



# Under the Clock

Issue 74 – June 2011

~ Patron: Doug Duxbury ~



ANZAC Day 2011. At the Pub - we were early this year being in the front of the March. We were there at about 10.45 and Ray Morton had been there long before us for our annual lunch. The Pub opened at 11.30am but some of our lads did not wish to wait and had gone home by then.



## Annual Report from the Secretary

This year has brought celebration as well as sadness among members. On the happy note, Vindi Boy George Shepherd Ashby and wife Lily celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. They were very proud in receiving congratulatory messages from our Queen and the Governor General. Both of them are still very active and happy giving their time to the community of Ipswich entertaining free to Aged Care and Nursing Homes. Looking through our membership list, there must be some celebrations of either reaching the matured age of a big "O" (maybe 70 or 80) among members and possibly some important anniversaries as well. However it would be nice if we do know so that we could help to celebrate with you.

We had a visit from Vindi boy Alan Tompkins and his wife Maureen from the UK. Alan was very thrilled to be able to meet some of our members at our June meeting. Recently, I met his son, Alan Junior and he said that Alan and Maureen are coming for another Aussie holiday soon and we look forward to see them again.

Our social events this year started with a luncheon at Jupiters Casino in June. We went to Macleay Island on 6<sup>th</sup> July to celebrate with Bill Gould's 88<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Bill came to the Ferry Point to meet us and we had a great day. Some went for the poker machines and some sang on the stage. As Bill does not get the opportunity to be able to come to our social events, we will do the same again this year to share our fellowship with him.

Our MN Day in September was celebrated with the Mariners at the Greenbank RSL. It was a good day. Fred made his speech about Vindi boys as there were some people who do not know who the Vindi boys are. His speech was followed by our Ray Morton who rang the bell. This bell had been installed at the War Memorial and never had been rang. Fred and the Mariners of Greenbank have held an exhibition prior to Anzac Day at the Logan City Council Library. Fred is now in the process of organising another Exhibition for MN Day this year at the Logan City Council Library and the Kingston Butter Factory. He is anxiously waiting for anyone who could submit some Memorabilia.

Some of us enjoyed our time at the WA Reunion in November and we look forward to the next one in Adelaide, SA in November. Our Christmas Party at the Beenleigh Tavern was very successful where some members showed their skills and talents in entertaining us. It may not have suited everyone but it was just a fun thing.

In February, some members attended the Tony Scott's Concert at the Yeronga RSL. The Concert was entertaining. There was also door prizes and guess who was the winner of a "Piggy Bank?" Terry Creasey was the winner and he said he wished the Piggy Bank was full!

On Anzac Day this year, some 13 Vindi lads and 3 lassies marched in Brisbane with the Master Mariners joining behind us. Unfortunately, at the end of the march, George Shepherd Ashby was unwell and the Anzac paramedic organised for George to be sent to the hospital for a check-up. Luckily he was able to go home in the afternoon as George had suffered dehydration. This is a lesson we have learnt from that for the future, we will make sure that the boys carry a small bottle of water with them. After the march the boys gathered at the Central Railway Station Pub to swing the lamp. This year, we were near the front of the march so we were first in the pub. It was a warm day and for \$5.00 we had sausages, mash and a free drink. Oh boy! Did we need that drink? (Our tongues were hanging out!!!) The day after I had a phone call from Mike Jenkins who had seen

us at the march. He said he is a Vindi lad and was keen to join our membership. We look forward to meet Mike at our June meeting.

In April, our member from Yass John Sunnucks and wife Rosetta came to Qld for a holiday but unfortunately, it was before our April meeting. However, we still managed to organise a day to meet with a couple of Vindi boys for morning tea. We enjoyed our get together and John hopes to come back again.

At our April meeting, some of our members have joined membership with the Golden Years Seniors Centre. We are hoping that as being their members, we would be able to sustain our position in using the club premises without any problems. We hope that the members who are regularly attending our Vindi meeting could do the same.

We are very pleased to see Vindi boy Doug Bennett returning to our meeting after being ill for some time. Doug looks well and as usual always with a smile. We wish him well and that good health will stay with him. Sadly there has been some illnesses among some members this year and we hope that they will recover speedily.

Our library is now being looked after by Roger Wilson. Most of our VCR tapes have been converted into DVD as most people today have DVD players only. A list of our library is available and if you wish to have books or DVDs, please contact Roger who will bring them to you at meetings. Alternatively, it can be posted to you at your expense.

In the Newsletter of December 2010, I had mentioned about the "TS Vindicatrix – National Ship Register". I wonder if anyone had sent their records to Dave Smith who is organising the register.

Sadly, we have farewelled two Vindi boys – Ernie Houston in September, Allan Kelly in April and also Carmel Malcomson, wife of Vindi boy Len Malcomson in February. The memorial plates of Ernie and Roger Jewson (died in April 2009) were placed on the Vindi Plaque at our meeting in October 2010.

The floods in Brisbane and North Queensland in early 2011 have brought worries to many people, and also the earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand. Our members were lucky not being affected but our friends here at home and friends in Christchurch have suffered badly. We are sorry for them and trust that time will heal the loss they have endured.

The committee would like to thank members for their contributions through the year for our raffle prizes, food for our sausage sizzles and also your "loose change" for the Tower. Our Social Convenor, Pauline Harris and husband Vindi boy Norman are going for their holidays from 19<sup>th</sup> June for about 3 months in the UK; also June and Mike Gallagher; Mike and Stella Jenkins all to the UK. We wish them all a very safe and happy holiday.

May I say that the toughest job for the Treasurer every year is collecting "subscriptions." Soon after the announcement of the subscription at the AGM, please send your subscriptions at your earliest convenience. You will soon receive a note for this.

**As we have sailed very well for the last 15 years, we will continue to sail peacefully for many years to come with great fellowship and friendship stay well and stay aboard the "Good Ship Vindicatrix".**

Smooth Sailing,  
Kim Cohen

## ~ Obituary ~

**Allan Thomas Kelly 1935 – 2011**



Allan was born 20<sup>th</sup> February 1935 and grew up in Aintree, Liverpool, England. As a teenager, work was hard to find and at the age of 16½ he left home and went to Sharpness to join the training ship “VINDICATRIX” in 1951.

Like all Vindi boys after the harsh training, Allan joined various merchant navy ships and travelled the world. On his return trip in 1955 on shore leave being New Year’s Eve, he met Cathy King. Friendship and romance blossomed and they were married on Christmas Eve 1957. Allan’s only brother had died and having no other close family, Allan became very close to the “King” family, being Cathy’s brothers and sisters. Allan and Cathy were married for 50 years and sadly Cathy died in November 2007. As they had no children of their own, Allan and Cathy loved all the nephews and nieces of the “King” family, some twenty two of them.

In 1963, Allan & Cathy emigrated to New Zealand where he joined the New Zealand merchant navy and worked on the coast. In 1965 Allan went back to Liverpool, England to commission the ship “WAHINE” and was a crew member when bringing the ship back to New Zealand for the Inter-Island Ferry. Unfortunately the “WAHINE” as many people would know sank in Wellington in 1968 with a huge loss of lives.

Later Allan took a shore job where he served as a “SCREW”, the proper name being a “Prison Warden” for 21 years. Allan and Cathy retired to the Gold Coast and he kept himself active as a volunteer worker at the Currumbin Bird Sanctuary until his recent illness.

