

News of the BISN company, its ships and staff, its history and *histoires*, of ships and sealing wax, nautical natters, maritime miscellanies and swinging of lanterns

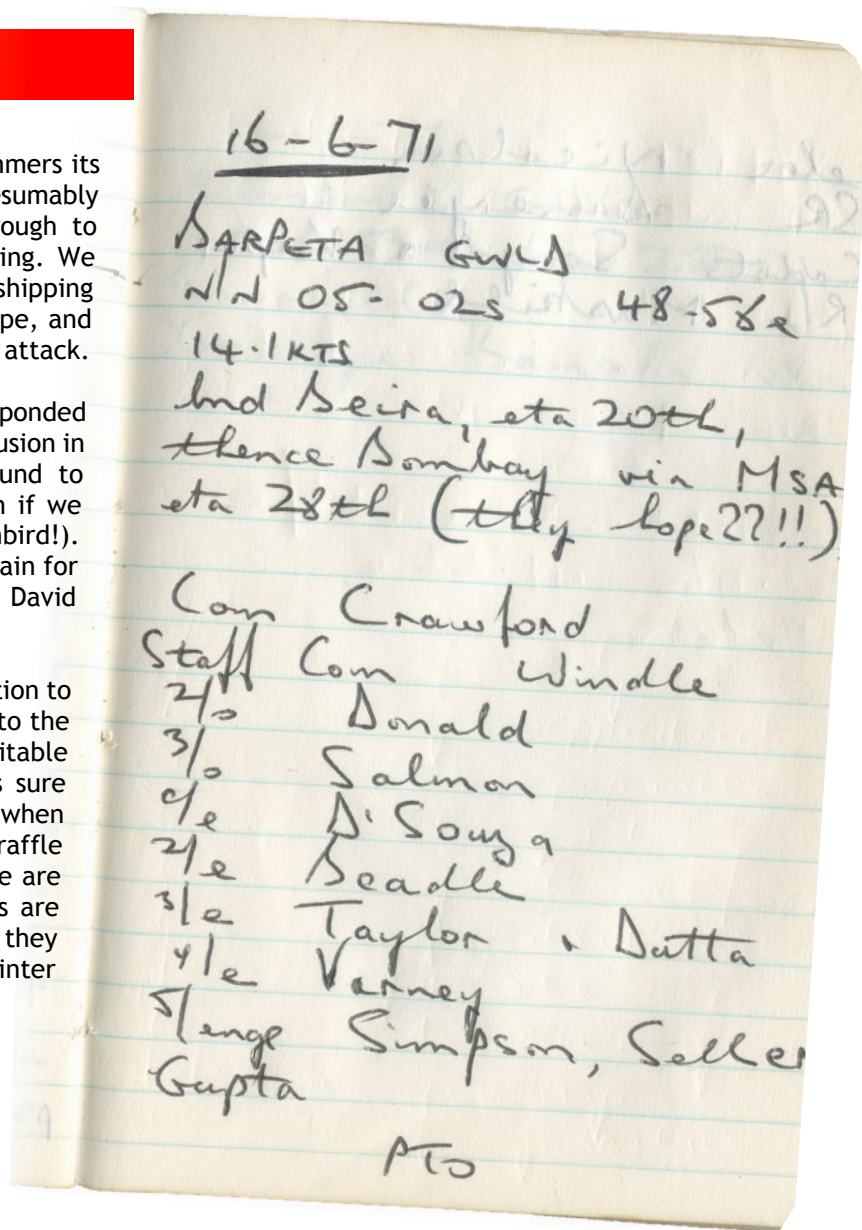
## FROM THE EDITOR...

As the northern hemisphere stutters and stammers its way through another uncertain summer (Presumably the southern half in sweltering its way through to midwinter), we offer you a little light reading. We conclude the history of the early years of our shipping company, welcome the return of a curry recipe, and view the sad aftermath of a wartime bombing attack.

