

The Seven Seas Tattler Issue 1.2 - July 2017



From our Chairman

Good day to you all. News on the naval front is scarce at this time. SAS SPIOENKOP is proceeding to East London to participate in World Hydrographic Day. Normally this would be undertaken by SAS PROTEA but she is currently in dry-dock undergoing routine maintenance.

In this edition you will read of new members who I personally wish to welcome, new members of the ancient mariners to whom I extend my congratulations and members celebrating birthdays during July to whom I would like to take the opportunity to say "Happy Birthday"

We are welcoming new tenants about whom you will find information included.

The club's committee will be debating the merits of permitting advertising on a small scale in both Tattler and on the club's website. At this time we would envisage permitting club members and their immediate families placing short advertisements which may benefit fellow members. You are invited to submit your views on this topic to the editor (jonathanagolding@gmail.com)

The club has recently invested in a high quality projector which, amongst other uses, permits us to project TV coverage onto a big screen. We recently set this up to watch the test rugby and feedback has been very positive. A reminder that the next Happy Hour and 100 Club Draw is on Thursday the 13th of July.

Have a happy July!

From the Treasurer:-

Things are looking up!! ...The deficits reflected in the first two months of the financial year have virtually been wiped out. May was a good month with the forecast being exceeded, thanks to better support by members and to our manager's stubbornness to spend the Club's money.

The month of June is also heading in the right direction and we are hoping that members will not be put off by the cold weather and that the Club will be well supported for the remainder of June and for July.

The "D-Day" for membership subscription payments has been reached and unfortunately, we still have some errant non-payers. It appears that some email addresses on our database are out of date and that none of the Club's correspondence is getting through to these members. (We no longer use the unreliable postal service). Please! Please! If you are not receiving any correspondence from the Club (every week the Manager sends out emails), contact Glen to update your details.

For those who have received emails, reminding them that subs are overdue and haven't responded, I am afraid your days are numbered and you will soon become an ex-member of the Seven Seas Club.

For the rest of the members, many thanks for your subs payments, most of which arrived even before they were due.

"News" from the "Secretaries desk"

"We welcome Eddie Noble and his Nautic Africa team as our new tenants and wish them a long, happy and productive stay with us. Not only is it fantastic for the Club to have a company ready to take over the lease from Dave and his Cybicom Atlas Defence team with no break in the income stream so important to the club, we are "over the moon" to have a new tenant actively involved in naval and the wider maritime business. For those who are interested, it is suggested that you take a gander at their website (www.nauticafrika.com)

Eddie's team started to move in at the end of the first week of June following some fancy footwork by Glen Marlow and Shaun Gourley to get on top of a minor snag list and the club members can look forward to seeing new branding on the door of these offices shortly. The Club also looks forward to seeing more of Eddie, his team and their business acquaintances in the club in the near future (hint hint)

We must record our thanks to Dave and his team for being such great tenants over the years as, not only did they pay their rent on time, they brought considerable turnover to the bar in the club. While sorry to see them depart as a result of their need for bigger premises, we wish them continued profitable growth and success in their new premises. We also trust they will continue to pop in to the Club particularly when visiting their "outpost" in the dockyard"

From the Web Master

It has been a quiet month this month for changes to the website but you may have noticed a lot more working links from the reciprocity page to our reciprocal clubs' web sites. Watch this space for a new graphic with a map to show you where in the world these clubs are. I would love to have some feedback from members as to the look and feel of the site. Do you love it or hate it? If you think it could be better then please let me know and I will work on making the site better for all of us. The ultimate aim is for the Seven Seas Club to have a presence in all social media platforms so that you can pick the place you go to get your information about events and all club news and contribute through media to the life of the Club!

3 New Ancient Mariners:

Congratulations to:

R Adm (JG) A.A. Cole (ret)
Lt Cdr K.W. Baker (ret)
Lt Cdr J.S. Meyer (ret)

New Members - The Club and Tattler extends the warmest of welcomes to the following new members:

Capt (SAN) Stan Slogrove (ret) → Stan was a member of the Club for many years whilst still serving in the Navy. He resigned his membership when he retired in Pretoria. Is now in the area from time to time and has re-joined the Club.