Allan & Cathy spent their retirement holidays travelling and mostly visiting their families in Christchurch, New Zealand, also in Geelong, Victoria and Cathy’s one sister in America. They were also active members of Vindicatrix Queensland and attended most social functions and the annual Down-Under Reunions. Allan never missed the annual Anzac Day march in Brisbane.

Allan was at our Vindi Christmas party last December and he was cheerful and healthy. Sadly he was taken ill sometime in March. Allan being a very proud and strong man would not let on about his deteriorating health. His neighbours who were concerned over his health contacted his sister-in-law Margo in Geelong who immediately came to care for him. His brother-in-law Michael from Christchurch followed soon after Margo arrived. Both of them had been caring for Allan over the last two months. Unfortunately, Allan was diagnosed with a Brain Tumour and never recovered from his operation in early April. Allan crossed the Bar on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2011.

Allan’s funeral service on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May at the Funeral Home & Chapel, Mudgeeraba was attended by some fourteen Queensland Vindi members. Most of us had the opportunity to say our “Final Farewell” to Allan as he lay dressed in his Vindi white shirt, blazer and tie in the open casket which was draped with the RED DUSTER.

To sum up, Allan was a gentleman, soft-spoken person always with a smile. We will miss Allan and his friendship. He will always linger in our memories not only as a friend but as a staunch VINDI BOY. He will surely Rest in Peace.

**The Saudi Royal family** recently unveiled plans to construct the world’s tallest building - which will be an incredible one MILE high. Kingdom Tower in Saudi Arabia will be 1.6km tall (one mile) when it is completed and consist of hotels, offices, luxury apartments and a shopping centre. The structure will be twice the height of the world’s current tallest skyscraper, the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, and FIVE times as tall as Britain’s highest building, The Shard.

It will take a staggering 12 minutes to reach the top of the **£12 billion** (*yes pounds*) building in the escalator. The megastructure will boast a staggering 12 million cubic square feet of interior space - 12 times more than Number One Canada Water in London’s Canary Wharf.

It is being financed by the Saudi Royal Family-owned Kingdom Holding Company - which is the nation’s largest company. Skyscraper specialists Emaar, which built the Burj, are understood to have won the contract to construct the Kingdom Tower, which will be built outside the Red Sea port city of Jeddah as the centre piece of a new **80,000** population city. **Yes WHY? Just food for thought.** Editor

**Editor:** You may recall I wrote stories about some Cairns trading ships that later went on to serve as navy ships during the war and that newer Cairns suburbs then were named after these ships, the Manunda, Manoora and lately the Kanimbla. Well these suburbs had name hand-painted plaques (one per suburb) and underneath (supplementary) gave a very small reference to that particular ships history though not very accurate. I recently noticed the these had now gone and new suburb shiny signs put up with no reference now to the ships.

In my wisdom, wrote to the Council requesting these signs be kept for historic prosperity and giving why my interest. I was emailed back that unfortunately they had been recycled, but they had one **that I could have to keep** regarding all the 3 ships and they then asking if possible a history of each, which I have done and think stunned them, they asking just for a few words and don’t think they actually knew how big these ships were or any real history. So now the proud owner of a sign, ha.



# MS Kanimbla



Along with the merchant ships Manunda, Manoura with Cairns suburbs named after them was the MS Kanimbla and a new modern suburb.

The well established Australian coastal shipping company McIlwraith McEachern Ltd was a company that originated in Scotland out of a company that commenced on February 1, 1875 by Mr Andrew McIlwraith and Mr. Donald McEachern and at first the company was named the "Scottish Line." Soon they had eleven sailing ships that carried migrants and cargo to the north of Australia, especially Queensland. The company proved to be very successful and soon they added a steamship the SS Hero to their fleet. Both partners frequently visited Australia and opened several offices in Queensland, then one in Sydney and

later in Melbourne. With the trade having shifted from the Britain migrant trade, they decided on the prosperous Australian coastal trade and in the 1880's they began to operate their steamships with their red and black topped funnels along the Australian coast, covering Western Australia to north Queensland. Their early ships included Tagliaferro, Norkoowa, Eddystone. All carried cargo, livestock and a few passengers. Eventually the passenger trade increased and larger ships were obtained such as the 7,000-ton passenger liner SS Karoola in 1909. The next liner to be delivered was in 1913 was the 9,424-ton SS Katoomba, a larger version of her earlier sister and was also was built by the Harland & Wolff. These two ships were the pride of the McIlwraith McEachern fleet!

As SS Karoola was due to be retired in May 1936, McIlwraith McEachern ordered a new and larger passenger liner again to be built by the ever reliable Harland and Wolff Limited at Belfast in Northern Ireland. She would be the last large passenger ship especially built for this Australian ship owner. She was laid down in July 1933.. She was completed on 26 April 1936 and ran her trials several days later. The luxuriously appointed (Motor Ship) MS Kanimbla delivery voyage to Australia was quite unique, as she became the only Australian owned passenger liner to transport migrants from Britain to Australia in style and comfort. MS Kanimbla arrived in Sydney on June 10 and later that day she commenced her maiden coastal voyage to Melbourne, departing there on the 12th. and sailed for Adelaide and Fremantle. Her regular service operated between Fremantle in Western Australia, Adelaide in South Australia, Melbourne in Victoria, Sydney in New South Wales and Brisbane, Mackay and Cairns in North Queensland. She partnered on the coastal service with the company's SS Katoomba until 1946, when she was sold, as well as the Adelaide Steamship Company MS Manoora, sailing west in summer and north in winter.

However the MS Kanimbla was unique for so many reasons, but the following beat them all: she just happened to be the only passenger liner in history to have a fully operational radio broadcasting station built into the ship at the time of construction. The equipment was manufactured by AWA in Australia and had been shipped to Ireland for installation whilst the ship was still under construction.

Kanimbla had an extremely smart and a modern looking profile for her day, her forward mast was raked a little further aft than her aft main mast and she had a smart raked bow (yet a she had traditional cruiser stern) giving her a streamlined look. She featured a rounded forward glazed superstructure, which was a new innovation for an Australian coastal ship.

Nothing was spared in fitting out the Kanimbla featuring the most luxurious accommodation of any of the previous coastal ships. She accommodated 203 passengers in First Class and 250 in Second Class. Kanimbla proved to be a huge success with the Australian public as well as with international visitors. Both classes had a fine range of lounges, dining rooms, glazed promenades and shady deck spaces, as well as ample sport decks. Cabin types varied from twin suites, to twin bedded rooms, two berth, and singles in First class, although some cabins also had upper berths available for families, these could be sold as three or four berth cabins. Second class was mostly twin, two, three and four berth as well as some small dormitories, which were suitable for an overnight voyage between "short hop" ports

**War Time Duties:** She continued her varied schedules along the Australian coast until the outbreak of World War II when the Australian Royal Navy who had her refitted at Garden Island Dockyard, Sydney, requisitioned her on September 5, 1939. Armaments were fitted as follows. 7 x 6-inch guns. 2 x 3-inch anti-aircraft guns. 2 x Lewis light machine guns.

