



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...

Yes, yes, we know. It's been a long time coming, but the latest edition of our BI newsletter is at last sitting on your computer desktop. It doesn't seem five months ago when we sent out the last issue - time has just flown by. Much of the time was taken up with a fantastic trip to India, meeting some wonderful people, eating some great food, travelling on the backwaters of Kerala and seeing the snowcapped Himalayas lit up by the setting sun. Of course the biggest job was whittling down the hundreds of photographs to a manageable few. I failed! But at least they are on my Flickr website now.

The installation of a completely new computer system also hampered efforts to produce your newsletter in good time

(as well as having a deleterious effect on your editor's wallet). Still we are now back in harness and hopefully things will be as smooth as usual from here on in.

We hope we have much to interest you in this issue. News of a social gathering in north Essex, a request for information from a correspondent and our usual snipe at passenger ships. Our popular "Where Are We Now?" competition makes a welcome return and we even have a musical rendition for you! We gratefully thank all contributors and end with a plea for you to join their ranks. Please send us any photographs, stories, artefacts, anything that may be of interest to our readership at large. See you soon!

## FROM THE ZOO SHIPS...

Your editor recalls carrying several cargoes of animals during his BI time. Why, he even had to be hospitalised in Aden on only his second trip to sea as a cadet on the *Waroonga*, when he was badly bitten by an overheated Doberman, aptly named Loki after the Norse god of misrule, and en route to join the Sydney police. He bears the scars to this day. Horses, gazelles and even giant tortoises all followed. He appreciates therefore this little story from Peter Glass:

Way back in 2009, Dave Humphries stated on the Biship website that the *Querimba* was the last BI ship to carry brumbies from Australia in December 1949. Not so.

I do not know if we were the last BI ship to carry Brumbies from Australia as remounts for the Indian Army but we certainly carried them on the *Chyebassa* in 1952 or 1953.

They were loaded in Adelaide and Fremantle for Bombay and we had two Aussie grooms to look after them besides us cadets. They were carried on the fore and after decks and in No. 2 'tween deck and, unlike the *Querimba*, were in fine fettle when we arrived at Colombo. Unfortunately we remained at Colombo for some time awaiting a berth and discharging as one did in those days and it was most uncomfortable for the horses but they survived very well.

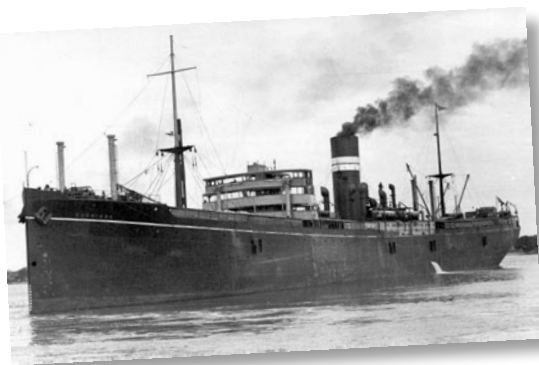
When we eventually arrived in Bombay, they were off loaded and handed over to the Indian Army, but a number of them escaped and led everybody a merry dance around Alexandra Dock before being recaptured.

The two Aussie grooms were great characters, one very young and one more elderly. The older one (who bore a resemblance to Chips Rafferty) used to rib the younger one a lot over his perceived lack of knowledge about horses.

For the record, A E Baber was in command (a real gentleman), Tommy Rouse was C/O (a great character), Jack Evans 2/O, Fred Christy 3/O (yet another character) and Don Matthews and Peter Glass as Cadets. I cannot remember the Engineers other than Eddie Chadwick and Hughie Cain as junior Fivers. Hughie had a meteoric rise to the rank of Chief Engineer at a very young age before leaving the BI to join a tug company in Fremantle. Was it all really sixty years ago? Little did I know that some eight years after that voyage on the *Chyebassa* that I would be her Burra Malim Sahib in 1961. But that as they say is another story.

And one which we will enjoy hearing, Peter!

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



## FROM THE LITTLE BOOK OF FUN...



Long established readers will know that one of your editor's favourite rants is about the design and function of modern-day cruise ships. He may have to eat his words. For look at all the things you can get for your money:

"Carnival Cruise Lines has unveiled additional details of the \$155 million makeover that will transform *Carnival Destiny* into *Carnival Sunshine* during a 49-day dry docking at Fincantieri in Italy.

