The Seven Seas Tattler Issue 3.4 - September 2019

Good day to all you members

Welcome to the September edition of Tattler. As always, please feel free to make suggestions, comments and criticisms to me at jonathanagolding@gmail.com

Your committee has an earnest objective of making the club worthy of your more regular patronage. Sessions have been held to seek ways of providing a greater range of entertainment and interest about which you will be hearing more in the future. At this time Tattler will provide you with some taste of such:

In addition to utilising our big screen for major sporting events (and it doesn't get much bigger than the Rugby world Cup!) we are considering having "concert evenings" using the big screen and some (reasonably) big sound. We have in mind showing one or more concerts on a particular night of the week. So, we may give you an evening with the Italian opera genius Andrea Bocelli or a diva evening with Shirley Bassey and Whitney Houston! Or how about Cliff Richard? Queen? Rod Stewart? Would you like to watch old rockers like the Rolling Stones? At some of these you may feel encouraged to get up and dance! Your suggestions are most welcome!

As the Rugby World Cup is coming from Japan, games are in the morning. How about a late morning game followed by a lunch at the Club?

We are contemplating auctions! Feel like selling off some of those items that you have been hoarding for several years (whilst they gain dust and take up space!) Want to find a bargain that you

just can't find in a shop? These may be for you. Let us know whether you would participate as a buyer, seller or both.

Feel like showing off your potjiekos skills? Would you participate in a competition? Let us know!

This and more will be coming!

Another great piece of writing from our Nick Lee. He tells us about HMS Belfast, how she was almost lost, how she was refitted, her service and how she remains a wonderful vessel that can be visited. Thanks Nick!

HMS Belfast

When I was a little lad (yes – I was, a long, long time ago!) one of my favourite pastimes was going onto ships. I had been born in Plymouth (Devonport actually) and when I was old enough, I started going to the annual Navy Days which were always a major happening in my young life, particularly as my father was in the Royal Navy, and could show me around and explain how things were done at sea. Not only was it great fun, but I learned quite a lot about ships. One thing I noticed was how different ships had a different "feel" about them. Some were light and sunny with a good "vibe", whereas others had a rather gloomy feel, and some felt quite unpleasant. Very many years later, I went onto another ship which is now a permanent landmark on the River Thames – HMS Belfast..

HMS Belfast

The funny thing was that as I boarded her, I got a feeling about her just like I used to get when I was a little chap in Devonport. I can't really describe it only to say that there seemed to be some confusion at her beginning, and she certainly seemed to have had a chequered career since then!

She was one of the ten town-class cruisers that was named after various towns in the UK, was laid down in 1936 and was eventually launched on Saint Patrick's Day in 1938. She was also one of the first RN casualties in World War 2 when she hit a magnetic mine while assisting in the blockade of the German fleet by the RN in November 1939, and there was considerable doubt as to whether she was salvageable. After some nocturnal fingernail chewing in the Admiralty, it was decided that she was, and after extensive rebuilding, she put to sea again in November 1942 when she was probably the most advanced cruiser in the RN having been equipped with radar and improved armament. She

spent most of her time around the North Sea where she accompanied convoys from the UK to Murmansk with supplies for Russia. Of all the hostile seas in the world, the route to Murmansk must have been one of the worst. Much of the ratings' time was spent in breaking up the frozen ice on and around her deck, and throwing it overboard in the teeth of below zero gales and heavy seas. Anyone who happened to fall overboard would be lucky to be recovered under those conditions.

In 1943, the North Sea was a major nautical battle area, and HMS Belfast, was in the middle of it. At the time, there were many formidable German ships there, three of which in particular were very tough battleships, Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Tirpitz. And it was HMS Belfast that played a significant role in eventually sinking the Scharnhorst during the Battle of North Cape. She carried on protecting the Murmansk convoys until 1944, when she protected the D-Day landings, and was apparently one of the first ships to fire its guns off the Normandy coast on D-Day. She spent 33 days there where she fired over 5000 shells – 4000 6-inch, and 1000 4-inch shells. She then returned to Devonport for refitting and a welcome rest for the crew, before she set sail for the Far East, where she eventually took an active part in the Korean war protecting the retreating Korean and US Armies. She then carried out various peace-keeping duties until 1963, when she was retired from service.

Now at this point in a ship's life, the next, and last chapter is usually the breaker's yard. However, that was not to be the fate of HMS Belfast. It so happened that the Imperial War Museum was at that time looking for a suitable second world war cruiser to be preserved in a suitable place, and its success was almost guaranteed when Rear Admiral Sir Morgan Morgan-Giles, a previous captain of HMS Belfast, set up a trust to assist her preservation. At length, on Trafalgar Day of 1971, she was moored on the South bank of the River Thames where she was opened to the general public for the first time.

So, if you happen to be in London's south bank, and you have an hour to kill, walk along the south bank of the Thames until you are approaching Blackfriars Bridge, where you will see the moored HMS Belfast on your left side. Go down the gangplank, pay the reasonable fee to enter, and enjoy being aboard one of the largest and most powerful light cruisers ever built!

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From the Chairman

The Club has had a successful trading month. This is mainly due to the various functions that were held at the club.

The Committee actively encourages members to use the Club for functions and to encourage their family members and friends to also use the facilities available.

With this in mind, the Committee had a work session to host more events at the Club details will follow. I encourage members to support these initiatives.

See you at the Club

From the Treasurer

With the great turnout we have had on the Friday evenings in July, largely (I guess) as a result of the very attractive attendance prize, together with well supported functions, July ended nicely in the black. Another good month like this and we will be out of the red cumulatively, for the 5 months to-date.

The original budget for this year, which was based on the declining support during the latter half of last year and which was presented at the last AGM, painted a bleak picture for this year. If the last 2 months of this year is an indication of what lies ahead, then we are going to be ok.

Your committee are planning some exciting functions for the rest of the year which, hopefully, will be well supported to assist with this turnaround.

