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GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

<http://www.generalbotha.co.za>

NOVEMBER 2006

JOINT NEWSLETTER

Should your address details change, please send your updated details to:
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Visit our website <http://www.generalbotha.co.za>

Greetings from your editorial team Tony Nicholas and Dennis Henwood on this, the last edition of 2006. We bring you news of recent activities and future events in the various branches around the world. We hope it has been a good year for Bothie Old Boys, and that soon you will have the opportunity for a moments rest and celebration with your family and friends during the coming holidays. We wish you all a blessed Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

In this edition you will find notices of the end of year functions in various branches. We look forward to hearing feed-back of more happy reunions for the next letter. Australia, it seems, is being quite innovative in bringing together Obies from that vast area including New Zealand. This is, surely, the network that the founders of the Association had in mind. There has not been much news of gatherings in the US of A or Canada lately. How about some young energetic blood to get the guys together on that continent? In the press this week there

have been rumblings about Australia standing by to rescue the FIFA World Cup event if SA does not get its act together, which has upset the Government here. Well, how about bringing together a world gathering of Bothie Old Boys instead? Well, we are allowed to dream. After all, had it not been for dreamers the Association would never have grown to a world-wide distribution of 530 printed copies mailed, and about another 500 emailed.

CAPETOWNBRANCH

End of Year JointLunch with the Society of Master Mariners.

(Please take note of the change of DAY&VENUE)

Date: Wednesday 13 December, 12:30 for 13:00

Venue: Mowbray Golf Club,RappenburgRd., Mowbray (Phone 021-6853018
fordirections)

RSVP: KathyNicholas, Tel. 021-7885957, Fax 086-6040811,
emailcptchairman@generalbotha.co.za

Cut off date Monday11December.

Of course the richness of this newsletter is in the fascinating and varied news from Obies in their many different backgrounds and countries of residence, all stemming from one small training establishment here in Cape Town – food for thought. If we cannot gather for a world reunion, then at least we are able to keep in touch through this letter, and the legend lives on thanks to your news and contributions.

We read in this edition of the Cape University of Technology (a.k.a. CAPUT) acquiring a vessel to train navigators, and we also read of the end of year prize-giving at the Simon's Town High School. One can associate these developments and happenings with our days at the Bothie, and our trips on the Howard Davies – the Hot Dog, and our end of year assemblies. What we see from this is young boys and girls emerging as future movers and shakers who will spread out in the world as so many General Botha boys have done in the past. That is an exciting prospect, and reassuring to know that with the motivation and foresight of Obies past, the legend continues. Perhaps these future Old Boys/Girls of the respective institutions will form an association as rich as ours. We certainly can dream.

This year was the 75th anniversary of the GBOBA. You will read about how other branches celebrated this occasion. In Cape Town we enjoyed a successful lunch on Saturday 9 September at the Roaring Forties" Restaurant. This was appropriately situated on board the old "Cable Restorer" in Simon's Town. The vessel is conveniently moored in the shelter of the outer dockyard wall adjacent to the yacht basin. This was a perfect venue for such an occasion, being close to the original home of the Ship with all the atmosphere. One could almost imagine oneself on board the training ship itself.

The highlight of the day was to have Mrs. Jean Gallard, and her husband John, with us, and to listen to Jean reminisce about her youth as the daughter of Herbie and Mary Horsley. Herbie

was one of the founders of the GBOBA (see the May 2006 Newsletter for the history and the origin of the Association). She spoke passionately and with humour of her memories of the joviality in her household with the many comings and goings of Old Boys and how Herbie would be the great organiser and motivator of functions at their home, at the Tennis & Badminton Club, the Mission or the MNOA Club, or anywhere else. One wonders if they ever managed to do their homework. Mother and children were included in almost everything, and they all had so much fun. Jean has every right to be so proud of her Father's, and Mother's, achievements, and we have good reason to be equally proud of an Old Boy who had the vision and energy to allow us to have what we do today in this Association.

Elsewhere in this letter we have included an extract from "Recollections of Living with a 'Bothie' Boy," written by another daughter of Herbie and Mary, Marianne.

FROM THE BRIDGE OF s.s. CAPE TOWN – Tony Nicholas.

The Soapie at the Royal Cape Yacht Club continues. The club wishes to expel the caterer and the caterer claims breach of contract and loss of investment. The club took the matter to court and the judgment went 50/50 to both parties. So the caterer remains but lacks support and thus a reasonable income and return on investment. All this is of course having a very negative effect on our Cape Town monthly lunches hosted at the RCYC resulting in lost support as well. This is of grave concern to your committee and I recently polled some regular attendees for their opinion. The overall consensus from the members polled was to wait it out as the caterer can not survive on the very low level of business as a result of the dispute. Thus your committee has again taken a wait and see stance for the time being. Please watch this publication for any [near] future change of venue. In the interim we have booked the year end Xmas lunch at the Mowbray Golf Club. Unfortunately we could not obtain a Tuesday booking but booked for the Wednesday instead. Please see details elsewhere in this publication.

