

The Seven Seas Tattler Issue 1.8 - January 2017



Good Day and welcome to the last Tattler of 2017.

Being this time of year, many are on leave, away, enjoying holidays and recharging batteries so some reports are missing.

Tattler wishes to take the opportunity to wish all members of the Seven Seas and their families a most happy holiday period and a wonderful 2018.

As the Irish say: "May your right hand always be stretched out in friendship, but never in want"

January in Military History

January 1, 1915 - During World War I, the British Battleship Formidable was hit by a torpedo in the English Channel, killing 547 crewmen.

January 2, 1905 - The Russians surrendered to the Japanese after the Battle of Port Arthur during the Russian-Japanese War. A peace conference was later held in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, with President Theodore Roosevelt serving as a mediator. In September of 1905, the Russians agreed to the Treaty of Portsmouth yielding Port Arthur and the Liaodong Peninsula to Japan. Russia also agreed to evacuate Manchuria and recognize Japan's interests in Korea.

January 3, 1777 - During the American Revolution, General George Washington defeated the British at Princeton and drove them back toward New Brunswick. Washington then established winter quarters at Morristown, New Jersey. During the long harsh winter, Washington's army shrank to about a thousand men as enlistments expired and deserters fled.

January 3, 1961 - President Dwight D. Eisenhower broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba two years after Communist dictator Fidel Castro had seized power and just weeks before John.F. Kennedy was inaugurated as the next president.

January 6, 1066 - Harold, Earl of Wessex, was crowned King of England following the death of his brother-in-law Edward the Confessor. Harold II was England's last Anglo-Saxon king. In October of 1066, Harold met the invading army of William the Conqueror at Hastings and died on the field of battle.

January 8, 1815 - The Battle of New Orleans occurred as General Andrew Jackson and American troops defended themselves against a British attack, inflicting over 2,000 casualties. Both sides in this battle were unaware that peace had been declared two weeks earlier with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent ending the War of 1812.

January 8, 1918 - Amid the on-going World War in Europe, President Woodrow Wilson proposed his Fourteen Points, calling for a reduction of arms, self-determination for governments, and the creation of a League of Nations, all intended to serve as a basis for resolving the conflict and establishing a lasting peace in Europe.

January 10, 1920 - The League of Nations officially came into existence with the goal of resolving international disputes, reducing armaments, and preventing future wars. The first Assembly gathered in Geneva ten months later with 41 nations represented. More than 20 nations later joined; however, the U.S. did not join due to a lack of support for the League in Congress.

January 10, 1946 - The first meeting of the United Nations General Assembly took place in London with delegates from 51 countries. The U.N. superseded its predecessor, the League of Nations.

January 12, 1996 - The first joint American-Russian military operation since World War II occurred as Russian troops arrived to aid in peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia.

January 14-23, 1943 - President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill met at Casablanca in Morocco to work on strategy during World War II. At the conclusion of the conference, Roosevelt and Churchill held a joint news conference at which Roosevelt surprisingly announced that peace would come "by the total elimination of German and Japanese war power. That means the unconditional surrender of Germany, Italy and Japan."

January 16, 1547 - Ivan the Terrible had himself officially crowned as the first Russian Czar (Caesar) although he had already ruled Russia since 1533. His reign lasted until 1584 and brought much needed reforms including a new legal code and cultural development. However, during his reign he instituted a campaign of terror against the Russian nobility and had over 3,000 persons put to death. He also killed his own son during a fit of rage.

January 16, 1991 - The war against Iraq began as Allied aircraft conducted a major raid against Iraqi air defences. The air raid on Baghdad was broadcast live to a global audience by CNN correspondents as operation Desert Shield became Desert Storm.

January 19, 1983 - Former Gestapo official Klaus Barbie, known as the "Butcher of Lyon," was arrested in Bolivia, South America. He was responsible for deporting Jewish children from Lyon to Auschwitz where they were gassed. He also murdered French Resistance leader Jean Moulin and tortured others. He was exposed by Nazi hunters Serge and Beate Klarsfeld, extradited in 1987, then convicted by the French and died while in prison.

January 20, 1649 - At the conclusion of the English Civil War, King Charles I was brought before a high court of justice at Westminster Hall on charges of treason. The Civil War had been fought over whether the King's power was absolute or was limited by the powers of Parliament. Oliver Cromwell had led the Parliamentary forces to victory over the Royals. In the trial that followed, Charles was found guilty and condemned as "a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and public enemy" and was beheaded several days later in front of Whitehall Palace in London.

