

S.A.T.S.

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GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

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

November 2008

JOINT NEWSLETTER

Has your address changed? Please send your updated details to Tony Nicholas Chairman Cape Town (details above).

Do you have an interesting article for this newsletter? Please send your contributions to Dennis Henwood,
dhenwood@iafrica.com Phone: +27 (0)21 6716373. Fax: +27 (0)86 6706710.

Can you read this Newsletter? If not please let us know. We can send you larger print if it is necessary.

It is that time of year when the diaries fill up and every day is a celebratory function. Well we are no exception, and we look forward to getting together in our various branches to enjoy some Christmas cheer. Please make haste and book your place with the following details.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCH DURBAN BRANCH

**DATE: Wednesday 10 DECEMBER
2008**

TIME: 12h00 for 13h00

VENUE: Westville Country Club

COST: R100 – includes wine

DRESS: Smart casual

**BOOKING: Derek McManus W - 031
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H - 031 7673719

E-mail - ernestn@saol.com

FORTHCOMING CAPE TOWN ATTRACTION

**Date: Tuesday 9 December,
1230 for 1300 [or earlier if you wish]**

**Venue: Royal Cape Yacht Club,
Duncan Road, Table Bay Harbour.**

Lunch: Four course if you can manage.

Price: R135 p.p – only a R5 increase from last year.

RSVP: Friday 5th December,

Kathy or Louise Nicholas:

phone 021-788 5959 mornings or evenings.

Email: cptchairman@generalbotha.co.za

Facsimile: 086 604 0811

Donations Received

We would like to thank all those who have donated this past year to our funds, making it possible to keep the Association going and in particular sending this newsletter out.

Peter Bitzker, J J Malherber, M A Hoffman, W J Damerell, J R Langridge, J Binos, Henri de Kock, Liz Hodes, Jim Cooke, G C Leale, P J Heydenrych, J B Cullen, R Hogg, Forster, K D Ford, Mrs Ann Nash, C Jackson, A Vowles

KZN BRANCH NEWSLETTER DURBAN October 2008

Firstly, many thanks to Ernest for his input regarding the Durban contribution to the newsletters of late. It is with regret that I have not yet entered the electronic age and at this point in time have purchased a second hand Fax that fortunately can send messages but not receive them. I still have no computer, cell phone or wrist watch and the message is out that I won't name any of these for Christmas gifts.

With a very capable secretary like Ernest all it requires is that he deciphers my scrawl and does the rest. He even corrects my grammar, after all grammar was never a top priority at the Bothie. We still have a hard core of supporters, some of whom we hope will still be around in 2022 for the 100th anniversary of the Ship.

Sadly I report the passing of Jack Finlayson (1291 – 1943-44) and Alan Cooke (2275 -1966).

Jack had a long battle with cancer while Alan passed over the side without warning.

We continue to enjoy good lunches at RNYC and committee meetings have been well attended with most of our committee here. Neil Brown, Master with Transocean Ship Management was recently on leave in the Durban area and attended some of our functions.

The Committee enjoyed a very good dinner with partners on Friday 22nd August at the RNYC. However some of our committee members have been traveling in the past few months and thus unable to attend functions. Ray Walker did an extended motor trip to Mozambique and Malawi. Alan Pembroke attended the world life saving championships on the Baltic and Dave De Wet enjoyed a cruise to Alaska and is now in the Philippines. Tony Da Silva is working the Angolan coastline so we don't often see him.

On the 10th December we will be holding the annual Christmas lunch – see above for details.

In closing I would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a prosperous new year. With a special plea to all our members to attend at least one function during 2009

Kind regards, Derek McManus.

FROM THE BRIDGE OF ss CAPE TOWN (Chairman, Tony Nicholas)

I was taught at school [yes I did have a life before Bothie] that one does not open correspondence with an apology, but today I must do so. I recently had my Bothie email system upgraded and my [usually] brilliant IT chap lost ALL my existing folders. So, I fear that I have lost some valuable Scranbag information for which I must apologize to those affected. Please communicate your news back to me again for inclusion in our next edition.

Our appeal for financial assistance met with a good response [Yes Mike Neill 1958/59 I received your envelope today] and therefore, comfortable in the knowledge that you members out there are supportive, we have decided to continue with the A4 format newsletter for as long as we can afford it. I must appeal to members again that if you have email and are still receiving hard copy newsletters by post from us, PLEASE advise your email address. Usage of email saves us immense cost and contributes to the longevity of the association. Thanks again for all the support.

On the social side our monthly lunches continue in Cape Town at the Royal Cape Yacht Club albeit with a smaller attendance than previously enjoyed. But those stalwarts still attending express their satisfaction with the venue and fare on offer. On that note **Ernie Bolton 1951/52** joined us last month but I could not entice him to sit down for lunch with us. Ernie your breakfast must be extremely good sir. We look forward to your visits and entertaining stories. The September lunch talk given by Old Boy Charles Kingon 1980 was enjoyed by all and those who missed that most interesting presentation; your loss. The port of Cape Town is in the process of enhancing their security infrastructure to comply with the ISPS Code. This includes the construction of new port entry gates and more stringent entry control. However I have been assured by the port authority that visitors shall be accommodated by means of issuing a temporary entry meaning that in the future it should take one less than a minute to gain entry to the port's Duncan Road and hence the RCYC or the Mission to Seafarers. The first new gate nearing completion is off Oswald Pirow Street which will be opened within a couple of months. When that gate is opened the Heerengracht/Adderley Street gate shall be closed. The other gates

remain at Paarden Eiland and South Arm Road, near the harbour SAPS. Forthcoming December lunch again takes the form of a year end, jointly with the Society of Master Mariners, celebration with partners invited as well as our special guests, our widows. Thus, although some of you are allergic to shaving at least wash your hands and assist us, your committee members in hosting these very special guests.

