



Issue no: 2

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News of British India, its ships and staff, the history and 'histoires', of ships and sealing wax, nautical matters and a miscellany of maritime musings

available free of charge by application to [callingBI@biship.com](mailto:callingBI@biship.com)

## FROM THE EDITOR

Your editor, perhaps chary of public reaction after the first issue of **...callingBI**, took himself off to Crete, the land of happy Greeks and a place he's not been to since he was on Nevasa, amidst breaking mooring ropes, a strong off-shore wind and waiting for three passengers who were late back (does any reader remember this? Can you date it?).

Imagine his pleasure, therefore, on his return to find lots of you wanting to read more of his



ramblings, a good few of whom were old shipmates. Thanks, too, to those who sent in pictures of Bankura - much appreciated. Sadly, some of these old friends chose to remember

various debts owed by him, mainly beers lost in solo whist games. One ex-purser even claimed 35 escudos for mail posted in Lisbon. Ridiculous! Your editor has just lately returned from the UK reunion at Runnymede where, no doubt, his pockets were somewhat depleted in paying off his debts but enjoying meeting up with all and sundry. Good luck, too, to those of you going to Fremantle and Glasgow. Long may your lanterns swing!

A question some of you have posed is the frequency of **...callingBI**. That, dear reader, largely depends on you. We'll send it out as soon as we have three or four pages of content, but sooner if there are urgent requests for info or news that will not keep. Or photos that lose immediacy. The more you write, the more the newsletter will hit your in boxes.

A goodly issue this one and thanks to "The Git", an ex-Marconi sahib who's travelled many roads with your editor literally and figuratively. He claims to have found the poem later in these pages hidden under the Kop at Liverpool FC's Anfield ground. Enjoy!

**And later in this issue....**

**FROM THE REUNION...**

**FROM THE NEWS...**

**FROM THE ALBUM...**



As others will testify I'm sure, the London reunion was a great success, thanks largely and once again to the efforts and hard work of Sue and John Spence, featured here in our two main pictures. Sue reminded me this was the 10th major reunion in UK, the first being at Lyndhurst in Hampshire in 1990. It was a pleasure to greet so many old friends, some of whom even bought your Editor a drink! Amongst the new ones, I enjoyed meeting Neil Sealey and his family from the Bahamas and Tony Lister, who has an encyclopedia of photos and articles about his time as a junior engineer on Nevasa, Uganda and Woodara - some of which we will feature in forthcoming issues of "...calling BI".

Due to a number of coincidental factors, the reunion seemed to take on a Nevasa theme. Hans-Peter Lemcke-Braselmann, the owner of Nevasa's bell, was present, bringing it from his home in Germany. And Malcolm Paget brought a large inscribed brass plate from Nevasa's engine room. Advantage was taken of the presence of these two objects to have a Nevasa photo-call after dinner. I think more than 50 people gathered for the photo (which you can see on the "from the album" page) - getting on for a third of the 180 present.

To summon everyone to dinner, Doug Brodie and Ian Denholm (the most senior Nevasa hands at the Reunion - having joined the ship when new in 1956) rang seven bells - correctly, being 1930hrs. David Kirchin was reckoned to be the most junior hand (the demolition voyage to Taiwan, 1975) and had his chance to ring the bell after dinner.

Tony Gray (ex R/O), seen below with John Simkins, told a few good stories about his time on the ship, mercifully leaving out any reference to your Editor's exploits. There was also a replay of a recording supposedly made by some officers during that scrapping voyage to Taiwan, when the ship was allegedly attacked by pirates in or near Indonesian waters. There seems to be some dispute about how or even whether this attack actually happened! It would be very interesting to hear if anyone in the group has any recall or original documentary evidence of the incident.

Also featured in these photos are Nigel and Glenna Hastings, probably winning the prize for travelling the furthest, living in Vancouver. More photos will be posted on the BI Staff website. It was a great weekend on the riverbank at Runnymede, not in any way dampened by the rain....thank you Sue and John - simply terrific.

PS the lamb curry was superb!!



with thanks to John Prescott



# FROM THE NEWS....

The BBC has started an exciting project where they track a container around the world for 12 months to illustrate the importance of shipping (and in particular the container trade) for world trade and globalisation. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in\\_depth/business/2008/the\\_box/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/business/2008/the_box/default.stm)

There has been the odd experiment with remote-controlled ships but to date nobody has successfully operated ships without people. People are an investment, and shouldn't be regarded as a cost; they are huge contributors to the success of a voyage and should be treated as such. Issue No. 18 of Alert! the International Maritime Human Element Bulletin gets down to brass tacks on the issue of people, pointing out quite bluntly: "look after your people ...and they will look after you."

