

News of the BSN company, its ships and staff, its history and *histoires*, of ships and sealing wax, nautical natters, maritime miscellanies and swinging of lanterns

## FROM THE EDITOR...

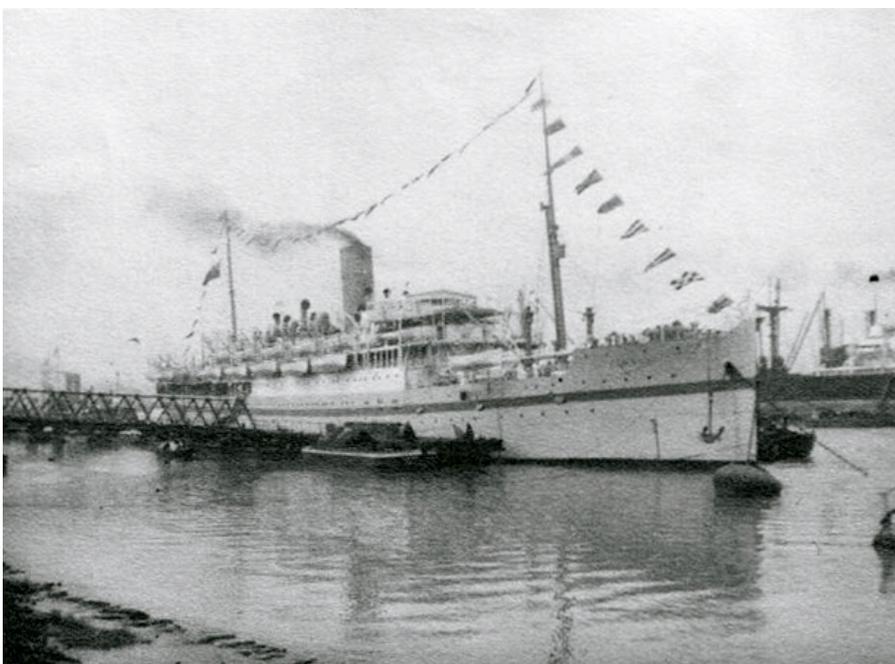
Your editor has positively revelled in things BI since we last spoke. Pictures, stories and parcels have been landing on the office door mat. These have included the oldest issue of BI News that he has ever seen, a special Coronation issue published in July

1953! A veritable cornucopia of nostalgia, history and good feelings. Warm and particular thanks to Richard Henderson for this. Richard is an old shipmate of your editor, having sailed with him in the *Bankura* between Calcutta and New Zealand. Of course, all this does not stop your editor being a glutton and he continues his *cri de*

*coeur* for more pictures and in particular, personal stories and memories. One of the photographs sent in by Richard requires positive identification. This ship is, he thinks, the old troopship *Nevasa* in Calcutta in 1947. However, can anybody confirm this? The photograph was in his mother's collection and she was, as he puts it, "a BI wife in Calcutta".

Thanks to all the others of you who have sent in material - it will all be used!

We have many good comments about the chicken curry recipe that we carried our last issue. Buoyed up by this culinary success, we continue the series with a totally different curry. This one might just engender a bit of controversy, as your editor has been told in no uncertain fashion by some people that fruit should not appear in any curry. Let's have your comments. Many thanks to curry king Mike Bowman for supplying this.



The debt of honour that your editor continues to owe his good friend David Hammond increases with yet another page from his little black book of crew lists.

In this issue, we also conclude the wonderful series of correspondence sent by Derek Ings to his parents at

the end of the last War.

Sadly, below, we carry news of an old BI friend who has left us. Happy sailings, Myles.

We have several new readers since our last issue. A warm welcome to Ken Jones and Cameron Paterson from UK, Mike Plant and Alan Young from Australia and Jim Furlong from Eire. And following our plea in our last issue, we're particularly glad to welcome back Paul Orwin, for whom we have a new e-mail address. Gentlemen, it is good to have you on board!

## FROM ROGER O'CALLAGHAN...

was later on the LSL's, and for a long time *Nuddea*. Myle's father was a doctor with BI, and on *Chantala* prior to Myles joining.

"Dear all, as some of my contemporaries on *Chantala* will already know it is sad to say that Myles Burke died suddenly last month. He was a *Chantala* cadet circa 61 till 63 and went on to serve on the *Chantala* as 3rd Mate. He

As he had successfully fended off the concept of electronic mail till the end, Myles was not a member of this forum. Perhaps, however, he will be recalled from his days with BI, as some have remarked he was a generous, considerate and kind fellow. Quite an achievement given that these impressions were mostly gathered on the often fraught conditions of a cadetship half deck. A confirmed Francophile, he lived in Burgundy and for many years worked as Rig Master, most recently in fields in the Caspian Sea. It was on a recent tour here that he was taken ill.