SOS

NAME	CLASS	LAST KNOW LOCATION
Vernon Keller	1965	East London
Jimmy Kruger	1978	Richards Bay

Both the above Obies worked for TNPA [Transnet National Port Authority], thus there should be an extensive network of members out there who can put me in contact with them again.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

W.D. LEPPAN 1939/41. In 1941 Warren was appointed Midshipman and joined H.M.S. Cornwall. Served on her until sunk by the Japanese on the 5th April 1942 south of Ceylon and then on HMS Valiant, both in the Eastern Fleet. Then HMS Kent in the Home Fleet, and finished the war out East on ML907. After the war he went farming, first near Klerksdorp, then Aliwal North and since 1956 on the farm Mandalay in the George district (South Africa) where he grew lettuce and celery. Passed away 17/09/2008.

G.B. DAVID 1966. Gerald previously sailed with Pentow Marine until 1999. Sadly passed away 16/10/2008 following an illness.

K.T. McNISH 1939/40. 1941 Ken was an indentured apprentice to Union Castle Line, 4/0 on the Arundel Castle for Sicily and Italian Troop Landings. 1944 sailed with Royal Dutch Shell carrying HI Octane. 1946 to 1951 remained at sea with Union Castle. 1951 Cargo Superintendent with Union Castle in Port Elizabeth. 1952, 3/0 & 2/0 with Safmarine, obtained Masters Certificate in 1954. 1955 joined S.A. Navy as Lieutenant, Navigation Officer on SAS Transvaal. 1957 Master of R.S. Africana II. 1961 transferred to Department of Transport and commissioned the new vessel R.S.A. 1962 to 1973 numerous voyages to the Antarctic and awarded the South African Antarctic Gold Medal. 1974 appointed Marine Surveyor in Cape Town, transferred to East London in 1975 where appointed principal officer. 1990 estate agent board exam in Cape Town. Deceased 19/08/2008. Ken authored a very interesting book covering his most interesting voyages to the Antarctic. I have a copy should anyone wish to read it.

J.D. ROBINSON 1939/40. Sadly passed away 01/08/2008. After leaving Bothie James was seconded to the Royal Navy and served as a navigator during the 2nd World War. After the war he joined the South African Railways & Harbours in Cape Town and transferred to Johannesburg in 1966 from where he retired.

R.J. ROWE 1931/32. Reg served his apprenticeship with British Tanker Co, and obtained second officer's certificate after attending the Sir John Cass Nautical School, London, in 1937. Then sailed on the Sulton Star to South America before signing on the steam tug Schermbrucker in Glasgow for her delivery voyage to South Africa. Later returned to Boksburg and worked as an operator at the Satmar Refinery. From there worked as a rigger on a paper mill and the mines for 10 years before farming for 28 years, producing beef cattle, hay and grass seed. Subsequently retired and deceased 24/08/2008.

D.A. WARD 1951/52. Doug sailed with Safmarine before joining the S.A. Harbour Service. Spent some time on the dredgers in Durban before transferring to a harbour pilot in Cape Town until 1996 when he retired. Deceased 17/08/2008.

A.A. COOKE 1966. Alan was born in Cape Town in 1948. He matriculated at Pinelands High School and attended GB during 1966. After serving as a Cadet with Safmarine Alan joined Durban Lines and gained his Masters Ticket at the age of 26 (youngest Master in the group). He came ashore in 1972 and joined Mediterranean Shipping Company [MSC], later Rennies, as operations manager. In 1994 he formed a partnership Seamaster Marine which later became Vulindela

Agencies. Amongst his various interests Alan was a passionate rugby supporter. Alan passed away on 27 August 2008 after suffering a sudden heart attack. Alan is survived by his wife Robynne and three children - Gillian, Sandra and Steven.

M.W. WIJNBERG 1941/42. After WWII Michiel went to Howard College, Natal University, to read Civil Engineering which led to a life in construction. Mainly in Africa and for the past 39 years in Zambia where he had his own fairly large company. Engaged mainly in rural development projects. 1994 in Zambia farming (crops and a boran herd). Was active in conservation and ecological matters. Deceased 25/08/2008.

A.G. HUNTER 1948/49. Alex was previously an electrician with a lift company. Recently reported deceased. Any further information of Alex will be appreciated.

