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October 2005

BI 150th ANNIVERSARY REUNION - CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL, GLASGOW
21-24 SEPTEMBER 2006

It seems no time at all since the Portsmouth gathering in 2004 and here we are already well on the way to staging our ninth reunion in Glasgow in 2006. John and I thought that Portsmouth was a very happy and relaxed weekend with all events well attended. It was particularly pleasing that after accounts were settled we were able to donate £500 to the ss Uganda Trust. I've enclosed the guest list which may be of interest to you, especially to those who couldn't make it but are thinking about coming to Glasgow.

As you know, 2006 marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of BI. William Mackinnon and Robert Mackenzie, both natives of Campbeltown on the Mull of Kintyre, together founded Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Company. On 29 September 1856 the Calcutta and Burmah Steamship Navigation Company was established and in 1862 it was renamed as the British India Steamship Navigation Company. Through Mackinnon's energies it was to grow into one of the greatest shipping companies in the world. It is appropriate therefore for us to hold this special reunion in Scotland in recognition of the achievements of Sir William Mackinnon, without whose enterprise none of us would have enjoyed the unique experience of being part of BI's history.

We've chosen a weekend as near as possible to the anniversary of that original date and have made Glasgow our venue. The main events are to be held in the 4-star **Crowne Plaza Hotel** (formerly the Moat House) which is situated on the north bank of the Clyde, and is close to the city centre. It has 283 bedrooms, good sized function rooms, a health and fitness centre with pool and an attractive bar and lounge area on two levels, ideal for meeting up and socialising during the weekend. We are promised free car parking for hotel guests. We have just learned that the hotel will shortly begin a significant refurbishment of the bedroom and public areas, which is good news for us. The Celebration Anniversary Dinner and Curry Lunch will be held at the hotel.

To mark the 150th anniversary reunion we've put together what we hope you'll agree is a series of special events. First up is the BI Engineers' Lunch on **Thursday 21 September**. This annual event is being organised as usual by **James Slater** and all enquiries and bookings should be directed to him. On Friday evening there's a cruise down the Clyde departing from the hotel's own pontoon. We do hope many of you will plan to arrive on the Friday in time to join the cruise. Boat trips of one sort of another have become a popular feature of past reunions; they always generate a great atmosphere and should get the weekend off to a lively start. On Saturday morning there's a coach trip to the Glengoyne Distillery, 15 miles north of Glasgow in the direction of Loch Lomond, - yes, this reunion will require stamina! In the afternoon Professor J Forbes Munro will give a talk on the story of BI and this will be followed by our Celebration Anniversary Dinner in the Argyll Suite with a four-course meal on a Scottish theme. The final event is the traditional BI Curry Lunch on Sunday. Full details of all the events are given on the attached sheet.

The hotel has quoted us room rates of £95.00 B&B for double/twin occupancy, £80.00 B&B for singles. They have reserved 50 rooms on Friday night and 100 on Saturday night for BI guests. The hotel is accepting bookings now and reservations can be made by calling either of the following numbers which will connect you directly to the hotel: 0141 306 9988 or 0870 443 1693. Fax: 0141 221 2022. When you call be sure to quote "**BI Reunion**".

There is alternative accommodation at the nearby Campanile Hotel. When we called in to check it out earlier this year the weekend room rates quoted were £65.00 but these do vary according to demand. Phone number: 0141 287 7700 (email Glasgow@envergure.co.uk). Website: www.campanile.com.

We'd like to assure you that we always try to keep costs down. To cover those involved in running the reunion, including postage, name badges, stationery, telephones etc, a non-refundable registration fee of £6.00 per person will be charged.

From initial soundings the 150th anniversary reunion is likely to be very popular. If you are intending to join us please complete the **BI Reunion Booking Form** (whether or not you intend to stay at the **Crowne Plaza!**) and return it to me with your cheque for £36.00 per person covering the deposit and the registration fee as soon as possible. **Please** make cheques payable to "**BI Reunion**" - anything else causes problems. The final date for payment of the balances will be **22 July 2006**, after which I cannot guarantee any refunds because the hotel requires payment in advance. I will send out a reminder in May along with confirmation of arrangements and an up-to-date guest list.