Cdr Robbie Menkveld (ret) → Robbie served in the SAN in the 60's and 70's as an Engineer during which time he was a member of the Club, but resigned to pursue an Engineering career in the private sector. He recently moved back to the Western Cape (Glencairn Heights) and thus re-joined the Club.

Capt (SAAF) Ken Hobson (ret). → Ken served for many years in the Air Force as a helicopter pilot. He flew many sorties off Naval Ships flying both Alouette and Phuma helicopters. After retiring from the Air Force, Ken pursued a new career flying choppers in the private sector.

Birthdays

We wish the following members on their forthcoming birthdays:

1 July - Capt WH Rice	2 July - Mr HJC Appleby
5 July - Mr C Hunter	7 July - R Adm RW Higgs
7 July - Mr B Rogers	7 July - Dr EA van Wyk
11 July - Dr NC Lee	12 July - Mr R Castell
14 July - Ens LJ Samuels	20 July - Mr PL Davies
24 July - Mr SB Gourley	29 July - Mr UH Schiefer
31 July - Capt KH Burchell	

We apologise to anybody who will be celebrating but is not on the list. This is because our records of birthdates is incomplete and we request you to kindly provide the information

Spotlight on Preston Barnard

This month Tattler puts the spotlight on (ret) Captain Preston Barnard. A gentleman for sure, a man who appears to shirk the spotlight, but one of many talents. One feels that this man would have been successful in any of several careers. The navy was indeed fortunate to have someone of his ilk.

PERSONAL

Names: Preston Stafford Barnard
Born: Port Elizabeth on 20 May 1949.
Schooling: Melville Primary & Roosevelt High in Johannesburg obtaining colours in cricket & rugby.
Married in 1975 to Margaret and has three adult children. (Ed - Margie is a wonderful persona at the club)

He joined the SA Navy in 1968 by doing National Service at SAS SALDANHA. After basic training he was selected as candidate officer and qualified at Naval College Gordon's Bay. On completion of National Service he joined SAS RAND the then Citizen Force base in Johannesburg progressing through the ranks of Ensign and Sub Lieutenant to Lieutenant.

Studied BSc Agriculture at University of Pretoria but due to the death of his father in 1970 and not great academic results started work for Premier Milling on an experimental farm and later at Sunnyside Chickens in Wynberg Johannesburg. After a disagreement with management he decided to leave and join the SA Navy. (Tattler – obviously a wise choice. Not at all “chicken-hearted”!)

NAVAL CAREER

He joined the Navy Permanent Force with the Citizen Force rank of Lieutenant in 1976 and immediately went to sea to obtain his Combat Officer qualifications. During this time he served on SAS PROTEA and SAS PRESIDENT PRETORIOUS and qualified for his Bridge Watchkeeping certificate in 1977.

The next twelve years were spent at the Mine Countermeasures Flotilla (MCM FLOT) spending most of the time at sea and doing qualification courses. Ships he then served on included SAS WINDHOEK, SAS EAST LONDON, SAS JOHANNESBURG and SAS UMKOMAAS. He regards himself as fortunate to command SAS FLEUR, SAS WALVISBAAI and SAS JOHANNESBURG. He was promoted to Lt Cdr and then to Commander. In 1989 he was appointed to Naval Headquarters in Pretoria as SSO Plans. From 1990 the work became very interesting as he was the Navy representative on many of the Department of Defence committees planning for the “new” South Africa. In 1992 he was promoted to the rank of Captain.