A memorial service is being considered and should I hear details I'll post them on this site."

## FROM THE INGS FAMILY ALBUM...

**22.11.46** - New York. Ian and I have entertained June and "Toots" on board *Chanda* and one evening, Second Engineer "Dak" Nelson marched around the boat deck playing the bagpipes for the visitors.

**2.1.46** - at sea in the Pacific. To-day is New Year's Day because we crossed the International Date Line yesterday and lost the 1st January!

**12.1.46** - Shanghai. Things are not quite straight in Shanghai after the end of the war and all the shipping companies have combined to form one concern which they call "Far Eastern Shipping Agencies" and this acts like the Ministry of War Transport elsewhere. The currency situation is chaotic with the official rate of 4,300 Chinese dollars to the pound. We are planning a football match against the ward room of *HMS Belfast*.

**16.1.46** - Shanghai. I bought a Mah Jong set from stevedores working on board in exchange for cigarettes, an old watch and a few US dollars. (*The Mah Jong set has stood the test of time and is still in use*). To-morrow the Second Officer, A T M Muir, will be married to one of the passengers who embarked in New York, a lady who works for UNRRA and is a nurse. We have been invited to the wedding reception at the Cathay Hotel.

**29.1.46** - Hong Kong. We sail for Sydney as soon as enough ballast has been dug out of the hillside which will take at least a fortnight.

**3.2.46** - Hong Kong. Yesterday was Chinese New Year and in the evening the warships, including *HMS Duke of York* put up a display of rockets, searchlights etc. Ashore everyone was setting off crackers "to chase the devils away".

**20.2.46** - Hong Kong. On Sunday I went to the Peak with one of the RN radar operators, using the cable car to see the Japanese "Victory" monument which was built at great loss of life by prisoners of war. (*The*

*monument was destroyed by the authorities shortly afterwards*).

**27.3.46** - Sydney. *Chanda* has now been handed back to the BI by the Ministry of War Transport and will be employed on the India/Australia service. I have heard that Mr Graham, the BI Secretary is retiring and will be replaced by Mr Kerr, who is presently the Assistant Secretary. We are no longer able to post our letters free of charge by Forces' Mail and will have to pay normal postage in future - the first time for about two years!

**1.4.46** - Port Kembla. I have bought a bicycle! It will be useful at most ports. I managed to arrange for a party of ten of the ship's officers to visit the Australian Steel and Iron Works here. We are loading their products for India.

**3.6.46** - at sea. We have been very busy calling at Madras and Calcutta where we closed and re-opened articles. It was decided that we should get Indian Coast rates of pay from the date of completion of discharge in Hong Kong but we had to pay UK income tax up to the date of closing our UK articles in Calcutta. I was very pleased to have the opportunity to visit Calcutta and the office of the BI Managing Agents. I also took part in the selection of the new Deck and Engine Room crews along with Mr Blakey, the Chief Engineer and Mr Salmon, the Chief Officer. I have never seen so many BI ships together at one time and when the shifting chits come aboard it makes me wonder if I might get one too! I must now decide whether to remain at sea or to ask to return to the London Office.

**25.6.46** - Bombay. I was nearly landed ashore with a high temperature but managed to persuade the captain, ship's doctor and Dr. Hickey, the Surgeon Supt ashore, to allow me to continue with the ship. After several days of Epsom salts and castor oil and drinking only lime juice, Horlicks and Bovril, I recovered. I was told to pay everyone on board an extra day's pay for "Victory Day". I also paid some money into my account with the BI Employees Deposit Fund (*whilst in the London office I was responsible for receiving and paying out money from the fund to officers on leave*). The old DEMS accommodation has been cleaned up so that we can carry 36 passengers on the next voyage.

**1.7.46** - at sea. I was able to make use of my bicycle in Karachi despite the risk of the cart-pulling camels taking a bite out of my rear end! There were fast motor trams which I had not seen previously. We sailed yesterday morning which was my 21st Birthday!

I bought all the officers a drink from the captain downwards.

(continued on next page)



2/O Muir and 3/O Ian Crawford *Chanda* 1946



The Japanese "Victory" monument



## FROM DEREK INGS (cont.)...

14.7.46 - Bristol Hotel, Colombo. Much to my surprise I found my relief waiting for me when we arrived here yesterday. I am to return to the UK in *Queda* when she arrives in about two weeks time. I expect that my bike will come in handy whilst I await my next ship.