When *Carnival Destiny* was delivered from the same shipyard in 1996, she was the largest passenger vessel ever built at over 100,000 grt and 2,642 passenger capacity. She also demonstrated all the possibilities that a really big ship can offer for enhanced passenger entertainment and activities. But time moves on and the Carnival brand is not about operating Grand Old Ladies of the Sea. The cruise ship will re-enter service probably in June 2013 with what Carnival describes as "all of the dining, bar and entertainment elements of the line's groundbreaking Fun Ship 2.0 product enhancement program, along with several exciting new features."

Passenger capacity will also be increased to 3,006.

Among the new highlights are a new racing-themed water park featuring Carnival's longest water slide, a tropical-themed Havana Bar and a full-service Asian restaurant. Top-deck amenities will include a spectacular three-level Serenity adults-only retreat – the largest in the Carnival fleet offering a pool, waterfall, a full bar, whirlpool, and, of course, magnificent sea views – as well as SportSquare featuring a ropes course, including an exciting new zip line feature, an array of deck and table games, a basketball court, jogging track, and a two-level miniature golf course".

What fun.

But wait 'till you see the piece about *Karanja* later..!



## FROM THE ARCHIVES....

After having enjoyed the old BI films shown at the BI reunion last October, we were delighted to come across this picture of one of the 'M'-class passenger liners anchored off Zanzibar, we think. Unfortunately, the detail is not clear enough to identify which particular ship it is.



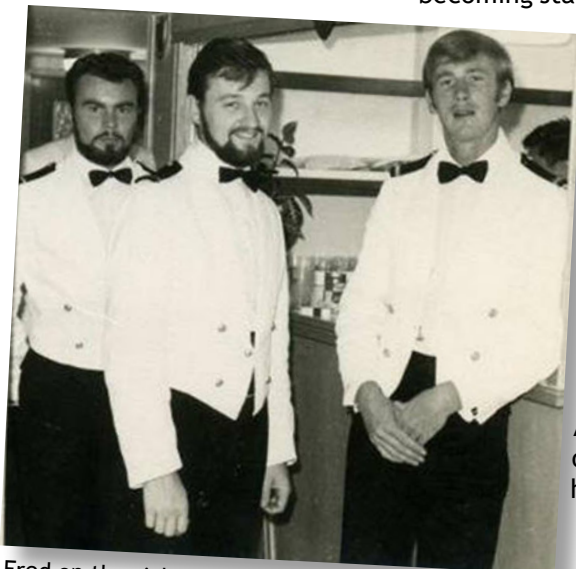
## FROM THE BOOK OF HELLOS AND GOODBYES...

We have several new readers, we are especially pleased to welcome Nick Harwood (UK) and Spike Taylor (Australia). Gentlemen, you are amongst friends and we do hope you will be able to contribute to our newsletter.

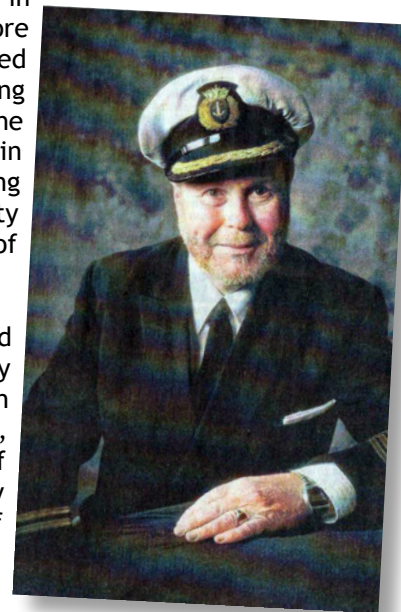
Capt Eric Milne has died in Inverness age 68 in March this year. He joined BI as a cadet in 1960. He served on a variety of ships including Chindwara, Dunera and the LSL fleet, before becoming staff officer on the Nevasa. In 1973 he transferred

to Cunard's oil division before being promoted to operations manager of the company's base in office complex in Aberdeen. Eric eventually left the shipping industry in 1982, joining a property management company as general manager of Inverness's new Eastgate Shopping Centre.

Also sadly departed from us is Fred Waddington. Fred was known to many readers of the BShip website for his often trenchant views and his signature signoff, FinF. He died suddenly at the beginning of April at his home in central France and many of us raised a glass of whisky at the time of his funeral.