January 21, 1793 - In the aftermath of the French Revolution, King Louis XVI of France was guillotined on the charge of conspiring with foreign countries for the invasion of France. During the Revolution, the King had attempted to flee to Austria for assistance. Ten months later, his wife, Queen Marie Antoinette, was also guillotined.

January 21, 1954 - The USS Nautilus, the world's first nuclear powered submarine, was launched at Groton, Connecticut.

January 22, 1879 - At the Battle of Isandlwana, the Zulu overwhelmed and wiped out 1,400 British soldiers. This battle is considered to be one of the greatest disasters in British colonial history. Isandlwana forced the policy makers in London to rally to the support of the pro-war contingent in the Natal government and commit whatever resources were needed to defeat the Zulu. The first invasion of Zululand ended with the catastrophe of Isandlwana where, along with heavy casualties, the main centre column lost all supplies, transport and ammunition and the British would be forced to halt their advances elsewhere while a new invasion was prepared. At Rorke's Drift (22–23 January 1879) 139 British soldiers successfully defended the station against an intense assault by four to five thousand Zulu warriors.

January 22, 1943 - During World War II in the Pacific, Japanese resistance ended in New Guinea, resulting in the first land victory of the war for Allied forces.

January 23, 1943 - In North Africa, British forces under General Bernard Montgomery captured Tripoli in Libya.

January 23, 1968 - The American ship USS Pueblo was seized by North Koreans in the Sea of Japan amid claims the Navy ship was spying. The ship was confiscated and its crew held in captivity until December, with one fatality.

January 24, 1972 - Japanese soldier Shoichi Yokoi was discovered on Guam after he had spent 28 years hiding out in the jungle not knowing World War II had long since ended.

January 27, 1944 - Russian Army General Govorov announced the lifting of the Nazi blockade of Leningrad. During the 900-day siege, an estimated one million Russian civilians inside the city died of disease, starvation and relentless German shelling.

January 27, 1973 - U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War ended as North Vietnamese and American representatives signed an agreement in Paris. The U.S. agreed to remove all remaining troops within 60 days thus ending the longest war in American history. Over 58,000 Americans had been killed, 300,000 wounded and 2,500 declared missing. A total of 566 prisoners-of-war had been held by the North Vietnamese during the war, with 55 reported deaths.

January 28, 1871 - The Franco-Prussian War ended as Paris surrendered to the Germans after a four month siege. Peace terms imposed on the French included yielding the greater part of Alsace and Lorraine to the Germans and a \$1 billion fine. German troops also outraged the French by marching triumphantly through the streets of Paris causing enmity between the two nations which lasted for decades.

January 29, 1916 - During World War I, the first aerial bombings of Paris by German zeppelins took place.

January 31, 1943 - German troops surrendered at Stalingrad, marking the first big defeat of Hitler's armies in World War II. During the Battle of Stalingrad, 160,000 Germans were killed and 90,000 taken prisoner, including the commander, Friedrich von Paulus, the first German field marshal ever to surrender. The captured Germans were forced to march to Siberia, with few ever returning to Germany.

Some other (January) items of interest

When World War II broke out the South African Naval Service was virtually non-existent, with only three officers and three ratings. In January 1940 a new naval unit, called the Seaward Defence Force, was formed. Rear-Admiral Guy Hallifax CMG (see below), who had retired in South Africa from the Royal Navy, was appointed Director of the Seaward Defence Force. This unit was to be responsible for operating minesweepers and anti-submarine ships, and undertaking other duties including inspection and signalling in South African waters. From 1941 a number of SDF antisubmarine trawlers served in the Mediterranean.

The SA Marine Corps - The Marines were disbanded on 18 January 1990, following a major restructuring of the Navy at the end of the South African Border War. The South Africa Marine Corps was set up as a sub-branch of the Navy in 1979 with the primary purpose of protecting harbours. Marines were also deployed at Katima Mulilo in South West Africa during the South African Border War, where they were responsible for patrolling the Zambezi River. The Marines also acted as regular infantry at the Border until 1988 as well as performing counter-insurgency operations inside South Africa. During township duties in the mid-1980s the detachment used facilities at SAS Rand in Johannesburg and on Signal Hill outside of Heidelberg. The Marines had an amphibious landing capability by operating from Tafelberg and Drakensberg. An elite company, named the Marine Amphibious Company (MAC), was formed to ensure the beach-head capability for landing large task forces. The Marines trained and fielded a small elite reconnaissance detachment between 1983 and 1989, under the direct control of the Marine CO, they received airborne, diver and urban counter measures training from other army units within the SADF.

