



News of the BSN 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...

blasts from the past and a roundup of articles about a hero.

As news breaks about the release of some hostages by Somali pirates, it is fitting to remember that this month marks the 26th anniversary of the *Achille Lauro* cruise ship hijacking. Four members of the Palestine Liberation Front commandeered the ship en route from Alexandria to Port Said as a means to force the Israeli government to release 50 imprisoned Palestinians. In an effort to move the implacable Israelis, the terrorists killed disabled American tourist, Leon Klinghoffer and threw his body overboard. The terrorists eventually surrendered to the Egyptians, put on a flight to Tunis, but US jets forced it to land in Italy. Their leader, Abu Abbas, was eventually allowed to depart.

Another anniversary closer to our hearts is also marked this month. It is 40 years ago since 127 companies of the P&O group were structured into five main divisions following the McKinsey management proposals. Hello Bulk Shipping, General Cargo Shipping, Passenger Shipping, European and Air Transport and General Holdings. Goodbye, British India Steam Navigation Company.

We end with a quartet of people seeking contacts. First up is Nigel March from the UK, who is trying to make contact with people who sailed with his late stepfather Peter Louis Reynolds, who joined BI as a cadet in 1944. He served on *Canara*, *Uganda*, *Chilka*, and possibly *Kampala*. Next up is Colin Brittain, also of UK. He is looking for anybody who has any link or knowledge of the loss of the *Rohilla*. He is working with the BBC to include this tragedy in the next series of their popular Coast programmes. Thirdly, Terry Gardner in Canada wants to contact old shipmates from the *Okhla* from September 1958 to January 1961. In particular, Terry wants to find Ken Farmer (2/E O), Ian Winton (4/E O), George Bowie (5/E O), John Grimshaw (3/O), Brian Archer and Bob Palmer, (both cadets) and Pete D'Souza (3/E O). And finally, our friends from the P&O Heritage museum are keen to locate Gary Bateson, who starred in a film "Where in the World", shot on *Nevasa* in 1972. Can anybody help?

Late Breaking news: The proposed Christmas partying scheme at UK's Merchant Navy Memorial has now been withdrawn. See the Bship message board.

The sharp eyed amongst you may notice a slight layout change in this month's newsletter. After requests from some of our readership, for this issue we have dispensed with our normal two column layout as an experiment in order to make it easier to read on a computer screen. Do you like the change, please let us know. Your editor is busy brushing up his uniform, relearning his Rules of the Road as he prepares to spend a week on the water... albeit on a narrowboat on one of Britain's lovely canals. Aha, me hearties!

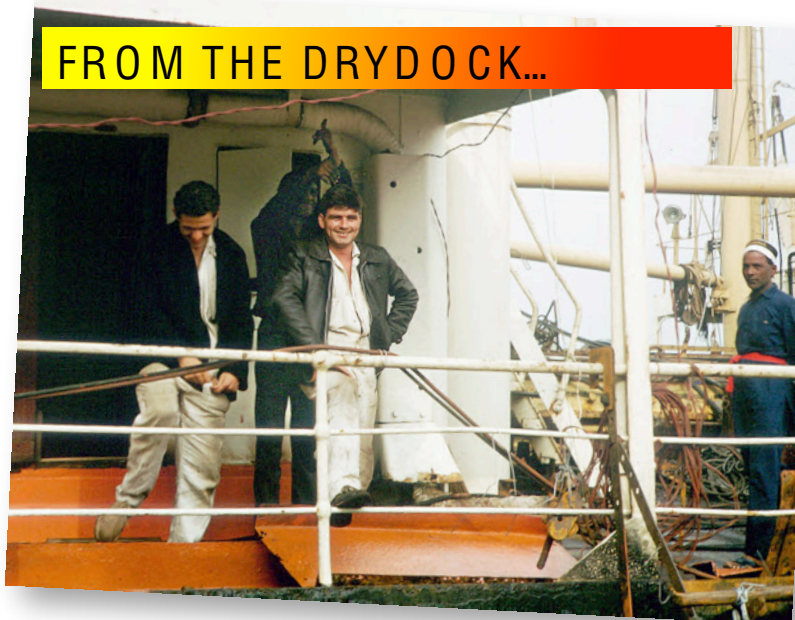
FROM THE WEBSITE....