She was officially commissioned into the Royal Navy as Armed Merchant Cruiser and reregistered as the HMS KANIMBLA on October 6, 1939. Armed Merchant Cruisers were employed to operate long ocean patrols looking out for enemy raiders and blockade-runners, thus supplementing cruisers and allowing them to be released for the more arduous fleet duties. HMS Kanimbla departed Sydney on 13 December 1939 for Hong Kong under the command of Commander Frank E. Getting RAN, with a complement drawn almost entirely from the Royal Australian Navy, including Australian reservists, having a total complement of 343. She was Based in Hong Kong and mostly stationed in the South China Sea. She kept a constant patrol of the area and ensured that a good number of large German Liners were stranded in Japanese ports, including the 18,000 ton Norddeuther Lloyd Liner SS Scharnhorst.

They made several unsuccessful attempts to break out. In June 1940 the HMS Kanimbla was dispatched to Singapore where she took patrol and escort duties around Malaya (Malaysia) and the East Indies (Indonesia), eventually extending out into the Indian

Ocean. On the night of August 24, 1941 HMS Kanimbla, with 300 Indian troops on board led a flotilla in a surprise attack on the Iranian port of Bandar Shahpur capturing eight German and Italian merchant vessels all containing valuable cargoes, as well as two Iranian gunboats and a floating dock. Kanimbla went alongside the burning Italian tanker Bronte and fought the fires while engaging a train with her main armament and with her 3-inch guns. She remained in the region until October 11, supervising the port and carrying out salvage work on the captured vessels, including salvage work on the German freighter Hohenfels.

After further work in Indian waters during the latter part of October and November, Kanimbla proceeded to Singapore and escorted the first convoy out of that city after the Japanese attack on Malaya. She arrived in Melbourne on Christmas Day. She carried out further convoy work off the Australian coast and in both the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. On April 2 Kanimbla arrived in Sydney to be converted to a Landing Ship Infantry (LSI) for operations in the Pacific and again in Asia.

The conversion involved the removal of her 6-inch guns and the augmentation of her anti-aircraft armament by the addition of a 4-inch gun and 2-pounder and 20mm close range weapons. Radar was also added. She was fitted to carry 16 to 24 landing craft, which were raised and lowered by davits fitted to either side of her superstructure. Scrambling nets were fitted to enable troops to quickly enter the landing craft after they had been lowered. Steel sheets replaced the ship's interior wood panelling and all available space was converted for the carriage of 1,280 troops although more were carried on various occasions.

On June 1, 1943 she was decommissioned as the Landing Ship Infantry, and reregistered as the HMAS Kanimbla, and on July 30 under the command of Commander N.H. Shaw RAN. HMAS Kanimbla recommenced new duties in the Pacific and in Asia and she continued to do her duties with great courage and completed each campaign with great success!

At the end of the war HMAS Kanimbla was employed in repatriating Australian servicemen from the Pacific Islands and also in returning Dutch dependents to the East Indies (Indonesia). Between October 1946 and June 1948 she sailed between Australia and Japan transporting British Commonwealth Occupation Forces. During these voyages she was also required to make calls to various Pacific Islands to relocate persons and cargoes. In 1948 Kanimbla was selected by the Royal Australian Navy to head for the United Kingdom to take personnel and stores in order for them to commission the new HMAS Sydney, as well as returning with British personnel who had enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy and 432 displaced persons.

The Australian Government paid for a comprehensive refit of the war weary MS Kanimbla and having been all spruced up and once again looking absolutely splendid and ready for service she was officially returned to McIlwraith McEachern Ltd on December 13, 1950.

**Post War Service:** There had been a good number of improvements made, but also there had been a change of passenger capacities, which were now; 231 First Class and 125 Second Class for Coastal Liner services and 371 One Class for Cruises. Also, MS Kanimbla was now registered as being 11,004 GRT. During one of her coastal voyages .

In December 1960, Kanimbla ran aground on a sandbank in Moreton Bay just out of Brisbane. She was soon re-floated and taken to Brisbane where she was repaired.

Sadly just like passenger shipping worldwide, Kanimbla's passenger loadings was suffering badly as airline trade was beginning to become the main competition and airfares were becoming cheaper and cheaper. Thus, the once booming coastal service began to suffer to the point that tragically had to stop most of her services, but McIlwraith McEachern decided to at least retain their flagship Kanimbla on a part time basis operating on the coastal service, whilst also operating cruises to Asia until 1961.

However, in 1960 she was placed on the market and a Japanese Company purchased the best Australia liner ever to be built, our beloved MS Kanimbla always to be remembered as "Australia's finest coastal liner."

**TSMV Oriental Queen:** In 1961 the ship was taken over by the Pacific Transport Company and renamed (Twin screw motor vessel) TSMV Oriental Queen and registered in Panama. She received a number of modifications and her hull was painted white, her funnel was painted in bands of red, white and black, whilst her interiors were given a more casual and tropical look. The Indonesian Government who employed her for the next three years transporting pilgrims from Indonesia to Jeddah chartered her. Upon completion of the agreement in 1963 she was chartered to an Australian company, Dover Pacific Cruises, and she operated several Pacific Cruises during the summer of 1963/64.

TSMV Oriental Queen began to operate a programme of cruises between Australia, New Zealand and Japan and during one stay in Yokohama she was used as a floating hotel for Australian and New Zealand visitors to the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games. Her accommodation now included 4 suites, as well as single, twin, triple and four berth cabins. She soon became a popular sight in both New Zealand and Australia and became a popular means of crossing the Tasman Sea to and from Australia. As a cruise ship she offered economical fares. Thus being a hit with both the younger and older generations.

With her cruises so popular it was decided to fit her with an outdoor pool and a Lido Deck, which enhanced her even further as a cruise ship. She also operated a number of Pacific cruises during 1965 and 1966. Oriental Queen was a regular visitor to both Auckland and Sydney. In January 1967, Toyo Yusen decided to purchase the ship outright, however that same month they also withdrew the once proud Australian ship from her homeland forever.

Upon arrival from Auckland on January 13, 1967, she sailed the following day for a one way Fly/Cruise package to Hong Kong and Japan. From there she operated from Yokohama to Guam and was chartered in 1968 to operate 5 cruises to Honolulu and Los Angeles. Upon completion of the Hawaii/USA charter, TSMV Oriental Queen resumed the Yokohama Guam service until arriving back in Yokohama on October 6 1973, which would prove to be her final voyage. She was laid up and duly sold to Taiwanese breakers, arriving in Kaohsiung on December 7, 1973 to be broken up.

**The proud Aussie served the seas for 37 years, and it is said; although she was aging, she had a good heart!**



## Colourful Characters

Bill Davis



Entering this life in the back of an army ambulance at the gates of Stone Hill Hospital, Beckenham, Kent, I made a nice but tardy birthday present for my mother back in April 1944. Life then was in turmoil with home (10 miles from London) being in the Hitler "V" bomb alley (69 V1's and 5 V2's hits) and hence being evacuated to Bluebell Lane in Liverpool soon after, so I'm told.

Home life was with mum, my older sisters Rosemary and Moira and dad in the home guard as "Fire Chief" which, being a baby I knew nothing. My education was the norm of infants, primary and secondary schools and did nothing exceptional having learnt the art of truancy, street smarts and quick thinking. In sport my interest laid in boxing, quickly going through my age peers, but when put against opponents years older than me and my hands got to be damaged by referees standing on them, interest waned.