From the Archives - Guy Hallifax

(From Wikipedia)

Guy Waterhouse Hallifax, CMG
Born June 21, 1884 South Stoneham, Hampshire, England
Died 28 March 1941 (aged 56) Baboon Point, 74 km north of Saldanha, Western Cape
Service/branch Royal Navy
Rank Rear Admiral

Awards

Commander of the Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus Order of the Medjidie.

Naval Career

He served in the Royal Navy from 1899 to 1935, and ended his RN career on the staff of the last British governor-general of South Africa, the Earl of Clarendon. He stayed in South Africa in retirement, and on the outbreak of World War II in 1939, he was recruited by the South African government to organise a navy, which was named the Seaward Defence Force.

Royal Navy

Hallifax joined HMS Britannia in 1899 and served as a Naval Advisor in Turkey, for which he was awarded the Order of the Medjidieh (3rd class). During the First World War served as first lieutenant and torpedo lieutenant on board HMS Ajax. After being attached to the Inter-Allied Commission in Berlin he served in HMS Valiant, Home Fleet, from 1921 to 1923. He then attended various disarmament meetings at Geneva and was promoted captain in 1924. Two years later he commanded the cruiser HMS Carlisle, of the China Squadron, remaining there until 1928. He was later appointed naval attaché in Paris and also served in that capacity in Madrid, Brussels and The Hague. He returned to active naval duties when he was appointed in command of HMS Malaya from 1932 to 1934. In 1935 he became Director of the Signal Division of the Admiralty, and was promoted Rear-Admiral, in the same year.

Rear-Admiral Hallifax went out to South Africa as secretary to Lord Clarendon, who was then Governor-General in South Africa, in 1936, and continued in this capacity for the first four months of the governor-generalship of Sir Patrick Duncan.

South African Navy

As Director of the Seaward Defence Force, he established a small fleet of minesweepers and anti-submarine vessels for coastal defence, and organised naval detachments in the major ports.

Promotions

Confirmed in the rank of Sub-Lieutenant -**15 July 1903**
Sub-Lieutenant to Lieutenant -**15 January 1905**
Commander to Captain- **30 June 1924**
Captain to Rear-Admiral- **3 October 1935**
Placed on the Retired List- **4 October 1935**

Death

He was killed in an aeroplane crash at Baboon Point, 74 kilometres north of Saldanha while returning from a tour of inspection to the newly established naval detachment in Walvis Bay.

SPOTLIGHT ON



This month we focus on Peter Le Roux a Club Member for 60 years! Peter is currently a Club Trustee.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF PETER RUDWYN LE ROUX

Peter was born in Port Elizabeth on 1 August 1938. He did not play in the streets of Port Elizabeth as other little boys did, because shortly afterwards his parents moved to East London. He is one of four brothers, the others being Tony (deceased), Denzil (now the club treasurer) and Robert (now headmaster at Westerford High School).

"There was a world war between me and the birth of my brother Tony. (WWII that is). I married Jean (nee van den Berg) on 18 April 1964. (She was also born in Port Elizabeth but not at the same time as me.) We have two children, André and Michèle and five grandchildren, Nicholas & Robynne (who have both just graduated from Stellenbosch University), Erin, Kyra and Remy."

In 1939 his father joined the RNVR, and so "my naval career began." From 1947 to 1950 he lived on Salisbury Island where he became great friends with the Fougstedt boys, John (deceased) Peter, now RAdm(jg)(ret) and Michael (deceased) as well as the Dryden-Dymonds, Gillian (now Lady Grose) and Noel (deceased).

In 1950 his "old man" (Cdr.(s) R.P. le Roux) was appointed to Pretoria and he attended Pretoria Boys' High school where he befriended Edwin Trevor Beddy (RAdm(jg)(ret).