19.7.46 - Colombo. I have been asked by the Agents to help with a crew change on the *Atlantis* - there is also a large aircraft carrier here with Australian war brides. (I did not get War Risk Money whilst off articles ashore awaiting a ship, reducing my pay by £10 per month)

27.7.46 - Colombo. I borrowed a book from the Merchant Service Club called "Merchant Adventurers 1914-1918" which is the war history of the P&O Group during the Great War - I have now been allowed to keep it (and I still have it).

4.8.46 - at sea. *Queda* arrived a couple of days ago. What a change from my previous two ships! My cabin, where I work, is no bigger than my office in *Chanda*. Having to use a compactum for the first time is rather a messy business.

(However, shortly after June and I were married, we moved into a house with no bathroom and I scrounged a compactum from the BI store in the Royal Albert Dock). Captain Morton is going home to retire and asked me to take a photograph of him holding the two tiger cubs which we are carrying. Owing to the monsoon we are only making between six and eight knots at present.



Capt Morton & the tiger cubs

18.8.46 - at sea. We bunkered with coal in Aden - a perfectly horrible 36 hours. Yesterday we passed the *Chantilly* operating as a French hospital ship... but I failed to see

her! We expect to arrive in London about 6th September and will load at Antwerp and Hull before *Queda* sails from London on her next voyage to India.

27.10.46 - Hotel Regina, Paris. June met me at the station on Friday and we are having a grand time here - she hasn't changed a bit from when we were in New York. I will be returning to the BI London office on 4th November.

## FROM A READER OF DEREK'S...

The diary of Derek was most interesting, the more so because I was a frequent visitor to the Officers Club on the first floor of the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York. The lady who ran the

club was Agnes Muir and she was awarded the MBE for her contributions to the war effort. The club was still going strong up to about 1952. They were truly halcyon days and we still had a merchant navy.

Best wishes

Ken Jones, a well retired r/o

## FROM THE TRIVIA PAGES...

Whilst your editor was idly doing nothing the other day (Mrs Editor was obviously nowhere around), he came upon one of those useless nuggets of information that cannot be ignored. Apparently the QE2 liner travels only 6 inches for every gallon of fuel she burnt. What a lot of tosh!





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FROM THE LOOK-OUT...

The famous Beachy Head light house which started operation in 1902 could soon have shone its last. Trinity House is considering whether to continue the operation of the lighthouse, claiming that modern navigational aids render it no longer necessary. Yeah, right and marine insurers know just how effective those modern navigational aids may or may not be...





# B-I Menu

## *Kashmir Lamb Curry*

**Preparation Time:** all night or 6 hours minimum in the refrigerator for the marinating; plus about 20 minutes prior to cooking.

**Total Cooking Time:** 1 hour and 15 minutes.

**Serves:** 4

### Ingredients

2lb (900g) of lamb, cubed  
1 cup (250ml) yoghurt (don't use the skinny or reduced fat brand)  
1 tsp turmeric powder  
1 tsp ground cumin seed  
3 fresh chopped de-seeded chillies or half a tsp chilli powder  
3 - 4 fat garlic cloves, minced or crushed.  
3 tbs (45ml) ghee/cooking oil  
2 oz (50g) flaked almonds  
4 oz (80g) sultanas soaked in cold water for 10 mins  
2 oz (50g) dried apricots or peaches, sliced thinly (the slightly moist Turkish variety are the best)  
The juice of 1 lemon or lime.  
Salt to taste.

### Method

Put the cubed lamb in a bowl with the turmeric, cumin, yoghurt, chilli and garlic, mix well, cover and put in the fridge for at least 6 hours, overnight if possible. When you are ready, dry roast the almond flakes in a frying pan until they start to brown a little, set aside to cool on a plate. In the oil/ghee, fry the apricots/peaches and sultanas until they are plump, (don't singe them), remove and set aside on kitchen paper to drain. Add the marinated lamb cubes to the pan and fry for about 5 minutes until browned all over, add the sultanas/apricots/peaches and the almonds, cover the pan and gently simmer for about an hour, stirring from time to time until the lamb is cooked. Season with the salt and the lemon/lime juice.

### Serving

With plain boiled rice, a tangy sambhal and pappadoms.