At this stage he held out little hope of getting back to Simon’s Town let alone getting another opportunity to have command at sea. He was therefore very pleasantly surprised to be appointed Officer Commanding SAS DRAKENSBERG early in 1994 and then undertaking the “Friendship Cruise” to show the new SA Flag to many countries in Europe and Africa. Countries visited included Portugal and Scotland. Rosyth, Scotland was the base from which they participated in a Joint Maritime Exercise with 26 other ships from 18 different countries. This was full-on warfare exercises and the ship performed extremely well and they received a BRAVO ZULU or a “well done” signal from the Commander of the Task Group. After Scotland the ship visited Denmark, Holland, Belgium and France. DRAKENSBERG then sailed up the Thames estuary and entered the Port of London (A special time for him as he managed to get (his wife) Margie to France and they were then able to get permission for her to sail to London with them).

After a busy week in London (where the ship's company also participated in the readmission of the RSA to the Commonwealth) the ship sailed for Spain and then on to Sao Tome and Principe, Bioko Island and to Libreville in Gabon.

In 1995 DKBG visited Abu Dhabi, India, Pakistan and Oman.

In 1996 he took command of SAS CHAPMAN and command of the MCM FLOTILLA. He also completed the Joint Staff course as it was then called. The Flotilla’s were closed down and after various appointments as Senior Staff Officer Combat Support Vessels, Executive Officer of Naval Base Simon’s Town and Senior Staff Officer Staff Duties to Flag Officer Fleet; he retired from the Navy in 2006.

Retirement did not last long as he joined the SA Navy Reserves 2007 and spent the next 8 years on almost permanent call-up as SSO Maritime Trade before finally retiring in 2015 the age of 66.

PASSIONS, EXTRA CURRICULAR, SPORTS, HOBBIES

His life's philosophy is based on nature, natural history and the laws associated with them. (Fibonacci and the “Golden Ratio” is an example) He has a passion for indigenous plants especially succulents and cycads which he collects. He is a Life Member of the Botanical Society of South Africa.

Sports: Preston played cricket, rugby and squash. He then played golf and was Chairman of Navy Golf and SANDF (WP) Golf from 1996 until 2006. He avidly watches sport on television, following most of the major sports types (except motor racing).

He enjoys a glass of good red wine. And the odd single malt whisky!

Asked about achievements of which he is proud, Preston tells us:

Naval: Command of SAS DRAKENBERG and the way the ship performed in his two years in command.

Personal: The thrill of my daughter being born after a five year struggle and then the birth of my other two children.

What makes Preston:

Happy: When the Springboks, Stormers or Proteas manage a win!

Angry: Australian and New Zealand rugby referees that blow inconsistently! - (*Tattler – Preston is not just passionate about the game but also very knowledgeable. His view about Ref from The Antipodes is shared!*)

Embarrassed: Having to converse with a beautiful young blonde Danish lady who had no clothes on in the streets of Copenhagen whilst being dressed “swords and medals” - (Ed – Wow!)

Frightened: Actually not being frightened on three occasions that I have been attacked; two knife attacks and one home invasion. On all occasions training kicked in and I managed to fight off the attackers!

ADMIRATION FOR/MENTORS

He learnt from his seniors (& often juniors) in the Navy. Doesn't want to single out any. Most know how they have helped him grow & achieve a rewarding career. He has great admiration & respect for the many peers and subordinates that supported him in his career & personal life, the SA Navy as well as at the Club

CLUB HISTORY

Joined the Club in 1976 and has attended and supported the Club and Club activities over the years. He was appointed Chairman in 1996 and served in that capacity for seven years until 2003. If he could entice more uniformed members back into the Club he would be happy. (He remembers well the days when Navy uniforms dominated). He feel the Club has great customs and traditions and feels proud when visitors, especially overseas naval officers, visit the Club and comment favourably. The Club upholds international standards and our reciprocity clubs are proof of this.

Tattler – Preston, the Club appreciates members with your values, knowledge and sensibility. It is indeed these qualities in membership to which many aspire. Long may you and your delightful Margie sip glasses of wine at the Club pub.