That's it for now…. see you at the Club!

Club Manager's Report

Birthdays September 2019.

We wish all of the following a happy Birthday!

Mr E.M. Van Der Niet – 2 September
Capt J.S. Coetzer (Ret) – 3 September
Mr W.J. Claydon – 3 September
Mr H.J.M. Van Aswegen – 9 September
Mr D.G. Viljoen – 10 September
R Adm (JG) A.A.A. Morris – 11 September
Lt Cdr D.E. Holland – 12 September
Lt Col R.W. Sproul (Ret) – 14 September
Mr T.K. Toplis – 18 September
Lt Cdr G.C. Hammond – 19 September
Mr B. Ireton – 21 September
Mr A.H.H. Pool – 21 September
Mr J.C. Leslie – 26 September
Mr B.P. Hansen – 30 September

100 Club Winners August 2019

R300 - R. De Wet
R300 – T. Van Zyl
R300 – O. Pfuhl
R1000 – R. Moore
Winning Members are requested to make arrangements with the Club Manager in order to collect their winnings.

New Seven Seas Club Members

The Club welcomes the following new members

Mr Daniel Jacques Pienaar resides in Simon's Town and is currently employed by Greef Estates in Simon's Town. Dan holds the Commissioned rank of 2nd Lt (Citizen Force) and was also a qualified physical fitness instructor. Dan is a Member of False Bay Yacht and is a keen sailor.

Mr Gordon Peter Tomlinson resides in Glencairn Heights and is retired. Gordon, who is an Engineer, hold the Commissioned rank of Lt (Citizen Force). He was a Test Manager for the Defence Industry Company Thales and was directly involved with Project Sitron (Acquisition of new frigates for the SA Navy). Gordon is a Member of the Lions Club Hout Bay. He has a keen interest in Naval Weapon Systems.

Mr George Frederick Alan Hooper married to Penelope resides in Simon's Town. George, who is retired, is a Yacht Owner and is a Member of False Bay Yacht Club as well as Muthaiga Club Nairobi, Kenya.

Credit/Debit Card Facility.

The Club now has a facility where Members and their guests may pay for their purchases by either debit or credit card. Please feel free to use this facility. A minimum purchase of R50 is strongly encouraged.

The Hazards of Drinking and Driving.

Members are advised that should the need unfortunately arise for a lift home; Uber now operate frequently in the Deep South. Their App can be downloaded to a mobile phone free of charge and their rates are reasonable. Other service providers are also available and Members may enquire about contact numbers from the duty bar staff.

Navy News

AUGUST 19, 2019
'Nuclear-powered' missile accident in Russia: What really happened?
by Claire Corkhill, The Conversation

Severodvinsk, Russia. Credit: Kuleshov Oleg / shutterstock

A missile engine exploded at a naval test range, west of the city of Severodvinsk on Russia's northern coast at 9am on August 8. At least five people were killed and several others injured. As it is associated with Russia's defence program, the incident is shrouded in mystery
At first, the Russian authorities denied the radiation leak, then later confirmed it. There were conflicting reports of the source of the explosion and a planned, then later cancelled evacuation of a nearby village. Unsurprisingly, tabloid media speculation followed that the Russian authorities may be hiding a Chernobyl-like accident.

Missile tests don't usually involve radioactive materials, unless the missile in question is carrying a nuclear warhead (which is prohibited under the UN's Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons). So, what is going on? No one outside of the Russian government and military can yet be entirely certain but, as an academic researcher in nuclear materials, I can do my best to piece together the available evidence.

Russian authorities have confirmed that the explosion involved "an isotope power source in a liquid propulsion system". There's nothing particularly new about the propulsion system—early ballistic missiles used a pressurized stream of liquid fuel and oxygen which, when ignited, expanded and rushed out of the bottom of the missile, propelling it in the opposite direction.
The "isotope power source" part is new though. Radioactive isotopes are unstable atoms that release excess energy by emitting radiation. So, if the missile is powered by isotopes this indicates

the Russians have developed a mini-nuclear reactor—able to fit inside a missile—that is capable of using radiation to heat the liquid fuel for propulsion. This has never been achieved before.

Severodvinsk (red dot) is on the coast of the White Sea, just below the Arctic.

This admission prompted American and UK experts to conclude the source of the radiation leak must be a type of long-range missile that Russia has previously claimed would be nuclear powered. It is known by the Russians as 9M730 Burevestnik, and by NATO as the SCC-X-9 Skyfall. The exact details of the mini-nuclear reactor that may have been developed to power a Russian missile are not known, but there are a few potential types that may be used. The key difference between a nuclear reactor used to generate energy and one that might be used to power a missile is the quantity of material required. The RBMK reactor that blew up at Chernobyl contained 200 tonnes of uranium dioxide fuel. A significantly smaller amount of fuel would be required—perhaps a few kilos at most—to lift a missile.

Norwegian and Finnish authorities are monitoring the air but have not yet reported anything abnormal. Western scientists are even asking residents of Severodvinsk to donate their car air filters, so that, at some point, we may understand more about what was released and how harmful it might be. That should give some indication as to the threat posed by the testing of such weapons.

Message in a Bottle!

Tyler Ivanoff, 36, holds the bottle on a beach just outside of Shishmaref, Alaska.

Happy sailing': 50-year-old message in a bottle from Soviet navy captain washes up in Alaska
August 19 at 5:18 AM By Emily Davies

On a breezy summer evening, Tyler Ivanoff took his family on a boat trip to a remote beach in western Alaska. While his children plucked salmonberries on a hillside, Ivanoff searched the coastline for driftwood to use in a campfire. That's when a green bottle in the sand caught his eye. He darted back up the hill on Aug. 5, and showed his children the glinting bottle with a cork cap and piece of paper curled up inside.

"Dada, is that a treasure map from a pirate ship?" his 8-year-old daughter exclaimed, Ivanoff recalled in a Sunday interview with The Washington Post.
Ivanoff uncorked the vessel and pulled out a wrinkled sheet with a message crafted in blue ink. The penmanship was worn but legible, and, as Ivanoff recognized from language classes in college, written in Russian.