This one is a product of Gordon McWilliam's archives from the BI Bombay Cookery School, circa 1950. It's very fruity and fairly mild and was apparently a favourite lunch dish for passengers on the Amra and Karanja, possibly producing just a milder post-prandial nap on a deck chair. The recipe takes a bit of preparation, but it's certainly worth it.

## FROM THE REUNIONS DEPT...

Revised arrangements for the UK-based BI reunion have been announced by the organisers. These details are outlined below. Booking arrangements are being handled by Sue Spence, (e-mail: [bi@johnmspence.plus.com](mailto:bi@johnmspence.plus.com)), whilst travel and hotel arrangements can be booked via Seb Rees, (e-mail: [seb@travelservices.com](mailto:seb@travelservices.com)).

All in all, it looks like being an excellent event -- and unusually it will probably come out cheaper than the previous reunion! That alone would convince your editor to attend, even without the renowned Geordie hospitality on offer. He will be standing at his usual place at the bar...

## PROGRAMME

### FRIDAY 8th OCTOBER

#### RECEPTION and REUNION DINNER

in the Gateshead Suite, Hilton Hotel at 1900 for 2000.

(cost approximately £40 per person)

### SATURDAY 9th OCTOBER

#### RIVER TYNE CRUISE

Quay to Sea three-hour riverboat cruise, departing approximately 1600.

(cost approx £21 pp, including dinner.)

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### SUNDAY 10th OCTOBER

#### CURRY LUNCH at the HILTON HOTEL

From 1230 in the *Windows on the Tyne* restaurant.

(cost approx £20 pp)

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#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

John King, who lives in Newcastle, has kindly offered to organise a guided tour of Trinity House. ([trinityhousenewcastle.org.uk](http://trinityhousenewcastle.org.uk).)

Cost: £4 pp for a minimum of 10 visitors.

John would also be happy to arrange a round of golf for anyone who might be interested. For further information, please contact John at

tel: ++(44)(0)1670 825916;

email: [john.king63@btopenworld.com](mailto:john.king63@btopenworld.com).

## FROM THE AUCTION ROOMS...

Our little illustration of the Allsopp's beer can in the last issue of "... calling BI" certainly opened up ...er, a can of worms! Most of our readers have probably heard of the practice for throwing empty cans over the side of the ship (not that any of you would have polluted the oceans in such a way, we're sure) but you wouldn't have realised that you were throwing away a fortune.

A keen-eyed reader has sent in details of a beer memorabilia website

[http://www.taverntrove.com/items/Allsops-Lager-Beer-Cans-Flat-Tops-10-12oz-Allied-Breweries-UK-Ltd\\_49736.asp](http://www.taverntrove.com/items/Allsops-Lager-Beer-Cans-Flat-Tops-10-12oz-Allied-Breweries-UK-Ltd_49736.asp)

which is now advertising an empty can at the grandiose cost of US\$27.99! Fortunately, your editor can reveal that this can is not from a BI ship. How? He notes it has been opened from the bottom!



## FROM THE COMPETITIONS DEPT...

As expected, "... calling BI" received an e-mail almost by return from Tom Kelso, who tried to identify the island featured in last issue's "where are we now?" competition. Unfortunately, he could only remember that it was somewhere beginning with "A, something, C, something". Not good enough, Tom. Ted Treacher did almost as well, he at least identifying it as "northern hemisphere". Your editor did think that the Winter Olympics may have provided a clue, because all the stones used in that arcane sport of ice curling come from that island. It is, of course, Ailsa Craig.

A doubleheader for this month's competition: please identify either where we are now or any of the intrepid seafarers piloting the *Chantala's* dinghy. Your editor is not sure of the first, but thinks he can spot Ray Small keeping a good lookout whilst steering the boat. Obviously smooth waters were expected, given the lack of lifejackets and, seeing the reddish skin tones, your editor doubts that factor 30 sunscreen has been used. All answers, please to ["... calling BI"](#). Thanks to Gordon Thornton for this photograph; your editor desperately needs some more "where are we now" pictures. The "... calling BI" offices do have film,



slide and flat bed scanners (and some experience of photo manipulation), so if you want to send in pictures and/or 35mm slides, we will be pleased to scan them and return the originals to you. Please let us know.

## FROM THE CAPTIONS DEPT...

They say a picture can be worth a thousand words and certainly in this case it would seem that words are just not enough. However, dear reader, it is your task now is to find those words. Our Competitions Department is standing by with arms full of wondrous prizes (it says here) for the

best caption to this photograph. Send in your comments to ["... calling BI"](#) and make your editor laugh.