We have Mr. Billy Hearne from Ireland to thank for this photograph taken onboard BI's *Aronda* during their centenary party on 15th September 1956. His late uncle, Jack Hearne, was the Marconi radio officer. Billy posted this on the website in the hope that somebody might recognise any of the officers. From the left in the front row, we have Chief Officer Henry Severs, Capt R S Freakes, the ship's surgeon (with pipe), Chief Engineer Officer W Oliver. Jack Hearne is second from right at the back with the third engineer on his left and Chief Radio Officer Murphy on his right. If any reader can put a name to any of the other officers, we will pass them on to Billy.



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

FROM THE DRYDOCK...



Readers may recall this picture from Gordon Thornton from our last issue that showed, we think, David James about to get his druthers. We were pleased to hear from Fred Kelkar in 'sunny San Francisco' -- his words. Fred says that the gentleman averting his eyes from the bloody scene is none other than Geoff Stokes, last known to him as a Dubai pilot when Fred was Master of a Mackinnon barge carrier. The ship was the *Orna* when she was in Mitsubishi's Yokohama dry dock in September 1965. Sadly Fred can throw no light on the troublemaker in the background, but marvellously he goes on to say that he has a picture of Gordon Thornton in his bunk with a teddy bear! Fred, this we just have to see -- please send it in.



FROM THE BARS...

You may recall from our last issue the plaintive cry from Tony Brooke about the lack of joie de vivre within the pages of the [Blship website](#). Your editor is gladdened to note that this has borne fruit. When you go to the website, click on 'Applications' and you will find a growing list of BI bars. Even your editor has made an entry. "Of all the bars in all the world", are your favourites in there? With less than 40 itemised so far, you are probably hiding your light under a bushel. Let us all know.

We are indebted to Eunice Rees for this press cutting, outlining what our confreres in P & O got up to in Scandinavia and, whilst we are sure that no BI officers would be so headstrong, we are equally sure that there must be some similar stories out there. Let's be hearing them!

For instance, we are glad to have located this photograph of Geoff Woodland and Danny Ravn in the Bar Hit in Kobe, Japan. Geoff tells your editor that his companion's name was Mickie (his memory is good enough to remember that, but not what ship he was on at the time!). Obviously a class establishment.



BAR HIT KOBÉ JAPAN

THE TIMES 31.08.11

23

Letters to the Editor

Doctor in the sauna

Sir, Merchant Navy shore leave in the mid-1980s, when overnight in Scandinavian ports with the ship's local agent, introduced us to the trick of inhaling alcohol vapour (letter, Aug 30) by pouring vodka onto the hot stones in a sauna.

Alcohol from the bonded store on the ship was very cheap, £2 for a litre of vodka, compared with £25 from a government bottle store in Helsinki. We would head for the nearest sauna with several ship's bottles down our trousers and then pour half, drink half.

The very rapid effect of inhaled alcohol vapour in a confined space was extraordinary and quite probably very foolhardy, but then there was a doctor present.