R.H. MACMILLAN 1932/33. After G.B. Robert was a cadet with Bullard King and Union Castle. Obtained second 'mates' in London and signed on the dredger 'Blesbok' for delivery voyage from the Glasgow Builders to S.A.R. & H. in Durban. Obtained 'mates' in Hong Kong and 'Masters' in Durban whilst sailing on the SAR Ship 'Aloe'. At end of the war (WWII) moved to Australia and sailed on the Coastal Trade. Incidentally his first position was with the Adelaide Steamship Co on their Vessel the 'Moonta', which traded to the Gulf Ports. Also carried out 120 passengers on its six day voyage. This ship was affectionately known as the 'love boat.' Retired as Master. Deceased 27/09/2008.

R.L.W. CHAMBERS 1946/47. It is known that in 1951 Rex was with the Rhodesian Army, stationed in Malaya. Deceased 28/09/2008. Any further information of Rex will be welcome.

OUR SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO FAMILY, SHIPMATES AND FRIENDS.

THE LEGEND LIVES ON

Some members may have recently seen an interesting documentary on TV titled "The Originals". This was the story of the founding of the army unit during WWII that was the precursor of today's British army SAS Regiment, the Long Range Desert Group [LRDG] and the men that served in this original unit. We have one of these Originals in our ranks, namely Cecil Jackson 1935/36, better known as Jacko and resident of Fish Hoek in Cape Town. 1936 Jacko passed Bothie but unfortunately failed the eyesight test. Thus in 1937 went to Rhodesia and joined the mines there. 1939 he decided to join the Rhodesian Army. 1940 attested into British Army, served in Palestine, Cypress and Libya. January 1941 to July 1943, sergeant with the Long Range Desert Group in Libya. Awarded the M.M and mentioned in Dispatches. August 1943, Jacko entered A.C.T.I. in Palestine. November 1943, was commissioned 2 L/T and returned to L.R.D.G. Feb 1944 to June 1945, led a 10 man patrol in Albania & Yugoslavia, liaison with the Partisans. April 1945 awarded MBE. Jan 1945, returned to Rhodesia, de-mobbed and returned to mining. Jan 1947, in the tyre re-treading. July 1965 New Zealand, still in tyre business. 1975 Johannesburg with Mastertreads. Feb 1991, retired. His son was [or still is] in the South African Air Force. *Very interesting sir and I beg you to send some of your interesting stories in.*

SCRANBAG

P.A. POTGIETER 1973. "I am currently in Honningsvag in Norway and will be bringing a semi hulk called the "Hutton Hulk" down to Cadiz in Spain via Belfast in Ireland for bunkering. I expect to be back in Cape Town mid December 08." Sorry, too late for the December sumptuous lunch, but send your dad.

K.H. ERIKSEN 1978. Konrad was another defaulter that went AWOL but with the help of our Old Boys network out there he was soon keel hauled. "I left P&O Ports/DPWorld in the middle of April and opened a CC, KV&B Consulting Services. Am contracted by Scan-Trans as a Supercargo and am sent wherever they wish to send me. Since May, have worked in Mombassa, Tunisia, DRC and Sri Lanka and now preparing to head to Dubai, followed by Angola and Nigeria in October and beginning November. That is brief description of why I went AWOL." Now Konrad, bring the good wife, Valerie, to the December lunch.

P. MORRIS 1949/50 #1610. 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.

K.D. FORD 1961/62 #2202. After failing the eye sight test joined the public service and worked for the Department of Customs & Excise. Then spent 30 years working for the Kimberly City Council where he was appointed Manager of Parks & Recreation in 1984 and retired January 2005.

LEWIS ALLAN LYNN – 1932/33

We lost contact with Allan Lynn a while ago and only recently did some research by Old Boy Graham Jooste confirm that Allan had passed away.

Alan was ex-General Botha boy who, like Sailor Malan, went to sea in the Merchant Navy as a cadet prior to the 2nd World War and then, like Sailor Malan, opted for a short service commission in the Royal Air Force. He was a pilot officer at the start of the war and was immediately at the spear point of hostilities. In Bomber Command he took part in 120 sorties over Europe, an astonishing feat. Astonishing in that a man could survive such dangers for so long. The comparison would be with a member of the U-boat service surviving several years on operations in the Atlantic Ocean. At War's end Alan was a wing-commander loaded down with decorations- DSO (and bar), DFC (and bar), AFC (Dutch) and other awards. After the war a town in England sought leave from the Air Ministry to name the streets of a new suburb after leading RAF heroes and asked for a list of men deserving this form of remembrance. Alan's name was on the list supplied and Lynn Street came into existence. The RAF had many heroes and Alan must have been high on their roll of honour. On one mission he was leading he was told that an American war correspondent was to travel with him in his aircraft. To Alan's surprise the correspondent turned out to be Ernest Hemingway. An official publication has a photograph of Hemingway and Alan standing beside the aircraft kitted out for the journey. Hemingway is described as "an incongruous sight with his large frame squeezed into RAF battle dress, flying gear, and helmet. His steel-rimmed spectacles and shaggy beard did not detract from the overall impression of something a little out of the ordinary. "Murderous flak greeted them on the road but Alan and Hemingway returned safely to form a wonderful and lasting friendship. After the War he was successful in business and towards the end of his life he had an urge to return to South Africa albeit on an extended annual vacation basis. For this purpose he and his wife Graziella bought a holiday home in Plettenberg Bay in 1997 and here they enjoyed several long vacations together. It was at that home that he died on March 18th 2000.