Fred on the right with Trevor Rose and John Pinder



Eric Milne

## FROM THE BAR....



This dubious cartoon (depicting a situation totally unknown to your Editor - so he says - and, no doubt, to most of his more temperate readers!) that used to hang in the bar of the Juna. That pillar of rectitude, Peter Maynard, sent it into "...calling BI", saying that he claimed it as soon as it was known the Juna was going for scrap. He continues "the legend 'JUNA' was added to the original for my benefit by one of the cadets.

I left the ship in Bombay in a bit of a rush to fly to Mombasa and join the *Tairea* (Capt. Kelso), so did not get everyone's signature or comments. The definitive crew list is as per the April 1971 'BI News'. The master was Capt. Hankin and the mate Roger Childs. I was x3/O by the way. Those signatures or remarks I do recognise come from:

Bob Pratt 2/E/O, Eddie Falkous 3/E/O, Brian Allsop 4/E/O, Jim McEvoy JEO, Rene Carrons Marconi, Bob Marshall Electrical/O, John Paul Laycock Deck cadet, Pete Morris Deck cadet, Ken Robson JEO and Zaw Tint JEO (whose comments are in Burmese - he assured me they are not rude, but I've never got them translated).

Ali S H (bottom right hand corner) is the artist. I believe he gave the picture to the ship - perhaps some previous crew may know".

Thanks very much for this, Peter.

Apart from a taste in unusual art forms, Peter has a large collection of very good photographs of Formula 1 racing cars in action. Check out his website,

[www.grandprixphotographs.com](http://www.grandprixphotographs.com).



## FROM THE TECHNOLOGY FRONT....

Your editor has always been one for the simple life. Why, he even regarded the change from hatchboards and tarpaulins to Macgregor automatic closing hatches with suspicion. Imagine then his bemused look when he laid eyes on this ship, courtesy of Piet Sinke of Maasmonde Maritime ([newsclippings@gmail.com](mailto:newsclippings@gmail.com)), photographed by Richard Wisse - [www.richard-photography.nl](http://www.richard-photography.nl)

Apparently it is a pipelayer, although we almost had difficulty in deciding which was the front and back! We are content to let some technology pass us by!



## FROM THE MUSIC STUDIO....

Readers may recall our little piece on the musical talents of the Thai Navy in our last issue. Our researchers obviously enjoyed this, because they have discovered the following contribution from the crew of a large tanker.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvAeBgN0fVY>

It seems that there isn't much to do to while away the long hours at sea on a large tanker. Come on now, three rousing choruses of the Doxford song!!

## FROM THE VIDEO STUDIO....

Whilst you are on the YouTube site, you may like to watch this little offering on heavy lift naval construction.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_detailpage&v=6Pova2gC-x8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=6Pova2gC-x8)

On December 14, 2012 the 900 ton deckhouse for the U.S. Navy's future *USS Zumwalt* (DDG 1000) destroyer was lifted off a barge and onto the hull of the new ship at Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine. The deckhouse module was built in Gulfport, Mississippi and was shipped by barge to Bath Iron Works for installation on the ship.

The 155-foot-long, 60-foot-high and 60-foot-wide section was lifted 100 feet in the air using four cranes. Once at the prescribed height, the ship's 610-foot hull was then moved into position beneath the suspended module using the shipyard's electro-hydraulic ship transfer system and then lowered into place. The ship is the largest destroyer to be built at the Maine shipyard and the 900-ton lift itself more than doubled the shipyard's previous heaviest-lift record.

## FROM THE SOCIAL CALENDAR

The BI Eastern Region, Bier for short, are living up to their name, it sounds like (cryptic clue: Beer, geddit?!). They are meeting for lunch at their favourite hostelry The Thatchers Arms in Mount Bures, Essex, when the pub is holding another of its occasional beer festivals on Friday 24th May. They plan to meet up between 1200 and 1230 to sample some of the brews on offer and sit down to lunch at about 1300. They would love to have you join them if you are in the area. Please contact John Prescott or indeed "...calling BI" to book a place. Details of the pub and how to get there can be gathered from <http://www.thatchersarms.co.uk/>. Lifts can be arranged from local rail stations if needed, just let us know!



## FROM THE CRUISE GURU....



We must apologise to those readers amongst us who view our various pieces about cruise and passenger shipping with disdain. We are well aware that many of our readers may not have served on these ships and who consider it all not "proper work". But you must admit, it does provide an easy target for our little friendly jibes! With this in mind, we thank Roger Northcote for providing us with a newspaper cutting detailing the experiences of one Ted Scull, an American journalist and celebrated commentator on the current cruise scene.