An appointment to the Cape for his dad saw him enrolled at Paarl Boys' High, as a border, from 1951. Unlike our chairman he stuck it out for four years until he matriculated in 1955. He played rugby for the first team under coaches Jean de Villiers (later Cmdre in the SAN) and Springbok Chum Osche. Even in those days "Booishai" "was the top rugby school in the country." (Ed - there may be the odd agreement or disagreement here!)

In 1956 he entered the Naval Gymnasium. "I was lucky as my dad was the stores officer there (the navy didn't have logistic officers in those days) so all my dhobi was sent home and returned cleaned and ironed the next day". "I thought I'd be smartest trainee of the year but I was pipped at the post by a certain Trevor Beddy." Other shipmates there were Chris Bennett (Now RAdm (ret)) Ivan Viseé (RAdm(jg)(res) and Koos Brink (deceased).

1957 saw him attempt the Military Academy at Stellenbosch but decided that that was not where his interests lay so he requested to be appointed as Midshipman under training to SAS Good Hope (Cdr. R.C. Cousens). At sea with him were Trevor Beddy, Ivan Viseé and Christo Grobbelaar .

After completing the Lieut. Qualifying Course he was appointed to various ships as follows: (Tattler - The memory of such detail is most impressive Peter).

*1959 SAS Vrystaat (Capt. M.R. Terry-Lloyd) as watch keeper. (Acting Slr.)

*1959 SAS Oosterland (Lieut. Sam Davis) as navigator (Slr.) James Sleight was XO. "We collected the SDB at HMS Diligence in Hythe UK."

*1960 SAS Good Hope (Capt. Peter Selk) as TAS officer (Slr.). During the infamous Pondo Land patrols, while alongside in East London, I was fired by the captain, told to pack my bags and return to

Simon's Town. All because the action alarm bells were activated as I returned from breakfasting ashore with the mayor. I was OOD and could not explain to him how the alarm had been activated. Fortunately No 1 (Bill Goosen) put a good word in for me.

*1961 SAS President Kruger (Capt. Terry-Lloyd) as TAS officer (Lieut.).

*1962 – 1963 SAS Vrystaat (Capt. P. Selk) as watchkeeper (Lieut.).

*1964 SAS Transvaal (Capt. Bill Hogg) as navigator (Lieut.) This was a very temporary appointment as the ship was due to decommission for the last time shortly.

*1964 SAS President Kruger (Capt. Peter Selk) as TAS officer (Lieut.)

*1965 to 1967 Naval College (Capt. G.N. Green) Training Officer (Lieut.). "Jonny Page and I coached the college rugby team. My brother, Denzil and Gordon Hammond were members of that team. They were not too bad a side."

*1967 to 1969 SAS Natal (Cdr. John De Wet) as 1st Lieut. (LtCdr.). They did the survey of the approaches to the proposed harbour of Richards Bay. "Many stories can be told of my experiences in that ship." (Ed - Maybe we should explore this!)

*1969 to 1971 SAS Saldanha (Cdr. Greyling van der Merwe) (LtCdr.) His daughter was born at AFS Langebaanweg in December 1969.

*1971 to 1972 SAS Johannesburg in Command (LtCdr. & Cdr.) His first Lieutenant was Slt. A.G. Söderlund. "He was quite good. He and I went through some trying times. Being in command of a sea going ship is every officer's dream. I enjoyed every moment even when I was hurling cats into the bridge wing bucket."

*1972 to 1974 SAS President Kruger (Capts. McNaughton & Kingon) as XO (Cdr.) Fire in the ship 3 Sept. 1973.

*1974 to 1977 SAS Simonsberg (Capt. Peter Bitzker) Cdr. and Capt. From being the training commander he relieved Peter Bitzker when he was appointed to Germany as Naval Attaché.

*1977 to 1980. Naval Attaché in London (Capt.). "A marvellous experience on the tax payer's account. We lived in Wimbledon, I compared notes on commanding ton class minesweepers with the Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace." He watched rugby at Cardiff Arms Park and consumed vast amounts of alcohol at the many diplomatic cocktail parties.

*1980 to 1983. A cultural shock, from London to Garsfontein in Pretoria. He was appointed to Military Intelligence into the foreign relations division dealing with the foreign attachés.

