

The Seven Seas Tattler Issue 2.11 - April 2019



Welcome to the April edition of Seven Sea's Tattler.

Some good news for those (actually all of us!) living in the dark world of "loadshedding"

The club will be purchasing an Inverter/Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) system in the near future. In addition to the more obvious benefits of having tills, computers and some lights working during power outages, the club will be able to ensure that members can come and watch televised sport in the comfort the club offers during the dark periods! (Including the big screen when appropriate)

So, another major reason to come down to the Seven Seas Club!

You will also recall seeing a notice about a fun quiz scheduled for 19h00 on the 10th. Questions will be about Music, Movies and Sport in the 60s and 70s. Please come and support the club and have some fun!

Chairman's Report

On the Navy front all quiet.

The AGM is scheduled for 26 April 19 at 1700. The Secretary has distributed documentation for consideration at the AGM. Members are encouraged to study the documents prior to the meeting and query any concerns to the Secretary prior to the meeting to avoid protracted discussions at the AGM.

The Club is starting a new quiz from 10 April 19 at 1900. I encourage members to give this venture their support for a fun evening.

From the Treasurer

We have our final figures for the 2018/2019 financial year and although we expected them to be not too good, they have ended up worse than anticipated. The year ended with a deficit of R24 002, against a budgeted deficit of R20 417.

The main contributors to the disappointing results were the major drop in bar sales and the reduced income from membership subscriptions. Fortunately, we were able to curtail costs which marginally reduced the impact of these losses. The Annual Financial Statements are currently with our auditors and as soon as they are released, a copy will be distributed to members for further analysis.

See you at the Club.....

From the Honorary Secretary

March is almost over and your Committee is hard at work preparing for the AGM to take place on the 26th April. By now, you should have received the notice of meeting for this AGM and the supporting documentation pack. (Distributed on Friday 22nd March). This notice and documentation pack has also been posted on the noticeboard. Please contact the Club Manager ASAP if you have not received this notice yet. It is expected that our august body of members will either support their Club by attending or have the decency to extend written apologies and proxies if unable to do so. Written apologies/proxies should reach the Club Manager/Secretary before the Easter weekend (18th April). These apologies/proxies will assist your Committee to ensure that a quorum is obtained and that adequate seating and catering is put in place.

For those who have not settled their membership subscriptions yet, please note that you will not be entitled to attend or vote at this general meeting (in person or by proxy) unless you are in "good standing". Even worse, you will cease to receive this entertaining publication if you are not in "good standing" by the end of May!

Looking forward to seeing you all there on the 26th.

Club Manager's Report

March 2019 100 Club Winners

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R.C. Maydon – R300

G.F. Harrison – R300

Forfeited – R300

N. Green – R1 000

Birthdays

We wish the following great birthday's and much good fortune in the year ahead!

01 April	Cdr R. Stone
04 April	Capt G.B. Kretschmer
06 April	Mr S.D. Neville
08 April	R Adm (JG) P. Bitzker
12 April	Cdr S. Hlatshwayo
12 April	Mr R. Farmer
12 April	Mr M.J. Smith-Chandler
17 April	Capt R.L.N. Erleigh
22 April	Capt A.J. Forrest
22 April	Mr R. Wilson

New Members

we extend a hearty welcome to the following:

Mr. Richard Francois De Wet, married to Helen and resides in Welcome Glen. Ricky is retired from the South African Navy where he served for 43 years in the permanent force as well as a further three and a half years in the Naval Reserves Force. Ricky held the rank of Warrant Officer Class 1. He was actively involved for a number of years with Project Sitron (New Frigate Acquisition Project) as well as a senior Member of the System Support Centre at the Fleet Command. Ricky is also the current Commander (Old Bill) of the Battledress Shell Hole in Fish Hoek.

Captain Michael James Geddes married to Juliette and resides in Simon's Kloof Simon's Town. Mike is a retired SAA Pilot who also flew for the SAAF at amongst other units, Central Flying School Dunnottar (Pilot Instructor) and 21 Squadron flying Falcon 50 and HS 125 aircraft. Mike is a Member of False Bay Yacht Club and the Constantiaberg Art Society. As a maritime interest, Mike is the "C" Crew Controller at NSRI Station 10 Simon's Town.