He fell asleep that night unsure of what he had discovered, but with the help of thousands of Facebook users and the Russian media, Ivanoff would soon unravel a mystery dating back 50 years that originated across the Bering Strait in the Soviet Union
The 36-year-old lives in Shishmaref, Alaska, an island village of around 600 people not far from Russian territory. Ivanoff, who spends most of the year working as an educational aid at a local school and chips in at a construction company during the summer, had been preparing a campfire to roast hot dogs when he spotted the green bottle lying a few feet from the water.

“It was out of the ordinary just lying there,” he recalled. “I had to go see what it was.”
After his kids oohed and aahed at his discovery, Ivanoff tucked away his find. But before he went to bed, he posted a photo of the note to Facebook, asking for help deciphering its message.
“I found a message in a bottle today,” Ivanoff wrote. “Any friends that are Russian translators out there?”

He woke up hours later to 500 shares on the post and messages from friends of friends offering insight into what it said.

“Sincere greetings! From the Russian Far East Fleet mother ship VRXF Sulak,” it read, according a translation on BBC. “I greet you who finds the bottle and request that you respond to the address Vladivostok -43 BRXF Sulak to the whole crew. We wish you good health and long years of life and happy sailing. 20 June 1969.”
The message, it seemed, was sent by someone affiliated with the Soviet navy more than 50 years ago.
Within the day, Russian reporters had gotten wind of the bottle and by the end of the week, they had tracked down its author: Capt. Anatoliy Botsanenko, now 86 and living in Crimea.
Reporters from Russia-1, the state broadcaster, visited Botsanenko at his home to show him the note. The captain studied a photo of the paper, growing teary-eyed as he recognized his handwriting from decades ago.

“It looks like my handwriting,” he said, according to a translation provided by Russia-1 to KNOM.
“Really … looks like. But I’m not sure. Wait … For sure! East industry fishing fleet! E-I-F-F!”
Botsanenko had tossed his message into the sea when he was 36 years old and serving aboard the Sulak, a ship he told reporters he helped construct and then sailed on until 1970.
While it’s not unheard of for messages tossed into the sea to reconnect with their owners decades later, Botsanenko’s tale does have particular interest for some historians. According to Mark Edele, a historian of the Soviet Union at the University of Melbourne, the note illuminates a key difference between the U.S.S.R. under Leonid Brezhnev, the premier at the time Botsanenko threw the bottle, and Joseph Stalin, who ruled almost two decades earlier.

“The bottle message clearly shows that Brezhnev’s Soviet Union was a much more liberal place than Stalin’s,” he said in an email to The Post, adding that under Stalin, “nobody in his right mind would have sent a random message abroad and given his address on it."
The captain and Ivanoff have not yet spoken, but Ivanoff hopes to connect with Botsanenko one day.
“I would like to say hello and a heartfelt greeting to him also,” Ivanoff said. “I also wish him good health, a long life and happy sailing.”

Featured Officer - "Woody" Woodburne

(Tattler asked our Chairman who he really respected in the Navy. - He answered "Woody")

Lambert Jackson Woodburne DVR SD SM SAN (13 July 1939 – 5 July 2013) was Chief of the South African Navy from 1 July 1990 to 31 August 1992. He is one of only two people to have been awarded the Van Riebeeck Decoration, which he received for Special Forces operations in Tanzania. He was more commonly known by his nickname "Woody".

He was born in Kimberley, South Africa in 1939. Woodburne's father was a former South African Air Force wartime pilot who farmed near Maclear in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. Woodburne was schooled in the Eastern Cape and Swaziland and served in the Naval Gymnasium at Saldanha Bay in 1958. He then joined the Permanent Force and enrolled for a Bachelor of Military Science (B. Mil) degree studying at both Stellenbosch University and the Faculty of Military Science at the South African Military Academy from 1960 to 1961. He did not graduate and after his time at the Academy he started maritime service on frigates.

Military career

He completed the Specialist Mine Warfare and Clearance Diving Course in the United Kingdom where he came top of the class. On his return to South Africa he became the Officer in Charge of the Naval Diving School in Simon's Town for two years. The Navy *Diver of the Course* still receives the Woody Woodburne Shield. Woodburne went on to command the mine sweepers SAS *Mosselbaai* and SAS *Johannesburg*.

With the establishment of the Submarine Branch, he volunteered for submarines and was chosen as the first commanding officer of SAS *Emily Hobhouse* (S98) in 1971; a position held until 1974. During the submarine's work-up in France, he was described as one of the "best foreign submariners ever worked up in France", which earned him the Southern Cross Medal.

In 1972, the SAS *Emily Hobhouse* landed Special Forces troops led by Commandant Jan Breytenbach near Dar es Salaam as part of a raid on the Tanzanian port. The Special Forces team placed explosives on a bridge, power lines and targets around the town. While making the pickup rendezvous, the submarine snagged a fishing net and sunk the fishing vessel dragging the net. This mission earned Woodburne the Van Riebeeck Decoration.

From 1975 to 1977 he was assigned to the *Agosta* submarine project. After this he served with the Special Forces (1978–1983) where he attained the rank of Captain. These were "exciting and dangerous years" said Woodburne in an interview after announcing his retirement in August 1992.

From 1983 to 1985 he was the military attaché in Argentina. In 1986 Commodore Woodburne became Director of Naval Operations, then seven months later Chief of Naval Staff Operations. In January 1989 Rear-Admiral Woodburne moved to the Western Cape as Flag Officer Commanding Naval Command West. On 1 July 1990 he was promoted to Vice-Admiral and appointed as Chief of the South African Navy; a position he held until retirement on 31 August 1992.

Personal life

Woodburne married Vivienne Kemp and the couple had two daughters, but they divorced after his retirement.