DR ROBERT BRUCE-CHWATT
(P&O ship's surgeon, 1983-90)
Richmond, Surrey



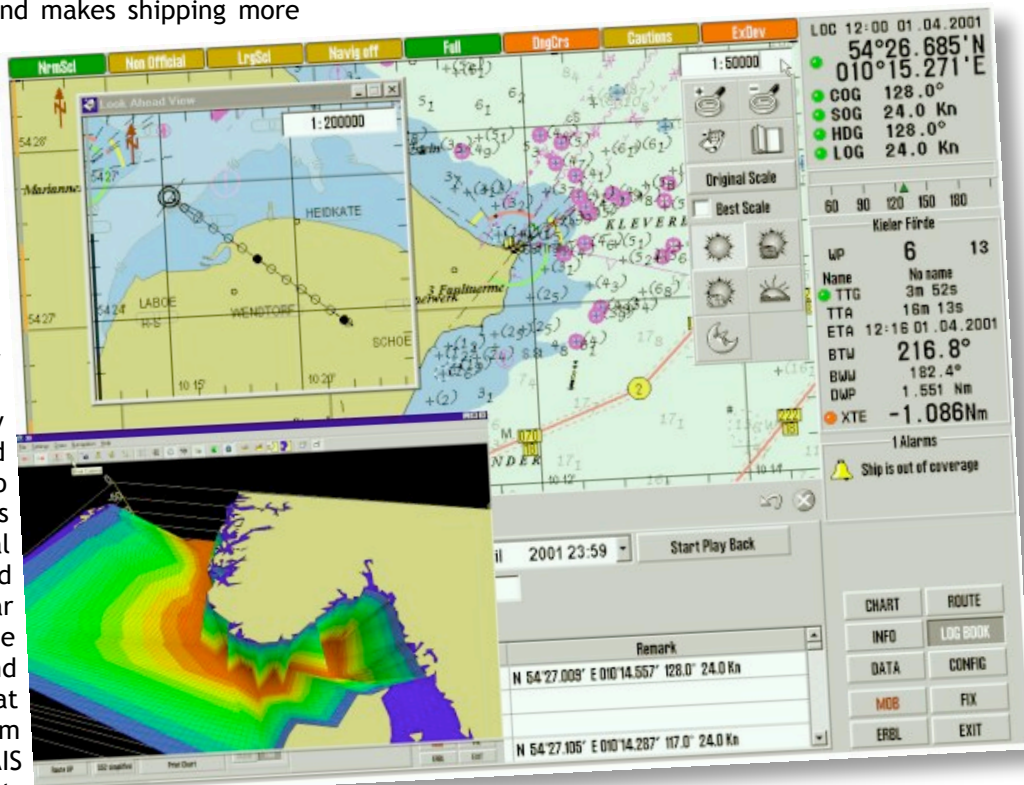
FROM THE BRIDGE....

Idling his day away, your editor was browsing amongst the various magazines that he receives and came upon this article from the Bimco house magazine of September. It will appear that once again, human nature has got the better of technology.



Nobody could ever deny that electronics have provided a huge boon to the shipping industry and its safety. The comforting ability to employ satellites to provide accurate positions, regardless of weather conditions or the distance from land makes shipping more precise and far safer than it was, when a landfall after an ocean passage with no celestial observations was fraught with doubts about the accuracy of the dead reckoning.

The arrival of the electronic chart display system (ECDIS) is but the latest stage in this progression and those who have spent hours correcting their world folios by hand are grateful for the transition. At the same time, just as every technological advance has provided misunderstandings in addition to advantages, the use of ECDIS is accompanied by snares and potential pitfalls for the unwary (and untrained). Just as the "radar assisted" collisions demonstrated the importance of proper theoretical and practical training in the use of that new device and every advance from ship to ship VHF communication to AIS has seen its share of accidents contributed to by improper use of the equipment, so a number of accidents have shown the need for the same application of training to ECDIS.



What might be described as a worrying trend in the use of electronic navigation systems has been exposed by the German accident investigation bureau BSU, as it probed the stranding of a German flagged heavy lift ship on a reef in the western Pacific. The course of the ship was plotted manually on a paper chart of the area, then transferred to the ship's electronic system and this was in use at the time of the incident. It seems clear that what was apparent on the large paper chart effectively became invisible on the far smaller electronic projection and a course shaped a mile off the reef somehow saw the ship stray right over the obstruction. The cause of the stranding was attributed to "transcription errors", but it is probably true to suggest that it would not have happened had the new device not been employed and the vessel been navigated instead using paper charts.

This is by no means the first accident of its kind and the problems seem to be twofold. First, there is the fact that if the small electronic screen is not to be cluttered, much of the information contained on the larger paper version must be "edited out". Accidents have occurred when this "editing" has included something vital, such as a buoy or beacon, a coloured marking indicating a shoal or some other vital navigational "need to know" information. Unfamiliarity with the equipment supplied aboard a particular ship and inadequate type-specific training have been blamed for such problems. On certain and even more disastrous occasions, it has been whole remote reefs and tiny islands that have become invisible in the electronic chart version being used by the ship, which has come to a grinding halt where the electronic chart showed no hazard in the vicinity.