Mr. Reinhart Schwendinger married to Natasha and resides in Bergvliet. Reinhart is employed by Paramount Maritime Holdings in the Business Development environment where he is currently the Business Development Manager (Commercial) which includes Vessel sales across and beyond the African waters. Reinhart is a member of the Italian – RSA Chamber of Commerce.

This month Doctor/Squadron Leader Nic Lee discusses a version of the Beaufort scale in an at times sensitive, at times light-hearted article:

Ah, Perkins. I've got an important job for you ...

All right everyone, relax! I'm not writing about aircraft carriers this time. Instead, it's something that was a part of service life, but also something that no one seems to like talking about much. As you will probably know by now, I was in the RAF rather than the RN. However, I'm reasonably sure that there was, and probably still is, a protocol in both services for sorting out welfare problems among the crew - oh yes, and the Army of course, which is common to all. It usually involved the more junior officers; the more senior ones having found some excuse for not getting lumbered with it. I refer to the privilege of being given a secondary duty as the Welfare Officer, whose function was to untangle situations to find out whether they were genuine, or whether it was a put-up job for unjustified repatriation whether temporary or permanent. I was stimulated to write about this part of service life by a description of the different types of welfare problems which I came across some years ago when a naval officer friend gave me an inspired list of naval welfare problems in the format of the Beaufort Scale which had clearly been put together by an exasperated and cynical welfare officer. I stumbled across it a few days ago when I was going through a massive heap of paper which I laughingly call a file, and I thought that it might bring a smile to your faces. So, herewith:

Scale for the assessment of nervousness in RN wives.

(cf. Beaufort Scale)

1. Married for years. No illusions left. Likes the money, but no use for hubby who can go abroad for as much as he likes, and the best of British luck to him, provided he keeps up the allotment.
2. Happy on her own. Can manage house and children herself. All relatives healthy and self-supporting. Realises that her husband is in the Navy, and does not object to him doing his share of foreign service.
3. Can't manage the children but otherwise OK. Needs husband to bash the brats occasionally.
4. All right by day, but definitely misses something at night. Wants husband kept within easy bus distance with no night duty. Will suffer from the vapours unless this is arranged.
5. Lonely, hysterical and maladjusted; pregnant for n th. Time (where n tends to infinity). Friendless in heart of overcrowded industrial town. Cancellation of foreign draft and immediate posting home recommended by Dr. Yehudi.
6. Going to end it all. Hears burglars in the house every night. No neighbours closer than next door. Requires husband (a key rating) flown home at once.
7. Knowing what she married for, and it was not for her husband to go gallivanting about with unmentionable Chinese girls. Wants him back the day before yesterday. (Doctor certifies will be "most advisable and beneficial"). Will write to MP unless accommodated.
8. Has been going out with a Pole. Husband has anonymous letter. Horrible language, hard lying, divorce. Husband to be kept at home for court case.
9. Very naughty girl, but has turned over a new leaf. Husband has promised to accept and grow to love little blessing now on way. However, must be flown home now and stopped draft for 5 years to 'cement' the relationship.

10. Psychoneurotic suicidal nymphomaniac. Husband required day and nights. No time for naval duties, but must have pay. Constituent of Labour MP.

Welfare work is, of course is not at all funny in real life. It is particularly important in the Navy, mainly because anyone needing help, particularly with family difficulties may well be at sea on the other end of the world, and in these days of complex electronics and weaponry, the loss of a specialised key technician, even for a short time can have a very negative effect on the efficiency of the ship. Although much of the administrative spadework may have to be carried out by the welfare officer, he or she should be able to find plenty of information and expert assistance from other sources. When I was a Medical Officer at a large airbase in Arabia, I was frequently asked about the health of anyone who was having a welfare problem which could be quite a hot potato as medical records are only for medical eyes, and any request for medical information from other quarters have to have the permission of the person whose records they are before they are seen by anyone else. Another possible source of help could also be provided by the padre (chaplain) who was also subject to the same restraints. However, there were two other sources of help who were worth their weight in gold. The first was SSAFA, which is the UK Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association, which is a charity that is 133 years old now, and is aimed not only at those currently in the Forces, but offers a lifetime service to anyone who has ever served in the armed forces and their families. When I served in Germany, we were regularly visited by a charming, uniformed SSAFA lady who made sure that all personnel knew of SSAFA's existence, and how to go about asking it for help when needed.