Admiral Woodburne was diagnosed with Progressive supranuclear palsy in 2007 and was confined to a wheelchair. He died on 5 July 2013 and was accorded a military funeral in Simonstown

The citation for the Van Riebeeck Decoration reads:

Lieutenant Commander Lambert Woodburne distinguished himself by displaying outstanding leadership, perseverance and devotion to duty in a special task of a delicate and dangerous nature during 1972.

One occasion, during that year, he was placed in command of an extremely sensitive task in the interest of the security of the State, in the execution of which a great deal had to be relied upon his own judgement and initiative and which demanded positive and dynamic leadership from him. He tackled and executed this difficult task with great courage and daring and, with his personal example, inspired the other members of the team that took part in this task. His positive leadership, perseverance in the face of great odds and his outstanding devotion to duty undoubtedly played a decisive role in the successful execution of the task.

Featured Ship - HMS Tetcott

HMS *Tetcott* was a Type II British Hunt-class destroyer built for the Royal Navy during World War II. She was the only Royal Navy ship to be named after the Tetcott fox hunt.

Service

1941

Following completion on 11 December 1941 the ship headed for Scapa Flow where it arrived on 16 December and joined the Home Fleet. The vessel collided with the corvette *Heartsease* on 23 December which meant that the next two months were spent in repair on the Clyde and later in Southampton.

1942

The vessel was finally ready for service again on 2 March 1942 and returned to Scapa Flow for working-up. On 15 April 1942 *Tetcott* joined convoy WS18 at the ocean escort Clyde Assembly point. The ship escorted this convoy to Cape Town, detaching briefly to call into Freetown on the way.
At Cape Town, *Tetcott* headed into the Indian Ocean and on to Alexandria via the Red Sea and the Suez Canal, arriving in early June 1942 where she joined the 9th Destroyer Flotilla.
On 10 June the ship sailed with *Grove* carrying supplies to the garrison at Tobruk. *Grove* was torpedoed on 12 June during the return journey and *Tetcott* picked up the survivors. On 16 June the ship came under heavy Axis air attack whilst defending of ships returning to Alexandria following the termination of Operation Vigorous. In July the ship operated as part of Operation Exporter off Palestine and Syria. On 4 August, with the destroyers *Sikh* and *Zulu* the ship attacked the German submarine *U-372* and forced the U-boat to the surface. 16 German crew and a Lebanese civilian were rescued.
In September 1942, the ship was assigned with *Hero* to convoy duties in the Red Sea, but returned to the Mediterranean in October. In November 1942, the ship formed part of the close escort for Convoy MW13, from Alexandria to Malta. This convoy succeeded in reaching Malta, and the ship formed part of the close escort on the return journey. In December, *Tetcott* was one of the escorts in the Alexandria to Malta convoy, MW14, after which she joined the 22nd Destroyer Flotilla at Algiers.

1943

In January 1943 the ship escorted *Orion* from Malta to Alexandria during cover for passage of a Malta and on 1 February rescued survivors from the minelayer *Welshman* which had been torpedoed off Sollum. She continued patrol and escort duties in the eastern and central Mediterranean for the next two months. In July she took part on Operation Husky, the invasion of Sicily, and in September the Salerno landing, Operation Avalanche.

1944

In January 1944, the ship was assigned to the Northern Attack Force for Operation Shingle, the Anzio Landings, and provided shore bombardment in support of the landings. From February until August 1944, the ship operated in the Adriatic Sea providing shore bombardment and operating as a convoy escort. In September she supported the invasion of the Aegean islands, and then worked as part of the liberation of Greece. Deployments off Greece and Albania continued until March 1945.

1945

Tetcott then operated off the Italian coast, and was slightly damaged in April during the bombardment of Genoa. The ship returned to the UK, arriving at Portsmouth on 21 May before heading to Gibraltar in June for a refit, which started on 5 July.

Post War

The ship was due to be assigned to the Indian Ocean following the refit but this was cancelled with the surrender of Japan and instead the refit was cut short and the ship placed in reserve on 17

January 1946 before heading back to the UK. In November 1952, it was announced that the ship would be preserved at the Penarth Docks, but this plan failed. Instead the ship was towed to Gibraltar where she remained until September 1955 when she was towed back to the Barrow in Furness, in Extended Reserve, having had much of her equipment removed and the vessel no longer maintained and placed on the Disposal List. In January 1956 *Tetcott* was reclassified as a hulk and in August transferred to the Iron and Steel Corporation of Great Britain for scrapping.

Canadian Coast Guard	
Garde côtière canadienne (French)	
Heraldic badge	
	
Racing stripe	
Agency overview	
Formed	January 26, 1962
Jurisdiction	Canada
Headquarters	Ottawa, Ontario
Motto	Latin: *Saluti primum auxilio semper*, lit. 'Safety first, service always' Template:Official March: "Ol' White Stripe
Employees	4,554[1] personnel
Annual budget	CA$285 million
Minister responsible	Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard
Agency executive	Jeffery Hutchinson, Commissioner
Parent agency	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Website	Official website
Footnotes	
119 vessels and 22 helicopters[2]	

Imagine patrolling a 202,080-kilometre long coastline, the longest of any nation in the world. This is the task of the Canadian Coast Guard.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia

The Canadian Coast Guard (CCG; French: *Garde côtière canadienne* – *GCC*) is the coast guard of Canada. Formed in 1962, the coast guard is tasked with marine search and rescue, communication, navigation and transportation issues in Canadian waters, such as navigation aids and icebreaking, marine pollution response and providing support for other Canadian government initiatives. The coast guard operates 119 vessels of varying sizes and 22 helicopters, along with a variety of smaller craft. The Canadian Coast Guard is headquartered in Ottawa, Ontario, and is a special operating agency within Fisheries and Oceans Canada (Department of Fisheries and Oceans).