HOWARD DAVIES MEMORIAL CHALLENGE GOLD CUP

Another piece of our history and legend. First an email from Brian Phipps passed to me via Laurentius van Rouendal. Brian writes; "While in the Harbour Service, I worked with one of the dredger masters by the name of Captain Ronald Philip Simkin (Ronnie) cadet No.775 1934 /35. He told me that in 1934 or 35 he was one of the members of a rowing team that went to the U.K. to compete against Worcester. In those days they travelled by Mail Boat. They took a trophy with them with Bothie inscriptions on it. Bothie lost the race and Worcester kept the trophy. The 2nd World War broke out soon after this year, not due to Bothie loosing the race, and this rowing race I believe was never held again. I'm sure you can guess what I'm going to ask. Where is this trophy now? It was a cup. Ronnie was not able to find out. I'm not sure if Ronnie Simkin is still alive, if so he would be about 90."

Yes, Ronnie is still hale and hearty here in Cape Town. So, about a week later [sorry Van, I have been busy] I sent an email off to the Honorary Secretary to the Association of Old Worcesters and received a very prompt reply. My, it must be wonderful to be retired.

“The Howard Davies Memorial Challenge Gold Cup for winning race between the training ships, H.M.S. “Conway”, t.s. “General Botha” and H.M.S. “Worcester” in the Albert Dock in June 1935 and won by the Worcester and retained by them. For reasons that I am not aware of the final at the top of the cup was given to a cadet by the Captain Superintend and following that cadets death has now passed on to a member of his family resident in New Zealand. The cup itself is now in the ownership of the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. It was presented to them in 1971 by the Merchant Navy College, the organization that succeeded our College when we closed in 1968. The cup was last on display at our Associations Millennium Dinner when it was held aloft in triumph by Captain John ARTHUR who was stroke oar on the day of the race; at that time he was the sole surviving member of the crew and sadly "Crossed the bar" on 10 July this year, at the age of 91.”

So now we may rest in peace that this part of our history has been preserved.

1952/53 BOTHIE FLAG

This is a true story! This flag flew daily during 1952 and 1953 until having become weather-beaten, slightly worn and scruffy; it was routinely replaced towards the end of the year and became the number two flag. On the Quarterdeck there was the Main Mast where the flags were ceremoniously attended to each day by Flag Party complete with buglers and sometimes the whole Ship's Company and the full Band. All the flags used were kept in a flag locker at the base of the mast. The number two flag was used each day and the number one flag brought out only on more special occasions such as Sunday Divisions, Holidays, a VIP, a Special Visitor or some such. A special, smaller flag was kept for strong wind days in bad weather. In December 1953 when 52/53 Cadets were getting ready to board the trooper for their journey to Strand station, the number two flag was surreptitiously and unceremoniously lowered and replaced by the number one flag from the locker by Cadet 1766. The cadet then liberated the number two flag, hid it in his baggage and smuggled it out into the Free World. The flag has been in the possession of ex-Cadet 1766 ever since and recently it came to light amongst the junk in his collection. Any guesses who this ex cadet 1766 may be? Pirate! The association is now in possession of this piece of Bothie history but we fear it may disintegrate if it gets anywhere near a mast again.

UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH – Ted Fisher e-mail tedefisher@aol.com

We are again heading at breakneck speed through the autumnal season toward Christmas with much of the country having experienced snowfall to a lesser or greater degree – this phenomena last seen in 1934!! Gracious me even I had not been thought about in that year!!

However, the social and festive period will be upon us and as in previous years a Christmas Gala Lunch is being held in conjunction with the Conway Old Boys Solent Branch at a well known hostelry:

THE CROWN HOTEL HIGH STREET LYNDHURST HANTS

Meet in the Bar from Noon

DATE SUNDAY 7 DECEMBER 2008

LUNCH IN THE GARDEN RESTAURANT 1300HOURS COST £20.50 pp

We have very much enjoyed the joint Xmas gathering over past years – an opportunity of meeting friends, having a little social intercourse between seafarers and ex-seafarers accompanied naturally by their ladies. Acceptances so far from OBIES total twelve including ladies with I know, a few more regulars having a reminder through this medium. Please respond to me tedefisher@aol.com or Telephone on 01903 744400 with closing date Monday 24 November.

Sea Pie Supper - For your 2009 Diaries, the Southampton Master Mariners Club Annual Sea Pie Supper is to take place on Friday 6 February 2009. Details to follow, however, cost to be in the region of £35.00. The venue will be Southampton City Guildhall.

I appreciated the long newsy e-mail letter from Peter & Norma Heydenryck. Great to know they are settling into life down under in Perth. They gave an interesting comparison of life 'down under' compared with their old days in Chichester. A difference in temperature and shopping with clothing more expensive as is food. The neighbours are more friendly. Peter is back to playing bridge and having the odd sail with Norma busy with her pottery class – sounds great! Best wishes & A Happy Christmas & New Year to all, Ted Fisher.

"GENERAL BOTHA" GAUTENG BRANCH SPRING FUNCTION.