The other organisation which was very helpful was, and is, the Red Cross. My father was away at sea during World War 2 when my mother was taken sick, and her condition rapidly deteriorated to an extent that threatened her life. Needless to say, in 1941, there were many more lives under threat at the time so that repatriation on compassionate grounds was not easy to get. However, with the help of the Red Cross which put forward a strong case for him, he came back to the UK, and my mother recovered. Hence my interest in those organisations who can help service men and women when they need it most.

The US Navy's new, more lethal frigate is coming into focus

By: David B. Larter



Lockheed Martin's version of the FFG(X) debuted at the Surface Navy Association's National Symposium in January.

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Navy is zeroing in on a cost and the shape of its new frigate as it prepares to launch an open competition this summer.

Through the conceptual design phase, which kicked off last year, the Navy asked for feedback from the five competitors in the competition. The result was more than 300 suggestions for ways to evolve the design and save money, Naval Sea Systems Command's FFG(X) program head, Regan Campbell, told an audience at the annual Surface Navy Association Symposium. About 200 of the suggestions the Navy took onboard.

"Our requirements are mature," Campbell said. "We've engaged with industry, gotten a lot of wonderful feedback and significant savings from that engagement. And we are on track to finish those conceptual design contracts, and through that process I think we are going to have a robust competition going into detailed design and construction."

The five designs participating in the conceptual design phase are variants of Lockheed Martin's mono-hull littoral combat ship as well as Austal USA's trimaran version, Fincantieri's FREMM, Navantia's F-100 frigate and a repurposed version of Huntington Ingalls' national security cutter design.

All told, the Navy is looking at about \$800 million per hull after the first unit, Campbell said, which is down significantly from where the program thought it was last year.

"We started closer to the \$950 [million mark]; we are trending closer to the \$800 [million mark] now," Campbell said. "So, we have taken some significant costs out of the program."

UK to get new passive offboard decoy system

March News 2019 Navy Naval Maritime Defence Industry

POSTED ON THURSDAY, 07 MARCH 2019 16:10

The United Kingdom Ministry of Defence has disclosed plans to get a new passive offboard decoy system to provide soft-kill anti-ship missile defence for Royal Navy ships. The Naval Passive Off-Board Decoy (N-POD) system is the new equipment intended to replace the actual Outfit DLF(3b) system in RN service. Outfit DLF(3b) is a passive radio frequency (RF) countermeasure using a floating inflatable corner reflector.



*The decoy is completely independent of the ship's systems and does not require other countermeasures
(Picture source: IrvinGQ)*

The contract award, anticipated for May 2020, is expected to be a Design, Development, Demonstration, and Manufacture contract with up to a five-year support contract, for a full operating capability planned for 2025.

Currently, FDS3 units are supplied as a complete decoy launch tube assembly in low-RCS launchers, typically in pairs, and may be integrated within the ship's systems or as a standalone system, with just 8 bolts and a power feed necessary for installation. Should all ship's power be lost, then FDS3 can still be launched and provide full ship protection. No auxiliary power is required in this mechanical launch mode and no targeting is necessary. The decoy is completely independent of the ship's systems and does not require other countermeasures such as jammers to be used in conjunction with it and once FDS3 is launched its operation is automatic and requires no further input from the ship.

IrvinGQ is the world leader in Corner Reflector decoys for naval ship protection. Their off-board passive decoys have been protecting ships of the world's leading navies from RF missile attack for more than 30 years. UK Royal Navy, the US Navy, the Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal New Zealand Navy are using the services of the company.