“ Ted Scull recalls voyages made 25 years ago in the British India liners *Karanja* and *Kampala*. Travelling the length and breadth of India for several weeks by train in 1968 had been a rich and stimulating experience but now ensconced in the dusty first-class compartment aboard the Bombay-bound "Punjab Mail", I was looking forward to the predictable comforts of a British India liner, followed by two relaxing weeks in remote Seychelles Islands. Upon arrival at Bombay's Central Station I went directly to the Lentin Court Hotel on Strand Street, a short distance from the Gateway of India, thence to MacKinnon McKenzie, agents of British India. Located in the Ballard Estate, the cavernous passenger shipping office had separate counters for each Indian Ocean service. An impressive display of black-and-white photographs and ship models offered the travelling public a sampling of British India's large passenger fleet. The crowded room was noisy and very stuffy in spite of the efforts of the hard-working ceiling fans. The *Kampala* was due to sail in two days; the *Dumra* had just arrived from the Gulf; and the *Sirdhana* had made the front pages of Bombay newspapers with 517 passengers from Kenya and Uganda, the second shipload of East African Indians attempting to enter the country as permanent residents. I carried an exchange order issued in San Francisco for a berth from Bombay to the Seychelles and for another from Dar es Salaam to Durban. However, the Tanzania High Commission in New Delhi had refused to issue any entry permit because of a South African visa stamped in my passport. The shipping clerk altered the second routeing to read Mombasa-Durban for this reason and yet another. The Tanzanian government would not allow anybody to embark in a Tanzanian port for South Africa even though the ship regularly traded between the two countries. The clerk then sent me around to the Shipping Corporation of India offices to change the Seychelles to Dar es Salaam portion in the *State of Haryana* (ex-BI *Santhia*) to read Seychelles-Mombasa. I would simply take my chances of being able to cross from Kenya into Tanzania and back by road or rail. Two days later, on 24th March, I returned to the Ballard Estate for embarkation. The shed was bedlam and, through an opening, I recognised the *Kampala's* smart profile - white hull with a black stripe and the unmistakable black-and-white BI funnel markings. Once on board I found the most comfortable and inviting world since leaving America back in early January. A covered open promenade deck wrapped around the cabin class and economy class public rooms, the barrier dividing the two last at sea. The cabin class verandah cafe, fitted with wicker chairs and tables, occupied the enclosed forward portion. Inside, the public rooms had light wood-panelled walls outlined by dark wood striping, small groups of cushioned chairs and couches and heavy wooden chairs and tables. An entrance hall divided the forward music room from the smoke room and adjacent cocktail bar, cardroom, and tiny library. Ceiling fans circulated the hot air in port, and at sea, the open windows and punkah louvres provided ample ventilation. My cabin class A deck single had the bunk placed beneath the open window and was furnished with a wardrobe, wash basin, dresser and chair. At 21 years of age, the 10,304 gross ton *Kampala* appeared to be in excellent condition. Along with her sister, the 1948-build *Karanja*, the two ships maintained a regular Bombay - Seychelles - Mombasa - Dar es Salaam service. The *Karanja* also called at Karachi and traded south to Zanzibar, Beira, Lourenco Marques and Durban. The sea link would remain vital to the Seychelles until the airport, still in the planning stages, was completed. The cabin class passenger list numbered 77, including 35 children. All passengers with Anglo-Saxon surnames, with two exceptions, were booked to the Seychelles. The Indian and Goanese surnames, with no exceptions, were listed under Mombasa, Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar. The economy class and 800-berth bunk class were also heavily booked, mostly by Indians bound for East Africa. The *Kampala* sailed at 2pm, passing the two funnelled liner *President Roosevelt* on a round-the-world cruise, some two dozen merchant ships riding at anchor and a few sailing dhows. Then the ship set a lonely four-day five-night course to the Seychelles. The dining saloon was forward on the deck below the public rooms with windows facing three directions. The British menu, with popular lunchtime curries, made a welcome change from the exotic food of the last couple of weeks. Everyone at our table was bound for the Seychelles - a British doctor and his wife for a two-year posting, a British cigarette salesman making his company's first personal foray, a young Harrow and Cambridge Londoner with £60,000 in his pocket to spend on purchasing land, a Canadian woman heading for a volunteer job in Uganda following a short stay in the islands and myself on a half-year world tour by sea. The Second Engineer and Chief Electrician would appear the next night to add their everyday working experiences to this jolly group. The lazy days at sea began at 6:30am with the Goanese steward bringing 'bed tea', biscuits and fruit. He returned half an hour later to announce that the bath was drawn and, after a walk on deck, the 8:30am call to breakfast brought passengers to the dining saloon. Between lunch and dinner, most read quietly on deck, played cards and napped, awakening from time to time to gaze at the calm sea interrupted by startled flying fish breaking the surface. As there was no swimming pool, table tennis was about as energetic as one could get. The hour prior to lunch brought a regular contingent to the bar and