The month of July in military history

1 July 1951 - The SANF was renamed 'South African Navy'. The title of HMSAS (His Majesty's South African Ship) was changed to SAS (South African Ship) in 1952, and the Crown in the SAN cap badge was replaced with the Lion of Nassau from the crest of the country's coat of arms in 1959, two years before South Africa became a republic

2 July 1945 - HMS Teviot arrived in Diego Suarez. Because of a shortage of manpower in the Royal Navy, the SANF agreed to man HMS *Teviot* and HMS *Swale*, 'River' Class anti-submarine frigates. After refitting, HMS *Teviot* was recommissioned with an all-SANF crew at Cape Town on 10 June 1945. Although manned and operated by the SANF, however, the vessel remained the property of the British Admiralty. On 19 June 1945, she sailed from Durban for Colombo, where she arrived via Diego Suarez on 2 July. She joined the East Indies Escort Command in Colombo and, after being painted in Pacific Ocean camouflage colours, immediately began a four-week work-up period. She was then employed as a link and mark ship on the aircraft route between Colombo and Rangoon. However, her active role did not last long, because, while sailing up the Irrawaddy River on the way to Rangoon, she struck an uncharted submerged wreck of a

Japanese gunboat, and suffered considerable underwater damage. The *Teviot* was patched up at Rangoon and repaired in a floating dry dock at Trincomalee and then returned to Durban, arriving on 21 December 1945. She was paid off on the same day.(97) The war against Japan ended before *Teviot's* sister ship, HMS *Swale*, also with an all-SANF crew, could be sent to the East.

3 July 1940 - the Royal Navy pounded a French fleet moored at the Algerian port of Mers-el-Kebir, sinking 3 French battleships. Usually when we discuss "friendly fire" we are talking about allied forces accidentally targeting other friendly forces. In this case, the attack was deliberate, as France had been overrun by the Nazi and the desperate British feared the powerful French fleet would be turned over to Germany for their own use. British contacted the commander of the French fleet and begged him to either join the British as Free French or battle the Germans, or to scuttle his fleet to deny the Germans use of his ships. He was also given the option of steaming to a neutral port to sit out the war. The French commander only advised his superiors of the scuttling option, and was ordered to resist any British advance on his ships. Reluctantly, British authorities felt they had no choice but to destroy the French fleet, consisting of 4 battleships, 5 destroyers, and a seaplane tender. The British sent an aircraft carrier, 2 battleships, 2 light cruisers, 1 battle cruiser, and 11 destroyers to do the job. The attack by *Force H* destroyed the battleship *Bretagne*, and also sunk the battleships *Dunkerque* and *Provence*, both of which were later refloated and sailed to Toulon where they were scuttled by their crews in 1942. The French losses included almost 1300 dead and another 350 wounded, and 4 of the 5 destroyers were damaged (1 had run aground). British losses were limited to 6 airplanes and only 2 dead.

3 July 1950 - During the Korea War, U.S. Carrier planes saw their first combat action in Korea when aircraft from the U.S.S. Valley Forge raided transportation and supply facilities in Pyongyang. The Navy fighters from Fighter Squadron 51 also recorded the first "Kill" of the war when they shot down a YAK - 9 aircraft.

3 July 1976 - The raid on Entebbe airport in Uganda occurred as an Israeli commando unit rescued 103 hostages on a hijacked Air France airliner. The jet was en route from Tel Aviv to Paris when it was hijacked by pro-Palestinian guerrillas. 3 hostages, 7 hijackers and 20 Ugandan soldiers were killed during the rescue.

4 July 1879 - The Battle of Ulundi took place at the Zulu capital of Ulundi and proved to be the decisive battle that finally broke the military power of the Zulu nation

4 July 2000 - International Naval Revue New York. The SAS *Drakensberg* left Simon's Town ("Operation Padler") on 8 June, and sailed via Norfolk, Virginia, to New York to participate in an international naval revue on 4 July. Next, the SAN ship sailed to Halifax in Canada - the first time that a SAN ship visited the country. The *Drakensberg* was back in Simon's Town on 2 August.