Unlike armed coast guards of some other nations, the CCG is a government marine organization without naval or law enforcement responsibilities. Naval operations in Canada's maritime environment are exclusively the responsibility of the Royal Canadian Navy. Enforcement of Canada's maritime-related federal statutes may be carried out by peace officers serving with various federal, provincial or even municipal law enforcement agencies.

Although CCG personnel are neither a naval nor law enforcement force, they may operate CCG vessels in support of naval operations, or they may serve an operational role in the delivery of maritime law enforcement and security services in Canadian federal waters by providing a platform for personnel serving with one or more law enforcement agencies. The CCG's responsibility encompasses Canada's 202,080-kilometre (109,110 nmi; 125,570 mi) long coastline, the longest of any nation in the world. Its vessels and aircraft operate over an area of ocean and inland waters covering approximately 2.3 million square nautical miles (7.9×10^6 km^2).

Predecessor agencies and formation (1867–1962)

Originally a variety of federal departments and even the navy performed the work which the CCG does today. Following Confederation in 1867, the federal government placed many of the responsibilities for maintaining aids to navigation (primarily lighthouses at the time), marine safety, and search and rescue under the Marine Service of the Department of Marine and Fisheries, with some responsibility for waterways resting with the Canal Branch of the Department of Railways and Canals.

Lifeboat stations had been established on the east and west coasts as part of the Canadian Lifesaving Service; the station at Sable Island being one of the first in the nation. On the Pacific coast, the service operated the Dominion Lifesaving Trail (now called the West Coast Trail) which provided a rural communications route for survivors of shipwrecks on the treacherous Pacific Ocean coast off Vancouver Island. These stations maintained, sometimes sporadically in the earliest days, pulling (rowed) lifeboats manned by volunteers and eventually motorized lifeboats.

After the Department of Marine and Fisheries was split into separate departments, the Department of Marine continued to take responsibility for the federal government's coastal protection services. During the inter-war period, the Royal Canadian Navy also performed similar duties at a time when the navy was wavering on the point of becoming a civilian organization. Laws related to customs and revenue were enforced by the marine division of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. A government reorganization in 1936 saw the Department of Marine and its Marine Service, along with several other government departments and agencies, folded into the new Department of Transport.

Following the Second World War, Canada experienced a major expansion in ocean commerce, culminating with the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1958. The shipping industry was changing throughout eastern Canada and required an expanded federal government role in the Great Lakes and the Atlantic coast, as well as an increased presence in the Arctic and Pacific coasts for sovereignty purposes. The government of Prime Minister John Diefenbaker decided to consolidate the duties of the Marine Service of the Department of Transport and on January 26, 1962, the Canadian Coast Guard was formed as a subsidiary of DOT. One of the more notable inheritances at the time of formation was the icebreaker *Labrador*, transferred from the Royal Canadian Navy.

Expansion years (1962–1990)

CCGS *Henry Larsen* docked at CCG Base St. John's in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

A period of expansion followed the creation of the CCG between the 1960s and the 1980s. The outdated ships the CCG inherited from the Marine Service were scheduled for replacement, along with dozens of new ships for the expanding role of the organization. Built under a complementary national shipbuilding policy which saw the CCG contracts go to Canadian shipyards, the new ships were delivered throughout this golden age of the organization.

In addition to expanded geographic responsibilities in the Great Lakes, the rise in coastal and ocean shipping ranged from new mining shipments such as Labrador iron ore, to increased cargo handling at the nation's major ports, and Arctic development and sovereignty patrols—all requiring additional ships and aircraft. The federal government also began to develop a series of CCG bases near major ports and shipping routes throughout southern Canada, for example Victoria, British Columbia, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and Parry Sound, Ontario.

The expansion of the CCG fleet required new navigation and engineering officers, as well as crewmembers. To meet the former requirement, in 1965 the Canadian Coast Guard College (CCGC) opened on the former navy base HMCS *Protector* at Point Edward, Nova Scotia. By the late 1970s the college had outgrown the temporary navy facilities and a new campus was opened in the adjacent community of Westmount in 1981.

CCGS *Leonard J. Cowley* docked at CCG Base St. John's in St. John's

During the mid-1980s, the long-standing disagreement between the U.S. and Canada over the legal status of the Northwest Passage came to a head after USCGC *Polar Sea* transited the passage in what were asserted by Canada to be Canadian waters and by the U.S. to be international waters. During the period of increased nationalism that followed this event, the Conservative administration of Brian Mulroney announced plans to build several enormous icebreakers, the Polar 8 class which would be used primarily for sovereignty patrols.

However, the proposed Polar 8 class was abandoned during the late 1980s as part of general government budget cuts; in their place a program of vessel modernizations was instituted. Additional budget cuts to CCG in the mid-1990s following a change in government saw many of CCG's older vessels built during the 1960s and 1970s retired.

From its formation in 1962 until 1995, CCG was the responsibility of the Department of Transport. Both the department and CCG shared complementary responsibilities related to marine safety, whereby DOT had responsibility for implementing transportation policy, regulations and safety inspections, and CCG was operationally responsible for navigation safety and SAR, among others.

Budget cuts and bureaucratic oversight (1994–2005)

Following the 1994 budget, the federal government announced that it was transferring responsibility for the CCG from the Department of Transport to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). The reason for placing CCG under DFO was ostensibly to achieve cost savings by amalgamating the two largest civilian vessel fleets within the federal government under a single department.

Arising out of this arrangement, the CCG became ultimately responsible for crewing, operating, and maintaining a larger fleet—both the original CCG fleet before 1995 of dedicated SAR vessels, Navaid tenders, and multi-purpose icebreakers along with DFO's smaller fleet of scientific research and fisheries enforcement vessels, all without any increase in budget—in fact the overall budget for CCG was decreased after absorbing the DFO patrol and scientific vessels.