The Gauteng Branch held its Annual Spring Function at the Harvest Inn Restaurant in Randburg on Sunday, 21 September. Notwithstanding the fact that it was a cold and blustery day, the group was comfortably ensconced in this very smart venue, which was suitably decorated in blue and white for the occasion. The "Botha" flag was up and each table was provided with a full set of beautifully designed and printed crested souvenir "Botha" menus. Our hosts for the occasion were Frank and Shirley Wheeldon, who ensured a top-notch meal for us and, judging by the noise level at one stage, an exceedingly good lunch (and afternoon) was had by all.

The toast to "The Ship" was proposed by Ivor Little. Frank Wheeldon said grace and entertained us with "Five points for a Gauteng Bothie Boy to remember" and some amusing anecdotes of the good ship "Dalia". A total of 42 people attended, with apologies from a further 13 ex-cadets, and 3 no-shows. Those ex-cadets attending were: Frank Redgment (39/40), who received the prize for the most senior "Old Salt" present; Frank Wheeldon (41/42); Ron McClintock (42/43); Bill Leader and Ted Page (44/45); Gordon Bennett (46/47); Gordon Cross (47/48); Rene Poerner (48/49); Vic Albert, Mike Crewe, Graham Jooste and Ken van der Walt (52/53); Tony Hunter, Ivor Little, Eric Moir and Keith Quayle (53/54); Martin Harvey, Tony Jacquet and John Orrock (54/55); Brian Watt (56/57); Donald Forbes (57/58); and Brian Preiss (1964), who received the prize for being the most junior "Chum" present.

Australia Branch News

3 San Giorgio Circuit, Castle Hill, NSW 2154.

1st November, 2008.

The Sydney Mid Year lunch was held at the Great Northern Hotel in Chatswood on Saturday 9th August 2008. It was well attended and included Gordon Maxwell and Cedric Clarke who we had not seen for a while.

The Queensland group lunch was held on 4th October at Kawanawaters Hotel on the Sunshine Coast (about 80kms north of Brisbane). The Queensland group is growing and is well looked after by Andy Fotheringham, our Vice Chairman.

On Saturday 22nd November, John Mc Tavish has organized a lunch in Newcastle (NSW) at the old Customs House (now a restaurant) on the harbor front next to the main railway station. This allows people from Sydney and northern suburbs to attend by train. We also have a number of old boys in the Newcastle area.

The waterfront of this busy working port has been renovated with restaurants and hotels overlooking the main channel. We are sure it will be a great day with quite a few old boys having already confirmed their attendance.

Looking forward, we will be planning our annual Commissioning day lunch in Sydney on Saturday March 14. Further details will be advised.

Regards to all and please get in touch if you are going to be "Down Under".

Grenville Stevens (2189 60/61) Chairman

Andy Fotheringham (2525 '76) Vice Chairman

Peter O'Hare (2247 '64) Hon Secretary, Australia Branch.

Email peteroh@bigpond.com Telephone 0417 028809

SATS GENERAL BOTHA Southern Lunch

The next lunch will be held on Tuesday 20 January 2009 at the Seven Seas Club, Simon's Town at 1200 for 1300. Those wishing to attend are requested to telephone Brad Wallace-Bradley on 021-786-1957 or Ian Manning on 021-782-1559 before 1700 on Friday 16 January 2009. Please note that the Seven Seas Club dress code requires shirts worn by members and their guests to have collars [i.e. no T-shirts or sweaters] and shoes to be worn with socks or stockings.

Get Together Sunday 09 Nov, Mossel Bay

The following report has just come in from Van van Rouendal who has been instrumental in gathering the Obies in the Southern Cape and this is their first of what hopefully will be many more. Now we really need to give this group a name as we do with the GB Southern Lunch, and the K Z-N Midland Meanders. So what is it to be? Congratulations Van & Rita on your efforts. Talking of which, we have not heard of our intrepid group in the K Z-N Midlands lately. How about hearing what is happening there, please?

Hi All

We wish to tell you how much Reg & Isabel, and Rita & I enjoyed the GBOB Get Together! Thanks for the good turnout. We missed Francois Oosthuizen though! Hope that you will be able to join us next time (probably in March 2009). This event will be organized by Trevor & Adelaide Homes, and Gordon & Mary Stockley, and will most probably be held in Knysna or surrounding area.

We attach a photo taken at the Get Together (*on the website*). The Old Boys and their Ladies were already "Dik Vriende" at that stage.

We wish you all a Blessed Christmas and a Healthy 2009.

Kind regards, Van & Rita (also on behalf of Reg & Isabel)

Hello sailor! (Submitted by Gavin Durell)

Every so often I get some unsolicited but very poetic proposals in my inbox. Some are in Janglish, Chinglish, Mandaringleish or whatever version of English you can think of. This tortured piece of "Bangalaprose" starts off well enough, but as the effort to punctuate becomes too great, it meanders to a close with a simply breathtaking final paragraph. Just try and read the last sentence aloud..... Wow - move over Shakespeare!

Fm: Kamrul Traders (Chittagong-Bangladesh)

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E-mail: **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid. / Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**

Ref No: KT.CR.01-01.2008 Mon-15-Sep-2008.