Secondly, the scale of the chart shown on a screen no bigger than the size of the average desktop computer seems to militate against the best possible use of this important and useful aid to navigation. Some professionals have suggested that the "miniaturisation" of the chart in electronic form is self-defeating and if it is possible to make the large screens that TV manufacturers are anxious to sell, it should be perfectly possible to provide an ECDIS screen effectively the same size as the paper chart. You learn, it is said, by "trial and error". The trouble is that with shipping, our errors tend to be expensive!

Entirely coincidentally, Phil Bulman penned these thoughts on the Bship website: "Having recently been on a navigational awareness course at South Shields Mar Tech (South Tyneside College now) I am amazed at how little knowledge is now needed to navigate the largest container vessel around the world. ECDIS is a wonderful device, just plot your destination like a Tom-Tom and way points, press go and you are off. Apparently some of the set ups have control of the vessel completely. God help them if they turn off the satellites, the world shipping will grind to a stop, hardly anyone knows how to navigate using a sextant and sights".



FROM THE HEART...

Many readers will be aware of and have contributed to the upsurge of news and views around the salvaging of BI's *Gairsoppa*. We thought that we should pull together the various reports and contributions from the press and the Bishop message board. We acknowledge with particular thanks the reports from Mail Online and the Deccan Herald.



On 17th February 1941, a Nazi torpedo tore a hole in BI's ss *Gairsoppa*, named for a spectacular waterfall near India's western coast, carrying a fortune in silver to England from India. The ship was part of a convoy headed for Liverpool, but it went down about 480 km southwest of Ireland, in icy waters nearly three miles deep, deeper than the resting place of the Titanic. Now divers say they have found the wreck intact and they estimate its cargo at up to 240 tons of silver – a trove worth more than \$200 million. The recovery of the cargo, if successful, would be history's deepest and largest retrieval of a precious cargo lost at sea, according to Odyssey Marine Exploration, the company that found the ship. It is working under contract to the British government.

"We were fortunate to find the shipwreck sitting upright, with the holds open and easily accessible," said Greg

Stemm, chief executive of Odyssey, which is based in Tampa, Florida. "This should enable to us to unload cargo through the hatches, as would happen with a ship alongside a cargo terminal." Stemm added that a growing number of seafaring nations view cargo recovery as a creative way to increase revenues. In such arrangements, private contractors put their own money at risk in costly expeditions and split any profits. Odyssey, for instance, is to get 80 per cent of the silver's value and the British government 20 per cent. "It doesn't cost taxpayers a dollar and accrues right to the bottom line," Stemm said. "Governments are waking up to the potential."

In December 1940, *Gairsoppa* sailed from Calcutta laden with tea, iron and tons of silver. In Freetown, Sierra Leone, the ship joined a military convoy headed to the British Isles and the contested waters of the North Atlantic. The merchant steamship, 412 feet long, had 83 crew and two gunners on board, according to Lloyd's of London. High winds and a heavy swell soon forced the *Gairsoppa* to slow. As the weather deteriorated, Captain Gerald Hyland judged that the wallowing ship had insufficient coal to make it to Liverpool and broke from the convoy for Galway, in western Ireland.

Then a highly decorated German U-boat captain, Ernst Mengersen, moved in for the attack. A single torpedo ripped through the *Gairsoppa*'s hull and exploded, causing the forward mast to topple and the radio aerial to part, cutting off the ship from the world. The U-boat opened fire as the *Gairsoppa* sank. As fire and smoke ripped through the *Gairsoppa*, Captain Hyland gave the order to abandon ship and the men made for the lifeboats. Then bullets ripped through the darkness, forcing them to throw themselves down. The U-boat surfaced and sprayed the deck with machine-gun fire. Some of the bullets cut through the ropes of one lifeboat, sending it crashing into the sea. Dozens of men leapt overboard and swam towards it, including Second Officer Richard Ayres.



