



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...

The hectic rush and the 'jobs-to-do-before' have all militated against getting out this issue to you by our deadlines. But hopefully we are in time for you to have a read before most of the world goes crazy at this time of year. A varied content is offered, something to tickle every palate, we trust.

Your editor escaped relatively unscathed from the BIER (BI Eastern Region) lunchtime bash in a well-known hostelry in north Essex a few days ago. It was great to see some new faces there, including David Martin (1953-1960), Bill Rigby (1951-1962) and his good lady, Barbara and Tony (1952-1994) & Sylvia Smythe, who was (and still is) a ship's draughtsman without compare and has hundreds of lines plans and drawings of BI ships through the ages. It was good to see you all. Incidentally, the day after the group met, the pub received this accolade from UK's *Daily Telegraph*:

The Thatchers Arms is also pretty irresistible, even though first impressions suggest otherwise. From outside it looks unremarkable. But looks can deceive and perseverance is the key. To pass on by would be a shame, for this is an establishment you really shouldn't miss. It hosts each of the holy trinity of pub life: good food, divine drink and heavenly company.

Obviously the East Anglian BI contingent know a thing or two! Join them at their next little get-together, planned for May next year.

Don't forget either the two big 'bashes' happening next year - The Australian reunion at the beginning of March next year, being organised by Sandy Yeats and Chris Blake

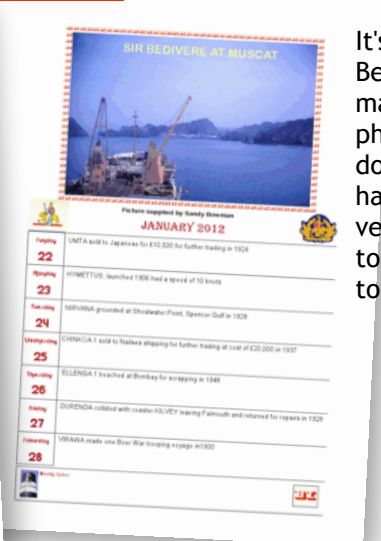
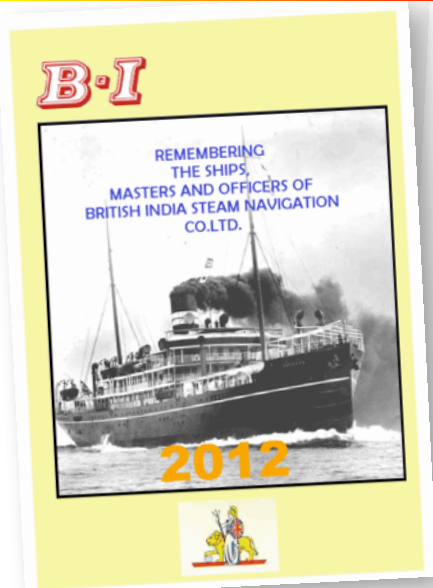
and the last UK reunion to be organised by Sue Spence. This will be in Southampton in October. So there are plenty of opportunities to meet up with old BI buddies, to tell tall stories and and to prove to everybody that you can still disport yourself as an officer of the BISN Co!

All those associated with "...calling BI" would like to thank all contributors and commentators for all their input this year. It wouldn't be possible without you. And if you haven't contributed, how about it for 2012? We all extend to you the very best wishes for the New Year.

We thank John Davison for telling us that the ship's surgeon (with pipe) is Malcolm Pereira in our picture from the *Aronda's* Centenary celebrations in 1956 from our last issue. Know any others?



## FROM THE CALENS....



It's that time of year again! Yes, Tony Bernthal has put together his marvellous BI calendar, with photographs of favourite BI ships donated by various readers. If you haven't seen this calendar, which is a veritable *tour de force*, or would like to receive a copy, e-mail Tony at [tonybe@dsl.pipex.co.uk](mailto:tonybe@dsl.pipex.co.uk)

## FROM THE SEARCH & RESCUE DEPT...

Some time ago, we welcomed Rachael MacBean to our readership, and we were delighted to receive from her photographs taken by her husband, Elgin MacBean, a medical orderly on the *Rajula*. The *Rajula* went to the assistance of some Japanese seamen whose vessel had caught fire on 27th of January



The *Ohzuru Maru* adrift, showing the blistered paintwork at the stern



An injured survivor being treated in *Rajula's* hospital

1971. The ship, under the command of Capt Gerry Thompson, had made an initial search of the area, but did not locate the vessel until 09:15 the next morning.