This publication contains report back on the association's 75th anniversary celebrations in Durban and Cape Town. Your chairman and wife [Kathy] were invited to the Durban dinner celebration. An evening we thoroughly enjoyed after being hosted like Royalty by Durban Branch, including being lodged by Colin and Anne Ogg at their lovely home. I can vouch that Anne is a wonderful cook and both are perfect hosts, even Colin's limo service from the airport. We met many Old Salts for the first time but names that I am familiar with from our Muster List. It was fantastic to meet you all. Included was Gordon "Bubbles" Schoeman 1975, I shall not relate what antics we got up to many years ago in this family publication. Another was class mate Neville West 1971 who introduced me to the rock band Black Sabbath. Terry Purdon [another class mate] has some very strange photographs taken of us in our dormitory performing to the record player. Ah well, such good fun. My and Kathy's heartfelt thanks to Durban chairman Derek McManus, Colin and Anne Ogg and all Kwa-Zulu Natal members that made us feel so welcome.

The Cape Town celebration went off equally well I believe but read the report elsewhere for an unbiased opinion. What delighted me was the fact that the function attracted a number of Obies that we do not usually see at our other functions. Thus I consider it to have been an immense success.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

L.O. NORTON 1934/35. After leaving the Bothie Lyle went to sea in the Ellerman Hall Line. After two years he returned home to Barkley East to go farming. At outbreak of the war joined the D.M.R. Regiment. Soon after WWII he returned to farming, retiring from

farming in 1980. Then joined an Estate Agency in Gonubie for 9 years. Bothie nickname 'Stompie'. Deceased 09/09/2006.

T.W. McEWAN 1945/46. Tom passed away on 29 July 2006 after a long battle with cancer. After leaving the "Botha" Thomas made his way to Salisbury as an accountant in the then Rhodesia. There he married, had two children and, after joining a company of auditors, moved to Bulawayo. In 1960 he joined Duly and Coy, the Ford agents, and worked for them for 22 years. In 1978 he married Ada and acquired three step daughters and with this family immigrated to South Africa in 1982, where he obtained employment at a Jewish Old Age Home. Tom was diagnosed with cancer in 1991 and, after the discovery of a second major tumor in 1999, had major surgery which forced him to retire to Johannesburg. His health continued to deteriorate until he finally lost the battle. Throughout this period he maintained his sense of humour and a positive attitude. He was a great lover of the outdoors and an all round sportsman, a dedicated family man and made many children happy with the supply of wooden toys he made for them as part of his hobby of carpentry. He was very proud of having been a "Bothie Boy", a strong supporter of the OBA and, until almost the end; he never missed a Gauteng get together where he is already missed.

D.W. PEREIRA 1941/42. After Bothie Doug was appointed as a Midshipman Royal Navy Reserve and appointed to HMS Revenge. Spent six months patrolling the West African Coast before escorting a convoy to the U.K. then appointed to HMS Rodney on North Atlantic duties and the D-Day landings. He was subsequently transferred to destroyers in the Eastern Theatre and Fleet Sweepers in the English Channel until VE day. Doug was decorated by the Russian Government for his part in convoy escorts to Northern Russia. On return to South Africa Doug became a Factory Representative until his retirement in 1992. Sadly passed away 13/10/2006.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? – FLASHBACK JOHN ORROCK 1954/55

“I particularly enjoyed Roger Layzell’s Gordon’s Bay Marathon recollections. By the time I arrived in 1954, the run had become an annual event and been extended to include all the ship’s company. Also by then the Dromedaris [ex 1952 van Riebeeck landing tri-centenary celebrations] was with us, firmly planted on the foreshore adjacent to the corrugated iron classrooms. As the prizes were being handed out, we were invited by Captain Gus Legassick to cast our eyes upward to the mast platforms of the vessel to look at each being occupied by the last three finishers, sent there for an hour or two’s soul-searching about not having tried hard enough. I remember two of them, but will refrain from disclosing their names. They may still be in the process of seeking absolution.”

Please share with us who those three laggards were?

SCRANBAG

S.G. BREBNER 1979 #2639. Simon was previously with P&ONLL based in London but went walkabout following that company’s merger with A.P. Moller. Through the Old Boy and shipping network Old Boy Chris King located Simon for us. “I am now working for MAERSK LINE in Brazil as General Manager for the Africa/Middle East/Far East trades. We are based in Sao Paulo and have been here since middle February 2006. Doubt if there is any 'old boys' here but if there are, then please contact me and we can meet up for a few caipirinhas! (Local Brazilian cocktail)”

W.W.B. LEARMONTH 1958/59 #E14. Willy was recently found lurking in Cape Town. He is presently NMC Business Development Director. Now what is that Willy and we look forward to more detail of what you have been up to since leaving the Ship.