*1984 to 1990. Naval Base Simon's Town in Command. (Capt.) My immediate boss was one Cmdre. E.T. Beddy. "This is where my official Naval Career ended although I did spend some time in the reserve, not in uniform, teaching pilotage at the warfare school and doing notice to mariners at the Hydrographic Office. When I turned 65 in August 2003 FOF (RAdm. E.M. Green) told me I had had enough and sent me on my way. I was quite happy to receive the news from Eric because we had known each other for many years as his parents and my parents were close friends."

Between all the above he completed the Naval Staff Course and the Joint Staff Course and other legal and organisation courses successfully.

Life with the Seven Seas started in 1957 when he was introduced by Mid. E.T. Beddy. " It is still my favourite club." (Tattler recognises this incredibly long and loyal period of membership and can only imagine how much Peter knows about our great club).

"Never once have I regretted my choice of a career. The SA Navy has treated me extremely well. Both Jean and I have considered it a privileged to be involved in all the comings and goings of our time."

He speaks of the book , "IF YOU CAN HOLD UP YOUR HAND HEAR ME! OR IF YOU CAN'T HEAR ME, WAVE..!!" by Dickin Silberbauer. He was involved in many of those incidents.

"I have made friends with colleagues and shipmates which I will remember and cherish all my life. To name all of the characters, and there were some, would be impossible because my memory does not stretch so far." (Ed - You have done a pretty good job though!)

Now he lives in a "little cottage in Silvermine Retirement Village". He reads, plays croquet, does the Cape Times crossword puzzles, plays solitaire on his laptop and listens to Fine Music Radio.

"When people ask me what I do now my stock reply is "I do what the Navy taught me---never volunteer". (Ed - I believe that his service to the club may just contradict this)

Tattler thanks Peter for this contribution, hopes he wins most of his croquet matches and nails the crossword puzzle for years to come.

Humour for the mature

As one of the more mature folk I can get confused when "instructed" by the younger people.

Recently at a supermarket when I was ready to pay for the purchases the cashier said, "Strip down, facing me." I did as commanded.

When the hysterical shrieking and alarms finally subsided, I found out she was referring to how I should place my credit card in the card reader!

As a senior citizen, I do not get flustered often, but this time it took me a while to get my pants back on.

I've been asked to shop elsewhere in the future.

They need to make their instructions to seniors a little more clear.

I still don't think I looked that bad! Just need to wear underwear more often.

SWALLOWS

swal-low

(swŏl'ō)

n.

- 1. Any of various small graceful swift-flying passerine birds of the family Hirundinidae, having long pointed wings, a usually notched or forked tail, and a large mouth for catching flying insects.*
- 2. Any of various similar birds, such as a swift.*

This month Tattler looks into the interesting life of those known as "swallows" . Club member Sheila Belshaw has been kind enough to provide views on the life-style involved in avoiding the winter by moving between hemispheres .

How much of the year do you spend in Cape Town versus your "other homes"?

Colin and I never intended to be swallows. This just happened. We never intended to have three homes. We never intended to live in Cape Town, although because this is where I was born, it was always an impossible dream of mine. It all just happened, due to circumstances related to our very nomadic lives because of Col's profession as a mining engineer. The Cape Town home happened because on leaving Zambia for the last time in 1998, after Col had been called back to sort out the mess the Zambian copper mines had got themselves into in the ten years he had been away, we were passing through Cape Town en route back to Europe. Our ship was delayed and the longer we stayed here, the more Col fell in love with it. One day when driving from lunch in Simon's Town back to our holiday digs at Sunny Cove, we drove around Glencairn Heights which had been nothing but a sand dune when I was a child. Col spotted a little house for sale. We stopped and looked at it. It was nice. Col was invited to put in an offer, never dreaming that this could be a binding legal document – a very different procedure from that in the UK. The next morning the estate agent phoned and said "The house is yours!" So that was that. We've made it into a lovely home. But to answer your question, we spend most of the time in Cape Town – six months per year, and a total of six months in Europe, which normally equates to two weeks at our home in the UK in May, four and a half months in Menorca, and then another two weeks in the UK before flying back to Cape Town in November every year. People think we are crazy, and that at our age (both 88) we should be settling down and living a quiet life.

Where are your other homes?