HMS Protector encounters Bristol-sized iceberg



07/03/2019

The Royal Navy's Antarctic patrol ship encountered an iceberg the size of Bristol as she began her final scientific mission of the season.

HMS Protector came across the enormous mass of ice and snow – 11 miles long and five wide – as she returned to the frozen continent for the last time this winter – or summer as it is in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Plymouth-based ship is coming to the end of a deployment to update maps and charts of the seas around Antarctica, support scientists in remote research stations on the frozen continent, and help experts study the effects of global warming on one of the world's largest glaciers.

She was making for the sunken volcano on Deception Island after helping British Antarctic Survey scientists conduct geological work around Cape Melville in the South Shetland Islands – 500 miles from the southern tip of South America, Cape Horn – when she came across the mammoth berg.

“The large iceberg we sailed past was an astonishing 11 miles by five” -Captain Matt Syrett RN

The berg is so big that it clearly shows up on satellite imagery of the Bransfield Strait, which separates the South Shetland Island chain from the end of the Antarctic Peninsula.

The iceberg is believed to be one given an official designation by scientists – A57A. It broke away from the Filchner-Ronne Ice Shelf in the Weddell Sea – some 1,100 miles from where Protector encountered it – more than a decade ago. From observations from other Antarctic travellers and explorers, it looks like it is melting at a rate of about nine per cent of its size at present.

“The large iceberg we sailed past was an astonishing 11 miles by five,” said Captain Matt Syrett, Protector’s Commanding Officer. “Along its edge large chunks of ice had calved off, leaving the appearance of a cave system.”

It was clear to Protector’s crew that the huge mass of ice was slowly melting and disintegrating as it was surrounded by growlers – small chunks of ice – and larger ‘bergy bits’.

With a total area of around 55 square miles (142 square kilometres), the berg is larger than Bournemouth and Poole and nearly as big as Bristol.

It’s still dwarfed by ten other icebergs which have broken away from the Antarctica region over the past 30 years; the largest lump which snapped off according to modern records was more than twice the size of Norfolk. It sheered away from the Ross Ice Shelf and took more than five years to melt, break up and finally vanish.

Iranian Navy thwarts pirate attack

Written by Reuters -
11th Mar 2019



Bulk crude carrier

Iranian naval forces repelled pirates attacking an Iranian oil tanker in the Gulf of Aden, state television reported. The broadcast said pirates in 11 speedboats attacked a tanker with a cargo of 150,000 tonnes on Thursday. It showed naval forces opening fire on speedboats, without saying when the footage was shot.

Iran's navy has extended its reach in recent years, dispatching vessels to the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden to protect Iranian ships from Somali pirates.

Though tattoos are discouraged in today's Navy, sailors for hundreds of years tattooed themselves as souvenirs to show where they'd been and what they'd gone through. Here is a short (and far from comprehensive) list collected from sources around the Web of imagery you may encounter among saltier sailors, along with what each item means.

(Ed – Right you sea-faring lot - who is decorated with any of the following?)

- **Swallows:** Home (each denotes 5,000 miles at sea)
- **Compass/Nautical Star:** Never losing one's way (each denotes 10,000 miles at sea)
- **Trident:** Special warfare
- **Rose:** A significant other left at home
- **Twin screws or props on one's backside:** Propels one forward through life
- **Rope:** Deckhand
- **Octopus:** Navy diver
- **Dolphin:** Wards off sharks
- **Sharks:** Rescue swimmer
- **Polar bear:** Sailed the Arctic Circle
- **Dragon:** Sailed the Pacific
- **Fouled anchor:** Sailed the Atlantic
- **Turtle:** Crossed the equator
- **Gold dragon:** Crossed the International Dateline
- **Gold turtle:** Crossed the International Dateline and the Equator where they intersect
- **Emerald fouled anchor:** Crossed the Prime Meridian
- **Emerald turtle:** Crossed the Prime Meridian and the Equator where they intersect
- **Full-rigged ship:** Sailed around Cape Horn
- **Helm:** Quartermaster
- **Pin-up girls:** Company at sea/port call
- **Hula girls:** Sailed to or ported in Hawaii
- **Dagger through a swallow:** Signifies a lost comrade
- **Pig and chicken:** Superstition to keep from drowning
- **The words "HOLD FAST":** Signifies a deckhand's tight grip on the lines

