

FROM THE EDITOR

We present for your consideration a veritable cornucopia of things whimsical in this edition, dear reader. A special offer for 2010, a rude photograph, another photograph from Bernard Fallon's portfolio, another instalment from the incredible life story of Robert Lyle and all sorts of other bits and pieces.

That constant collator of all things calendrical, Tony Bernthal, is putting his mind to producing the 2010 version of his BI calendar. This, dear reader, is a veritable *tour de force*, I can assure you. Like all good things in this world, it grew from small beginnings, and now people are lining up all around the globe to get it.

He is extending his invitation to receive the 2010 edition to subscribers of "... calling BI". The cost?... merely that of you printing it out from your computer. He is making this offer in the spirit of BI ... friendship and comradeship and not-for-profit - a bit like "...calling BI" in fact (although your editor occasionally indulges in a bit of wishful thinking that Rupert Murdoch will see the brilliance of this publication and shower us with his millions!)

If you would like to be included in the distribution list for the 2010 calendar, please e-mail Tony from this link.



On a radio programme your editor heard recently, there was an item about the ashes of a pub landlord being buried under the floor in the pub. The inscription apparently read thus; "*stand here and have a drink on me!*" This brought to mind a posting on a website we came across which gave us the dedication on a burial plaque, in Swafield Church, Norfolk which reads:

*"In the aisle of this Church are deposited the remains of Capt. James Olifent, who Departed this life the 11th of April 1808 aged 58 yrs
 The 'Boreas' Blasts and Neptune's waves have tossed me to and fro,
 By God's decree you plainly see I harbour here below
 Where I do now at anchor lie with many of our fleet, yet once again, I must set sail our Admiral Christ to meet"*

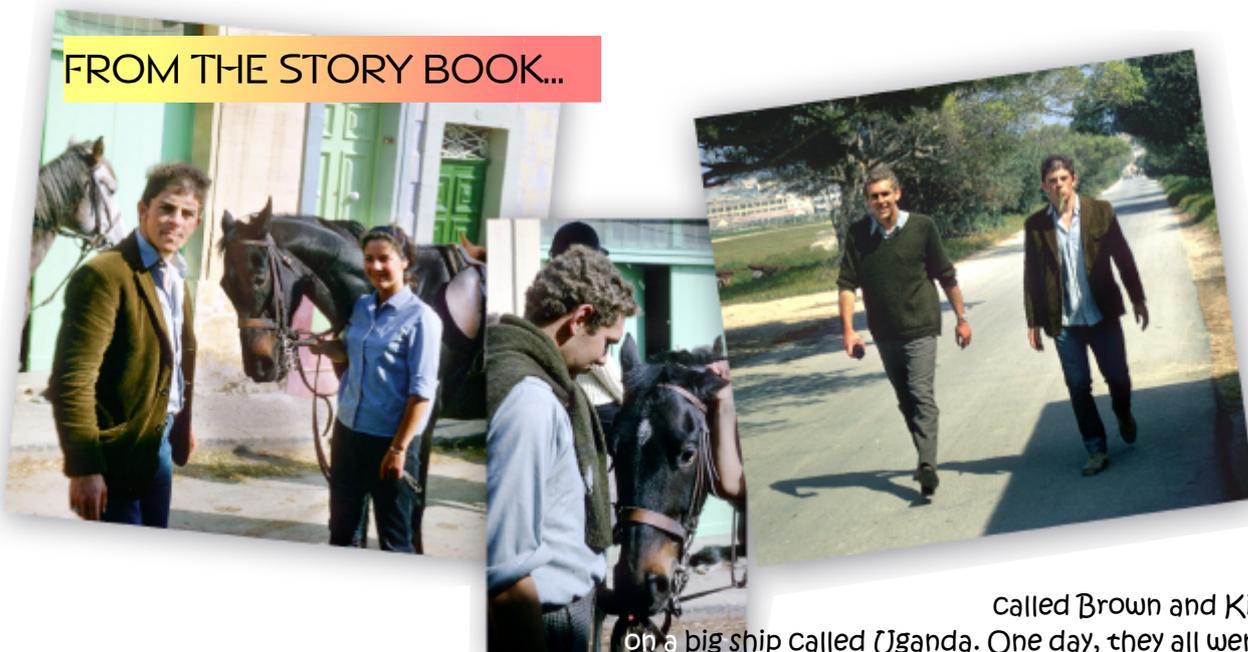
Your Editor is rarely prone to maudlin thoughts, but even he can recognise there is at least more eloquence here than Spike Milligan's epitaph, which reads "I **told** you I was ill!".
 Enjoy!