T.J. RICHARDS 1974 #2484. Trevor finally contacted us after going AWOL somewhere along the voyage. He resides and runs a large marina in the USA. So you yachties, pay him a

visit over there. "Hello Tony - I am actually President of the Corporation which owns the marina - I guess you could equate it to the "Managing Director" of a South African company. It is quite a big operation - a resort marina with 250 slips, pool, restaurant, large boatyard operation, gift store and fuel dock. Keeps us busy. On leaving Safmarine in '82 (approx), spent the next 4 years sailing around the world, met an American girl in Australia, (which ended my single handing days), got married in Knysna in '86, sailed back to the States and settled in Maryland in '88, where we got a job managing a full service marina. 18 years (and 2 kids) later we are still here and are now part owners of the marina. We still have our Knysna build Endurance 37 "Wandering Star" - who knows, my wife has not seen the Pacific yet!" Yes, and perhaps you will pay us a visit as well.

G.A. DAVIES 1980 #2712. Previously reported that Guy had joined Dublin Port Company. Based in Dublin in 2003, however since April 06, he has been involved in international port operations and currently doing a long-term contract in Indonesia."As you can see, old 'Nav-Cad Chopper' is still happiest when involved with 'ships & shipping'. Having cut my teeth with Safmarine back in 1979, the lure of the sea remains as strong as ever. Residing in Sabang allows me the privilege of going for a 'cool off' in the most pristine, clear coral reef areas found in Asia. Working in paradise does have its privileges! My best regards to all my old friends and colleagues. Guy 'Chopper' Davies."

B-J.E. WALTHER 1983 #2821. Another wandering Obie looking for company out there somewhere. "After resigning from Safmarine in 1987 I joined the SA Navy and served on various Strike Crafts till 1990. With the independence of Namibia in 1990 I went back to Namibia and sailed as 1st Mate on the Sea Fisheries patrol vessel "ORYX". In 1996 I joined an Off Shore Supply and Commercial Diving company as General Manager operating out of the port of Walvis Bay. In 2002 I resigned and took up a job in Kuwait as a General Manager Port Operations for "Jassim Transport & Stevedoring Co." in the port of Shuwaikh." Whatever next? Trust you are out of the war zone Bernd.

R.G. WEISS 1945/46 #1445. Reg has also reported in after his daughter kindly contacted me. "I have been somewhat remiss (at 77) in not attending any of the functions but still lead a very busy life. Off to Norway on August 10 to attend the 50th anniversary celebrations of the establishment of the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists of which I am Vice-Chairman for Africa. This may be my last jaunt overseas. I have represented South African journalists on the Federation since 1996 when we once again achieved respectability and could secure the World Congress here in 2004. I have been in active journalism since 1948 when I left Safmarine. Captain Potch Potgieter and I were the first cadets (apprentices) on Safmarine's first ship, the old Constantia, a Victory ship that did duty as a trooper in the Second World War. Potch is now living at Blouberg." Yes, we know where Potch is, perhaps you two should meet at the next lunch.

SOS

Geoff Williams 1976, last known lazing about Cruz Bay, St John, Virgin Islands. Where is he now?

FOR THE RECORD

In the last newsletter was an obituary to Arthur Bluett, and we have received the following from **Laurie Barnes 1946/47, #1450:**

"I was sad to read about the death of Arthur Bluett in the Bothie magazine recently received. 'Bluey' was with Gordon Bennett & me on the Bothie in '46/47 and I was also with him in Safmarine although we were never on the same ship together. I was on the Constantia - Safmarine's first ship. For the record, Brian Ingpen's statement that Bluey was the company's first cadet is factually incorrect. The company's first cadets were 'Pottie' Potgieter and Reg. Weiss - our Old Salts - who were already at sea in the

Constantia while Bluey and I were still on the Bothie. I took Reg. Weiss's place on the Constantia in '48 when he left the sea to become a journalist. The rest of the record speaks for itself, and Bluey had a very distinguished and lifelong career with Safmarine and was a prominent member of the Cape Town Branch of the Association, where I am sure he will be sorely missed.”

Brian Ingpen replied that the information he had was based on what he was given when he was writing the book ‘Safmarine 50’ back in 1995. He acknowledged that the information appears incorrect as there were the other two ahead of him. We apologise for any misunderstanding.

NEWS FROM DURBAN -

The Associations 75th anniversary dinner was held at Point Yacht Club on 25th August 2006 and was a resounding success. Due to the stormy weather and chaotic traffic we got off to a late start but soon settled down to an excellent dinner and a fascinating talk on future scenarios by Chantel Illbury.

Chantel is a leading strategist who works both locally and internationally. She works closely with Clem Sunter of Anglo American. Together they have written a number of books on strategy. We were very pleased to have Tony Nicholas and his good wife Kathy with us at the dinner, as well as many Obies who had been assumed lost.

A special thanks to Colin Knowler and his assistants for all the work done to make the event such a great success. They set a very high standard for those who will be honoured to arrange the 100th anniversary 25 years hence. Also a big thanks to Roy Martin for being the MC and keeping us entertained through the evening and for keeping order amongst an increasingly rowdy and happy group who had to pause periodically for toasts etc.

Our monthly luncheons continue to be very pleasant meetings at a great venue on Durban's bay.