You will see that, at the request of Jonathan Clark, I have included an individual invitation to support the work of the Mission to Seafarers, whose 150th anniversary coincides with that of BI. It would therefore seem appropriate for us to donate any surplus funds from our anniversary reunion to the Mission.

Some of you may not yet be aware of the existence of a website devoted to all things BI. There's a discussion group for former BI staff which, with over 400 members, is flourishing. This online forum is a permanent extension of the regular reunions held around the world, details of which appear on the Events pages of the site. Discussion is lively and covers many topics dear to the hearts of BI people, including ships, friends and old shipmates, reminiscences, food and the like. It's a great way for a far-flung group like the BI crowd to stay in touch. The website is run by John Prescott and he would be delighted to hear from you. To find out more visit <http://www.biship.com>.

Many of you already know that we lost our BI database in a computer crash last year and we have had to re-establish our records from a much older and smaller version. Unfortunately we lost quite a few of our more recent contacts so please do pass the message on to anyone who you think might not have heard from us, or anyone you know who might like to come to Glasgow. It would be especially good to welcome first-timers to help celebrate the 150th anniversary. Reunion details will also be published on the BI website.

We hope to make this weekend a really happy and successful one. John and I look forward to seeing you in Glasgow.

Kind regards

Sue Spence

Sue Spence
Reunion Organiser



REUNION BOOKING FORM

21-24 SEPTEMBER 2006

From:

Tel:

Email:

Please correct any errors or omissions in your details printed in this section and I will bring the database up to date.

Reunion Dinner Booking (Saturday evening)

Please reserve places at the BI Reunion Dinner at a cost of £41.00 each.

Number of persons requiring vegetarian option

Curry Lunch Booking (Sunday lunchtime)

Please reserve places at the curry lunch at a cost of £18.00 each.

Number of persons requiring alternative (non curry) option

Showing interest in additional events

I/We are interested in the following additional events (*please indicate possible numbers*):

Clyde Cruise on Friday evening – £12.00

Talk by Professor J Forbes Munro on Saturday afternoon – cost £5.00

Glengoyne Distillery Trip on Saturday morning – cost £9.00 per person

Deposit places at £30.00 per person

£

Plus Registration Fee places at £6.00 per person

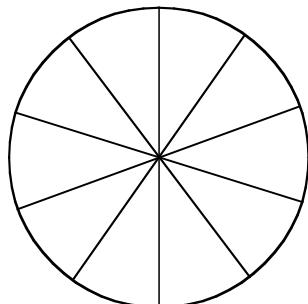
£

I enclose a cheque for

£

Please make all cheques payable to “**BI Reunion**” and forward to:-

Mrs Sue Spence
45 Crimicar Lane
SHEFFIELD S10 4FA



Please indicate your table seating requirements, if any, including all names and whether they are sending in separate booking forms. I will do my best to accommodate some, if not all, requests.

Please list all those attending so that name badges can be provided.

Please feel free to add the name and address of any other former BI staff member whom you think would be interested in attending the 150th Anniversary Reunion.

MAIN EVENTS

THURSDAY

RETired ENGINEERS' LUNCH

The Engineers' Lunch will be held in the Buchanan Suite at the Ramada Glasgow City Hotel, which is situated on Ingram Street, Glasgow. This is our usual venue though the name changes from year to year; who knows what it will be when we arrive? The cost of lunch will be notified nearer to the date but will be in the region of £25.00. Wine will be to your own account. The bar in the Buchanan Suite will be open from noon and we will dine at 1.00 pm prompt. The bar will remain open until 4.00 pm. (we are negotiating a later closing time). Outside these hours there are other bars in the hotel that we can frequent! All members of the BI Engineer Officers Association will be sent a letter with full details of the lunch during the summer of 2006. Contact James Slater: tel: 01706 351190; email: james.slater@zen.co.uk