- The first submarine not propelled by human power was the French vessel named 'Plongeur'. Launched in 1863, it used compressed air for propulsion.
- French writer Jules Verne published '20,000 Leagues under the Sea' in 1870, a popular science fiction novel that boosted interest in submarine design.
- Submarine development and use continued through World War I and II, with German U-boats particularly effective in blocking supply lines to the UK.
- Launched in 1954, the first nuclear powered submarine was the USS Nautilus. Nuclear power allowed submarines to operate at high speeds while staying underwater longer than other forms of propulsion such as diesel-electric.
- Both the United States and Soviet Union maintained significant submarine fleets during the cold war.
- In August 2000, a Russian submarine named 'Kursk' sank in the Barents Sea after a series of explosions inside the vessel, killing all 118 crew.
- Developed in the 1800s, torpedoes became an important part of submarine warfare.

The mastermind behind the GREAT ESCAPE was a South African, and the escape had very little to do with Americans.



Here is another great South African (seen here at Stalag Luft III). Squadron Leader Roger Joyce Bushell RAF – AAF (30 August 1910 – 29 March 1944) was an Auxiliary Air Force pilot who organised and led the famous escape from the German prisoner of war camp, and also victim of the Stalag Luft III murders when participants in the famous escape were executed by the German Gestapo.

The escape was used as the basis for the film *The Great Escape*. The character played by Richard Attenborough, Roger Bartlett, is modelled on Roger Bushell. The story about the "Great Escape" was one of the most famous escape stories during WW2. The *Great Escape* movie is now an institution in The United Kingdom and the United States. Made famous by the swagger of Steve McQueen and his fictional attempted escape attempts culminating in a cross-country motorbike chase (McQueen's preferred sport) with Nazi Germans in pursuit.

The Real Story of The Great Escape

In the spring of 1943, Roger Bushell masterminded a plot for a major escape of Prisoners of War from Stalag Luft III. Being held in the north compound where British airmen were housed, Bushell as commander of the escape committee channelled the escape effort into probing for weaknesses and looking for opportunities. Falling back on his legal background to represent his scheme, Bushell

called a meeting of the escape committee in the camp and not only shocked those present with its scope, but injected into every man a passionate determination to put every energy into the escape. He declared,

“Everyone here in this room is living on borrowed time. By rights we should all be dead! The only reason that God allowed us this extra ration of life is so we can make life hell for the Hun... In North Compound we are concentrating our efforts on completing and escaping through one master tunnel. No private-enterprise tunnels allowed. Three bloody deep, bloody long tunnels will be dug – Tom, Dick and Harry. One will succeed!”

The simultaneous digging of these tunnels would become an advantage if any one of them were discovered by the Germans, because the guards would scarcely imagine that another two could be well under way. The most radical aspect of the plan was not merely the scale of the construction, but also the sheer number of men that Bushell intended to pass through these tunnels. Previous attempts had involved the escape of anything up to a dozen or twenty men, but Bushell was proposing to get over 200 out, all of whom would be wearing civilian clothes and possessing a complete range of forged papers and escape equipment. It was an unprecedented undertaking and would require unparalleled organisation. As the mastermind of the Great Escape, Bushell inherited the codename of “Big X”. The tunnel “Tom” began in a darkened corner of a hall in one of the buildings. “Harry”’s entrance was carefully hidden under a Stove. The entrance to “Dick” had a very well concealed entrance in a drainage sump. More than 600 prisoners were involved in their construction.

Bushell also organised another mass break out, which occurred on 12 June 1943. This became known as the Delousing Break, when 26 officers escaped by leaving the camp under escort with two fake guards (POWs disguised as guards) supposedly to go to the showers for delousing in the neighbouring compound. All but two were later recaptured and returned to the camp, with the remaining two officers being sent to Oflag IV-C at Colditz for attempting to steal an aircraft.