continued overleaf



## FROM THE CRUISE GURU.... (continued)



before dinner, a much larger group gathered, with the men now dressed in long trousers, white shirts and ties, but seldom jackets.

On the second day at sea Captain Brown, a portly, bald man sent around a pre-dinner party invitation reading in part, "for cocktails on the Dance Deck at 7:00 to 7:40pm". The Dance Deck was a covered space on the promenade deck open on both sides. Hinge screens could be lowered to enclose the area in cool weather and, because the partitions were considered temporary, this space was not counted in the gross tonnage figures. The party was a stiff affair where everyone tended to gravitate to those they already knew. On another evening, a book title contest after dinner broke down all barriers when couples volunteered to act out such names as "Valley of the Dolls", "Barefoot in the Park" and "Kon Tiki". The successful dance that followed had everyone foxtrotting together until near midnight.

The weather deteriorated as we approached the Seychelles. On the morning of 19th March, a few small islands came into view between the short, heavy downpours. At 7am, Mahe appeared, looking big, beautiful and looming high out of the water. With flags flying, the *Kampala* eased slowly towards the island with an Asian deckhand taking frequent soundings from a platform cantilevered from the forward deck. He relayed the markings on the line with a shout up to the bridge. Soon the anchors were let go with the splash and the rush of metal grating against metal. The small boats that had kept their distance came alongside and immigration officials and hotel representatives boarded.

Disembarkation coincided with a tropical rain squall of drenching proportions and, while the baggage was carefully shielded by a canvas tarpaulin in a separate boat, the passengers were not and the wet half-hour ride to the Long Pier was spent bailing out the boat. The Seychellois that stood in the doorway of the pier shed had faces ranging from light-skinned European to black Africans. The French had been the first European settlers to arrive in the 18th century and had intermarried with African labourers imported to work the copra plantations. This industry was still the keystone of the island's economy and several motorised schooners were docked along the town pier unloading coconuts. A Land Rover belonging to the Seychelles Development Corporation took me over the mountain roads, through thick rainforests and down to a rocky shoreline broken by wide sandy beaches. The Hotel des Seychelles, the largest establishment in the islands with 72 beds, consisted of a collection of small stone buildings with tin roofs and a grass roofed dining hall. The cabins faced west through the trees to the sea and Silhouette Island, several miles offshore, became a lovely backdrop at sunset. After dark, we watched from the beaches the *Kampala*, her lights ablaze, sailed past on her way to East Africa.

*to be continued in our next issue*

## FROM THE COMPETITION DEPT...

We resume our little "Where Are We Now?" competition with a delve into the historical photo archives from the early 20th century. This smallish port has actually featured in more modern times within our own pages. That will send you scurrying to the back issues! Hurry along, the prizes are all waiting to be mailed out. Send in your answers to "[...calling BI](#)" now!!



## FROM THE EMAILS...

We received the following email a little time ago, seeking help from a researcher into BI matters:

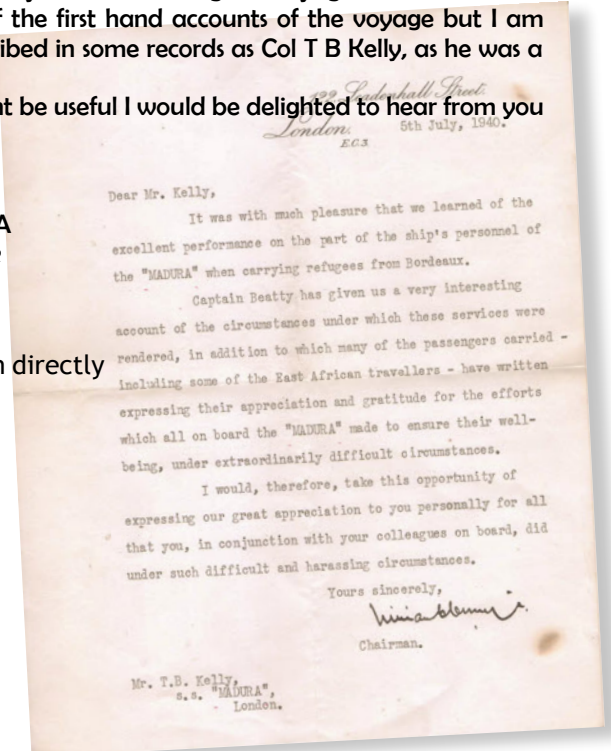


"I noticed from The British India Steamship website that the voyage of the ss *Madura* from Bordeaux in 1940 has been mentioned several times and that people have shared some information about this. I am looking into it as part of the research for a book on Thomas Bernard Kelly who was the ship's surgeon on that voyage. I have a letter from the chairman of the company to him following the voyage which I attach. I have details of many of the famous passengers and some of the first hand accounts of the voyage but I am interested in any specific references to Kelly (who may be described in some records as Col T B Kelly, as he was a retired Indian Army Medical Service doctor). If you have any information or know of other sources that might be useful I would be delighted to hear from you

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Regards

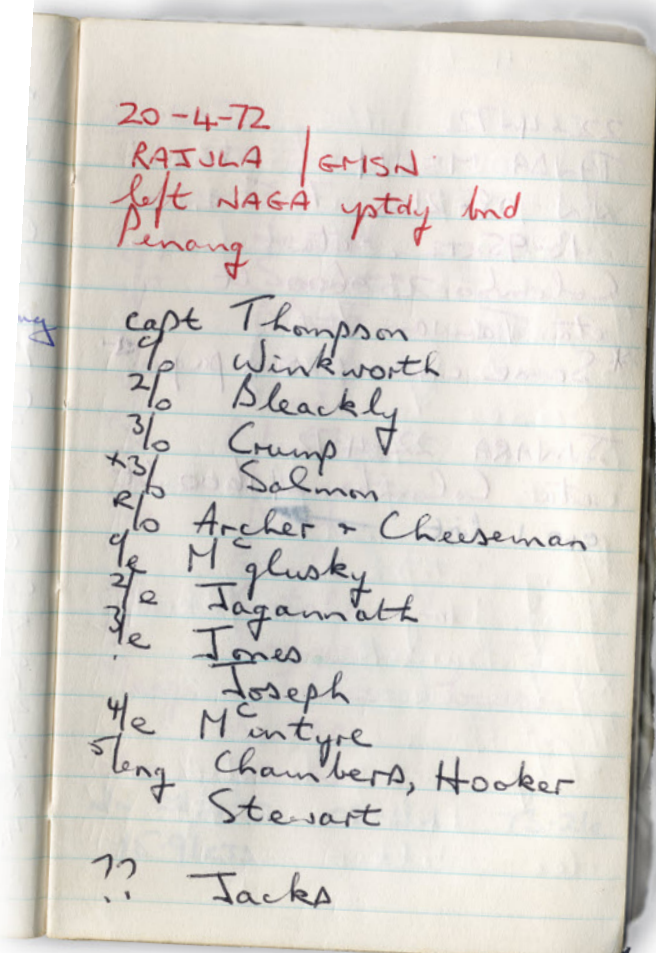
David

David Worsfold, 183 Chelmsford Road, Shenfield, Essex CM15 8SA  
Tel: 01277 221445 Mob: 07885 348982, david.worsfold@zen.co.uk



If you can help David with any information, please contact him directly or send us the details and we will forward onto him.

## FROM THE LITTLE BLACK BOOK...



Once again we thank good friend David Hammond for yet another page from his little black book of BI crew lists. This time we feature the good ship *Rajula* from 41 years ago.



FROM THE RECRUITMENT BROCHURE...



Your  
Life at  
Sea  
with

We thank reader Nick Pearson for these photographs from a BI recruitment booklet published circa 1971 (although we suspect that Ray Boyd and Tony Bernthal may also have something to do with them).

That's cadet Nick poring over the chart table on the *Aska's* maiden voyage. He looks as though he knows what he's doing and is surely providing a fine example for any young person wanting to go to sea. He opines that the engineering cadet receiving instruction in the other photograph is, in fact, deck cadet Graham Ashton. Why this should be so your editor is at a loss to understand. Surely the engineers were equally photogenic or maybe they were just busy, doing a proper job.



...calling  
**B-I**