The Naval Officers Association, battle of Trafalgar commemorative dinner was held at DLI on 21 October 2006 and as usual was a memorable event.

A number of our Obies have been travelling recently. Dave De Wet did a trip to the east and visited China. Ernest Nellmapius visited the UK and was fortunate to see the lovely towns of Conway, Dartmouth and a definite high light was a visit to the historic dockyard at Portsmouth and a tour of the HMS Victory, HMS Warrior etc. While there he briefly met Rob Myburgh who lives near Windsor. Capt (SAN) Allen Pembroke visited India during October as the SA Navy's Chief of Mission with the Navy team for the World Military Sailing Championship hosted by the Indian Armed Forces in Mumbai. The Championship was run in accordance with the ISAF Racing Rules of Sailing. Missions from 125 Countries were invited to participate at this prestigious World Event. Missions from participating countries were required to compete in a total of 12 races during the period and the much-coveted CISM Cup was awarded to the winners of the World Championship and medals awarded to the skippers and crews of the first three boats.

FUTURE EVENTS in KZN:

The GBOBA Christmas lunch is planned for Wednesday 13th December at the Royal Durban Golf Club in the Greyville Racecourse. Time 12h00 for 12h30 Bookings via Candy on 031 5692585 between 08h00 & 16h00

AUSTRALIAN BRANCH NEWS - Peter O'Hare

The Australian Branch extends its best wishes to Old Boys everywhere.

Please let us know if you are in our area and we will put on a few drinks at short notice. Our South East Queensland Group have had a busy time recently and our National Vice Chairman Andy Fotheringham reports;

The Queensland group met at Breakfast Creek Tavern, Brisbane in the Spanish Garden on Sunday 29th October. There were 10 of us at the gathering and the food and company was good. Mike and Margaret Pomfret were kind enough to bring Brian and Jill Hoatson. Fred and Moreen Moore made the journey as well.

John de Villiers was kind enough to bring Ian along. Ian is our most senior Queensland member and is always an enthusiastic supporter of our get togethers. I (Andy) made the pilgrimage down from Mackay and Simon Reynolds and I earlier said farewell to Mike and Cheryl Carrington at the airport. They were up from Adelaide for a week on the Sunshine Coast.

The previous day Mike Carrington, Simon Reynolds and Andy had what could be called the 30th Anniversary of the year of 76/78. We met Mike in the city and walked down to Southbank. We had a good lunch and catch-up at the Ship Inn next to the Brisbane Maritime Museum.

Very Important Notice.

The Australian Branch 2007 Annual Commissioning Day dinner and AGM will be held in Brisbane on Saturday 17th March 2007. While normally held in Sydney this annual event has in the past been held in Adelaide and Melbourne. Next year is Brisbane's turn.

This will be a Lunch held on a vessel named "Kookaburra Queen" on the Brisbane River with more drinks to follow at a dockside tavern. We have the top deck reserved for us and it will depart from Eagle Street Pier at 1215 for a 2 hour river cruise and lunch. Boarding will be at 1200.

All Australian and New Zealand Old Boys will be sent further details. Please note that with bargain airfares it is possible to fly in for the day. We will also find reasonable accommodation near the departure for those who wish to stay on overnight.

Besides Australian and New Zealand members, all are welcome. Please note that we include wives, partners and siblings in our celebrations.

Regards to all, Peter O'Hare Hon Sec/Treasurer Australian Branch, email peteroh@bigpond.com.

UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH NEWS - Ted Fisher

Best begin with a further report on our weather – Britain continues to experience unseasonably hot weather, with temperatures reaching 67F (19C) in Cornwall yesterday. The monthly average is around 50F. It will all change this week!!

Again, not much activity to report upon for this session, however, true to form Alan Bole answered my request through the last Newsletter and has reported on his visit to the largest Model Building Exhibition in the world in Dortmund – see note on **Big Boy's Toy's** from Alan Bole (49/50).

Contacts – from Alwyn Christie (46/47) who is not enjoying the best of health at the present time, indeed, Alwyn has been suffering stoically for a number of years so we do wish him well, as also to Hugh Underwood (41/42) both of whom are unable to attend our forthcoming December lunch. Others reporting in with apologies have been Chris Nash (61/62), Johnny Johnston (38/39), Graham Harker (56/57), Greville McCarthy (84), Bill Rushby (52/53), Ian Meikle (54/55), Alistair Struthers (60/61), Stewart Edwards (54/55), Keith Collins (57/58) and Ian Piggott (76) – great to know they are still around and about our shores and busy!!

Forthcoming Social – several Obies attended the Conway Club's Christmas Dinner in Lyndhurst last year and following on from our joint Spring Lunch at Goodwood Chichester in March, we have received a welcome invitation to join them at their **Christmas Lunch on Sunday 3 December 2006 at 1300 hrs. Meet at Noon in the bar, The Crown Hotel High Street Lyndhurst Hampshire** (near Southampton for non-locals) The cost **£17.50 per head**. I've e-mailed to Obies and for those on 'snail mail' I hope you read the Newsletter! So far a very good attendance anticipated so more news anon!