They began pushing away from the stricken vessel to avoid being sucked down as it sank and had to paddle frantically to get clear of the rotating propellers. Somehow they pulled away and watched as the *Gairsoppa* disappeared under the waves within 20 minutes of being hit. Of the other two lifeboats they could only sight one with a few seamen, whom they took on board. They were alone in icy seas, hundreds of miles from land. There were 31 men in the lifeboat: eight Europeans and 23 Indian seamen who immediately began suffering badly from the cold, so they were given all the blankets and some canvas for shelter.

Ayres, then aged 31, the only man skilled at sailing a small boat, immediately took command and set sail eastwards, steering with an oar because the rudder had been lost.

Their food supplies consisted of some tins of condensed milk and dry biscuit, so hard it could barely be swallowed. Ayres resisted the crew's pleas for extra water rations to soften the biscuit, because they were desperately short of water. Each man was limited to half a pint of water a day and half a pint a night. But the Lascars began drinking salt water, which made them go mad and fight each other.

Soon, men began dying. Then, on the eighth day, water ran out. There was no sign of land and little chance of rescue: no one knew their fate or whereabouts. Men become delirious and 'had barely enough hope and heart to carry on,' according to Ayres. A couple of rain showers gave some relief from the thirst that burned their throats, but in the cold air their hands and fingers became swollen with frostbite, making it impossible to grip the oars.

Over the next few days, their strength and spirit ebbed away. But Ayres, determined, fit and strong, was resolved to save the lives of the remaining men. He sailed the little boat through towering waves and fierce gales, snatching little sleep as only he, the *Gairsoppa*'s radio officer, 18-year-old Robert Hampshire, and a gunner named Norman Thomas, 20, from Chatham, Kent, had the strength left to man the rudder.



FROM THE HEART (contd)...

Then, 13 days after the sinking, with only seven men surviving, many barely clinging to life, one man croaked out the word they all longed to hear: 'Land'.

At first the others thought it was just a cloud, but then they made out a lighthouse. It was the Lizard lighthouse on the southernmost tip of Cornwall, 300 miles from where the *Gairsoppa* had sunk. Ayres began sailing towards a rocky cove. Just as they were nearing its entrance, a huge wave smashed onto the small boat, capsizing it. In their weakened state, all but three of the men drowned.

Another wave righted the boat and Ayres managed to drag himself, Robert Hampshire and Gunner Thomas on board, only for another breaker to capsize them again. They clung to the keel, but as more waves crashed violently over them they lost their grip. Hampshire was washed to his death, but Ayres and Thomas made it onto nearby rocks. Then another icy wave knocked Thomas backwards, drowning him just yards from safety.

Suddenly, children's voices drifted down to him on the wind. Three young girls, Betty Driver, Olive Martin and her sister, evacuees from Tottenham in London, had been walking along the cliffs when they spotted the boat flip over in the stormy seas below. They were calling to him with increasingly desperate encouragement: 'Stick it, mister! Stick it, mister!'

Barely conscious, Ayres made one last superhuman effort to drag himself through the surf towards the shore. Then he saw a rope thrown into the water beside him. He managed to wrap it around his body and then he was being pulled through the churning seas. By the time he was dragged onto the beach, he was unconscious. But he was alive and he was on British soil. And what a story he had to tell. For, while those passing children had spotted his desperate efforts to survive, they could not have guessed that he represented one of the most savage setbacks to Allied shipping in the Atlantic during World War II.

In recent years, the famous lost cargo of silver began to beckon as technological strides resulted in new generations of salvage equipment. At least one company tried, and failed, to find the shipwreck. In early 2010, Odyssey won an exclusive contract from Britain's Department for Transport to salvage the cargo. The company took its main ship, the *Odyssey Explorer*, to investigate the area. Its tethered robot took three and a half hours to descend 2.9 miles through dark waters to the muddy seabed. Then came the moment when the robot found a gaping hole where the torpedo struck 70 years ago.

The hulk of the *Gairsoppa* was covered in rivulets of rust known as rusticles, which look like brownish icicles. But still standing bright and shiny on the deck was a waist-high compass used by the helmsmen. Odyssey says it confirmed the wreck's identity from evidence including the number of holds, the anchor type, the scupper locations and hull colours that matched the scheme used by British Indian Steam Navigation Co.