6 July 1943 - The battle of Kula Gulf. The U.S. Navy won the first victory of the South Pacific offensive. Forces of 3 cruisers and 8 destroyers fought a night action against 10 destroyers at the cost of 1 American Destroyer. Due to this, the Japanese were unable to reinforce their troops on Munda, New Georgia

6 July 1995 - SA Task Force arrived in Maputo. "Operation Palm Beach" was aimed at promoting regional co-operation. A task force consisting of SAS *Outeniqua*, the submarine SAS *Maria van Riebeeck* and the strike craft SAS *Oswald Pirow* and *Kobie Coetzee* (renamed SAS *René Sethren* and *Job Maseko* respectively in 1997) reached Maputo on 6 July, and on the same evening the South African ambassador to Mozambique held a banquet on board the *Outeniqua* for members of the diplomatic corps and the Mozambican defence force. The next day the opening of the Delagoa railway-line exactly 100 years earlier was commemorated. Next, the SAN naval units visited Dar es Salaam. On 25 July, the task force was back in Durban, the home base of the strike craft, while the other two units were back in Simon's Town on 31 July.

10 July 1943 - Allied Forces invaded Sicily in one of the largest amphibious landings of the war. Paratroopers, who had landed the night before, delayed the main German forces in the western portion of the island while Generals Patton and Montgomery landed their troops in Southern Sicily. Eleven days after the invasion, Patton reached Palermo, marching through the streets crowded with people yelling, "Down with Mussolini."

10 July 1966 - Vietnam War, the first U.S. Air Force air to air combat victory occurred. Two F-4C aircrews of the 45th Tactical Fighter Squadron shot down 2 communist Mig-17 jet fighters over North Vietnam.

11 July - 1900 Anglo-Boer War 2: Battle of Silkaatsnek, (Pretoria), starts with Gen. De la Rey launching a three-pronged attack on British forces. The British, under Col. Roberts, surrender the next morning.

12 July 1943 – During World War II, the largest tank battle in history took place outside the small village of Prohorovka, Russia. Between the Russians and the Germans, an estimated 1,800 tanks took part in the fray.

12 July 1957 The first flag-showing cruise undertaken from the new base (Simon's Town) involved the frigates SAS *Good Hope* and *Vrystaat*, as well as the minesweepers SAS *Kaapstad* and *Pretoria*. The flotilla sailed from Simon's Town to Durban, Lourenço Marques and Beira. From the latter harbour, SAS *Vrystaat* sailed to Mombasa in Kenya to fetch ammunition, after which the frigate returned to Simon's Town (7 August) via Durban. The other ships had already arrived in Simon's Town via Durban on 2 August.

SAS Vrystaat



14 July 1954 - the *Simon van der Stel* (the former HMS *Whelp*, and a sister-ship of the *Jan van Riebeeck*) left Durban harbour on what was the longest flag-showing cruise ever by an SAN warship. The warship sailed via Cape Town, Walvis Bay, Freetown and Dakar (Senegal - at the time still a French colony) to Portsmouth in England (31 July), where the ship remained for 2 weeks. Then she became the first SAN ship to visit the Netherlands, when the warship berthed in Rotterdam. From there she returned to Portsmouth and then sailed to Derry (Northern Ireland), Glasgow (Scotland) and once again returned to Portsmouth. On 21 October, the return cruise to South Africa was undertaken, together with SAS *Gelderland* (the former HMS *Brayford*, the new "Ford" Class seaward defence boat, which it escorted. On their way to Durban, the ships visited Brest (France), Lisbon (Portugal), Las Palmas (Canary Islands - a Spanish territory), Dakar, Abidjan (in the former French West Africa; today located in the Côte d'Ivoire - in other words, the Ivory Coast), Pointe Noire (the former French Equatorial Africa; today located in the Republic of the Congo), Walvis Bay, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. This successful cruise of 147 days ended on 8 December 1954.



15 July 1918 - During the Battle of the Marne in World War I, General Erich Ludendorff launched Germany's fifth, and last, offensive to break through the Chateau-Thierry salient. However, they were stopped by American, British and Italian divisions. On July 18, General Foch, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied troops, launched a massive counter-offensive. The Germans began a retreat lasting four months until they requested an armistice in November.