Our other homes also happened by chance. For most of Colin's working life we lived in Zambia (first it was Northern Rhodesia, so you know how long ago that was!). We also lived in Tanzania at Williamson Diamonds, and in Ghana, in Tarkwa. Our home in Wilmslow, Cheshire came about because our middle son was studying Law at Manchester University. When visiting him while on leave we were appalled at the squalid student digs he was living in, and we bought a flat near the university which we could use when we were there, and which Peter could live in as well. Later, when our youngest son Andrew was diagnosed with teenage bone cancer, it was necessary for Col to resign from his job in Zambia in order for us to be near Andrew, who was having one operation after another and had been given a 15% chance of survival. So we sold the flat and bought a nice little house in leafy Wilmslow, a bit further down the road from Manchester. As for our house in Parc Natural De S'Albufera in Menorca, we had built this in 1976 knowing that we could not live in Central, East and West Africa forever because the necessary Malaria prophylactics were becoming

detrimental to both my health and Colin's. We chose Menorca because at that time the plot we bought was on a golf course and we were both crazy about golf, and also we thought it would be a lovely place for our three sons to visit us in our retirement. We were not wrong.

How you feel about the term "swallow"?

I think it suits us very well. We move from one hemisphere to the other because of the weather. And that's just what the birds do. Col and I don't do winters. We haven't been in a winter now for 19 years! When Col had his aortic valve replacement op, the surgeon told him he had to try to avoid getting any infection, as this could be fatal with the metal heart valve. Now that he also has leukaemia, it is even more important that he should not get an infection, as his immune system cannot cope with this. So eternal summer is the answer.

How long have you been migrating between the hemispheres?

We started our migrating when we bought the house in Glencairn Heights in 1998. Best thing we ever did. When Col finished his final contract with the mines in Zambia, we decided we would return to Europe by land and sea, rather than in a tin tube. First we were driven down to Victoria Falls from Kitwe. We stayed a few days in the magnificent Vic Falls Hotel, and boarded a train at Vic Falls Station, bound for Bulawayo. We then changed trains and a South African Railways train took us to Joburg and then on to Cape Town. It was a magical railway trip, enabling us to sit in comfort, sipping wine and taking in the wonderful scenery, which when you fly you completely miss. The plan then was to sail from Cape Town to the UK on a cargo ship. However, our ship was delayed by several weeks by a dock strike in Durban, and during that time we enjoyed Cape Town – especially the deep south – until one day ... fate stepped in.

Tell us about the different life-styles and why this appeals to you?

We don't consciously think about the different life styles we encounter by living in three different countries. It is exciting and invigorating to have to adapt to the differences. Each one has its advantages, and its drawbacks, and we adapt seamlessly to each one of them. Each time we open a front door, we feel we are home, and do not hanker back to the previous home we lived in. We have very special friends in each country, and when one day we decide not to travel any more, we would miss those friends. But it is very tempting to make Wilmslow UK the place where we would leave our bones, because our three sons and their wives and children are now all based in the UK, having previously been scattered all over the world.

What draw-backs, down-sides?

Drawbacks? Down-sides? Each of the three homes has a little of each, but none of those are strong enough at the moment to make us want to abandon them. An obvious drawback at the moment in Cape Town is the water-shortage. Having only been back a couple of weeks, we are still not used to the restrictions, and don't like it one little bit. But the multitude of good things make up for this. Drawbacks in the UK – well, obviously the weather and the early darkness in winter, the traffic and the high cost of living. In Menorca, a small island less than the size of the Cape Peninsula, I suppose you could say the language is a drawback, although we do both have a smattering of Spanish, enough to get by with, but not to have an intelligent conversation with a Spaniard. But oh, Menorca is lovely. We love our house and garden there and we love the friends we have and the island is beautiful. And the wine is good and cheap. There is something about living on an island that is quite unique. Menorca is steeped in history, having been occupied by the Phoenicians, the Romans, the Moroccans, the Spanish, the British, the French, and has signs of all these occupations in its ruins, its

buildings and its customs, and even its language. This little island has every necessary facility and everything is very easily accessible. Medical treatment is the best I have ever encountered. Menorca has the oldest opera house in Spain. It is like a miniature La Scala and we get operas, music concerts and ballet from all over the world. A big plus for Cape Town is that we can afford to have domestic help, giving me some time to do my writing, which has been sorely neglected for the past two years. As I love walking on the beach every morning, often early enough to catch the sunrise, Glencairn and Fish Hoek are hard to beat, so there's another plus for the Deep South. But let me not forget the Seven Seas Club. Colin and I both love it, and we go every Friday when we are here. The friendships we have made at the Club over the seventeen years we have been members are very special to us.