After the discovery of Tom, construction on Harry was halted. but it resumed in January 1944. On the evening of 24 March, after months of preparation, 200 officers prepared to escape. But things did not go as planned, with only 76 officers managed to get clear of the camp. Among those left behind was 21-year-old RAF Flight Lieutenant Alan Bryett, who refers to Bushell as “the bravest man I ever knew”. Roger and his partner Bernard Scheidhauer, among the first few to leave the tunnel, successfully boarded a train at Sagan railway station. They were caught the next day at Saarbrücken railway station, waiting for a train to Alsace, which had been annexed from France by Germany.

Bushell and Scheidhauer were murdered three days later by members of the Gestapo. This was a breach of the Geneva Convention and so constituted a war crime. The perpetrators were later tried and executed by the Allies. Fifty of the 76 escapees were killed in the Stalag Luft III murders on Hitler’s direct orders.

In an ironic twist Bushell’s executioner was himself executed at the end of the war for his crime (see this story on the Observation Post As they like to say in the military “Karma is a Bitch!”).

It unfortunately was not just Roger Bushell as a South African to suffer this fate, three more South Africans participated and escaped with Roger Bushell in The Great Escape. Lieutenants Gouws, Stevens and McGarr (all South African Air Force) were also recaptured and executed illegally by the Gestapo. Bushell was posthumously mentioned in Despatches on 8 June 1944 for his services as a POW. This award was recorded in the London Gazette dated 13 June 1946. His name also appears on the war memorial in Hermanus, South Africa, where his parents spent their last years and where they were buried.



Roger Bushell was born in Springs South Africa on the 30th November 1910. He was first schooled in Johannesburg at Park Town School but later moved to England, and in 1929 he spent his first year at Cambridge University where he studied law. His talents however extended far beyond a career in law, as an athlete he had the honour of representing the University, both as a skier and rugby player. He excelled at skiing and during the early 1930's he was declared the fastest Briton in the downhill category.

In South Africa the memory of Roger Bushell lives on in Hermanus. His name is among those on the War Memorial above the Old Harbour, Roger's parents were living in Hermanus at the time of his death and his parents also made a presentation to the Hermanus High School, in remembrance of their son who (incidentally) could speak nine languages. The two coveted Roger Bushell prizes for character are still awarded annually at the prize-giving of the school. One prize is awarded annually to the student who has shown the most exemplary signs of character during the year and second one is for the school boy chosen by his fellow students as the best leader.



Roger Bushell's memorial plaque on the War Memorial in Hermanus, South Africa

Researched by Peter Dickens, with reference and help from Buskruit Burger and Sandy Evan Hanes.

SOME HISTORY FROM APRIL 1969

Music

Top 40 Hits of April 1969		
1	Desmond Dekker & The Aces	The Israelites
2	Mary Hopkin	Goodbye
3	Marvin Gaye	I Heard It Through The Grapevine
4	Beatles With Billy Preston	Get Back
5	Lulu	Boom Bang-A-Bang
6	Who	Pinball Wizard
7	Dean Martin	Gentle On My Mind
8	Foundations	In The Bad Bad Old Days
9	Noel Harrison	Windmills Of Your Mind
10	Hollies	Sorry Suzanne
11	Clodagh Rodgers	Come Back And Shake Me
12	Joe South	Games People Play
13	Bob & Earl	Harlem Shuffle
14	Johnny Nash	Cupid
15	Beach Boys	I Can Hear Music
16	Sandie Shaw	Monsieur Dupont
17	Tremeloes	Hello World
18	Stevie Wonder	I Don't Know Why
19	Junior Walker & The All-Stars	Road Runner
20	Fleetwood Mac	Man Of The World
21	Temptations	Get Ready
22	Cliff Richard	Good Times (Better Times)
23	Peter Sarstedt	Where Do You Go To My Lovely
24	Frank Sinatra	My Way
25	Sarah Vaughan & Billy Eckstine	Passing Strangers
26	Cilla Black	Surround Yourself With Sorrow
27	Equals	Michael And The Slipper Tree
28	Elvis Presley	If I Can Dream
29	Bee Gees	First Of May
30	Herman's Hermits	My Sentimental Friend
31	Cream	Badge
32	Marbles	The Walls Fell Down
33	Engelbert Humperdinck	The Way It Used To Be
34	Righteous Brothers	You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'