Many thanks to all the readers who have responded by sending in articles and photographs for inclusion in "... calling BI". We will eventually get around to selecting all of these, we promise you, even if we have to edit them a little (that means you, Linbird!). In this issue, we thank David Hammond yet again for his crew list, Rhod McNeill, Mike Bowman, David Mitchell, *et al.*

We would also unashamedly draw your attention to the last page. We have occasionally referred to the plight of modern seafarers and the charitable efforts made on their behalf. Your editor is sure that the good BI folk are no less than the best when it comes to consider others. We are holding a raffle to boost the funds of a marine charity and we are sure you will want to participate. The prizes are redolent with BI history and if nothing else, they will provide a good talking point in the winter evenings ahead.

Enjoy your read!



## FROM THE NAUTICAL INSTITUTE...

The Nautical Institute has published a new book on seamanship detailing new advances in safety equipment, survival procedures and best practice. The Admiralty Manual of Seamanship is another

in the series published by the NI on behalf of the Royal Navy. The book and CD are aimed at both merchant and naval training schools.

The Admiralty Manuals are considered authoritative on seamanship, navigation, firefighting and survival. The new edition of The Admiralty Manual of Seamanship has been brought up to date by author Vic Vance. This is the 10th edition and its pedigree stretches back to 1908.

The book is expected to be used as a textbook and reference work for shipping companies, individual ships and all nautical colleges; it is closely aligned with the UK's Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) examination syllabuses and is used by the MCA as a standard reference.

The 1000-page manual is split between a 700 page book and a CD containing all chapters. It is comprehensive in content and lavishly illustrated with many hundreds of high quality colour graphics and photographs. It covers sea terminology, anchors, cables and buoywork, rigging and deck gear, towing, boats, replenishment at sea, sea survival, towed bodies and their deployment and recovery, seamanship organisation, maintenance and helmsmanship.

The Admiralty Manual of Seamanship, Price £95; ISBN: 978 1 906915 01 8; <http://www.nautinst.org>

To send in your views, notes, photos, brickbats or spare gold bars, please click on any "...callingBI" logo

## FROM THE HISTORY BOOKS...

*We conclude the early history of the British India Steam Navigation Company taken from the Geographical Review of March 1874.*

Many of the intelligent and industrious natives of India are settled at the ports on the East African coast. Trade is increasing; the slave trade has received its death blow and those who have been engaged in it are

devoting their attention and capital to a more healthy and legitimate commerce. Recently, at the desire of the French Government, the Company has undertaken to carry a mail every four weeks to the French colonies of Mayotte and Nossi Be and the latter being situated close to Madagascar, that island will

undoubtedly be brought within the range of communication; and in the future this island and the ports of East Africa will doubtless yield a fair return to the Company. The latest important service which the Company has been enabled to render to the Government is in connection with the famine in Bengal. The transport of the vast quantities of rice which have necessarily to be imported from Burma and elsewhere is one of so great and pressing importance that the opportunity thus afforded to raise freight to exorbitant rates might have been made use of. We understand the British India Steam Navigation Company spontaneously offered to convey by the regular weekly steamers any supplies of Government rice at a rate barely sufficient to cover the cost of working the steamers; and it also offered to provide extra tonnage, at a fixed rate much lower than any other vessels, sailing or otherwise, to undertake the transport. This action on the part of the Company enables the Government to secure the remaining tonnage required at a fair market rate.

In 1863, proposals were made to the Directors by the Dutch East India Government to take up the mail service of those islands, for which a liberal subsidy had been granted by their Government for a period of ten years, dating from 1866. One of the essential conditions under which the subsidy was granted was that the steamers should carry the Dutch flag. This could not be arranged under the circumstances that the whole of the proprietors and Directors were British subjects; a new Company was therefore formed, under the title of the Netherlands India Steam Navigation Company, with practically the same board of Directors and to a great extent the same body of proprietors. This Company commenced operations in 1866 and has but lately had its contract renewed for a further period of fifteen years dating from 1876. It now possesses a fleet of 23 steamers aggregating 20,000 tons, trading from Java to the different ports in the Eastern Archipelago. At the present time six of its steamers are engaged by the Dutch Government as



Nerbudda off the beach at Zanzibar

(from the Ambrose Greenway collection)

transports to the Achin expedition. When released from this employment, the Company will be in a position to commence a new service between Java and the Australian colonies, for which a contract has been already entered into.