The Alert! Project -- launched in October 2003 -- is a campaign to improve the awareness of the human element in the maritime industry. This is a Nautical Institute project, sponsored by Lloyd's Register Educational Trust. For further information go to <http://www.he-alert.org>.

A wonderful website of various maritime related disasters exists at Virtual Image Gallery <http://visual-image-gallery.blogspot.com>; the publishers have recently launched a new picture and video weblog which is a gallery of images relating to the risks of transport and shipping. The publishers welcome pictures, videos and images relating to casualties, near casualties and anything else related to the industry. Send your images to [Sam.ignarski@gmail.com](mailto:Sam.ignarski@gmail.com)

And if you have ever wondered how they put up those big windmill generators, go to <http://www.vertical.net.au/stories.php?id=3116>

## Harmful paint systems outlawed

AN international convention banning the use of organotins and other harmful substances in anti-fouling paints applied on ships' hulls entered force on September 17, 2008. Under the convention, ships are not permitted to apply or re-apply organotin compounds which act as biocides in their anti-fouling systems; ships either shall not carry such compounds on their hulls or external parts or surface or, in the case of ships that already carry such compounds on their hulls, will have to apply a coating that forms a barrier to prevent them leaching from the underlying non-compliant anti-fouling systems.

The convention also establishes a mechanism to evaluate and assess other anti-fouling systems and prevent the potential future use of other harmful substances in these systems. <http://www.imo.org>

SHIP operating costs surged over 11% last year, mainly as a consequence of higher crew costs, according to shipping accountant Moore Stephens.

Their container ship index saw the largest overall increase of 18% per cent, mainly driven by higher crew costs in all three container ship types covered.

The tanker index has increased by 11.1% on a year-on-year basis, while the bulker index has seen a smaller increase this year of 7.4%.

Moore Stephens partner Richard Greiner says, "Container ships saw crew wages rise an average of 20% this year, and the average crew wage rise over all ships was over 10%"

Owners continued to spend more on repairs and maintenance, with costs in that category going up an average of 12%, although there was significant variation across vessel types. Insurance also increased by around 7%, down on last year's increase.

<http://www.moorestephens.co.uk>

The UN Security Council is next week expected to consider a resolution proposed by France calling on all countries with a stake in maritime safety to send military ships and aircraft to fight piracy off the coast of Somalia.

The Associated Press says it has seen a draft of the resolution which would also call on ships and planes to use "the necessary means" to stop acts of piracy. The volume of recent Gulf of Aden piracy has allowed the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) to determine factors that represent maximum risk of becoming a hijack victim. Of these, vessel speed at time of attack and time of day are the most significant. Analysis over a two month reporting period included 21 incidents representing both firing incidents and vessel seizure.

The Singapore Shipping Association (SSA) President, Mr S. S. Teo said, "There is an urgent need for the international community, especially through the International Maritime Organisation and the United Nations to find ways to deploy the required level of military effort needed to re-establish stability in the Gulf of Aden."

Quick quiz question: on what BI ship did James Bond sail? Answers to ...[callingBI@Bishop.com](mailto:callingBI@Bishop.com) to win fabulous prizes ..well, a vague promise by the Editor to pay for a drink sometime!

**Advance Notice:** A lunchtime gathering of BI people is being planned for the north Essex/south Suffolk area of UK. All former BI staff - whether living in the area or not - and their partners will be most welcome. We hope the gathering will happen this side of Christmas and we shall try to arrange a pleasant location with good beer and food on hand. Full details will be notified on the BShip site and within the online BI group.

Chindwara's rugby team in Australia, 1969, thanks to David Hammond. How many can you recognise? Email us to win the usual array of glittering prizes...



The Nevasa crew taken at the Runnymede reunion October 2008



Albert Roberts of Glasgow, Queensland State, a ship no dad helped to build, provided the name of my first reaction.  
Left: The ship is over at Fairfield's, the shipyard where Dad and Martin worked. The water level is in substance Chelsea.  
Right: Glasgow moment seen: a war time of Neptune Seven in 1942 when I was still a toddler.

Thanks to Tony Lister pointing out the importance of Nevasa to modern football; this pic is from Alec Ferguson's autobiography (are they rushing to watch his Manchester United team on the telly or to give their wives the weekly wage packet?)



Roger Northcote said he liked this pic of mine and that you should see it too...

Colombo Anchorage  
The exotic East bids us welcome  
turning on our steel fulcrum  
here we lie cargo in hold  
lying at anchor doing as told  
company policy we have no choice  
by letter, telegram, or even voice  
Home Line, hurrah! is their boast,  
we may as well be on the Coast,  
three months gone and still three more.  
Christ, this ship is horrid  
GIT.