35	Jefferson	Colour Of My Love
36	Donald Peers	Please Don't Go
37	Isley Brothers	Behind A Painted Smile
38	Kinks	Plastic Man
39	Troubadours Du Roi Baudouin	Sanctus
40	Love Affair	One Road

Movies in April 1969

April 1 – Sam Whiskey and Sweet Charity

April 3 – Goodbye, Columbus

April 24 – If its Tuesday, This Must Be Belgium

Five Nations Rugby (April 1969)

Position	Nation	Games				Points			Table points
		Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Difference	
1	Wales	4	3	1	0	79	31	+48	7
2	Ireland	4	3	0	1	61	48	+13	6
3	England	4	2	0	2	54	58	-4	4
4	Scotland	4	1	0	3	12	44	-34	2
5	France	4	0	1	3	28	53	-25	1

And some general history from April 1969

April 1 – The Hawker Siddeley Harrier enters service with the Royal Air Force.

April 4 – Dr. Denton Cooley implants the first temporary artificial heart.

April 9 - The Harvard University Administration Building is seized by close to 300 students, mostly members of the Students for a Democratic Society. Before the takeover ends, 45 will be injured and 184 arrested.

April 9 - Fermín Monasterio Pérez is murdered by the ETA in Biscay, Spain; the 4th victim in the name of Basque nationalism.

April 15 – The EC-121 shootdown incident: North Korea shoots down the aircraft over the Sea of Japan, killing all 31 on board.

April 20 - British troops arrive in Northern Ireland to reinforce the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

April 20 - A grassroots movement of Berkeley community members seizes an empty lot owned by the University of California, to begin the formation of "People's Park".

April 22 – Robin Knox-Johnston becomes the first person to sail around the world solo without stopping.

April 24 – Recently formed British Leyland launches their first new model, the Austin Maxi in Portugal.

April 28 – Charles de Gaulle steps down as president of France after suffering defeat in a referendum the day before.

Interesting visitor - THE BATTLECRUISER “KONGO”

The “Kongo” was a Battlecruiser of 27,500 tons, designed by Sir George Thurston, built and armed at Vickers at Barrow-in-Furness, U.K., launched 18th May 1912 and completed 16th August 1913. At the time she was the world’s largest warship. Her sea trials were conducted in early May 1913, followed by torpedo and gun trials before returning to Barrow for completion and handover. The gunnery trials used more than 27 tons of projectiles, which cost nearly 6,000 pounds sterling. On 25th August 1913 she was at Devonport to take on stores, including 40x 21-inch torpedoes of a new and secret design which were manufactured at the Whitehead works at Portland Harbour.

“Kongo” then commenced her delivery voyage to Japan. As constructed, she had 36 Yarrow boilers, which provided steam for 27.5 knots. She carried a maximum of 4,000 tons of coal plus 1,000 tons of fuel oil, which could be sprayed into the boiler furnaces for additional heat. No doubt she made her voyage at a more sedate speed to conserve fuel – she arrived at Simon’s Town on 22nd September 1913 and presumably “coaled ship” during her short stay. The attached photograph shows her at anchor in Simon’s Bay.

The “Kongo” was the first warship to mount 14-inch, 45 calibre guns (her main armament was 8x 14”, with 16x 6” as secondary armament). She was able to load the main guns at -5° to +25° which gave her a high rate of fire. She was the last warship built in the U.K. for Japan. The remaining 3 vessels of her class (Hiei, Kirishima and Haruna) were constructed in Japan to the original Vickers designs.

Japan declared war against the German Empire on 23rd August 1914 and subsequently attacked and took the German island possessions in the Marshalls, Caroline, and Mariana Islands and the stronghold islands of the Palau group. Kongo and Hiei, assigned to the First Battleship Division, were directed to support Japanese troops by patrolling the Chinese coast. Kongo spent World War 1 at the Naval base at Sasebo or on patrol along the Chinese coast.