That's about it other than to say our Australian friends could soon have another Obie in their midst in that, Peter Heydenryck (52/53) together with Norma are due to finally depart these shores for pastures new. They will be missed - Peter will no doubt fill in the details and we hope to meet with them for a farewell lunch shortly. All the best and somewhat early a Happy Christmas and New Year to all.

Ted Fisher +44 (0) 1903 744400, e-mail: tedefisher@aol.com.

BIG BOY'S TOY'S - Alan Bole

In April 2006, Keith Lindsay (#2180: 60/61) and I joined a coach trip along with some 45 Model Boat enthusiasts for a trip to the 'Modelbau' Exhibition in Dortmund, Germany. It is claimed to be the biggest such exhibition in the world and I can quite believe that it is. We set off from Manchester for Hull where we boarded the ferry 'Pride of Hull' for the North Sea Crossing (calm) to Rotterdam. The following morning, we got back on the coach and went via the autobahns, directly to the show where we arrived at noon.

We had the afternoon at the show and also, the following two full days and we needed every minute of that time. We still didn't manage to see it all. There were 10 massive Exhibition Halls. The main (concert) hall, the size of London's Albert Hall was for boats. The centre piece was a 'lake' on which there were demonstrations in 20 minute slots. (Sadly, all the commentary was in German) A second hall was for boat club exhibitions and traders. The next hall was for aircraft club stands and traders. The second 'aircraft hall' was for indoor flying, including tag competitions where competitors would endeavour to cut off the streamer which was flying from another aircraft's tail. There were two halls for trains – one for club layouts and the other for traders. Computer controlled layouts were everywhere.

Next came two halls for vehicles. One was a race track for cars with races every 30 minutes or so, while the other had an arena with 10 tons of sand at each end and a group of operating cranes, diggers etc transferred the sand to the other end while a different group moved it all back again. Meanwhile, in the centre of this activity, there were demonstrations by every kind of vehicle you can think of – e.g. cranes loading logs on to transporters, while others unloaded the logs.

The two final halls catered for everything else – doll's houses, roller coasters, complete funfairs, circuses – you name it, plus more traders of every description. Outside, robust, highly sprung buggies were driven at a ramp in an attempt to jump an 8 foot high wall. This continued from 9am to 5pm. I questioned the sanity of the participants.

On the way home, we spent a day in Rotterdam and were able to visit the indoor and outdoor Maritime Museums before boarding the 'Pride of Rotterdam' for the return voyage across the North Sea (calm) to Hull and then on to Manchester. It was a most interesting and worthwhile 6 days.

(Alan Bole #1588: 49/50).

Gauteng Annual Spring Function – Ivor Little.

The Gauteng Branch Annual Spring Function was held on Sunday, 17 September, at the Bryanston Sports Club where we were hosted by Graham Jooste and his charming wife

Colleen. The gathering took the form of a Buffet Sunday lunch and went off extremely well. We had two guests of honour from the Royal Naval Association, Bill Keeble their President, Ian Loubser their Chairman, and a number of members' wives, friends and family. The standard of catering was very good and the 47 people who attended certainly got their moneys worth. Those ex cadets attending were Frank Redgement (39/40); Frank Wheeldon (41/42); Bill Leader and Ted Page (44/45); Gordon Bennett (46/47); Gordon Cross (47/48); Rene Poerner (48/49); Drummond Terry (50/51); Vic Albert, Mike Crewe and Ken van der Walt (52/53); Tony Hunter, Ivor Little, Eric Moir and Keith Quayle (53/54); John Orrock (54/55); Archie Campbell and Brian Glass (55/56); Brian Watt (65/57); Donald Forbes (57/58); Gerry Marais (58/59); Fred Marais (61/62); Henri Fouche (1968). Apologies were received from a further 15 cadets, including ex "Worcester" Ian Thurston (58/59) whose wife Evon stood in for him to represent our sister college.

Our next get together will be in March 2007.

The Gauteng Branch is very proud of one of its members who received his Doctorate in Technology in Pretoria in September. This is ex cadet Henri Fouche (1968), who is currently a lecturer in Policing and Security Management at the Tshwane University of Technology.

His doctoral thesis was entitled "Policing Piracy and Armed Robbery of Ships in South Africa's Territorial Waters and Contiguous Zone".

On leaving the "Botha", Henri proceeded to sea before joining the South African Police in 1971, where he rose to the rank of Colonel. He served as Area commander at Jan Smuts Airport and deputy director of Interpol in Pretoria before leaving the SAP to go into the casino security industry, and then to lecture in security at Technicon Pretoria. He is married to Emmarentia, with two children, a daughter and a son, Andre, who is currently serving as Chief Officer in the *Ruth First*.

Thanks guys, Ivor.

News from Ian Manning.