I joined the TS Sekh, Sea Cadets and enjoyed it immensely playing the bugle, .303 target shooting, knots & spicing and trips away, visiting naval establishments and ships thinking/hoping to join the Royal Navy later as an artificer (engineer/mechanic). But when I applied was knocked back because of my limited education, so lost interest and deciding on a sea career in the Merchant Navy.

Appling to the Shipping Federation in the Minorities, London and taking odd jobs until 16 years. knocking down air-raid shelters with a jack hammer, wheel barrowing concrete or carrying bricks soon became quite fit and hardened waiting with bated breath for my dreams to come reality. Yes, got my papers but not as a deckie but catering having failed an eyesight test. *(Funny thing my wife always reminds any passengers in our car never to be driven by me unless I'm wearing my glasses).* Undeterred thinking I could get this changed in time attended the Vindi in the winter of early 1960 and can say I have never been so cold in all my life – the canal was frozen. *In observation Sea Cadet lads took to Vindi training and the camp a lot easier than those without that experience.*

On leaving the Vindi and reporting for duty at the KG5 pool was told no ships were available, but work at the Union Castle Line offices helping serve lunch to the staff, also a catering school for upgrade 2nd Stewards and Chefs. So with a promise of a ship, a wage and accommodation paid for at the Custom House, Flying Angel, took it on. Of course the ships chandlery at the rear of the offices had my greater interest, seeing what was in store, playing cards and talking with the splicers and riggers.

Seven weeks later met my first ship being the Pretoria Castle

with a six week turn-around to Durban and all the usual on the way, Tenerife, Capetown, East London and Port Elizabeth. Thinking this a good way to earn a living did it again, but £12 a month didn't go far. Now having seen South Africa was looking further afield and snagged a Port boat and set sail on the Port Lincoln for ports unknown around the world for the next nine months, out though the Suez to Oz, Oz to the States, up the east and west coast and believe we went through the Panama Canal four times tramping around. Back again to OZ, I even got a taste of Cairns in far north Queensland with all dirt roads and hitching rails outside the numerous pubs. Then back to the land of the free and liberty. What a sight sailing into New York in a light mist and out of the sea arose the Statue of Liberty, stunning and absolutely unforgettable.

My fondest memories of being at sea was on the Tate & Lyle sugar boats collecting sugar around the Continent and West Indies, the crew mixed with the officers and spirits were allowed. I even got a single berth with a desk and fitted wardrobe, not the usual. We mixed with the friendly locals in the many small anchorages and the warm weather was always delightful. The dress of the day never formal just cut down jeans, tee-shirts and thongs unless in UK waters and an official visit may occur.

Many ships, many companies and many trips from Blue Star, NZSC, Shaw Savill, King Ling and Royal Mail never really happy with my lot in catering and thankfully never having to be a winger (passenger waiter) decided enough was enough when taking a ship from the Blackwater river, Essex to South Shields (Home Trade) in a blizzard without ballast and all hands called on deck to remove ice for fear of capsizing. Never looking back from the dock gates, swallowed the anchor and an end to an era.

My yearning to get on the tools came to pass with a late apprenticeship in the motor trade and subsequent trade schooling at the Bromely Tech for a City and Guild trade certificate. I went ready willing and able and took to study like a duck to water. I not only did one day a week, but also two nights and copious homework. City & Guild study is all theory and hands on mechanics learnt in the workshop, though some metalwork is taught in metallurgy. Study was fast and furious never allowing one to miss a single lesson.

All good things come to an end and mine at the age of 21 years advised that I must now be paid an adult wage and my sponsorship to trade school would be terminated. Biding my time found an alternative employer feeling most dejected, but no more school unfortunately.

With more time on my hands had time now to think of the future and time to play. It was winter, cold and miserably and having to wait an hour for a bus I contemplated my options and came up with migration to Australia, to a place I knew and liked. To boost this I even got my mate and his family also to apply and successfully. But, always a but was I would later meet my wife to-be Shirley at a party, growing fonder towards the end of the year, on bended knee asked for her hand in marriage. For her to travel with me was an impossibility as she was indentured as a Children's Nurse and to break her contract would put her dad as guarantor in a poor financial position. *Shirley's dad by the way was a GSS lad back in 1933, an RAAF war invalid and a real gentleman.*

So sailing on the PO ship Himalaya with my mate and family took my leave of England and said my goodbyes to the pompous, hierarchal duplicity and bigotry of my birth place. Also to my parents and fiancé on the dock, Valentine's Day 1966. Fortunately I still had my MN No. 1 keys so had the run of the ship and pantries at any hour, even having an evening in the crews Pig & Whistle pub. My friend having a ship-board romance eventually married and have three sons.....

Arriving in Adelaide to start a new life, gained employment at a BMC motor dealership and of all things put behind a viewing glass for customers, tuning their cars. With a host of modern equipment, smart white overalls and a cleaner forever hovering, turned out to be a nice job. My accommodation was in Rundle Street what would be now looking down on the Mall. Itching feet made me move on this time to Perth, WA where I was told the streets were paved with gold. But first a stop off, working for the Commonwealth Railway out in the desert near Woomera laying heavier and longer welded lines, and living in a converted railway carriage camp named "Birthday" ha, I was game for anything.

Moving onto WA worked for CBH out in the wheat fields loading train trucks, all part of the experience in becoming an Australian. At the end of the season and with my fiancé arriving soon took up residence in a Perth suburban family guest house in Belmont and back on the tools. All too soon Shirley arrived flying from the middle of winter to the middle of summer and the Perth summers can be quite daunting.

Marriage soon followed along with a mortgage and the pater of tiny feet in the guise of a son and daughter and by this time switched from car mechanics to earth moving equipment. In gaining my trade papers at the Victoria Park TAFE campus, decided to rent out our house, buy a caravan and head north to the iron ore mine boom. Sometimes for a change, off the tools and sat in a seat of a truck, bull dozer, loader or anything that moved. As things happen we ended up in Darwin, which to us, after 2 years in the bush seemed like bliss and a big city.

It was not long before being offered a house to go with my job as Service Manager for Motorama in a Nissan/Kawasaki/Case Machinery distributorship for security of tenure to being a permanent resident, and another mortgage. For extra cash would assemble Nissan Patrols out of boxes at night and later Kawasaki motor cycles. One day out of the blue I was approached (head hunted) to take over a workshop to maintain garbage trucks, though all new then and a new contract, with a promise of double my pay and pick my own hours, fell in. Though that did not last long with Cyclone Tracy blowing our house to Kingdom come and with southern intervention, said my good bye a year later.

Rebuilding our house to a higher building code and a change of circumstances led me to purchase a tip truck for the clean-up of Darwin in the construction phase and from there began building a company of haulage contracting and diversities like swimming construction and maintenance and concrete delivery. Shirley in the meantime gaining her mining right to extract material for sale and prospecting suitable sites.

It was during this time I noticed that our son Steven was lacking in motivation, not really being interested in any sports, so I got him involved in cycling racing with the purchase of a new road bike and us as a family meeting new friends that have survived the distance. We as parents got involved with administration and both qualified as Commissaires (referee's). We joined the committee with me as Treasurer with a turnover of 300k a year, and later Shirley as President as I took my leave to concentrate on other matters. We attended National titles each year in road and track and I even took up roles as first a cycle mechanic and later State Manager, Shirley as State Federal Secretary to the annual National Conferences. So we got to see a lot of Australia and meet many top class athletes, coaches and management and enjoyed every moment. One of the year's greatest race in Darwin is the "Top End Tour" with a cast of hundreds of interstate riders and support, racing from Katherine to Darwin over the Queen's Birthday weekend and one I enjoyed for many years as lead car driver, watching all the 1st class action in my rear vision mirror with siren blaring and roof top light flashing. Our daughter Christine was now

also getting in on the act as First Aid attendant.