Reprinted with thanks to [Bernard Fallon](#)

- Later in this issue...**
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FROM THE STORY BOOK...



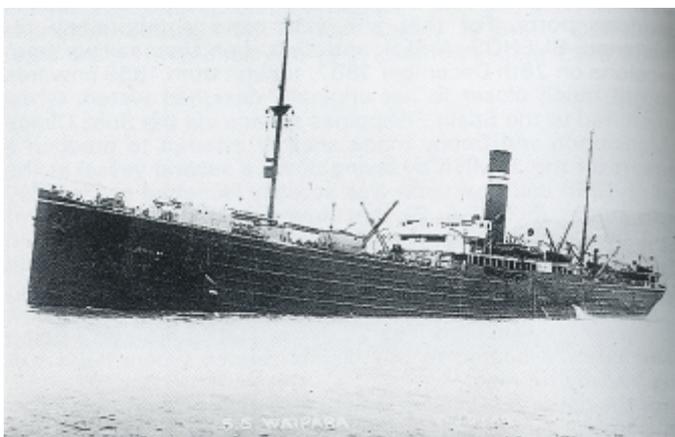
Once upon a time, long long ago, there was a pixie called Chris-Teen who carried a bell and two mischievous little elves

called Brown and King. They all lived on a big ship called Uganda. One day, they all went for a long walk in a strange country called Malta and came upon some horses. The pixie knew about horses and persuaded the two little elves to ride them. The two little elves would do anything for the pixie, because they fancied her. So they got on the horses and made complete prats of themselves. My, how the pixie did laugh! In the end she went to live in a country called Scotland in a town called Cupar, where she rode lots of horses and married a rich man. The King elf called himself Mike and eventually went to live in the north of Cyprus and to work in the Gulf for some magicians called Maersk and married a beautiful Russian princess. He also remembers, when not swilling a magic potion called Efes, another Elf called Lin-bird, who has featured in this story book before. Apparently that naughty little elf played with radios and made up silly messages like "Booiing said Zebedee" when their big ship bounced off the breakwater in Haifa! He was exiled to Bali, poor thing! The Brown elf changed his name to Pete, and nobody has heard of him since then. The gnome who writes these fairy tales knows that the pixie and the King elf and the Lin-bird elf lived happily ever after and would love to hear what fate befell the Brown elf. If you know the answer, please let us know so we can frighten some more small children. Hee hee!

FROM THE LOG BOOK...

Amy Bruce, Australia - Thursday, July 16, 2009

Recently a friend gave me a copy of a photo of the **Waipara** from your logbook along with enquiries from folk concerning the ship. This was of great interest to me because my mother & I sailed from England to Australia on the Waipara in May 1916. We disembarked in Brisbane and the ship went on to Townsville before returning to England. I still have and cherish a letter written to me from the purser of the Waipara and posted from Townsville. His name was W J Perkins (who I called Uncle Billy). In his letter he also sends "Best Wishes from Uncle Chris". I don't know Uncle



Chris' surname. Although I was aged only 2½, I have some memories of incidents on the ship during the voyage and I still remember Uncles Billy and Chris. My mother told me it was a rough voyage as we were chased by German submarines for a fortnight and it was only the superb seamanship of our Captain that got us safely through. He zig-zagged the ship 24 hours a day for two weeks. Crockery was broken, passengers seasick and their bunks due to the tossing of the boat. Passengers were told that we were weathering severe storms and weren't told the real reason until the ordeal was over. I guess the Captain had enough trouble to take care of without hysterical passengers to deal with.