Good Day Sir,

Re: CREW MANNING FOR ALL TYPE OF WATER-CRAFTS FROM BANGLADESH.

While we are on this subject, we introduce ourselves that we have been handling total shipping services as crew Manning for all type of vessel/tankers, owners protecting agents and charter agent, local Representative of foreign ship owners. Well trained and experienced marine crews with requisite qualification in respective marine subject have been supplied to different shipowners/managers at comparatively convenient terms of wage and other benefit etc. keeping the users free from all anxiety of unrest.

Bangladesh crews are sober, obedient and sincere and loyal to their duties and also to the orders of their senior officers and easily understand and follow english command on board. As a result peaceful co-existence among all members on board are prevailed and hence risk-free peaceful voyage are maintained on board so long Bangladesh crews and officers served on any vessels or tankers.

It is relative to add here that maintenance cost and peaceful voyage are two vital factors to develop in shipping-trade. We offer our share of pains and toil in these two sectors by our sincere

participation in your crew manning services at dog-like watchful eyes round the clock alike mother's nursing baby in her arms and thereby reduce your direct cost for crew-maintenance and anxiety in this respect for peaceful voyage.

Salary scale for guidance for TANKER/CONTAINER vessel/BULK carrier.

Rank	Wages & Scale	Fixed Over Time
Oiler	USD\$ 450/=	Fixed Salary
A/B	USD\$ 450/=	Fixed Salary
G/S	USD\$ 400/=	Fixed Salary
Fitter	USD\$ 600/=	Fixed Salary
Electrician	USD\$ 700/=	Per Month
Pump Man	USD\$ 600/=	Per Month
Motor Man	USD\$ 600/=	Per Month
Busan	USD\$ 600/=	Fixed Salary
Cook	USD\$ 600/=	Fixed Salary
Ass/Cook	USD\$ 400/=	Fixed Salary
O/S	USD\$ 400/=	Fixed Salary
D/B	USD\$ 350/=	Fixed Salary
DK/Cadet	USD\$ 250/=	Fixed Salary
EG/Cadet	USD\$ 250/=	Fixed Salary
Wipper	USD\$ 350/=	Fixed Salary

Should you kindly choice our offer please ask for further details in this respect which to be reciprocated by return e-mail.

Yep, the pay scales are appalling but the tortured prose is definitely worth a "Wipper's" salary...

The Bathtub Test

During a visit to the mental asylum, a visitor asked the Director how do you determine whether or not a patient should be institutionalized.

'Well,' said the Director, 'we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the patient and ask him or her to empty the bathtub.'

'Oh, I understand,' said the visitor. 'A normal person would use the bucket because it's bigger than the spoon or the teacup.'

'No,' said the Director, 'A normal person would pull the plug! Do you want a bed near the window?'

NEWS FROM THE HOOLES – Rob Hoole (#2644; 1979)

Dear All, I am sitting at the Dar-es-Salaam Yacht Club overlooking the bay in 38 degrees with the languid colonial ceiling fans vainly trying to move the air around a little.

The passage from Nosy Be in Madagascar to the island of Mayotte and then on to Mtwara in Tanzania was very good with light winds and flat seas filled with life (caught some good Tuna and Spanish Mackerel). Spend a week in Mayotte and then sailed on to Tanzania. The African coast (as one must always anticipate in Africa) is a far harsher environment with big cumulus cloud build up in the pm sometimes leading to heavy rain squalls (accompanied at times with strong winds), making for tricky sailing at times. Travelled slowly up the coast via Kilwa (with fantastic 12 century ruins), Mafia Island with great diving (spectacular visibility and huge fish) to Dar. From here we head to Zanzibar and Pemba Islands before ending up in Tanga (Northern Tanzania) were we plan to spend Xmas and leave the boat before heading back to Cpt in mid Jan. Kind regards, Rob.

MEMORIES FROM THE PERSIAN GULF

OLD SALTS' TALES by Alastair Mackay (1366)

I was among those who mourned John Shone's untimely passing. When I heard that he was visiting S.A. I thought of contacting him to renew old ties made about 1950, in the Persian Gulf. During my service with British Tankers, from Apprentice to Chief Officer, there were several occasions when I was "shanghaied" to serve in their Eastern fleet; headquartered at Abadan, Iran,

at the head of the Persian Gulf, on the Shatt al Arab, that euphonious confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (meaning "Water of the Arab").

One such assignment was as mate on the steam tug "Herald", between August and November 1950. This vessel, quite elderly, had an iron hull, having been built after the turn of the century, to serve as a passenger tender to the White Star liners at Liverpool (the "Titanic" amongst them!). Before WW2 she was withdrawn and converted into a towage vessel, for Anglo-Iranian Petroleum, and transferred to the Persian Gulf. The officer's accommodation was impressive, with a grand staircase leading down into spacious air conditioned cabins (originally for the first class passengers!). Earlier I had met John (last seen in December 1944 at Simonstown - on Red Hill) at the Seamens Mission in Abadan, and again, later, while waiting for a ship to take him back to South Africa, on leave from Shell Tankers.