There were serious stumbling blocks arising out of this reorganization, namely in the different management practices and differences in organizational culture at DFO, versus DOT. DFO is dedicated to conservation and protection of fish through enforcement whereas the CCG's primary focus is marine safety and SAR. There were valid concerns raised within CCG about reluctance on the part of the marine community to ask for assistance from CCG vessels, since the CCG was being viewed as aligned with an enforcement department. In the early 2000s, the federal government began to investigate the possibility of remaking CCG as a separate agency, thereby not falling under a specific functional department and allowing more operational independence.

Special operating agency (2005)

In one of several reorganization moves of the federal ministries following the swearing-in of Prime Minister Paul Martin's cabinet on December 12, 2003, several policy/regulatory responsibilities (including boating safety and navigable waters protection) were transferred from CCG back to Transport Canada to provide a single point of contact for issues related to marine safety regulation and security, although CCG maintained an operational role for some of these tasks.

The services offered by CCG under this arrangement include:

- Icebreaking and Arctic sovereignty protection
- Marine search and rescue: primary marine SAR vessels, personnel to staff Joint Rescue Coordination Centers (JRCCs) trained and designated as maritime SAR coordinators per the *Canada Shipping Act*
- Marine security: monitor vessel movements within Canadian waters, coordinate information to other government departments and agencies regarding 96-hour pre-arrival notification from vessels per the *Marine Transportation Security Act*, personnel to staff Marine Security Operations Centers (MSOCs)

- Environmental response: spill containment and clean-up
- Marine navigation services including aids to navigation: buoy tending, light station keeping, beacon maintenance, publication of Notices to Mariners (NOTMAR) annually and monthly, and Notices to Shipping (NOTSHIP) as well as broadcasting safety Notices to Shipping over marine radio frequencies; and the publication of Radio Aids to Marine Navigation (RAMNav) and the List of Lights, Buoys & Fog Signals (Lights List)
- Maritime mobile safety services: marine radio communications, electronic aids to radio navigation systems (e.g. LORAN, Differential GPS[9])
- Vessel traffic services to co-ordinate vessel movement safety, monitoring vessel movements including 96-hour reporting protocol before vessels are permitted to enter Canadian waters
- Support to fisheries research (as a platform)
- Offshore, mid-shore and coastal fisheries enforcement (as a platform)
- Integrated border-enforcement teams (IBETs) with the RCMP and Canada Border Services Agency (as a platform)
- Marine support to other federal government departments (as a platform)

On April 4, 2005, it was announced by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans that the CCG was being designated a "special operating agency"—the largest one in the federal government. Although the CCG still falls under the ministerial responsibility of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, it has more autonomy where it is not as tightly integrated within the department.

An example is that now all CCG bases, aids to navigation, vessels, aircraft, and personnel are wholly the responsibility of the Commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard, who is also of associate deputy ministerial rank. The commissioner is, in turn, supported by the CCG headquarters which develop a budget for the organization. The arrangement is not unlike the relationship of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, also headed by a Commissioner, toward that organization's parent department, the Department of Public Safety.

As of March 13, 2017, Jeffery Hutchinson has been appointed the current Commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard.

The special operating agency reorganization is different from the past under both DOT and DFO where regional directors general for these departments were responsible for CCG operations within their respective regions; this reportedly caused problems under DFO that did not occur under DOT. Now all operations of CCG are directed by the Commissioner, who reports directly to the Deputy Minister of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Assistant Commissioners are responsible for CCG operations within each region and they report directly to the Commissioner. This management and financial flexibility is being enhanced by an increased budget for CCG to acquire new vessels and other assets to assist in its growing role in marine security.

CCG continues to provide vessels and crew for supporting DFO's fisheries science, enforcement, conservation, and protection requirements. The changes resulting in CCG becoming a special operating agency under DFO did not address some of the key concerns raised by an all-party Parliamentary committee investigating low morale among CCG employees following the transfer

from DOT to DFO and budget cuts since 1995. This committee had recommended that CCG become a separate agency under DOT and that its role be changed to a paramilitary organization involved in maritime security by arming its vessels with deck guns, similar to the United States Coast Guard, and that employees be given peace officer status for enforcing federal laws on the oceans and Great Lakes. As a compromise, the CCG now partners with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to create what are known as integrated border-enforcement teams (IBETs), which patrol Canadian waters along the Canada–United States border.

Fleet modernization (1990–present)

CCGS *Louis S. St-Laurent* docked at CCG Base St. John's in St. John's, NL.

In the 1990s–2000s, CCG modernized part of its SAR fleet after ordering British Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)-designed *Arun*-class high-endurance lifeboat cutters for open coastal areas, and the USCG-designed 47-foot Motor Lifeboat (designated by CCG as the Cape class) as medium-endurance lifeboat cutters for the Great Lakes and more sheltered coastal areas. The CCG ordered five 47-foot (14.3 m) motor lifeboats in September 2009, to add to the 31 existing boats. New vessels delivered to the CCG from 2009 onward included the hovercraft CCGS *Mamilossa*[11] and the near-shore fisheries research vessels CCGS *Kelso*[12] and CCGS *Viola M. Davidson*. Several major vessels have undergone extensive refits in recent decades, most notably CCGS *Louis S. St-Laurent* in place of procuring the Polar 8 class of icebreakers.

CCGS *Terry Fox* docked at CCG Base St. John's in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

In the first decade of the 21st century, CCG announced plans for the Mid Shore Patrol Vessel Project (a class of nine vessels) as well as a "Polar"-class icebreaker – since named CCGS *John G. Diefenbaker* – in addition to inshore and offshore fisheries science vessels and a new oceanographic research vessel as part of efforts to modernize the fleet.

In 2012, the Government of Canada announced a procurement of 24 helicopters to replace the current fleet.

Modernizing the Coast Guard's icebreaker

The Coast Guard has acknowledged that it is not just *Louis S. St. Laurent* that is old, and needs replacing, all its icebreakers are old. Some critics have argued that with global warming, and the scramble for Arctic nations to document claims to a share of the Arctic Ocean seafloor, Canada lacked sufficient icebreakers. In 2018 the Coast Guard started to publicly search for existing large, capable icebreakers it could purchase. On August 13, 2018, the Coast Guard confirmed it would be buying and retrofitting three large, icebreaking, anchor-handling tugs, *Tor Viking*, *Balder Viking* and *Vidar Viking* from Viking Supply Ships.