Between this Company and the British India Steam Navigation Company there exists an arrangement for the interchange of traffic at Singapore, by which the various ports in the Dutch East Indies are brought into direct communication with the Indian and Burma ports. It is also worthy of mention that under arrangements which have been entered into by both these companies and the principal lines of steamers from Europe, cargo and passengers may be booked through from the chief ports of the United Kingdom and the Continent.

Having thus traced the growth of the British India Steam Navigation Company from its foundation up to the present time, it may be useful to consider the causes which have contributed to its success. In the first place we must credit the Directors not only with having conducted its affairs with consummate care and ability, but also with the possession of powers of organisation of no common kind.

It is moreover a proof of the beneficial influence of the British rule that commerce should have so rapidly sprung into existence in the comparatively unknown places that were brought to light by the Company's steamers; and that the British flag should have been respected in ports which were previously known only as the haunts of pirates and slavers.

There is but one remark further that we have to make; with the evidence before us of what has been done in the development of steam communication by sea, the knowledge that water carriage is much cheaper than rail transport and the certainty that from year to year this traffic will progress if it only has fair play, it seems to us that the project for constructing lines of railway running parallel to the Coast can never be realised with hope of success. The energies of India will be sufficiently taxed for many years in providing the necessary roads, canals and railways in the interior. On the coast, the Public Works Department will be best employed in improving the harbours and providing the communication to them from and to the interior.



Sir William MacKinnon, Chairman 1857-1893



Many thanks to Rhod McNeill for contributing this article



## FROM THE GULF OF MEXICO...

It may be in bad taste, but as the oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico enters its second month with little or no sign of abating, leading internet betting outfit Paddy Power are taking bets on the first species to become extinct as a direct result of the spill.

Top of the bookies list at odds of 4/5 is the already critically endangered Kemp's Ridley Turtle. In what must be considered spectacularly bad luck, this particular species of turtle migrates to the Gulf of Mexico at this exact time of year.

Paddy Power said, "We hope this betting will highlight the environmental catastrophe unfolding right now as a result of the BP oil spill. It's a sure bet we'll lose some marine species, the only question is which ones".

The full list of runners and swimmers to become extinct as a result of the BP oil spill are:

4/5	Kemp's Ridley Turtle
6/4	Bluefin Tuna
8/1	Leatherback Sea Turtle
8/1	Brown Pelicans
12/1	Loggerhead Turtle
16/1	Sperm Whale
16/1	Blue Whale
20/1	Gulf Sturgeon
20/1	Smalltooth Sawfish
20/1	Elkhorn Coral

After our pictures of the albatross chicks in our last issue, your Editor is obviously feeling in crusading mode at the moment!



## FROM THE CREWING DEPT...

Filipino seafarers reportedly sent home a record \$888mn in 2010's first quarter, demonstrating their sheer numbers on foreign-owned ships.

The fat payments home represented an increase of 11% from a year ago, the Philippine Star newspaper reported recently. The money sent home by seafarers outpaced the 6% growth in remittances by land-based workers to their families, the Star noted. In 2009, the seafarers sent back a record \$3.4bn, up 12% from 2008, the Business Mirror online business site reported.



## FROM THE GUESSING GAME...

This must be the easiest "Where are we now" competition that we have ever carried, so there's no excuse for not sending in your answers to "[...calling BI](#)" today! Thanks to Tony Lister for this picture, which brought back memories of shivering nights in the fo'c's'le head for your Editor.



# FROM THE WAR RECORDS...



It's strange, isn't it, Dear Reader, how stories evolve? A few months ago, someone got in touch with Sue Spence about the BI War Memorial at UK's national Arboretum. She in turn, sent the story onto your Editor, who in his turn asked John Prescott to take some photographs of it for this newsletter and the BI website. On the original (non-BI) correspondent's website, was an observation about one of the ladies listed on it, one Martha Alice Elcoat. We discovered that she sailed on the *Domala*, which was sunk in the English Channel in March 1940. We reported on this in our last issue.

No sooner had we done so when up came an auction on Ebay for the cutting you see here. Our thanks to the auction winner for sharing it with us.



SET ABLAZE IN TWENTY MINUTES  
 Still burning after the merciless attack, the *Domala* as seen from a naval vessel in the Channel. The aeroplane circling round the vessel is searching for survivors who may have escaped from the liner.