The third GENERAL BOTHA "Southern" lunch was held on Tuesday 17 Oct 06 at the Seven Seas Club, Simon's Town. Michelle Schooling, twenty GENERAL BOTHAs and one WORCESTER attended. All comments received were positive.

The fourth GENERAL BOTHA "Southern" lunch is scheduled to take place at the Seven Seas Club, Simon's Town on Tuesday 16 January 2007 at 1200 for 1230.

Reservation is essential. Please telephone Brad Wallace-Bradley on 021-786-1957 or Ian Manning on 021-782-1559 before 1700 on Friday 12 January 2007.

MARINE TRAINING VESSEL HANDED OVER TO CAPE UNIVERSITY

In a significant step forward for maritime education and training development, the national department of environmental affairs and tourism last week handed over to the Cape Peninsula University of Technology a vessel for the very purpose.

Known as the Patella, the upgraded former fishery and environmental protection vessel was acquired from DEAT by the university, soon to be renamed Fathom 10.

Possibly the only dedicated training vessel on the African continent, the vessel will "complement and enhance the existing academic component," says departmental head Captain Dr Ed Snyders.

Formally deployed to monitor rock lobster and other vessels around the South African coastline, the Patella is said to be ideal for a wide range of training applications for marine engineering and marine navigation cadets and pilot boat skippers.

The vessel will also be used for marine research and a host of other non-commercial academic applications.

It's Been One of Those Days

My forgetter's getting better,
But my rememberer is broke
To you that may seem funny
But, to me, that is no joke

For when I'm "here" I'm wondering
If I really should be "there"
And, when I try to think it through,
I haven't got a prayer!

Oft times I walk into a room,
Say "what am I here for?"
I wrack my brain. but all in vain!
A zero, is my score.

At times I put something away
Where it is safe, but, Gee!
The person it is safest from
Is generally, me!

When shopping I may see someone,
Say! "Hi" and have a chat,
Then. when the person walks away
I ask myself, "Who was that'?"

Yes, my forgetter's getting better
While my rememberer is broke,
And it's driving me plumb crazy
And that isn't any joke.

Simon's Town School, Maritime Studies Department - Prize-giving (Hugh James)

On 30 October 2006 I represented the committee of the GBOBA at the Maritime Studies prize-giving at Simon's Town School. The prize-giving was held in an appropriate setting, Bertha's Restaurant which overlooks Simon's Bay where the SATS *General Botha* was moored in days gone by. In addition to students, teachers and parents, the Head of the Maritime Studies Department, Brian Ingpen, had invited representatives of sponsors, benefactors and other supporters of the school. We all had a good time. It is not often that you are wined and dined at a school prize-giving.

Students spoke of their experiences at the school and spoke warmly of what the maritime training had meant to them. It was immensely satisfying to see that the students are representative of the rainbow nation and that the school is providing the skills they need to enter the maritime industry whether at sea or ashore.

The Maritime Studies Department is in its tenth year and Mr Fred Jacobs, a director of Safmarine, spoke of a decade of involvement in the school. He paid tribute to Brian Ingpen for having the vision and drive to make a success of maritime training at the school as well as thanking others who have been closely involved. He challenged the students to meet the demands of the workplace and to use the opportunities ahead of them.

As a first time guest at the prize-giving I was struck by the interest of the maritime fraternity in the school and their enthusiasm to see it be a success. In particular, it was wonderful to see amongst the guests a number of General Botha old boys who show an interest in the school. It was therefore a great honour to read out the criteria for awarding the Gold Medal to a cadet of the original training ship and to present a pair of binoculars from the GBOBA to the top student of 2006, Martin van Ast. In this the 75th anniversary year of the founding of the GBOBA, there was a sense of continuity from the past to the present that, with our interest as an Association, can extend into the future.

Hugh James (1967).

Donations Received.

Over the past year we have gratefully received donations from the following Obies:

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Your contributions go towards making this newsletter happen, and keeping the legend alive around the world – thank you.

“Recollections of Living with a ‘Bothie’ Boy.”

The following extracts are taken from Marianne Horsley Wybrow memoirs of her father, and affirm what her sister Jean spoke about at the Cape Town lunch commemorating 75 years of the GBOBA. Having read the May 2006 Newsletter, Marianne wrote that she was encouraged to see that what had brought her father so much pleasure in his life was still going strong. She wrote these memories down for “the future enjoyment of her nine grandchildren” and she is happy to share them with other Bothie Boys.

I grew up loving sing-songs and knowing all the war songs. As one of three children of Herbie and Mary Horsley, I peeped in on many parties, and was in awe of the adults and their antics. Most of the many people who came to our home were involved with the General Botha Old Boys, the Master Mariner’s Association, or with shipping in general. Some of them were MOTHS, as Dad helped them with their major fund-raiser each year. Many a night we were woken up with the explosion of frivolity, when Dad came home from yet another Botha Boys’ meeting, and brought friends with him. Part of the problem was that we never had a family car, so he would need a lift home. Mom must have been very tolerant, as she would be invited out of bed to make snacks for the “Boys”.