On 22 May 2019, it was announced two more *Harry DeWolf*-class offshore patrol vessels will be built for the Canadian Coast Guard, in addition to the six being constructed for the Royal Canadian Navy. Additionally, $15.7B was announced for the production of 16 additional multi-purpose vessels.

SAS Somerset

Tattler found a piece in the newspaper about the scrapping of this "old Girl". For historical perspective, I have inserted this bit from Wiki

Somerset was originally built in Blyth, Northumberland, by Blyth Shipbuilding Company and commissioned as HMS *Barcross* in 1941. HMS Barcross and her sister ship HMS Barbrake arrived at the Cape Station at Simonstown, in 1942 and was transferred to Saldanha Bay for boom defense operations directly thereafter. In 1943 she was re-designated as HMSAS Barcross as she was transferred to the South African Naval Forces for the remainder of the war. In 1946 Barcross was purchased by the South African Government and was used for the dumping of ammunition off Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. On completion of these services, she was transferred to Salisbury Island in Durban and was subsequently laid up at Salisbury Island. In 1951 her name was changed to Somerset. In 1953 whilst still decommissioned Somerset was used in the raising of the sunken minelayer Skilpad (ex:Spindrift) at Salisbury Island.

During 1955 Somerset was brought back into service and during this period she was tasked in salvaging the remains of two Harvard training aircraft following a mid-air collision over Table Bay. Six weeks later she recovered a third Harvard which had crashed into the sea off Bok Point. In 1959 during a refit, Somerset had her coal fired boilers converted to be fired by furnace oil. She was responsible for the laying of an oil pipe line at the port of Mossel Bay, this was to serve the oil terminal.

In 1961 Somerset salvaged the South African railways tug Schermbrucker which had sunk in East London harbour. In 1967 she was fitted out with new boilers and a reconditioned main engine. In 1968 her services were called on again to assist the cable ship John W. Mackay to raise and repair the newly inaugurated overseas telephone cable in the shallow waters off Melkbosstrand. During 1969 Somerset raised the old whale catcher Wagter 11 in Saldanha Bay and subsequently towed her back to Simonstown. During the same year, she salvaged a floating crane which had capsized and sank at Port Elizabeth. In the early hours of 24 July 1974 Somerset was dispatched to Cape Agulhas to assist with the salvage of the Oriental Pioneer, poor weather conditions and bad luck rendered this effort unsuccessful.

In 1981 the fishing trawler Aldebaran was successfully raised in Port Elizabeth having laid on the bottom for over two and a half years. Somerset also acted as a standby vessel during submarine shallow water diving operations. In 1983 she assisted in the salvaging of a barge and two whale catchers at Saldanha Bay. In March 1986, Somerset was finally paid off. In 1988 the old boom defense vessel was donated as a museum ship, moored at the waterfront at Cape Town. Her original R.N. badge can be seen displayed on the side of the Selborne dry dock.

She is now used as a museum ship, has been moored on the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront in Cape Town since 2 September 1988, and is the only boom defence vessel remaining in the world, as well as the only remaining ship of the Royal South African Navy.

Tattler understands that there has been a decision to scrap her

EVENTS THAT LED TO THE DISPOSAL OF THE SAS SOMERSET

The Department of Public Works previously maintained the SAS Somerset as she was considered to be a museum site, but later the DPW advised that the vessel would be viewed as a large museum object and that DPW would no longer be responsible for repair and maintenance. A vessel such as the SAS Somerset should be sent to the synchrolift every five years for major repairs, but this is costly, so Iziko Museums of South Africa (Iziko) has not been able to maintain the vessel.

Iziko has been approached by several companies to lease or purchase the SAS Somerset for various business ventures, but once the vessel was surveyed the business proved not to be financially viable.

Iziko had also approached the South African Navy Museum in Simon's Town to take over the SAS Somerset, but the museum was not in a position to take on another naval vessel

Two independent surveys conducted earlier this year highlighted the environmental risks posed by the SAS Somerset and recommended that she be scrapped.

The SAS Somerset is berthed in the V&A Waterfront Marina next to the Two Oceans Aquarium which pumps seawater from the Marina into tanks housing sea life. Iziko informed the DAC immediately and an independent assessment from the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) was obtained by the DAC.

On 3 August 2018 Iziko was informed that ministerial approval had been given to deaccession the SAS Somerset in terms of Section 10(2) of the Cultural Institutions Act, 1998 (Act No. 119 of 1998) which states that "any movable property transferred under subsection (1) to a declared institution may be alienated only with the approval of the Minister".

When oily water was observed around the SAS Somerset, the V&A Waterfront advised that the following urgent work needed to be done:

- conduct an underwater hull survey;
- seal the sea chest; and
- pump oily water from the vessel.

The SAS Somerset has now been stabilized.

Approval was also granted to scrap the SAS Somerset, hence the scrapping process. Asbestos and fuel must be removed from the SAS Somerset before she can be moved to another berth to be scrapped so these processes are underway.

As the SAS Somerset is a military object older than 75 years, processes are being followed in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999).

Smaller heritage objects will be removed from the SAS Somerset before she is moved to Quay 700

where the scrapping process will commence and larger heritage objects will be removed by service providers procured by Iziko at Quay 700. The scrapping process will be completed on the synchrolift. The scrapping process is compliant with the Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) Scrapping Procedures.

What are members' thoughts about the end of this bit of history?

Curious?