According to the press cutting from "*The Sunday Standard*" sent in by Rachael, Capt Thompson saw a distress signal flare from the *Ohzuru Maru No. 1* and sounded the Man Overboard signal. By 10:00, the rescue boat was launched under the command of First Officer Tony Wyman. He said "we approached on the lee side which held some risk as the vessel was drifting but my prime concern was to get the men off and see if any more



Some of the rescued seamen recovering after their ordeal

were around. We had to be careful because lots of wreckage was floating about and the steel hull was still hot". By 10:30, the rescue boat returned with the Japanese captain and three crew from a total complement of 23 men. Half an hour later, two life rafts were spotted with four survivors in each and these too were rescued. At 12:40, a lone survivor was spotted on a makeshift raft. His arms and legs were swollen and sunburnt after 36 hours afloat and Medical Officer Fernandez said that if he had been out a few more hours he would not have survived. An hour later, a further two seamen were rescued, both with injuries and unconscious. A box search ensued until 6:30 in the evening, but no further survivors were found. Later, Capt Thompson, who had himself been torpedoed



Survivors being returned via *Rajula's* lifeboat

and rescued during World War II, said that the 15 men were lucky to be found alive because sharks had been sighted at the stern as they approached the burnt out fishing vessel in the morning. The survivors were eventually landed at Madras and repatriated to Japan. *BI News* (April 1971) carried Captain Thompson's account of the rescue.

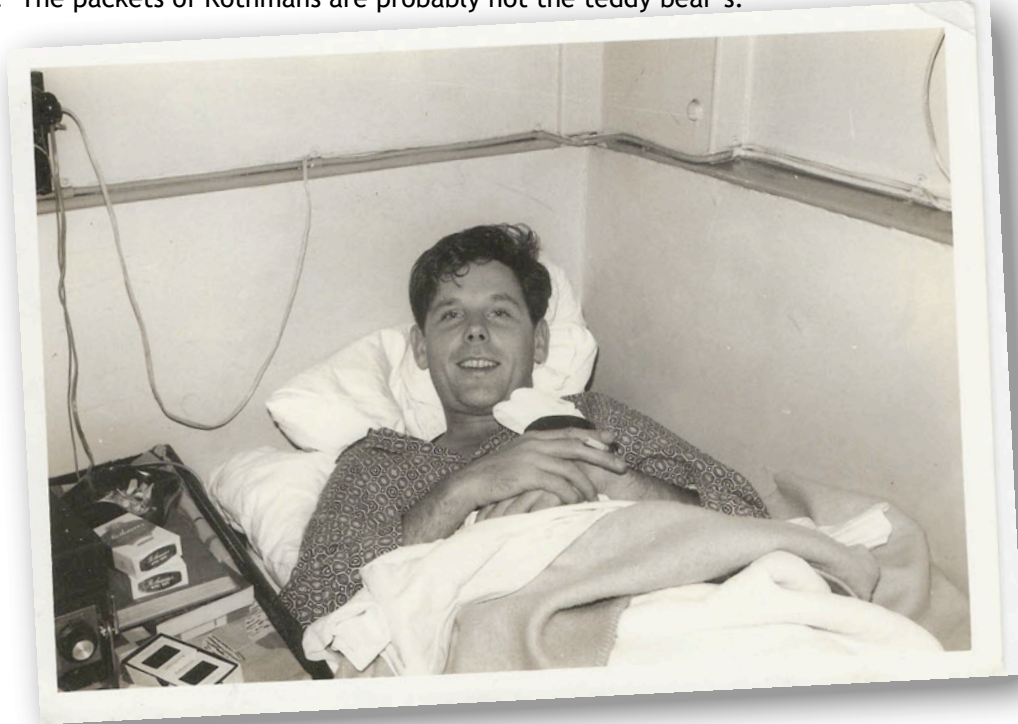
Look out for more photographs from Rachael in our next issue.



## FROM THE FAMILY ALBUM...



Don't say you weren't warned! In our last issue, we promised to try to get THAT photo of Gordon Thornton with his teddy bear and, Dear Reader, we did it! Doesn't it make you want to go "Aaaah!". Perhaps not. The packets of Rothmans are probably not the teddy bear's.



## FROM THE SUBSCRIPTIONS DEPARTMENT...

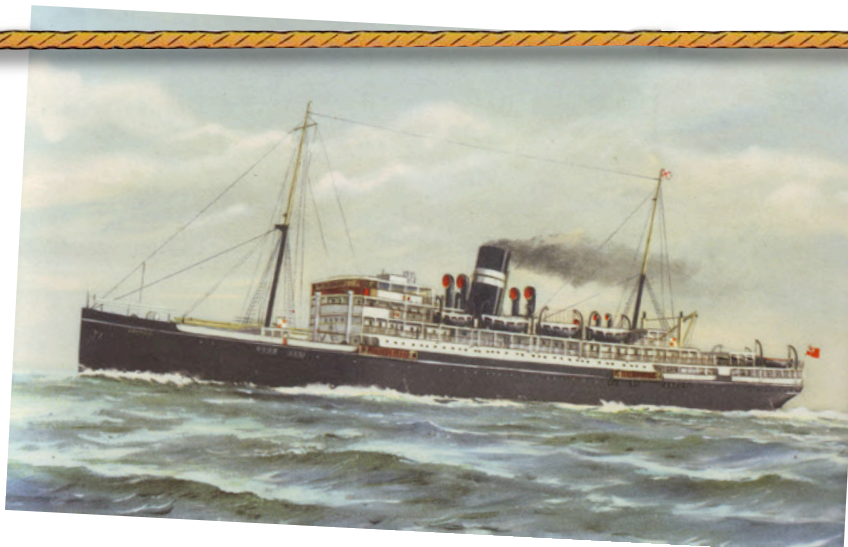
Tracey, our girl wot duz, rushes in to make sure that we bid a great and good welcome from the following who have joined our growing list of subscribers worldwide:

Andrew Stokes, USA  
John (Ian) Hollywood, Australia  
Paul (Tony) Brown-Beresford, Australia  
Bryan Rodgers, Australia  
Ken Skinner, Australia  
Geoff Arnold, Thailand.  
Peter Thompson, Spain.  
Nigel Marsh, France

Patrick (Rick) Gates, Canada.  
Frank McKay, Sweden  
Bill Swann, Argentina.  
James Bennett, England  
Alan Farley, UK  
George Ferrier, UK  
Jimmy Coyle, Scotland

Gentlemen, you are amongst friends and we all look forward to sharing some of your adventures, stories and pictures. Please send them in to ... calling BI. Meanwhile Tracey has a feral look in her eye, with bunches of mistletoe strewn about. Watch out!

Thanks to Simon Morgan for this fine picture of the *Aronda* (1912-1939)



## FROM THE AUCTION ROOMS...

Your editor had a frustrating time this month, trying to buy various items of BISN Co paraphernalia, such as this Centenary issue of the "BI News" and the welcome teapot that would greet him as he finished a long hard watch at night. They went for £34 and £31 respectively. He wasn't tempted however to bid for the second hand Electrical Officer's uniform jacket that was knocked down at just over £31. Obviously there is quite a demand for such things. Some of the bids were placed at the very last seconds, indicating a sophisticated snipe operation is underway. Your editor may just have a little trundle through his attic again...



## FROM THE HEART...

About three years ago, three ex-BI colleagues and near neighbours sat down at a little country pub to discuss life in general, BI in particular and BI communications in fine detail. Two of the three were expansive, enthusiastic go-getting sort of people, the sort that get things done by sheer force of personality. So it was that "...calling BI" was born and your editor found himself given the role of producing it. He didn't quite realise how this happened, but was patted on the back and reassured that it would be 'no problem' and that he would enjoy himself. These sort of things happened quite regularly around John Rees, one of the two 'persuaders'. He joined BI from Silver Line, initially to transfer to the nascent Trident Tankers. But whilst waiting at One Aldgate for a posting, he was called into Kenneth Campbell's office and was told that he would be one of the small team to organise, research, plan and sell the formation of an Educational Cruising department. It was long and arduous



*John Rees at a BI Eastern Region pub lunch*

work, ranging from voyage planning, destination planning to selling the idea to educational authorities. John himself told some of the story in "...calling BI" issues 7 and 8. Your editor met John but briefly whilst he was serving on the cruise ships, as he swept along on some mission or other. It wasn't until much later that he met up with John again and was immediately put to work on various aspects of village life, involving one of John's 'little' projects. He had such a way with people that you couldn't refuse his 'suggestions'.



*John Rees with his wife, Eunice*

It is sad to record now John's departure across the bar on 13th December after a brief hospitalisation. But wherever he has gone, you can be certain that he is organising things there, too. You will be missed, John.

## FROM THE COMPETITIONS DEPARTMENT...

We herald the return of our ever popular quiz "Where are we Now?". We have Tony Lister to thank for this photograph, which all but gives you the answer! It's not really Christmassy, but your editor confesses that he has seen a few festivities there! So where are we or what is the other name by which we know this street? Answers, please, to the usual [address](#) and who knows - maybe Santa will bring you a few unexpected goodies!



## FROM THE CHRISTMAS GIFTS DEPARTMENT...

Judging by the adverts and general chat around here, it seems that quite a few are getting one of the new mobile phones this Christmas. Fortunately, we have located the perfect website to enable them to make their choice. Hit on '[Wireless for Ladies](#)' for



further information (ignoring, of course, all the little incidental ads).

For those of you with a sardonic turn of wit can always turn to issue 26, wherein we alerted you to another British India, an Australian rock band specialising in garage music (whatever that may be). Here's their latest CD just waiting to be put into an Ancient Mariner's stocking. Or perhaps not.