I’ve often wished that I had the energy that my Dad had. He would do a full day’s work as a self-taught accountant at a shipping firm, come home, quickly paint a wall while singing war songs, shower in his outside open air cold shower, change, and be out at another meeting. He became a life member of the GBOBA, plus a life member of the Durban Tennis & Badminton Club. He was a founder member of the Merchant Navy Officers Memorial Club (MNOMC) in Durban and was honoured with life membership there. He was also a life member of the Missions to Seamen in Durban.

It was at the MNOMC that I did much of my ‘spying’. On Bothie dance nights us children would be bundled into the (manager) Townley’s flat, and depending on which waiters were on duty, we would sneak and peak. I was fascinated with the ‘Lambeth Walk’ and slightly aghast when they played ‘hands knees and boomsa daisy’, especially if Dad wasn’t dancing

with Mom. Dad always saw to Mom's comfort, but he made it his duty to dance with every single lady.

Dad was a peoples' person. His list of Christmas cards was a nightmare for those who had the job of writing the envelopes, as there were new names squeezed in every year into the already crowded address book. But Dad would always do the writing in the card and nearly always with a personal anecdote. Addressing envelopes was also our 'duty' for the circulars to the Botha Old Boys. Dad kept regular contact with them all. They were all done on those roneo machines, where we endlessly turned the handle to run off those violet printed letters with a distinctive smell. Dad had carefully typed those circulars with two fingers on an old manual typewriter, working at amazing speeds, which almost caught up with his tongue movements. Just imagine how many people he could have reached with today's technology! Imagine Dad having a GB website! He would have reveled in it! But that may have spoilt his more flamboyant outreaches. One year he sent out some of the family greetings printed on toilet paper. He loved practical jokes. One personality columnist in 1970 described him as "a dynamic, utterly tireless, white-haired 'goer' ... a madcap, a high priest of practical joking, yet a man who coupled a sound outlook on living with his light-heartedness."

The bigger Bothie dances were held in big halls. Dad believed that working together is what made people stick together. So these dances entailed weeks of work parties for décor and the hats. They always had fancy hats, and these were always hand-made. Us children were happy when we were considered big enough to help with these creations. Lots of laughter went into those hats which were sold for funds at the dance. As for the catering, Mom was usually the convener, and her and the ladies cooked for days!

The dances were grand affairs as the men wore their tux, or full naval regalia, and the ladies vied for beautiful creations in their long flowing dresses. We used to linger in the doorway as our Mom was turned into a queen! As Mom and Dad would always need a lift, drinks and snacks were served at the Horsley's before and after these dances, so we got to admire the other revellers as well. We were glad when Robin and Helene Thomson were there as Helene had such a fascinating French accent and he was so handsome in his uniform! Another gracious lady was Joyce Everton, with Garth at her side, and I remember Alex and Muriel Davis with fondness – he always looked dapper in his Port Captain's uniform. In those days dances stopped at midnight, usually with "Goodnight Sweetheart" as the last dance, and often followed by "God Save the Queen." Woken by the noise of the after-party, we would stand behind the door and listen to the stories. We listened to how Alf Bell had 'done his thing' ... performing the Zulu war dance, and this he did like a true warrior. No Bothie dance was finished till Alf had done his war cry. ... He was sometimes so fired up that he literally lit a fire to dance around in the middle of the dance floor. I seem to remember that there was at least one venue that banned the 'Bothies' after one of Alf's pyrotechnic dances!

Another favourite Botha Boy for us kids was Uncle Paul Dymond, who was head of the island in our minds. We loved catching a bus into town, and walking down to the Victoria Embankment to catch the ferry across to Salisbury Island. We could cycle anywhere on the island and all the sailors would acknowledge us, because they all knew Uncle Paul's children. We even had a Botha Old Boys' Christmas party on the island and Father Christmas arrived in a speed boat. Another place we had Botha Old Boys' Christmas Trees was at the Mission to Seamen. This was an exciting place for us kids, with the mystery of the sailors, the smell of dusty books, old chairs stuffed with horsehair, and the kindness of Padre Precious.

.... To add to the enjoyment of our walk along the docks to the Mission, people always greeted us. Dad was a gregarious person, so he knew the stevedores, the chandlers and some of the dockworkers, many of them by name. Because of this he had acquired the nickname of 'Admiral of the Point'. They also referred to him as 'Horsley's employment agency', because he knew who was out of work in the field of shipping and who could employ them. He was a good networker. Similarly he could spot a lonely person and know just who they needed to meet, hence another nickname of 'The Matchmaker'.

It was on the field at the back of the Mission that the Botha Boys played friendly cricket matches against visiting seafarers. Us children loved selling cool drinks and collecting the bottles at these events. Dad and Mom enjoyed their sport. For years Dad ran the Botha Tennis Club at the Municipal grounds. They were good clay courts and us children all learned a love of the sport there, as we were allowed to play when the grown-ups were finished. The club did not play league, as Dad believed that would spoil the social purpose of the club. When Dad met spinsters, or bachelors, or 'outcasts', he would get them to join the tennis club. He organised lots of tournaments and once caused havoc when he awarded the first prize to the person who came last. He was determined that the club would cater for the love of the game and not for winning. He had the same attitude in the Botha Badminton Club, which I was allowed to join when I turned fifteen. We played at the Inkonkoni Naval Base at the yacht mole.