During the four-and-a-half-hour examination, the robot did not locate any of the precious metal, but it did observe that all five holds had lost their covers. Inside one, the robot spied tea chests whose shiny tin linings for a moment were taken as evidence of silver bars.

Greg Stemm said the British government had approved a news release announcing the discovery. Nobody knows how much silver may lurk inside the *Gairsoppa*. The wartime government, to avoid giving enemies information about valuable targets, deliberately kept its transportation records opaque. But Odyssey's historical research indicates that the ship probably held a fortune in silver equal to 240 tons, probably in bars and coins.

The company found that the British government paid out

an insurance claim on about half that amount owned by private parties and it sees the gap between the payout and the total reported value of the cargo as possibly alluding to the government's hidden share. The price of silver (along with gold) plunged on world markets last week, to about \$31 an ounce. But even that relatively low price would mean a total cargo value of nearly \$240 million.

Odyssey says it does not expect to find human remains, in part because no seamen would have been in the cargo holds. Still, it says the ship's resting place nearly three miles down "deserves respect in recognition of the brave merchant mariners who sacrificed so much." Ex-BI engineer James Slater reports that John Opperman of Odyssey Marine has made a donation of \$150 to the



FROM THE HEART (contd)...



Liverpool Seafarer Centre in the name of British India as an appreciation for Tony Smythe providing a copy of *Gairsoppa's* capacity plan for them.

The bodies of Hampshire, Thomas and two lascars were recovered and buried in a nearby cemetery. It later transpired that the place where Ayres had come ashore, at Caerthillian Cove, was just a few miles from Steve Clarke's (BI, 1959-63) home. He recalls "I was born in 1941, in Helston, Cornwall, in the Cottage Hospital to which Dickie Ayres was taken when he was washed up on the Cornish coast after the torpedoing of the *Gairsoppa*. My grandfather visited my mother after my birth and then dropped in on Dickie Ayres in the next ward".

Richard Ayres was awarded an MBE in recognition of his heroic efforts to keep fellow survivors alive, as well as a War Medal for bravery at sea. He was also awarded Lloyd's War Medal for Bravery at Sea, one of only 500 awards were made during the war years. Ayres returned to sea just nine months later, and spoke little about the *Gairsoppa* affair after the war, during his years in the Royal Naval Reserve. He died in 1992. But the citation on his MBE will forever celebrate the extraordinary efforts of this brave man: 'It was only the cruelty of the sea that robbed him of the fruits of his labour.' Michael Farlie (BI, 1956-80) remembers Richard Ayres well: "I knew Dickie pretty well in Bombay where he was the Cargo Superintendent. I think he retired in 1964. A most likeable man, utterly modest when questioned about his heroic attempts to save himself and his fellow crewmen ex *Gairsoppa*". A full list of the crew and other technical details of the *Gairsoppa* can be found at www.bishop.com/historical/salvage.htm

Richard Ayres' father, Captain R A M Ayers (died 1964), was also a BI man, having joined the Company in 1898 as a Fourth Officer, attained command in 1916 and retired in 1930, whilst his only son, Michael, served with Gray Mackenzie, mostly in Muscat where Michael Farlie met him on a visit for GCD in 1977. Michael was diabetic and generally did not enjoy good health. Michael Ayres died in December 2004 aged 66 years old.

On 10th October, Odyssey Marine announced that it had also found the remains of BI's ss *Mantola*, a First World War-era ship that sank on February 9, 1917. Like the *Gairsoppa* but decades before, the *Mantola* fell victim to a German submarine, U-81. An Odyssey spokesman said the *Mantola* was insured to carry silver worth £110,000 when it sailed in 1917.

FROM THE SOCIAL CALENDAR...

Getting into practice for the Christmas season, the BIER (BI Eastern Region), will again be quaffing beer at their favourite local, the Thatcher's Arms (www.thatchersarms.co.uk) in Mount Bures, Essex, on **Friday, 9th December**. There will be special Christmas menus available, details of which are available from the Thatcher's website, as are directions on how to get to the establishment, but lifts from local railway stations may be possible. Your Editor dismisses rumours that he will play Father Christmas, but Our Tracey is already adjusting her Christmas stockings! Contact John Prescott (jprescott@ninetynorth.com) for further details.