We have lived together in Africa since 1953 and experienced the many changes which have occurred, and sincerely hope that the future will allow us to enjoy our remaining years here.

Tattler thanks Sheila for her contribution. I am sure many will feel a little jealousy. Long may you and Colin enjoy the life-style, the different homes, the deep south and the Seven Seas Club!

Interesting sayings

A few centuries ago, common entertainment included playing cards. However, there was a tax levied when purchasing playing cards but only applicable to the 'Ace of Spades.' To avoid paying the tax, people would purchase 51 cards instead. Yet, since most games require 52 cards, these people were thought to be stupid or dumb because they weren't '*playing with a full deck.*'

During WWII, U.S. airplanes were armed with belts of bullets which they would shoot during dogfights and on strafing runs. These belts were folded into the wing compartments that fed their machine guns. These belts measure 27 feet and contained hundreds of rounds of bullets. Often times, the pilots would return from their missions having expended all of their bullets on various targets. They would say, "*I gave them the whole nine yards,*" meaning they used up all of their ammunition.

At local taverns, pubs, and bars, people drank from pint and quart-sized containers. A bar maid's job was to keep an eye on the customers and keep the drinks coming. She had to pay close attention and remember who was drinking in 'pints' and who was drinking in 'quarts,' hence the phrase '*minding your 'P's and Q's.*'

Among the euphemisms and colourful expressions used to describe extreme intoxication or drunkenness, the phrase *three sheets to the wind* often stands out as a particularly curious one. Some people might ask why three sheets as opposed to one or two, as well as what sheets have to do with overindulgence in alcohol. The answer lies in nautical history. The original expression was actually three sheets IN the wind, not TO the wind. In the sailing world, the word sheet actually refers to a rope, not the sail it controls, although some nautical sources suggest the word did once refer to the corners of a sail. Specifically, a sheet rope controls the horizontal movement of a sail, while other types of ropes keep the sails vertically or statically stable. If one sheet becomes loose or is improperly secured, the sail may flap in the breeze but the ship will still be relatively steerable. The loss of two sheets will make the sail too loose to maintain a straight course, but the captain may be able to compensate by manipulating other sails. By the time three sheets are in the wind, the ship will flounder and wobble, much like a drunken sailor on shore leave. If four sheets are in the wind, the ship is virtually dead in the water.

Mind Your Own Bee's Wax

Now, honestly, I have to admit that this one I thought was just a coined phrase mimicking the more common and literal phrase, "mind your own business."

However, it turns out this has a more defined origin. Apparently, in the early days before there was Stridex and Clearasil, the ladies would use bee's wax to smooth their complexion where they had acne. There were actually several phrases that came from this practice.

If a lady looked too long or stared at another lady's face, they would say, "Mind your own bee's wax!" If the woman were to smile, it might crack the veneer of bee's wax on her face, thus the phrase, "crack a smile." Also, the phrase "losing face" came from when a girl would sit too close to the fire and then the bee's wax would melt.

Man vs woman! (Many may relate)

Wife's Diary:

Tonight, I thought my husband was acting weird. We had made plans to meet at a nice restaurant for dinner. I was shopping with my friends all day long, so I thought he was upset at the fact that I was a bit late, but he made no comment on it.

Conversation wasn't flowing, so I suggested that we go somewhere quiet so we could talk. He agreed, but he didn't say much.

I asked him what was wrong; He said, 'Nothing. I asked him if it was my fault that he was upset. He said he wasn't upset, that it had nothing to do with me, and not to worry about it.

On the way home, I told him that I loved him. He smiled slightly, and kept driving. I can't explain his behaviour. I don't know why he didn't say, 'I love you, too.'

When we got home, I felt as if I had lost him completely, as if he wanted nothing to do with me anymore. He just sat there quietly, and watched TV. He continued to seem distant and absent. Finally, with silence all around us, I decided to go to bed. About 15 minutes later, he came to bed. But I still felt that he was distracted and his thoughts were somewhere else.

He fell asleep; I cried. I don't know what to do. I'm almost sure that his thoughts are with someone else. My life is a disaster.

Husband's Diary:

A two-foot putt.... who the hell misses a two-foot putt?



That's all we got folks - enjoy the holidays, stay safe and may 2018 bring you all much happiness and great health!