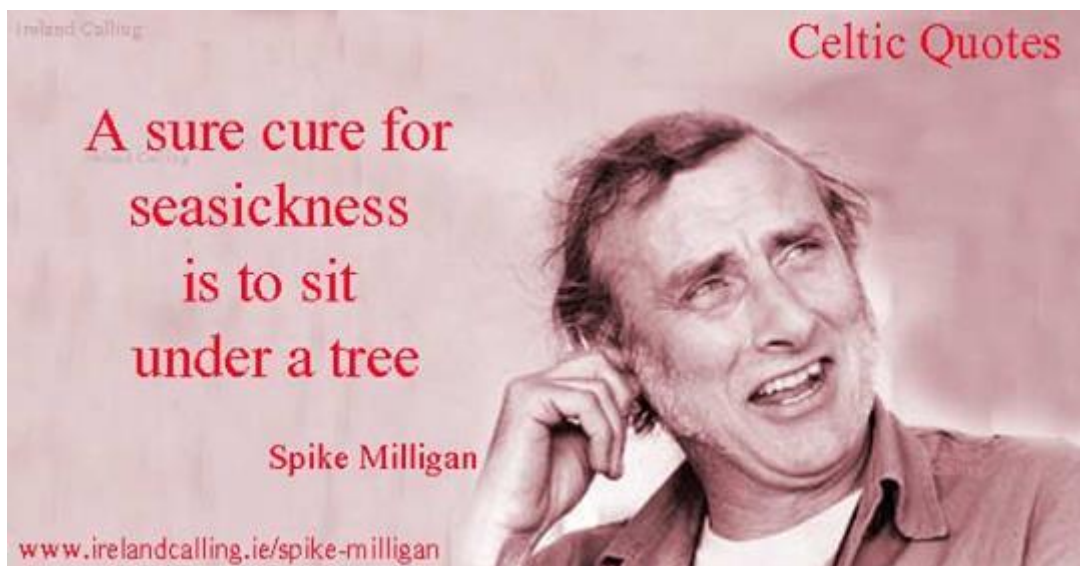
All four ships were re-engined and re-boilered progressively in major refits in 1927/32, 1933/40, 1943 and 1944. The 14” guns remained throughout but their elevation was modified from the initial -5° to 25° through 33° and finally 43°.

“Kongo” was sunk by the submarine USS Sealion II (SS-315) on 21st November 1944 some 60 miles north of Keelung, Formosa.



The "Kongo" in Simon's Bay 1913

Submitted by David Erickson



And, another Spike

Wanda's dishwasher quit working so she called in a repairman. Since she had to go to work the next day, she told the repairman,

"I'll leave the key under the mat. Fix the dishwasher, leave the bill on the counter, and I'll mail you a cheque.

Oh, by the way don't worry about my dog Spike. He won't bother you."

"But, whatever you do, do NOT, under ANY circumstances, talk to my parrot!"

"I MUST STRESS TO YOU: DO NOT TALK TO MY PARROT!!!"

When the repairman arrived at Wanda's apartment the following day, he discovered the biggest, meanest looking dog he has ever seen. But just as she had said, the dog just lay there on the carpet watching the repairman go about his work.

The parrot, however, drove him nuts the whole time with his incessant yelling, cursing and name calling.

Finally, the repairman couldn't contain himself any longer and yelled,
"Shut up, you stupid, ugly bird!"

To which the parrot replied,

"Get him Spike!"

See - Men just don't listen!

Did you know?

The first science fiction book was published in 2 AD. It included space aliens, space travel, and continents across the ocean.

There are more barrels of bourbon in Kentucky than there are people.

The horsepower output potential of a single horse is 14.9.



Just a thought - All those who believe in psycho kinesis, raise my hand.

And, to close

I had a rose named after me and I was very flattered. But I was not pleased to read the description in the catalogue: - 'No good in a bed, but fine against a wall.'

- Eleanor Roosevelt