Maybe some descendents of

W J Perkins will read this memory of the Waipara and if so I would love to hear from them.



FROM THE TAKING ACTION CREW...

We continue the story of young Robert Lyle, started in issue 9. Readers may recall that we left him wallowing in the Bay of Biscay in the middle of a storm with a broken steering gear on the good ship "Goorkha". He continues in his own inimitable words... ..It was only a relief and diversion to us Scotsmen to go below and lend a hand to the ship's officers and when morning broke, fair and smiling, the storm having passed away, we were sailing merrily down the pleasant Portuguese coast. Passing by the well-known rock of Gibraltar you cannot fail to be impressed by the strength of the British bulwarks when you view the whole face of the rock bristling with British guns, and from this time our voyage was most pleasurable. Everyone has heard of the blue Mediterranean but you need to go sailing down it to have any idea of its beauty, coupled with the radiance of the skies overhead which form a striking contrast to the sullen rainy ones that are the general rule in this well-watered city of Belfast.

Our first point of call was the beautiful old city of Naples. I must confess the first time I entered her harbour to a feeling of disappointment. The Bay of Naples is without doubt one of the finest in the world, but my advice is - if you want to keep up your old illusions, don't go on shore! For if you do, it is to find nothing but narrow, filthy streets, fearfully tall dingy buildings, vile, thievish countenances and evil smells. Better to stay on board and view the chief point of interest, the volcano of Vesuvius which towers above the city, always emitting clouds of smoke suggestive of imminent eruption and destruction to the town folk, but long usage and custom have made them fearless. Leaving Naples we passed through the straits of Messina which are extremely narrow, but present some lovely scenery. The vine-clad hills rise around you on either side and in the distance, the giant volcano Stromboli keeps sentry over the strait, sending forth smoke and ashes from its capacious mouth. Soon after leaving Italian shores we sight the highest lighthouse in Europe which is stationed on the island of Crete.

Our next port of call is Port Said, of which a word may be interesting. Port Said at the entrance to the Suez Canal is, I believe, one of the wickedest cities of the world. It is, as it were, the gate of the east and here collect the scum of all nations for purposes of plundering the unwary or carrying on some evil trade. Here you may see Jews, Mohammedans, Turks, Egyptians, Arabs, Continentals

and last, but not least, Britishers and as you may guess, the very lowest specimens of our race. All trading vessels must call here for coal which you see in great quantities as you approach the harbour, as well as crowds of dirty Egyptians waiting for employment of some sort in replenishing of the ship. Pity the unwary sailor who sets foot, unwarned, for the first time, among the shoal of land sharks to be found in Port Said!

After coaling, we gladly left Port Said behind and voyaged down the Suez Canal which is a very uninteresting run, nothing to be seen but sand, sand, on either side. The canal is 98 miles long and just broad enough for two fair sized ships to pass each other - the time taken about 24 hours. A pilot is always in requisition who is dropped at Suez, and then we go on down the historic Red Sea, wondering and speculating where the children of Israel crossed when they fled before the avenging Pharaoh and how they did it!

After 18 days of a delightful voyage we reached Aden which is called the coal hole of the East. Here we have another specimen of British power when we see the principal fortifications impregnable and almost covered with our guns. The inhabitants of Aden are chiefly of the Somali race. The town is said to be built in the crater of an extinct volcano. Here we have a wonderful example of the engineering enterprise of the ancients, when we find water-tanks believed to be two thousand years old, which are cut out of the solid rock and capable of holding 20,000 gallons of water. (You see in Aden it only rains once in three years). These tanks are now unused, the drinking water being distilled from sea-water, but they form a great object of interest to the antiquarian.



On this particular voyage of which I speak a great disappointment awaited three of us on our arrival at Aden. As I said, we had expected to be sent on to our numerous friends and acquaintances in Calcutta, but here orders awaited us to proceed to the East

African coast. However, in the event, it turned out for me a very interesting episode in my sea life.

...and, Dear Reader, you had better believe it! More in our next issue... ..