And the Big Ones! Sue Spence has whispered in your editor's ear that the next big BI reunion, open to all ex-BI staff, will be held in Southampton on the **12th-14th of October 2012**. Details are being finalised and will be available soon. If Sue doesn't have your details, you can e-mail them to her at sue@johnmspence.plus.com. Meanwhile the southern hemisphere BI brethren are girding their loins for a big bash in Fremantle from **2nd-4th March 2012**, organised by Chris Blake and Sandy Yeats. Details at www.bishop.com/fremantle/pages/fremantlemain2012. If past reunions are anything to go by, we're in for a good time!

There you are, four dates for your diary, including next year's BI Engineers' Association meeting (see last page) -- put them in!

FROM PORT HEALTH...

Your Editor's eye was, inevitably perhaps, drawn to the following unsavoury exchange of communication on the Blship message board recently:

"Just returned from our Somerset "dacha" near the nuclear facility at Hinkley Point - I can recommend the giant "glow in the dark" shrimp cocktails at the local pub! Whilst in the Chandlery at Watchet, I purchased a novel key fob in the form of a cockroach encased in clear plastic. I thought it would be a reminder to me of those days on *Chakdara*, when it was a race to see who would get to your morning toast first. The "Jaspers" usually won but a tupperware box defeated their endeavours eventually. I reflected: we could have started a real little "cottage" industry on the "Chak" if we turned our cockroaches into key fobs. There seemed to be an infinite supply. My key fob cost £4.95 and was imported by container from China. You have got to admire the Chinese: they are even exporting their cockroaches to us now!! Regards, Roger Northcote"

"I recall being on *Karanja* in about 1966 when we were fumigated (or is it defumigated) in Durban. A night ashore in a hotel at BI expense - Oh boy! The ship was filled with cyanide gas and after suitable ventilation, gangs of workers invaded and carted off sack load after sack load of cockroaches, rats and mice. Enough to put you off your beer - well not quite.

Had we been quicker off the mark, we could have sold them to the Chinese - or maybe the Purser did! Simon Morgan".



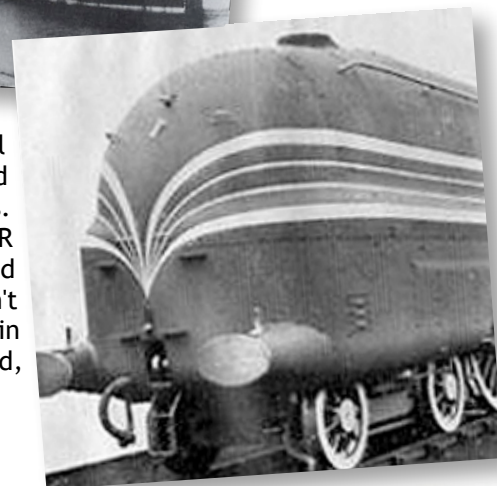
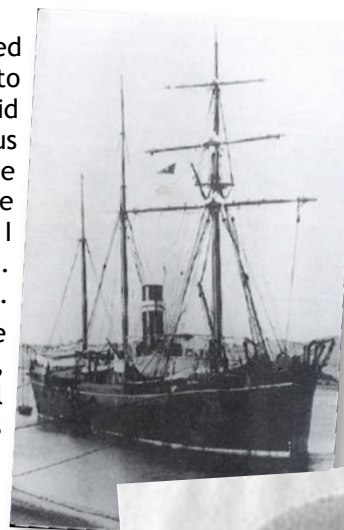
FROM THE ARCHIVES...



We are indeed indebted to that font of all knowledge of things BI, David Mitchell, for his observations on various photographs etc from last month's issue. The photograph of the *Nevasa* being repainted, he thinks shows her at the end of her World War I trooping service being repainted in BI colours. She had previously been a 660 bed hospital ship. The ship we used to illustrate the "from the family tree" item is the *Nuddea*, built in 1883, in the Suez Canal. David says that the original image shows a line of ships astern with yards to the fore. In later editions of postcards, a bit of darkroom magic has been used to remove the yards, including those of *Nuddea*.