FRIDAY EVENING

RIVER CLYDE CRUISE

We have chartered Clyde Marine's *Cruiser* for a 3 to 3½ hour cruise on the Clyde. On the way downriver we will pass the old Barclay Curle shipyard where Rajula, Chantala, Dunera, Kenya, Uganda and Nevasa (built 1956 to celebrate the company's centenary), to name but a few, were built. *Cruiser* is an all-weather, all-year cruising vessel which will comfortably hold 180 in an enclosed and heated interior. Cash bar on board. Embark from Crowne Plaza Hotel's own pontoon at 5.45 pm, departing at 6.00 pm. The company are more than happy to fly the BI flag, so if you have one we can use either on the cruise or in the Argyll Suite on Saturday evening, please bring it along - the more the merrier. (As in Portsmouth, the BI flag will be flown at the hotel's entrance throughout the weekend.) We should get splendid evening views of the city on our return journey, arriving at approx 9.00 pm. Clyde Marine have given us a discount on the cruise in recognition of BI's historic links with the Clyde and our 150th anniversary celebrations. Cost approx £12.00 based on a minimum of 100. The initial proposal to charter Balmoral proved financially impractical and on this date she is not scheduled to run a public cruise that we could have joined.

SATURDAY MORNING

VISIT TO GLENGOYNE DISTILLERY

Departing by coach from the Crowne Plaza Hotel at 9.30 am. Tour of distillery including a dram of whisky and time to visit the on-site shop. Return to hotel at approx 12.30 pm - possibly with a drop-off for those who wish to do some shopping in town. Cost approx £9.00 per person including transport.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

TALK BY PROFESSOR J FORBES MUNRO

Professor Munro's talk will be entitled *BI, It's Founders and Early Years*. He is the author of *Maritime Enterprise and Empire*, winner of the 2004 Wadsworth Prize and joint winner of the 2004 Saltire Society Research Book of the Year Award. J Forbes Munro is Emeritus Professor of International Economic History, University of Glasgow. The talk starts at 4.30 pm in the Barra & Jura Suite and will last about one hour. Cost £5.00 per head to cover room hire and an honorarium.

SATURDAY EVENING

CELEBRATION ANNIVERSARY DINNER

This will be held in the Argyll Suite at the **Crowne Plaza Hotel**. There will be a four-course menu on a Scottish theme with dietary alternatives on request. As usual please let me know if you wish to sit with particular friends or to make up a table, indicating your requirements on the booking form. Although you can't always know at the time you book who else is going to be there, you can still suggest possible names. I'm usually able to accommodate some, if not all, of your requests and I try to ensure that each of you knows at least one other person seated at your table. Dress is optional: Black Tie or Highland Dress or Jacket & Tie. We would not wish anyone to feel put off by imposing an arbitrary dress code so the final decision is left to you. However, we do think it is a good opportunity to dress up in best bib and tucker for those who wish to (or BI Mess Dress perhaps - if you have got it and can still get into it!!).

As we gather to celebrate the 150th anniversary of a great shipping company and in recognition of BI's importance in all our lives, we have arranged for each dinner guest to receive a traditional cut-glass crystal whisky tumbler in a presentation box as a memento of this unique occasion. Made by Glencairn Crystal this traditional glass is a special limited edition which will be suitably engraved and bear the well-loved Britannia logo. The Celebration Dinner will cost £41.00 per person (including the whisky tumbler) based on a minimum of 200.

SUNDAY

CURRY LUNCH

This will be held in the Argyll Suite. As usual there will be choice of curries, meat, fish and vegetable, of varying strengths, which will be served along with the usual accompaniments, or dietary alternatives, at £18.00 per head, based on a minimum of 100.