## FROM THE WAR RECORDS (contd) ...



These pictures show some of the damage done to the *Domala* by the bombing and subsequent fire. Her master was Capt W A Fitt. She was rebuilt and eventually run by the Bank Line as *Empire Attendant*, (bottom picture). She was torpedoed and sank with all 59 crew off the Canary Islands in July 1942.



Pictures from the collection of DJM, with thanks



# B-I Menu

## Madras Beef Curry

**Preparation Time:** 10-15 minutes

**Total Cooking Time:** 1 hour (plus 20 minutes if the meat is tough)

**Serves:** 3/4

### Ingredients

1 lb (450g) lean beef/stewing steak, cubed.

1 tbs ground coriander

1 tsp. ground tumeric

1 large onion, thinly sliced.

1 fat clove of garlic, finely chopped or crushed.

Half a tsp. ground cumin seed.

3 fresh chopped and seeded chillis or a half tsp of chilli powder.

A quarter to half teaspoon of each of the following :ground fenu-greek seed, ground black peppercorns and ground black or yellow mustard seeds.

2 tbs of tamarind infusion (a thumb sized ball of tamarind paste, soaked in half a cup of hot water and strained) or the same quantity of a 50-50 malt vinegar and water mixture.

### Method

Mix all the spices with the tamarind juice or vinegar mix and make a paste. Gently fry the onion and the garlic for 3-4 minutes until golden (not brown!) add spice paste and gently fry for another 3 minutes, add the cubed beef and stir until a thick gravy forms then add just under half a pint (280 ml) of cold water and simmer in a covered pan until the beef is tender. You can add half a cup of thin coconut milk at the end if you like, letting the pot simmer for another 4-5 minutes uncovered before serving.  
Add salt to taste.

Many thanks to Mike Bowman for the latest in our series of Good BI Curries. Mike says it was served onboard "CHAKLA" on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1965. The alternatives on that day were; "Spaghetti Boulanaise" (honest!) or Tripe and Onions. Your Editor knows what he would have chosen!

## FROM THE SOCIAL DIARY...

It seems the great social whirl is well underway. The Essex & Suffolk band of brothers have already whiled away a few hours at the Thatchers Arms. Straight away your Editor wishes to repudiate any malicious whisperings that the plethora of casks at that establishment's Beer Festival had any bearing on the fact that he completely forgot to take any photos of the event! Amongst those attending were Tony Boddy (1953-62), Lyndon (1961- 78) and Rita Johnson, John King 1953-72, Frank and Sandra Lawlor - all the way from Perth, Australia!, Peter Motion, John and Wendy Prescott, John and Eunice Rees, Dick and Jenny Turner and Mike Wheeler. A goodly crowd, who plainly enjoyed the occasion.

Next on the list of mini-reunions is the Great Manchester Meet at Waxy O'Connors on **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June**. Details from [james.slater@zen.co.uk](mailto:james.slater@zen.co.uk) if you are coming and/or need more information.

We are pleased to advertise a goodly Australian bash in Brisbane. George Preston writes to say that "A few of us are getting together for a curry lunch in Brisbane with our memsahibs. We would be delighted to see other ex BI people and partners for a convivial get together and chat over old times. If you think can make it please let Tom Gardiner or myself know to ensure a suitably sized table. The venue will be the "Tastes of India" restaurant at South Bank, Brisbane on **Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June** at 1.00 pm. George & Ruth Preston can be contacted via email on [george.preston@bigpond.com](mailto:george.preston@bigpond.com)



And, of course, the biggest of all will be the BI Reunion in Newcastle in October. Details from Sue Spence - and our next page is relevant to that event as well! See you there!

So no excuses for not enjoying yourself in good BI fashion. If you are planning a similar event or whatever, "...calling BI" will of course publicise it for you.