Eighteen years later after successfully selling my business and our house headed for Queensland in a state of semi - retirement on a date and time hard to forget as we went through the last set of traffic lights at 11am - 11/11/1989 and a minute silence. As free birds we travelled the length and breadth of Queensland staying where ever we liked with no plans for the future ending up in Brisbane at an ex-Darwin mates place and came to appreciate what it could offer in the way of culture and a weather pattern of 4 seasons not seen for some time. But later to regard the winter nights as the pits.

Life in our Greenslopes, Brisbane unit came a tad boring so I decided to go back to work, but this time in a more sedentary position, so threw my hat in the ring for a position in Queensland Treasury. Having continued my studies in Darwin for business management and accountancy, helped me across the line. Slowly climbing the career ladder along this 15 year career and winning a position in Cairns with a big promotion after beaten 28 other aspiring professionals. Having to move lock stock and barrel at their cost from our newish house in Eight Mile Plains, was something we were going to do ourselves later anyway, so say thank you. With an office in Cairns and a working area south to Tully, north-west to Mt Isa and north to Thursday Island was very busy, with never a dull moment and whether travelling on a plane or in a executive car I often pinched myself to how lucky I was - was I dreaming? My actual work was ensuring that the various gambling acts, regulations and rules were being adhered to in pubs, clubs and casinos to lotteries, media competitions, raffles, and bingo to horse racing etc. Wherever there is money involved there is someone trying to beat the system.

One fine day in Cairns we had a visit to our office from Brisbane H/Q in the form of a young fella who started at the same time as me (an idiot of the highest order) and was advised that he was my new Director, ye gods, I thought. Having put a rubbish bin over his head one Christmas for being so blooming stupid, needed now some deep thinking, could I or did I need to work for a person of this caliber.

What a life from seaman, to master mechanic, management, to haulage contracting company director to an inspector, investigator and auditor protecting the State's finances, revenue and integrity in gambling. So after taking long service, holiday and sick leave off for a year, retired from the public service with no regrets when I could spend more time on a life time of stamp collecting, reading anything printed and listening to my varied music collection though mostly early 60's, classical and opera and my antique iron collection.

Time also to travel overseas or in our caravan for as long as it takes and never be in a hurry. The smell of salt air, the roar of the waves and my quest of knowledge in maritime matter has never left me, nor my interest in the Vindi, my second family. I have made a point of meeting, phoning or writing to as many as possible in Aust and NZ and keep a confidential record of names and addresses etc. in this endeavour have found 920 Vindi lads.

My other interest is of course the Queensland newsletter "Under the Clock" being editor since April 1999 and pumping out 74 issues that travel around the world. Another interest has been in the annual down-under reunions helping where I can and sitting on the committee hashing out the venue for the following year or two. Shirley doing her bit, running the Qld Vindi webpage and a guru on computers making my life easy fixing all our technical problems.

Our children flew the coop before leaving Darwin with Steve now in Kalgoorlie running his own computer business and supplying us with two grandchildren. Our daughter Christine to the Sunshine Coast and a further three grandchildren.

## I'm not staying there again



In 1987 Peter Bryan lived in the **Flying Angel, Custom House**, East London. It was here that he attempted to throw another resident from his sixth floor window. There was a struggle and his intended victim escaped leaving Bryan with a deep gash to the head. The initial attack by Bryan was totally unprovoked. The victim was questioned by the police about the gash on Bryan's head but no further action was taken by the police against the victim or Bryan. He was later sent to Rampton Secure Hospital in 1994 after admitting the unlawful killing of 20year old shop assistant Nisha Sheth, who was beaten to death with a hammer in 1993.

By February 2001 the nursing staff thought he had made considerable progress in regard to his 'behaviour, attitude, maturity, relationships, anger and insight.'" Bryan was transferred from Rampton in June 2001 to the John Howard Centre after a six month trial leave project agreed by the Home Office. He was released into the care of a psychiatrist and social worker. After applying to a Mental Health Review Tribunal in 2002, he was moved to the Riverside Hostel in north London where he was allowed door keys and could come and go as he pleased. Psychiatrists and social workers were remarking that there had been a "continued improvement" in his behaviour. In November 2002 his mental health social worker wrote to the Home Office stating that matters had settled down and there were no further concerns. It was thought that he "did not present any major risks."

In January 2004 social workers applied for a transfer of Bryan to "low-support accommodation". But, Bryan was then transferred to an open psychiatric ward at Newham General Hospital for his safety after allegations that he had indecently assaulted a 16year old girl close to the hostel. In February 2004 he walked out of the mental health unit in Newham, east London, and killed friend Brian Cherry. Police were called after neighbours heard screams and weapons, including a hammer, were found strewn around the flat. When police caught up with him, he was cooking the dead man's brain in a frying pan.

Bryan was remanded to Broadmoor special hospital after appearing in court over Mr Cherry's death. Two months later, while on remand in Broadmoor Hospital, Bryan killed his third victim, a fellow patient, Richard Loudwell, aged 60. He battered him on the head and tied a ligature around his neck. Mr Loudwell died in hospital later that day. Bryan said that if he had not been interrupted he would have eaten Loudwell's flesh. On 15 March 2005, Bryan pleaded guilty at the Old Bailey to two manslaughters on the grounds of diminished responsibility.

Judge Giles Forrester said: "You killed on these last two occasions because it gave you a thrill and a feeling of power when you ate flesh." Bryan, a paranoid schizophrenic and self-confessed cannibal, was jailed for life for killing two people. It is likely that he will never be released and will die in prison.

## The National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT)

### RMT OLD AGE GRANT

Before the merger of the NUR/NUS in September 1990, the NUS Union Rule (Rule 3, Clause 3.28) regarding Old Age Grant stated:

*"The benefits in this Rule shall be given only to the following:*

*Male members of 65 years of age and female members of 60 years of age, who have been members of the union during the 25 years preceding the date on which they attained the age of 65 and 60 respectively."*

After the merger of the two Unions, the R.M.T. Rule (Rule 18, Clause 6) on this matter states quite clearly that:

*"This Rule shall apply to Shipping members except those who, on the effective date, having been members of the National Union of Seaman for 20 years or more, shall be entitled to claim an old age grant in the form of a lump sum payment...."*

Old Age Grant would only be paid at retirement age, and even had you left at retirement age, under the previous Rules, Rule 14 Clause 13, I draw your attention to the following:

*"Members must register their claim to be placed on the rota under this rule within six months before attaining the qualifying age and/or qualifying period of membership, either to the registered office direct or through the local branch secretary. Claims submitted outside the period specified in this clause, however, may in exceptional circumstances be accepted by decision of the executive council."*

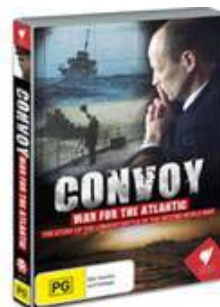
**Note:** If you did not retire from the Union, you would not have qualified for the benefit in question.