18 July 1936 The Spanish Civil War starts as a revolt by right wing Spanish military officers in Morocco which spreads to mainland

20 July 1945 - HMSAS Barbrake (a boom defence vessel) arrived in Burma. She was the SA naval ship to be attached to the Royal Navy East Indies station. In November 1944, the Union government agreed to lend the Barbrake and her crew to the British Admiralty for service on the East Indies Station. Under the command of Lt F M Kamke, the *Barbrake* sailed from Simon's Town for Trincomalee on 3 February 1945. This ship was employed mainly in laying and lifting moorings off the coast of in April 1945, she played a prominent part in laying a submerged pipeline at Chittagong, in that part of India that today is Bangladesh. With Trincomalee, Ceylon (the present-day Sri Lanka), as her base, the *Barbrake* also visited Madras (India), Colombo (Ceylon) and Akyalo (Burma, the present-day Myanmar). On 20 July 1945, the *Barbrake* arrived at Rangoon in Burma. After removing parts of the Japanese boom defences there, as well as doing general work on buoys and moorings in the river channel, she sailed for South Africa at the beginning of December 1945. After an uneventful voyage, the Barbrake arrived back at Simon's Town on 12 January 1946.(90)

20 July 1964 - An odd looking, 40-foot vessel, equipped with pontoon-shaped appendages, was launched from the navy's oceanographic research tower, *Argus Island*, on 20 July 1964. Instead of floating, this vessel-the *Sealab 1*-promptly sank to the bottom, 192 feet below the surface. Twelve hours later, four navy divers entered the *Sealab 1*, prepared to begin a unique 21-day experiment. Their assignment was to participate in the Navy's first protracted physiological-engineering test to determine how men can work freely and for extended periods in the hostile underwater environment.

24 July 1944 - The Naval Task Force landed Marines on Tinian. After victory in the Battle of Saipan from June 15 to July 9, Tinian, which was 3.5 miles south of Saipan, the next logical step in the U.S. strategy of island hopping. Tinian was Phase III of Operation Forager, which began with the capture of Saipan (Phase I) and the battle for the liberation of Guam (II), which was raging even as the Marines were approaching Tinian. Submarines were used to destroy enemy forces approaching the islands, clearing the way for the beach landing.

27 July 1953 – U.S. Army Lieutenant General William Harrison, Jr. and North Korean General Nam Il met to sign the Korean Armistice Agreement, ending hostilities in the Korean War until a final settlement could be reached. The war lasted just over three years.

29 July 1945 - I-58 Japanese submarine sinks the American cruiser Indianapolis, killing 883 seamen in the worst loss in the history of the U.S. navy.

A passing thought - A bachelor is a guy who never made the same mistake once. -Phyllis Diller

Did you know? The bitter end -

Meaning - To the limit of one's efforts - to the last extremity.

Origin - Bitter is an adjective meaning acid/sour tasting since 725 AD at least. The word was in common use in the Middle Ages and Shakespeare uses it numerous times in his plays and poems, as do many other dramatists. The phrase 'the bitter end' would seem, fairly obviously, to come directly from that meaning.



But not so fast. Enter, stage left, Captain Smith, in his publication *Seaman's Grammar*, 1627, which is the earliest citation of the phrase in print: "A Bitter is but the turne of a Cable about the Bits, and veare it out by little and little. And the Bitters end is that part of the Cable doth stay within board."

As you might have deduced, a bitt is a post fastened in the deck of a ship, for fastening cables and ropes. When a rope is played out to the bitter end, it means there is no more rope to be used.

But again, not so fast. Folk etymologists are those who say something is true with no more justification than that they would like it to be true. They are thickest on the ground in the area of military and especially naval attributions. People seem to love a sailor's yarn, and anything with a whiff of the sea is seized on with enthusiasm. So much so that more thoughtful etymologists have dreamed up the inventive acronym CANOE - the *Committee to Ascribe a Naval Origin to Everything*.