Intrigued by my job he came to dinner on the "Herald", and was grateful for the use of one of our spare cabins - for a cool night's sleep. Our master, Peter Piggford, seeing John's interest, asked him if he'd like to come on a delivery trip we were about to make - to which John enthusiastically agreed. He was expecting a long wait, in the hot and uncomfortable Mission, for his passage home.

We had to tow two large lighters, loaded with drums of diesel and lube oil, and paraffin and petrol in four gallon tins, from Abadan to Bahrain, at the Southern end of the Gulf, where one lighter was dropped off. Then we crossed over to the Eastern side of the Gulf, where the second lighter was delivered to Bushire. The trip was uneventful, with John keeping a watch, and, as I recall, we were escorted by shoals of porpoises in fine weather. It was September and the South-Easterly date-ripening wind was starting to blow up the Gulf towards the vast date plantations on either side of the Shatt al Arab. The N.W'ly wind was known as the Shamaal (often a sand storm) and the S.E'ly date-ripening, if my memory is correct, was the Suhaili.

Before we reached Bushire, new orders by radio instructed us to continue to Khor Musa. There we had to pick up a barge at Bandar Mashur for Abadan. John Shone was not greatly perturbed by his trip being lengthened by two or three days, but, when we eventually moored alongside at Abadan, it was a somewhat chastened John who told us, later, that the Shell Superintendent had been less than pleased with him, for missing an unexpected earlier sailing for S.A. I seem to remember that within the week John went off on the ship that was originally planned to take him. I suppose that he would have remembered that episode in his life?

Amongst the colourful group of mariners working in the Gulf, the doyens of the tug masters were George Burton on "Nirumand" and Freddie Jones on "Daneshmand"; the two newest tugs. Summer temperatures in Abadan soared into the 120° Fahrenheit, and these two portly gentlemen would be seen, behind the engine telegraphs (all gleaming brasswork), dressed like Roman senators in their togas of large white bath-towels, on the bridges of their craft. The tugs were kept immaculately; the old adage about eating one's lunch off the engine-room floor plates was as true there as anywhere! Junior officers like myself dressed in conventional tropical rig, and I could stand my shirt upright on my cabin deck, after taking it off, starched into an outline of my body with the dried salt from the sweat I had been drenched in!

In my day the tanker loading jetties were numbered from 10 to 26 (going downstream from the refinery) and between 1 and 9 were three cargo berths and various structures with patent cranes and conveyor belts for handling drums, cases and tins. Across the river a line of mooring buoys flanked the Iraqi bank, and a fleet of launches attended the ships at anchorage or moorings. The river was broad enough, at Abadan, for the biggest tankers to be turned off their berth, and sail downstream. These were the American, wartime built, T2 turbo-electric tankers of 16,000 tons dwt., 523 feet overall. The whole area below Basra - where the Tigris and Euphrates joined - downstream to the mouth, was a necklace of channels and waterways through date palm plantations originating thousands of years ago. I had an instructive visit to a primitive date-packing go down, while dates were being packed, during an autumn sojourn in Abadan. Communities of Marsh Arabs lived among the date plantations, where the chief mode of transport was on canoes

and motorised dhows. The weather could become quite cold in winter, and frost and ice sometimes appeared on the moorings of ships at the buoys in January.

Apart from my spell of duty on "Herald", I also worked on "Nirumand" and "Daneshmand" as mate, which gave me some insights and experience to bring to the S.A. Harbour Service. Fog was another weather condition we contended with on the river, where it could become really thick! I particularly remember returning from a trip to Bandar Shahpur with George Burton on "Nirumand", and arriving at Abadan in dense fog, with the visibility worsened by it being after sunset. George had decided to hang off the port, and lie at a mooring buoy, until morning, when we would berth at a jetty. Feeling our way very slowly along the Iraqi bank, we had cleared the shipping at anchor, and all hands were peering through the fog, looking for the first buoy to appear. Suddenly, we saw the low curved shape, hardly visible above the river surface, and George - literally hanging over the bridge rail - called to the Serang to put the "jumper" on the buoy and to be quick about it. The "jumper" was the admi (deckhand) who jumped onto the buoy with a wire rope which he would rove through the shackle and pass back to the tug. My attention was divided by my need to complete the voyage report, but became aware of a conflicting hub-bub of loud voices. George was berating the Serang for delaying the job, and from the focs'le head I could hear the shrill voice of the Serang protesting about something not being right.

The tide reached Abadan, but not strongly enough to stop the river flowing, and it was just after high water, so it wasn't easy for George to keep the tug close up to the buoy. The fog was also making it difficult to see the buoy, and for a man who usually had a short fuse, George had been tried enough! In exasperation he called to me to "Get down on the foredeck, and see why the ----- -- hadn't got the ----- onto the -----!"

I quickly went down and confronted an agitated Serang, who was calling on all his deities to witness the madness of the Malim Sahibs! Peering over the bowmat, next to the "jumper" who was shivering nervously and holding onto the bulwark plating, I was dumfounded to see that a dead water buffalo had caught its horn on our bow stem plate. Having been dead for some time it had swollen with putrefying internal gases, and so it loomed quite large on the river surface! The fog had done the rest!