Question: What happened to the contributions, Answer: Rule 14, Clause 15, which reads:

*"The Old Age Grant fund shall be wound up as from 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1981, and any monies remaining therein shall be transferred to the general funds of the Union."*

All monies transferred into the general fund have, and are, being used for other benefits available to members, including any new applications for Old Age and Funeral Grants.

**Len Malcolmson** would like to inform members of an



'excellent' DVD now available through the Public Library system. It is titled 'Convoy - War For The Atlantic'. Produced by SBS it is in the system at DVD 940-542 93 CON. and Len says that his local library has it catalogued at 34211017937922. The material contained within would, he says, be of great interest to many members.

## TIPS FOR EARTHQUAKE SAFETY

Simply stated, when buildings collapse, the weight of the ceilings falling upon the objects or furniture inside crushes these objects, leaving a space or void next to them - NOT under them. This space is what is called the 'triangle of life'. The larger the object, the stronger, the less it will compact. The less the object compacts, the larger the void, the greater the probability that the person who is using this void for safety will not be injured. The next time you watch collapsed buildings, on television, count the 'triangles' you see formed. They are everywhere. It is the most common shape, you will see, in a collapsed building.

1) Most everyone who simply 'ducks and covers' when building collapse are crushed to death. People who get under objects, like desks or cars, are crushed.

2) Cats, dogs and babies often naturally curl up in the fetal position. You should too in an earthquake. It is a natural safety/survival instinct. You can survive in a smaller void. Get next to an object, next to a sofa, next to a bed, next to a large bulky object that will compress slightly but leave a void next to it.

3) Wooden buildings are the safest type of construction to be in during an earthquake. Wood is flexible and moves with the force of the earthquake. If the wooden building does collapse, large survival voids are created. Also, the wooden building has less concentrated, crushing weight. Brick buildings will break into individual bricks. Bricks will cause many injuries but less squashed bodies than concrete slabs.

4) If you are in bed during the night and an earthquake occurs, simply roll off the bed. A safe void will exist around the bed. Hotels can achieve a much greater survival rate in earthquakes, simply by posting a sign on the back of the door of every room telling occupants to lie down on the floor, next to the bottom of the bed during an earthquake.

5) If an earthquake happens and you cannot easily escape by getting out the door or window, then lie down and curl up in the fetal position next to a sofa, or large chair.

6) Most everyone who gets under a doorway when buildings collapse is killed. How? If you stand under a doorway and the doorjamb falls forward or backward you will be crushed by the ceiling above. If the door jam falls sideways you will be cut in half by the doorway. In either case, you will be killed!


7) Never go to the stairs. The stairs have a different 'moment of frequency' (they swing separately from the main part of the building). The stairs and remainder of the building continuously bump into each other until structural failure of the stairs takes place. The people who get on stairs before they fail are chopped up by the stair treads - horribly mutilated. Even if the building doesn't collapse, stay away from the stairs. The stairs are a likely part of the building to be damaged. Even if the stairs are not collapsed by the earthquake, they may collapse later when overloaded by fleeing people. They should always be checked for safety, even when the rest of the building is not damaged.

8) Get near the outer walls of buildings or outside of them if possible - It is much better to be near the outside of the building rather than the interior. The farther inside you are from the outside perimeter of the building the greater the probability that your escape route will be blocked.

9) People inside of their vehicles are crushed when the road above falls in an earthquake and crushes their vehicles; which is exactly what happened with the slabs between the decks of the Nimitz Freeway. The victims of the San Francisco earthquake all stayed inside of their vehicles. They were all killed. They could have easily survived by getting out and sitting or lying next to their vehicles. Everyone killed would have survived if they had been able to get out of their cars and sit or lie next to them. All the crushed cars had voids 3 feet high next to them, except for the cars that had columns fall directly across them.

Since Gordon Cohen once ran a pawnshop, I asked him to value my grandfather's violin. "Old fiddles aren't worth much, I'm afraid," he explained. "What makes it a fiddle and not a violin?" I asked. "If you're buying it from me, it's a violin. If I'm buying it from you, it's a fiddle."



 Percy Grout writes: I was on the NZ coast in the 60's when an old skipper retired the local press interviewed him and asked "Captain now you have retired after a lifetime at sea you must have seen many changes, is there any one thing in your sea faring career which stands out." The Captain thought for a moment, then replied "Yes drip dry shirts"..... true story.

### Vindi AGM news around the traps are executive elections of for WA:

Tony Harben (President), Brenda Douglas (Treasurer), Terry Pickett (Vice President), Moira Butler (Secretary).

#### And for NSW:

Bill King (President), Peter Bearman (Treasurer), Len Britton (Vice President), Terry Hales (Secretary).

## Big Bill Marshall

I don't know if, or how many ever had dealings with "Big" Bill Marshall. In 1944 I joined an Anglo Saxon Tanker on which Bill was my Bosun. Much earlier, before WW2 he, and Ernie Tosdevine, who was a Bosun on two later ships in which I served had sailed together down in the Antarctic on the RRS William Scoresby. (Whale research). Both men were of the old school, tough, fair, and took excrement from no one. I remember them fondly as they treated me as if I was their son.

I well remember one particularly stormy day on the MV Niso when all hands were called as the scrambling nets had become dislodged, trailing over the side. For those who have never used or even seen these monstrosities, they were chain and wood lookalike Jacob Ladders only these are about twenty feet wide for emergency evacuation or picking up swimmers. When I say a storm it was one of those North Atlantic blinders, with all available hands heaving to regather the heavy mess, my sou'wester hat suddenly departed. I looked at it pinned, temporarily, to a stanchion by the wind. Honestly I had no intention of rescuing it, but if I had, the look Big Bill gave me would have deterred anyone. He didn't have to say a word.

I learned so much from that kindly bull of a man whose first words to me on joining the ship was.. "Edgar? I've got to keep my eye on you". More or less the exact words I got from

“Chinese” Jackson the Skipper. The Chairman of Shell Oil had got me the job and word had been passed along. I’d never even met the man, he was my mother’s employer and a personal friend.

It was a long time after leaving that ship that I ran into Bill again. He was now the NUS (National Union of Seamen) rep in London. I had spent some time ashore and gone along to the “Pick Up” down past the Angel, Islington, and told him that I needed a ship that I could leave at short notice as I was migrating to Oz. Bill said. “Just the right man at the right time, need an AB on the SS Arnheim, Ferry boat Harwich to the Hoek.” I rushed home to call for my sea gear. The only thing I got from my mother was “Make your damned mind up. First it’s Australia now you are off to flipping Holland.” I had two signings on that ship before departing to land in Brisbane and then off to the Bush. Two of us were sent to a cattle/sheep station, my companion was another seaman with whom I had chummed up with on the migrant ship the SS Chitral. I left Steve there some time later to hit Brisbane and promptly gained a berth as an AB Storekeeper on the SS Carlisle.

The little tramp plied between Brisbane, Newcastle, where we coaled up as she was a triple expansion coal burner, then on to Sydney, Melbourne then a reverse trip repeated ad nauseum. On the first trip, landing in Sydney, a favourite place of mine as I had relatives there I could visit, I was crossing the main drag, George St I think, when I heard a bellow like a fog horn. “Oi!!! Woppie.” Well nobody had called me that for over seven years not, since the Niso. It was Big Bill, now the N.S.U. Rep in Australia.