... Dad used to take us for walks along those wharves. ... We'd walk for a long time with the smell of the sea and the ships filling our nostrils, and sometimes we were invited on board. To me those ships represented far off horizons that I could only dream about.

There's no doubt that Dad loved ships and the sea. I have wondered if it was the fact that he was denied the opportunity to use the training he had received at the General Botha that fueled his passion? After his training, he had signed up as a cadet on the Blue Funnel Line, but couldn't pass a vision test. So he was not allowed to fulfill his career there. He became a clerk in a shipping firm and served for a stint with the Seaward Defence Force. He eventually worked himself into a senior executive position with William/Mitchell Cotts, spending his entire working life with the same firm. At the outbreak of the Second World War, he was preparing to serve aboard the minesweeper, HMS Bluff, but at his firm's request he was kept at home as a "key man" in the shipping industry, and in 1940 was transferred to Durban. According to a newspaper article "Mr Horsley and his wife – childhood sweethearts who first met when they were both eight – entertained hundreds of officers and ratings from the Allied navies and merchant vavies in Durban ..."

Or was Dad's love for the General Botha one of gratitude for what it had done for him? Serving on the General Botha had kept him out of an orphanage. From what I understand, Dad, who was one of eleven children, was to be put into an orphanage when his own father died. He was 14 years old, and a benefactor advised his mom that he could get a cadetship on the General Botha which would train him, and give him somewhere to live, with a career at the end of it. So he was saved from the orphanage and he was able to help support those siblings who did end up there.

After 25 years in Durban, Dad was transferred back to Cape Town as chief accountant for Mitchell Cotts. I quote from his circular at the time: "We had many of our friends to see us off at all the ports and after the pilot boarded the Randfontein at Durban we received a message that the captain wanted to see us on the bridge and on arrival up there we met Pilot

Peter Kroon and we were invited to stay on the bridge whilst the vessel was leaving the harbour. As the Randfontein was pulled from the side of the wharf, Senior Tug Master Reg Norton wished us, over his loud hailer, farewell on behalf of everybody and as the vessel neared the Channel all harbour craft gave us a royal send off on their 'steam whistle' and the Captain of our ship gladly responded. We were both very thrilled at this special treatment and when we got down to our cabin we were faced with beautiful bouquets of flowers presents telegrams and bon voyage cards and will always remember Durban by the kindness shown to us by so many. East London also gave us an exit with all sirens at full throttle and when we left Port Elizabeth after 9 at night we felt certain that our "Royal Status" was over – people go to bed early in these places – but the sirens of the tugs and the pilot boat gave forth through good steam provided by the engines and our Captain again responded beautifully."

Dad returned to Durban to celebrate with his Durban mates, the fiftieth anniversary of the commissioning of the General Botha. The shipping correspondent wrote of the event in the Daily News on Wednesday March 15th 1972: "If a thorough search of the history of South Africa were made, it is doubtful if you would find any establishment which ... turned out so many men of such a high calibre, as the training Ship General Botha."

I also remember Mom telling me how she had visited Dad on the General Botha, catching trains to do so. She had fond memories of courtship days involved with Dad and Bothie Boys, the latter becoming like their extended family and the mainstay of their social lives for their entire married life. My own children now have a holiday home at Gordon's Bay and if I sit on the balcony I look straight at the General Botha crest on the hillside. ... I will ensure that all my grandchildren know what the GB stands for and why it is so special to me, to their country, and to their heritage.

~~~~Written by M. Horsley Wybrow, August 2006. ~~~~

### **"The stuff of life in the corporate world."**

In the beginning: In the beginning was the Plan. And then came the Assumptions.  
And the Assumptions were without form. And the Plan was without substance.  
And darkness was upon the face of the Workers. And they spoke among themselves, saying,  
"It is a crock of sh\*t, and it stinks."  
And the Workers went unto their Supervisors and said,  
"It is a pail of dung, and we can't live with the smell."  
And the Supervisors went unto their Managers, saying,  
"It is the container of the excrements, and it is very strong,  
such that none may abide by it."  
And the Managers went unto their Directors, saying,  
"It is a vessel of fertilizer, and none may abide its strength."  
And the Directors spoke among themselves, saying to one another,  
"It promotes growth, and it is very powerful."  
And the Vice Presidents went to the President, saying unto him,  
"This new plan will actively promote the growth and vigor of the  
company with very powerful effects."  
And the President looked upon the Plan and saw that it was good.  
And the Plan became Policy.  
And that is how sh\*t happens

*Remember:* The Pessimist complains about the wind, the Optimist expects it to change and the Realist adjusts his sails. *All the best* – Scribe, [dhenwood@iafrica.com](mailto:dhenwood@iafrica.com).