However, David surpasses himself with our picture of the Coronation class locomotive. He says that the quest for improved rail services between London and Scotland by the LMS on the West Coast route and the LNER on the east led to the introduction of the streamlined trains in the 1930s. The approach of the two companies to locomotive design differed. The LNER design was based on aerofoil technology, whereas the Coronation class was based on submarine design. Which was more effective, nobody knows. The LMS didn't have a suitable length of track to have a serious go at speed, but the LNER did, in the Vale of York. And as we all know, "Mallard" achieved 126 mph, a world record, on 3rd July 1938.

Is there no end to the man's expertise? Many thanks indeed, David.



FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOPS...

This must have been our easiest "Where are we now?" competition yet. Correct answers came in their droves, especially from our Australian contingent. Tracey, our girl wot duz, was quite beside herself (which made a nice change for the office boy). And so they should have done, for the view is none other than the Three Sisters in the Blue Mountains, just beyond Sydney.

Ted Rowley, who supplied our photograph, writes in to say: "What might be of interest is the circumstances prior to and after taking the photo. I have a feeling it was taken during our 13 day stay (yes, 13 days) in Sydney June 1963.

Ian Fraser was at the time 5E/O on *Bulimba*, myself 3/O....we hired a VW Beetle in Sydney and decided to drive to Katoomba, from memory a Saturday, spend the night there and return to Sydney on the Sunday morning.

In the afternoon, we went to all the usual tourist spots in the Blue Mountains including a trip on that frightening "sight-seeing" car that takes you almost vertically down a cliff face. Evening time came and we hoped to find some night life, sadly to no avail, which was disappointing. Heaven knows why, (no doubt monetary), we decided to spend the night in the VW. It turned out to be a big mistake; hardly any room for two people especially Ian being 6ft-plus and what we did not expect, freezing cold and damp in the early hours (we had to cover up with newspapers to keep warm).

Early Sunday morning we decided to head back to Sydney, it was cold and wet and luckily there was no one else driving around at that time.

We had not gone far down the steep twisting road before Ian lost control of the VW and we went into a spin that to me seemed like eternity. Luckily it was the rear of the car that hit the rock face first on the inward side of the road and we came to a grinding halt. Of course with the engine being in the rear of the VW, we expected the worst but after inspection the only mechanical damage was the exhaust which was broken off.

As a result we continued on our merry way to Sydney making one hell of a noise and being noticed by everyone except the police!

Driving back into the hire depot brought the staff out in a hurry and yet the front looked in tip top shape. Not so the rear!"



FROM THE WAR YEARS...



Readers may recall that in our last issue, we introduced you to the awesome Rosie the Rivetter, doing it below. We now thank Chris Shelbourn for finding her sister-in-law, Wendy the Welder. Chris finds it difficult to reconcile his own drydock experiences with this image, we can't imagine why. Surely Smith's Drydock in Middlesbrough in winter always looked like this?



FROM THE ENGINE ROOM...



John Miller, Alisdair Macintosh, Steve Tilson and Geoff Slone



Jock Sturrock, Ken Paul and Mike Campbell and beyond, Jim Burnett and George Ferrier



That wonderful body of men represented by the BI Engineers Association had their annual meeting, again in Glasgow on 15th September of this year. David Mitchell writes:

Since its inception in 1923, the Engineers' Association has met many times. And this year in BI's historic founding city, just over 60 sat down for luncheon. A full list of attendees can be seen at www.BIship.com, message number 41817. Attending for the first time were James Heanan, Ian Robson and Ian Winton, and from abroad came John Robertson (USA) and Fred Waddington (France). Jim Burnett from Sunderland has stepped up to take the place of the late Jimmy Yorkston as a committee member. A good time was had by all, as can be seen from the photographs.

They will meet next year, again at the Ramada Hotel, Ingram Street, Glasgow, on **20th September 2012** at 1pm.