So, is this one from CANOE or not? We like to be definitive and, although the naval origin does seem to have a good case, it isn't conclusive. This time we'll sit on the fence and let you decide.

A WISE lady?

Tattler thinks it appropriate to look into the life of a senior Naval Officer's wife and so this month we have a little peek into the life of the jovial and gorgeous "missus" of our Chairman , Tracy-Lee Wise.

She was born 15 August 1966 to Irene Porter and the late WO1 Desmond (Blackie) Curtis at 2 Military Hospital, Wynberg and married Kevin Wise and had 2 beautiful daughters Kerry -Lee (25) and Shannon (23) Her fairly blunt answers to some Tattler questions were:

Work – Secretary Hobbies - Anything creative. (*Tattler - Tracy is clearly very modest to which anybody who has seen her exquisite photography will attest*)

How you and Kevin met, early time together, how he proposed?

She met Kevin at the Seven Seas Club on the 3rd February 1989 (after he stuck his tongue out at her from across the bar) and he proposed to her on the 11th November 1989. Kevin was a submariner and often at sea. (*Tattler - so all at sea with the proposal then Kev?*)

Kevin and Tracy got married on the 20th October 1990 at the SA Navy Dockyard Church followed by the reception at Rhodesia by the Sea now known as Job Masego

Life for Tracy as Kevin moved through the ranks, in her own words:

When I met Kevin he was a submariner and continued his submarine career until 1992. He then spent five years at Naval Staff College as Directing Staff. In 1995 Kevin was transferred to Pretoria . We sold our house and moved to Pretoria. Our daughters were then one and three years old and it was difficult leaving all our family behind. One of my happiest moments in Pretoria was in 1999 when Kevin was told he was being transferred back to Cape Town as XO of SAS Drakensberg. The SAS Drakensberg had many overseas deployments. Because of my naval background and huge family support I was able to survive Kevin's absence and happily ran a support group for other families. One of my many proud moments was when Kevin received command of SAS Drakensberg in 2002.

Those years will always remain my fondest memories of being a Naval Officers wife.

What the Seven Seas Club has been to you?

The Seven Seas Club has always been the place to meet up with old friends and make many new, including foreign friends. A club to hear the many wonderful sea going stories of past and present. There are so many fond memories of the club, from meeting Kevin to my daughters running around on the freshly polished floors in their walking rings.

The life of a Harbour Master and his wife?

I have always supported Kevin in his naval career and will continue to do so. My life as a Naval Officers Wife has been filled with many proud moments, from a very young submariner's wife to the proud Harbour Masters wife. From a young Seven Seas Club committee members wife (who used to sit on the office floor, licking stamps & sealing envelopes for members accounts) to the proud wife of the Chairman today. *Tattler comments that Kevin must be very proud of his wife and daughters.*



A touch of humour

One day the new Admiral was interviewing three Master Chiefs for the Command Master Chief position. The first Master Chief was a Submarine warfare type and it was a great interview. At the end of the interview the Admiral asked him, "Do you notice anything different about me?"

The Submarine Master Chief answered, "Why yes. I couldn't help but notice you have no ears."

The Admiral got very angry at this lack of tact and threw him out of his office. The Aviation Master Chief replied, "Well yes. You have no ears."The Admiral threw him out also.

The third interview was with a Surface Warfare Master Chief. He was articulate, extremely sharp, and seemed to know more than the other two Master Chiefs put together.

The Admiral wanted this guy, and went ahead with the same question, "Do you notice anything differently about me?" To his surprise the Surface Warfare Master Chief said, "Yes. You wear contact lenses."

The Admiral was impressed and thought to himself, what an incredibly observant Master Chief, and he didn't mention my ears. "And how do you know that?", the Admiral asked.

The Surface Warfare Master Chief replied, "Well it's pretty hard to wear glasses with no friggin ears."

Well, that is that for this month! stay warm and may the rain (particularly in the catchment areas) be BIG!