Bill and Ernie will have crossed the bar long ago but they still live on in my fond memory. Ernie had even inveigled me to correspond to his daughter Beryl back in Blighty. Reckoned I was the first seaman he could trust with his daughter. We wrote for some years. I never did let her know what Papa got up to.

**Tom Edgar**

## **Jamaica.....**

1. On May 5, 1494 Christopher Columbus landed on the island of Jamaica and claimed it for Spain.
2. The RN’s rum ration began with the capture in 1655, which led to the sailors daily drink changed from brandy.
3. There are more churches per sq mile than anywhere else.
4. The name comes from an Arawak Indian name meaning “Land of wood and water”
5. In the 17th century when a haven for pirates, Port Royal was known as the wickedest city in the world.

## **Len’ Story - Part 1**

I was born Leonard Francis Malcolmson at Teignmouth in South Devon, United Kingdom, on the 25th June, 1930. The first thing I ever remembered was an old kitchen in Langs Park Road and people all around me. I had wet my pants and by the fuss they were making it was a capital crime. At this stage I guess the ‘people’ were my mother and some of the cronies she had around her. I do remember having my pants removed and being changed. My next recollection is of being on the Teignmouth sea front. A fair was in progress and I saw the bumper cars running over caps and making a hell of a noise. It must have awakened my thought processes for I

remember the bumper cars running on metal sheets, rolling over little coloured paper discs and the little flashes and bangs of the caps going off.

Then I was once lost, but evidently found my way, or was brought, home. Inserted in my coat was a photographer’s photo slip – ‘claim your photo’ I was later told. In later years this photograph became an object of ridicule, “Has he got lost and found his way home yet?” A kite got mixed up in the story somewhere, and my nanny helped me to fly it. Also I was carrying my ‘puppy dog’ – a grey-looking hound with a button which, when pressed, went ‘squeak, squeak...’. It was moth-eaten, but a charm.

Next was a nightmare of large proportions. My nanny was evidently a Salvation Army lass and we attended some sort of Christmas celebration of Christianity. It must have been Christmas because mum and dad were not at home but at a party given by the office superiors (I guess). Anyway I was absolutely terrified. It was to me some sort of torture, devised to scare the hell out of kids with the crib and all. My memory is of screaming and sobbing. One recovered rapidly after a fast removal into the night air and an ice-cream. Following this, mum and dad getting dressed up; dad in some sort of black suit with a white front and a funny black tie around his neck, mum screaming at the top of her voice and my sudden exit in a pram. Later I was to be further terrified by an enormous fire in the road, flashing lights, pretty coloured lights and to top it all off, someone attempting to kill us all with loud bangs. It was New Year’s Eve, probably in 1935, a fireworks display for which at that stage of my life I was not prepared.

My next big recall job was being on a train, moving house. Dad was being transferred from the Teignmouth Electric Light and Power Company Ltd to the Paignton Electric Company. I never forgot that train ride and it is still firmly fixed in my memory with the red cliffs, stopping at stations, the speed, and the ocean. Hell that stimulates my memory cells!

Dad often took me for a walk to Dawlish Warren, with a packet of McIntosh’s sweets - a type of almond surrounded by barley sugar. The ‘Ness’ was an over-hanging type of red rock, with a railway line alongside it. The Warren was full of rabbit holes. Mum didn’t figure much in my memories in these early years, oh yes, on Teignmouth Seafront a man who created a ‘lion’ out of sand and the awe-inspiring, oar-powered Lifeboat painted blue with ropes hanging from it, and a box into which dad always put money. And oh, yes, ginger wine! Dad usually went for a Sunday walk to the pub and I recall biting a chunk out of a glass containing Stone’s Ginger Wine. I must have been about five years old, the year 1935.

Paignton “Cimies” The Rivera. We moved into a mansion of three stories with seven bedrooms (so I was told). I had measles because, and so, the curtains were closed. Mum killed my cat because it pissed in the house. I managed to exhume it for examination, upon which I cried my heart out. At this stage I had my first brush with God. He was something special, always around us and watching over us. I must have been impressed. I had a very, very small tricycle but the front wheel kept coming off it. I kept pushing it on but being no A-Grade mechanic it kept falling off again. I called out, “God, please help me. Please keep this wheel on my bike.” God was around me, He would help in times of need, or so I was told. Again the wheel came off. My

ultimatum was, "fix it, or else!" There was still no response so little Len went into the house, picked up a table knife and went out armed to do battle. Still no response so Len thought, 'well, God is all around me,' and around he went, slashing, cutting and hacking God up for failing to answer to his six-year old prayers. Religion did not re-enter my life for many years after this incident.

An Austin 7 motor car, such a luxury, was once parked outside our house. I had never seen anything so awe-inspiring. My brother Ralph, now in the army but turning cartwheels on the lawn, was teaching me how to fence with dad's two walking sticks. Another time one was my 'elephant gun' and the other just a 'light gun'. How I loved the pictures at the cinema – Sabu the Elephant Boy was my childhood hero.

More terror; a leopard once escaped from the local zoo. I think my mother terrified us all night but in fact I'm sure that dad slept outside, no doubt hoping the leopard would eat him and carry him off to somewhere or other else. Could have been the Manor Inn that he had in mind, the one he eventually got carried either to or home from. Who knows? - One or the other.

Gradually a person grew up and made friends. The war also progressed with air raids, alarms, the flashing of exploding bombs and gunfire. Plymouth was being bombed and the planes passed overhead, Whomm, Whomm, Whomm they went. We were so scared. Then the old plane would chicken out and drop his load on us. Dad still said he was going to stay in bed, "I have work to do tomorrow," and there he stayed. We got many evacuees from Plymouth. They had been bombed out completely and had nothing. To me they seemed pretty rough but full of life and energy. Of course we soon all became friends.

The S.S., Special Service. Sam Underhay and Jim were tough types with 45 automatics and Tommy guns who walked to Bristol and back in three days. Sam's socks had to be soaked off his feet by mum. They were pre-runners of the Commandos but were nice guys although still very tough. Most were later killed I believe. Dad was upset when he found out.

I had previously been to another public school where I graduated as being something of a hero. There was a boy who was the best fighter at this school who bullied and picked on me for no reason. Being also of a placid nature I allowed him to continually wallop me. However my big brother at home, Lewis, took me into his confidence and told me to bide my time because soon I would grow up and become stronger than my opponent. Well, the next day was enough for me, I reckoned, so little Len goes straight up to this guy and, due to my unexpected and violent attack, laid him out on the bitumen. I was grabbed by several teachers who said I was the bully, but from that day on the clique stayed well clear and the oppressed rallied around me until we moved to Goodrington Sands. It must have been around 1940 then. I moved school again also.

Then, once, I had to get out of the way of a big bull running down the main street. Bernard, my brother, went to war as I said. Lewis ran the air-raid alarm. We all got up to the All Clear sounding as Lewis never got around to sending the alarm. There were long walks on the seafront, a crashed aircraft on the Green, then thousands of soldiers. It must have been Dunkirk because they all had French money and not many rifles, and now one thinks about it, they all looked

pretty tired and worn-out, but still cheerful, in their battledress. It could have been us kids who gave them spirit again. There were barbed wire entanglements on the beach. The pier was cut in half, a hole in the wall on the Preston seafront and a Boyes rifle to knock out tanks. Bren guns were along the seafront. Oh yes, dad too was in the LDV – Local Defence Volunteers (later to become the Home Guard). His five-shot Canadian rifle and five rounds to be handed to the next LVD after each guard duty. Our gas masks were a cardboard container about 8"x5"x4" with a device which fitted over the face like a Mickey Mouse mask. We carted this monstrosity around until the cardboard collapsed.