## FROM THE SUBSCRIPTIONS DEPT...

Our office 'Man Friday', Tracey, has popped her head around the door to say hello to our latest subscribers. A big welcome therefore to John King, Peter Motion,

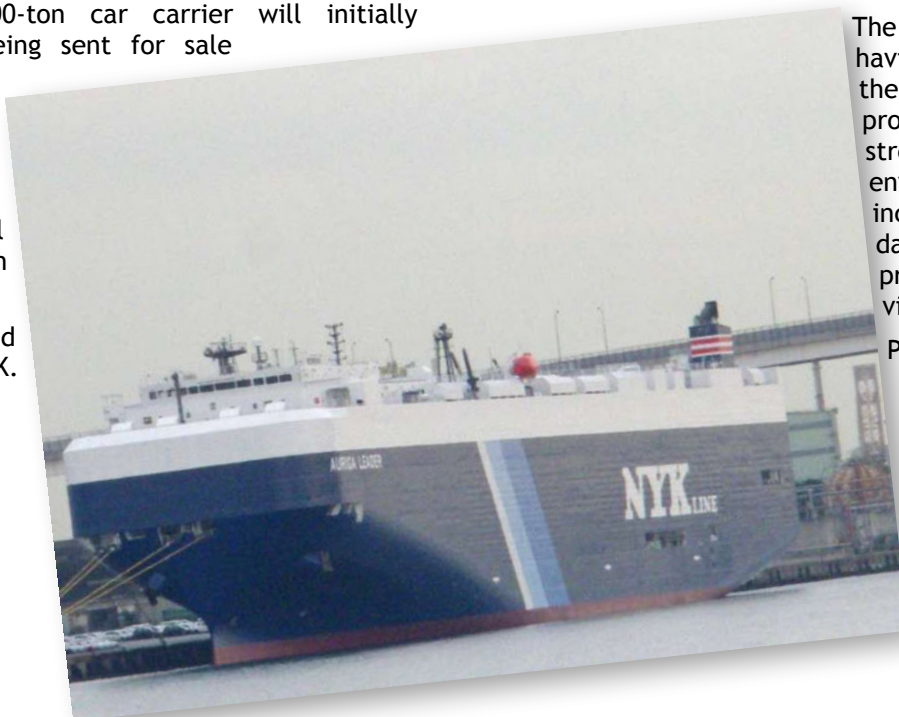
Robert Kilburn, Richard Bracher, all from UK, Fred Waddington from France and George Preston in Australia. By the way, several readers have been intrigued by this poor, benighted character, Tracey. They have demanded photographs and the like. Please, please, there are gentle souls out there. They should be left in peace.

## FROM THE WORLD OF TECHNOLOGY ...

Completed in late 2008, the *Auriga Leader* is the world's first cargo ship to be partially propelled by solar power. The 656-foot, 60,000-ton car carrier will initially transport vehicles being sent for sale overseas by Japan's top automaker, Toyota Motor Corp, and harness the energy of the sun in order to reduce fuel costs and cut carbon emissions.

The vessel, developed by Nippon Yusen K.K.

and Nippon Oil Corp., is capable of generating 10% of the energy used while the ship is docked with its 328 solar panels on the top deck. Nippon Yusen has set a goal of halving its fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions by 2010.



The companies hope having the panels on the carrier will protect them from the stresses of the ship's environment, including salt-water damage, wind pressure and vibrations.

Pretty she is not.



# Matiana jigsaw raffle in aid of Seamens' charities



The staff at "...calling BI" are very pleased to offer this old BI jigsaw puzzle and related handbook for the 1922 built Matiana as a raffle prize to help a seamen's charity.

The going rate for these BI jigsaws, when they turn up, is between £25/£50 unless luck is on your side and the item is missed by a serious bidder in auction ... and they don't turn up very often! Chad Valley made a series of four for the BI, including this one of "Matiana and Dwarka" by artist James Greig dating from 1933. It has to be said that the box containing the jigsaw is decidedly tatty, but all the pieces are pristine and present.

The raffle will be drawn at the BI reunion in Newcastle at the beginning of October. To ensure the widest possible participation, raffle tickets are available from [callingbi@biship.com](mailto:callingbi@biship.com). Payment can be made by cheque at only £2 each (a mailing address will be given in response to your e-mail requests) or via PayPal at £2.50 each (to cover PayPal transaction costs) to e-mail address [eljay01787-ebay@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:eljay01787-ebay@yahoo.co.uk). You can even pay cash if you happen upon the "...calling BI" editor in Rick's Bar or some other such low dive. You can buy as many tickets as you like! Both items will be separate prizes.

All money raised will be donated to a nautical charity in the name of the ...calling BI newsletter.

Please be generous and open hearted!