FROM THE "WHERE ARE WE NOW?" DEPT...

Readers of "... calling BI" really excelled themselves in our last issue. Almost by return, two of you correctly identified our scene as Dar es Salaam -- the Haven of Peace. Mind you, Tony Gates did have a slight advantage over the rest of you -- he lived there for nine years as a child. He remembers Mike Waddington who also lived there, but who now resides in Victoria, Australia. Tony correctly identifies the Catholic church, with the Customs House in front.

Also in line for accolades is John Roddis. John was there possibly even before Tony, as a cadet in the 1950s. He well remembers the BI tug "Arusha" from his time there. John went on to serve with the LST fleet, principally "Sir Lancelot". Congratulations to you both, we are sure our Prizes Department will get their fingers out some time and send valuable recognition of your memory feats.

Now for this edition's secret location. Actually it's quite easy again. But sadly, you cannot see this any more -- it's been redeveloped. *Plus ca change*, as it were!



FROM THE IDIOTS COLLECTION #23 & #24...

Didn't anybody tell him that you had to put the boat in the water first...? Thanks to Nigel Hastings for this -- presumably these people are even allowed to vote!



How not to name a ship... or is it an instruction?

FROM THE SUBSCRIPTIONS DEPARTMENT ...

Recent subscribers to "... calling BI" include: Douglas Daniel from UK, Gary Ruaux from Australia, Ian Dancer from France, Martin Cotsford from Australia, Raja Qaiser from Pakistan, Ted Treacher from Canada, Hugh Rayner from UK and Sandy MacFarlane from New Zealand.



Gentlemen, you are all welcome.

Please feel free to send in any snippets that you care to share with the rest of your fellow of subscribers, whether about BI or miscellaneous matters maritime we care not. Previous issues of "... calling BI" can be opened up by clicking [here](#).

FROM THE SOCIAL PAGES...

That bibulous bunch of BI imbibers (*lovely alliteration: Ed*), who reside in the South Suffolk, North Essex region of UK are planning yet another lunchtime get-together at what is fast becoming their local -- "The Thatcher's Arms" in Mount Bures. The date when all well-behaved and decent folk should take cover is **27th November**. Meanwhile the rest of us should contact [John Prescott](#), to let him know they're coming.



Actually, they are all pussycats, but don't let them know I told you! Directions to the venue can be had from the [pub's website](#). Lifts to and from the nearest rail stations can probably be organised with sufficient notice. Sounds like a good warm-up for Christmas!

FROM THE BAZAARS...

Gentle reader, your editor receives many e-mails in the "... calling BI" inbox. Once in a while, a real opportunity appears. Just as we were about to go press with this issue, the little bell dinged and up popped the the following:

Hello BI Group, After sorting through some old items we have had stored we have come across the following items, a British India Steam Navigation Co handbook for passengers by the east Africa lines, showing the MATIANA and mv DUMRA on the front cover, I would say in very very good condition, also a 150 piece wooden jigsaw puzzle depicting the same picture as the handbook in a complete state and in excellent condition. But the box is in a



pitiful state the picture is fully clear but the sides and corners have come apart. I have attached some photos of the items. If yourself or any of your members would like to make an offer for these item please contact myself at email address carpboss@gmail.com. My postal address is **Mr Edwin Wilson, 60, Seathorne, Withernsea, East Yorkshire, HU19 2BB**. Tel 07754661945. I am also a radio ham call-sign "2e0enw" and can be verified by my call sign at www.qrz.com/2e0enw Looking forward to further contact. Yours sincerely, Edwin Wilson.

We leave it to you, dear readers, to approach Mr Wilson direct with your offers. As regular readers of "... calling BI" will recall, your editor is still gloating over his purchase of a similar jigsaw. According to that BI archivist *par excellence*, David Mitchell, these jigsaws go for around about £30-£50. Just another thought... subscribers to "... calling BI" will read of this opportunity before the general BI website reader... just another benefit for the newsletter subscriber!

Don't forget that promise you made to yourself "... must send in that story and photograph to "...calling BI"! Do it now..! See you soon!