Bomb shelters were set up on the seafront where we filled sand-bags daily for weeks – thousands of them. It was all part of life at the time but people seemed unaffected by the war, or did they? Tank traps were built on the cement steps, and they blocked the lifeboat ramp off as well. In England they used to have individual huts for regular beach users. They were like dog boxes, about 8'x8'x8', so you could sweat nicely in the sun, all lined up neatly. This was where I had my first taste of the Englishman at home, regimented and reserved, rather.

We moved house again, this time to Goodrington, with a nice park in front, a railway siding on the right and the seafront to the left. There was a long sea-wall constructed of red concrete and curved to throw the sea out. My next memory of any account was shifting to Preston, a part of Paignton. We had two shifts there; one was to an enclosed house in a block of the same equality, rather dingy and small on working it out. We had previously rented a house in a secluded lane which was a semi-detached place with privacy. It was actually a nice place and we had a garden shed as well in which tools and things were stored. If I recall, my brother Bernard also slept in there.

The whole area was pleasant and dad used to take me for walks around the new houses up in the hills. War came eventually. My brother Bernard had been in the regular army but mum bought him out. He was home for three months before being re-called. Apart from one more stolen night at home, that was the last time we saw him for another seven years.

We took in an evacuee from London, Ralph Crawford, who seemed like a nice kid but we still managed to fight over some stupid things. Once it was over sandshoes on the seafront. He took off and he could really run as I tried to catch him. I wanted to belt him for what he had done. He then left us, poor kid, but his new lodgings were very poor and he had to sleep on two chairs. Mum was tempted to take him back, but wouldn't at any cost.

Playing cricket in the park once, we were startled by a loud bang and a cloud of smoke. Then this rat-a-tat-tat as a German Focke-Wolfe 190 fighter-bomber flashed past the railway siding alongside. The park was full of ammunition for the D-Day landings. I am now glad he didn't hit it. Instead of running home my friend Peter and I raced to where the bomb had demolished a house, just missing the railway bridge. I picked up a piece of shrapnel to show mum and she collapsed. My brother Ralph had died from shrapnel wounds in Tobruk. How naive and insensitive kids can be.

To be continued next issue.....

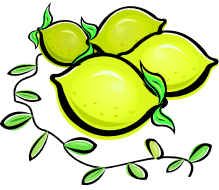
**Editor:** *Len as many members will remember is a long time member of Vindi Qld, but rather frail to attend meetings.*




**This year 2011 - July has 5 Fridays,  
5 Saturdays and 5 Sundays.  
This apparently happens once every 823 years.**

**An Englishman,** a Scotsman, an Irishman, a Latvian, a Turk, an Aussie, a Yank, an Egyptian, a Jap, a Mexican, a Spaniard, a Greek, a Russian, an Estonian, a German, an Italian, a Pole, a Lithuanian, a Swede, a Finn, an Israeli, a Romanian, a Bulgarian, a Serb, a Czech, a Swiss and a South African, went into a nightclub..... The bouncer says *“Sorry I can’t let you in without a Thai”*



 **A man applying for a job** at a Mildura Lemon Orchard seemed to be far too qualified for the job. The foreman frowned and said, “I have to ask you this: Have you had any actual experience in picking lemons?” He replied: “I’ve been divorced three times, bought a Leyland P76, a Beta video player and took up all the Telstra share floats. Then I voted for Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard. “How am I doing so far”?”

 Dave Hammond writes:- I read your article in the 73 issue newsletter with great interest on the sea disaster in the ending of the MV Royston Grange – which broke my heart as I had served on her as an able seaman between 7<sup>th</sup> March 1964 and 1<sup>st</sup> May 1964. It was a beautiful ship to work on being only 5 years old with a great crew, which I would imagine were mostly the same crew I served with and to die a terrible death (accident 11<sup>th</sup> May 1972).

I have enclosed the times, dates and route the MV Royston Grange took down to South Africa. Having served in these water-ways many times aboard other vessels at the helm and having had a few near misses in the past in South America I have many stories to tell and I must write them down and send them to you in the future. As time skips past too fast now-a-days!

Happy Sailing, Dave Hammond (Vindi Qld)

***S.T.V. Royston Grange***

*Worse things happen at sea they say, worse things happen at sea,  
In `72 this came true with the tanker `Tien Chee`,  
Within dense fog near the River Plate, she collided with a freighter,  
Crude Oil gushed from shattered tanks exploding seconds later.....*

**A couple** go for a meal at a Chinese restaurant and order the ‘Chicken Surprise’. The waiter brings the meal, served in a lidded cast iron pot. Just as the wife is about to serve herself, the lid of the pot rises slightly and she briefly sees two beady little eyes looking around before the lid slams back down.



‘Good grief, did you see that?’ she asks her husband. He hadn’t, so she asks him to look in the pot. He reaches for it and again the lid rises, and he sees two little eyes looking around before it slams down. Rather perturbed, he calls the waiter over, explains what is happening, and demands an explanation. ‘Pleaze sir,’ says the waiter, ‘what you order?’ The husband replies, ‘Chicken Surprise.’ ‘Ah! So sorry,’ says the waiter, ‘I bling you Peeking Duck!’

**~ LIFEBOATS ~**

**Many thousand seamen were sunk by diverse means,  
In wartime by a bomber or more likely submarines,  
Perchance to reach a lifeboat amid the death and strife,  
Hoping to be picked up conserving precious life.**

**With a ship abandoned (the Owners stopped your pay)  
In truth the only real chance was rescue right away,  
Survivors of such numerous crews were cast adrift at sea,  
Not knowing of the end result whenever that would be.**

**Mal de mer was commonplace, in the troughs and peaks,  
Exposure and the trauma went on for days or weeks,  
Misery intense with sunburn and the thirst,  
Hypothermia, overcrowding, or weather at it’s worst.**

**No comfort on the wooden thwarts, feet were always wet,  
Capsizing or plain madness an ever constant threat,  
Salt water boils so painful in unrelenting spray,  
And the need for bailing, constant every day.**

**The usual fare were biscuits a bit too dry to munch,  
Unless crushed up with tinned milk, pulping them for lunch,  
Perhaps if they were lucky there was Bovril pemmican,  
Or Horlicks formed in tablets issued to each man.**

**Still not enough for voyages with survival at the fore,  
Firm energy required for handling of the oar,  
The wooden boats unswieldy, difficult to sail,  
And progress near essential for ending their travail**

**- would play her part in this longest war,  
In a vast and angry ocean a long way from the shore.**

**Fantastic feats of seamanship and courage went unsung,  
Even after wartime when victory bells were rung,  
Providence would play her part in this longest war,  
In a vast and angry ocean a long way from the shore.**

Joe Earl 2009

**ALL MONIES, for whatever reason to be paid to the Treasurer  
(Cheques & PO’s made payable to Vindicatrix Association Queensland - ONLY)**

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