I quickly instructed the Serang to get a boathook and dislodge the body, at the same time calling up to the bridge to advise an incandescent tug master. We had to move on and find another buoy! This we did, and I suspect that George needed triple nightcaps to restore his equanimity before we retired to bed that night!

Dhows of all shapes and sizes were to be found all over the Gulf, most sailing with cargoes from the past, such as dates, carpets, etc., and small fishing craft also made a living. A little old cargo ship, "Tarraqi", run by an ebullient Romanian known as 'Tarraqi George' took case oil, and anything else, to all the inaccessible Inlets. 'Tarraqi George' would hold the floor, in the bar at the Mission, with amusing stories of his close shaves with disaster, after a return trip. In 1948 I was posted as second mate to "Empire Tesella", a small tanker of about 1000 tons taking refined products for the increasing post-war demand, from Basra in the North to Bahrain and other Southern ports. I found an enterprising band of mariners there!

The officers - all from U.K. while the crew came from India - operated a syndicate, with the intention of saving their pay, and avoid spending it on booze, which was the downfall of so many. In order to join the syndicate I had to contribute four cheques, each of GBP5, drawn on my bank in London. The master, Captain Hartnell, kept an eye on the money exchange, because he started each tranch of funds at Kuwait. Pounds drawn at Kuwait were used to buy Indian Rupees at the bazaar, and then, further down the Gulf, at Bahrain, the rupees were used to buy Persian Rials. "Tesella" made a circuit of the Gulf about once a month, and on our return to Abadan the rials were changed into Pounds. Each round trip saw a profit of ten shillings in the pound.

Another project was trading American haberdashery: Arrow shirts and Fifth Ave. trilby's, were amongst the items obtained from Gray Mackenzie's trading store at Kuwait. These desirable clothes virtually doubled in price when they were acquired by the snappy dressers at other ports! Other trading items were liquor, which included Persian vodka "Makhsous", made from potato

peels and produced at discreet stills upcountry - far from disturbing sensibilities in a strictly Shiite Moslem society!

Our Northern-most port was Basra, where the Gymkhana Club was our usual off-duty visiting place. The intriguing "Suleiman's House of Rosy Hours", was not what one might assume! The rosy hours were induced by the fragrant fumes of the hookah or hubble-bubble pipe, and not the ministrations of dancing girls! Kuwait old harbour was where one could watch dhows being built - an activity that has continued unceasing for literally thousands of years - dhows would load at the nearby quay where a line of donkeys would be trotting up one gangway with full goatskins, and down another, after filling the earthenware 'tunb' water tank lashed to the mast. A curious place was the unfinished railway platform at Kuwait - Lawrence of Arabia having blown up the Germano/Turkish railway to Damascus - where the camel caravans completed their loading before setting off across the desert.

I left "Empire Tesella" after a six month stay - not altogether sure that I wanted to leave, but I needed to return to London to sit my second mate's certificate exams. These exams became due in 1949, and we studied at King Edward VII nautical college in Limehouse, sitting the exams at the old Board of Trade offices behind Tower Hill. After I had been home a couple of weeks a phone call from Barclay's Bank, Earl's Court Road, summoned me to see the manager. My four syndicate cheques were, as it were, holding centre-stage in the middle of his desk, when I had been ushered in. If there was ever an exhibition of cheques these would have been showpieces! Each cheque displayed a story of negotiating from bazaar to bazaar; the one that had gone furthest, via Damascus to Istanbul!, each transaction involving an endorsement in flowing Arabic script, covering the paper in beautiful calligraphic patterns.

Regrettably the inherent beauty of these cheques was quite lost on the bank manager. At one stage, while describing my villainous contravention of the Bank of England's exchange regulations, he became quite emotional depicting my passage through the Old Bailey to be cast into durance vile; should I ever perpetrate this again! At the time I thought of appealing on the grounds of the sterling characters of my fellow officers; but having been over the subject of the syndicate, bringing it up seemed to make him more frenzied; so I said no more.

Maritime Trivia – if you can believe it!

Here is some info on the USS Constitution that might interest you....

One of the early traditions of the Navy is pretty well illustrated by the USS Constitution's famous cruise during the War of 1812. She set sail in August with a complement of 475 officers and men on board, and the following supplies:

48,000 gallons of fresh water; 7,400 cannon shots; 11,000 pounds of black powder; and
79,400 GALLONS OF RUM.

Upon arriving in Jamaica on October 6th, she took on:

826 pounds of flour; 69,300 GALLONS OF RUM

She then headed for the Azores where she took on:

550 tons of beef; 64,000 GALLONS OF PORTUGUESE WINE

On November 13th she set sail for England. In the ensuing days she defeated five British men of war and sank twelve British merchant ships,

SALVAGING ONLY THEIR RUM.

By January 27th her powder and shot were exhausted. Nonetheless, she made a raid on the Firth of Clyde. Her landing party captured a whiskey distillery and brought about

40,000 GALLONS OF WHISKEY back to the ship.

She then headed home.

She made port in Boston on February 23rd with

NO cannon shot, NO powder, NO food, NO rum, NO whiskey, and NO wine,
but with 48,000 GALLONS OF STAGNANT WATER!

And that is a true story. Need I say more!