## FROM THE IMO...

They say that every dog has its day. So now do seafarers. The 27th session of the IMO Assembly was held at IMO Headquarters, London in November and was attended by some 1,200 delegates from IMO Member States, as well as observers from international organisations.

The Assembly adopted a resolution establishing 25th June of each year as the "Day of the Seafarer", recognising the invaluable contribution seafarers make to international trade and the world economy, often at great personal cost to themselves and their families. The resolution invites Governments, shipping organisations, companies, shipowners and all other parties concerned to promote and celebrate the Day in an appropriate and meaningful manner. The Assembly endorsed the decision of the IMO Council in June to elect Koji Sekimizu (Japan) as IMO Secretary-General, to start a four-year term on 1 January 2012. The outgoing Secretary-General, Efthimios Mitropoulos (Greece) ends his second four-year term at the end of this year.



## FROM THE BRIDGE...

Following our piece in last month's issue of "...calling BI" on electronic chart displays, it seems that everything we read at the moment is ECDIS-orientated. Even the Irish marine ministry has kicked in with its own Notice to Mariners:



*Irish Notice to Mariners published 18<sup>th</sup> October 2011.*

*The ECDIS ship specific equipment training should relate to the make and model of the equipment fitted on the ship on which a Master or Navigational Officer is currently serving i.e. it will be necessary to complete training for each different system a Master or Navigation Officer is expected to operate. This training should build on the approved ECDIS generic training, and be delivered by the ECDIS manufacturer; the manufacturer's approved agent, or a trainer who has attended such a programme. A manufacturer's computer based training package can be accepted for this purpose. "Trickle down training" (i.e. one officer training another) is not acceptable as, inevitably, it leads to incomplete knowledge of the equipment's capabilities, and especially the lesser used functions, being passed on.*

*This equipment specific training should concentrate on the functionality and effective use of the system on board. This training should at least cover the following areas:*

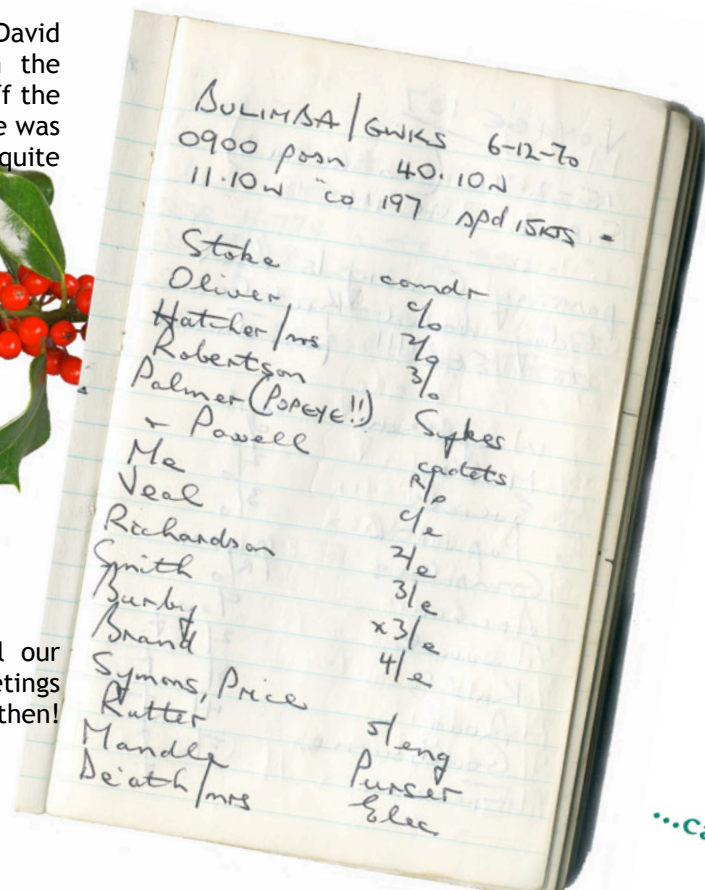
- familiarisation with available functions
- familiarisation with the menu structure
- display setup
- setting of safety values
- recognition of alarms and malfunction indicators and the actions to be taken
- route planning
- route monitoring
- changing over to backup systems
- loading charts and licenses
- updating of software

*Each navigation officer on board an ECDIS carrying vessel must hold documentary evidence on board the vessel indicating that the type specific training has been completed for the ECDIS equipment being carried. Given the critical nature and importance of recording this training, the procedures involved should be incorporated in the ships Safety Management System.*

Sound advice indeed, but will it be heeded?

## FROM THE LITTLE BLACK BOOK...

As ever, we are indebted to good friend David Hammond for this seasonal crew list from the *Bulimba*, as she was proceeding southwards off the coast of Portugal. Does anybody know why she was in home waters at this time? Surely this was quite unusual.



To David, our other contributors and to all our readers, we extend the very best season's greetings and our hopes for an excellent 2012! See you then!