USS *Nimitz* UFO incident

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

USS Nimitz UFO incident

Video released by the US military showing a Navy F/A-18 Super Hornet intercepting a UFO
Date November 10–16, 2004
Coordinates 31°20’N 117°10’WCoordinates: 31°20’N 117°10’W

The USS *Nimitz* UFO incident refers to a 2004 radar-visual encounter of an unidentified flying object by US fighter pilots of the *Nimitz* Carrier Strike Group. In December 2017, infrared footage of the encounter was released to the public. The encounter also included an engagement with the UFO by the Commander of the squadron, VFA-41.

A 2015 account of the incident on FighterSweep.com, interviews with one of the pilots, and subsequent news reports describe the sighting of an "unidentified flying object" by six Navy Super Hornet fighter jets over the Pacific Ocean in November, 2004.

According to *The Washington Post*, the video was released by former intelligence officer Luis Elizondo to shed light on a secretive Department of Defense operation to analyze reported UFO sightings, the Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program.

Numerous FOIAs were submitted regarding this event. There was a FOIA obtained that indicated four Marine Lt Colonels and a Marine Major were aware of the event and had witnessed the IR video of the unknown object. A number of documents were leaked to the internet with varied levels of credibility. Acceleration values for the performance characteristics of the object were made using

statements from the USS Princeton radar operators, the F/A-18 pilots that saw the object disappear within a second, and acceleration values based on the IR video.

The Navy has now updated their protocols for pilots to report UFO sightings in an effort to reduce the stigma associated with such reports.[9]

Skeptics have called into question the veracity of the pilots' accounts, pointing out that the sighting could be explained by equipment malfunction or human error. On his part one of the witnesses, retired navy commander David Fravor, lamented the amount "of misinformation that [was] starting to come out through third and fourth parties" during a June 2018 interview.

Curious? -A most unusual naval craft

Lun-class ekranoplan

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

MD-160, the sole completed *Lun*-class ekranoplan

Class overview	
Name:	*Lun*
Operators:	Soviet Navy Russian Navy
In service:	1987–late 1990s
Planned:	2
Building:	0
Completed:	1
Cancelled:	1
Active:	0
Lost:	0
Retired:	1
Preserved:	1
General characteristics	
Class and type:	Lun
Type:	Attack/Transport ground effect vehicle
Displacement:	Displacement n/a, weight 286 tonnes unloaded
Length:	73.8 metres (242 ft)

Beam:	(Wingspan) 44 metres (144 ft)
Height:	19.2 metres (63 ft)
Draught:	(2.5 metres or 8 feet 2 inches)
Propulsion:	8× Kuznetsov NK-87 turbojet engines, 127.4 kN (28,600 lbf) thrust
Speed:	297 kn (550 km/h; 342 mph)
Range:	1,000 nmi (1,900 km; 1,200 mi)
Capacity:	100 tonnes (220,000 pounds)
Complement:	six officers and nine enlisted men
Sensors and processing systems:	Puluchas search radar
Armament:	Six fixed-elevation P-270 Moskit antiship missile launchers 4 × 23 mm PI-23 turrets (2 x 2, 2,400 rounds)

The *Lun*-class ekranoplan is a ground effect vehicle (GEV) designed by Rostislav Evgenievich Alexeyev in 1975 and used by the Soviet and Russian navies from 1987 until sometime in the late 1990s. It flew using the lift generated by the ground effect of its large wings when within about four metres (13 ft) above the surface of the water. Although they might look similar to regular aircraft, and have related technical characteristics, ekranoplans like the Lun are not aircraft, seaplanes, hovercraft, nor hydrofoils. Rather, "ground effect" is a distinct technology. The International Maritime Organization classifies these vehicles as maritime ships.

The name *Lun* comes from the Russian for harrier.

Design and development

KH-8 Image of Kaspiysk Special Research and Development Facility on the Caspian Sea in the Former Soviet Union, 11 August 1984

Lun-class at Kaspiysk photographed with a KH-8 reconnaissance satellite in 1984

Lun-class at Kaspiysk, Russia, in 2010

The Lun was powered with eight Kuznetsov NK-87 turbofans, mounted on forward canards, each producing 127.4 kN (28,600 lbf) of thrust. It had a flying boat hull with a large deflecting plate at the bottom to provide a "step" for takeoff. It had a maximum cruising speed of 550 kilometres per hour (340 mph). Equipped for anti-surface warfare, it carried the P-270 *Moskit* (Mosquito) guided missile. Six missile launchers were mounted in pairs on the dorsal surface of its fuselage with advanced tracking systems mounted in its nose and tail.

The only model of this class ever built, the *MD-160*, entered service with the Black Sea Fleet in 1987. It was retired in the late 1990s and is now sitting unused at a naval station in Kaspiysk.

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Blast from the Past - The 1969 Killarney 3-hour Endurance Race

50 years ago - Proper, serious racing!

South African endurance racing in those years, including the fabulous Kyalami 9 hour, attracted some fantastic drivers and cars. In this "3 hour", pole position went to a Ferrari 330 P4, the fastest lap was achieved by a Lola T70 and the race was won by the same car.

Drivers included legendary names like Love, Hailwood, Walker, De Udy, Gardner, Serrurier and Guthrie. Locals such as Joubert, Taylor, Chatz, Swanepoel, Mortimer and Keizan. Wow! And the cars? Brands on the track that day were Ferrari, Lola, Porsche, Ford GT40, Lotus and Alfa amongst others.
Pictured below is the Lola driven by the legendary Jon Love which finished second on the day

Who was there? I will bet that young Greg Walker was!

Winners:

Overall:	7 Lola T70 Mk.3B GT Chevrolet	De Udy / Gardner	

Fastest Laps:

Overall:	7 Lola T70 Mk.3B GT Chevrolet	Frank Gardner (AUS)	1:19.300	175.419 km/h

Pole Positions:

Overall:	4 Ferrari 330 P4	Alistair Walker (GB)

Notes of interest:

Top makes by numbers:	Chevron (3), Alfa Romeo (3), Lola (2), Ford (2), Volvo (2), Mini (2), Lotus (2)
Top engines by numbers:	Ford (4), Alfa Romeo (3), Chevrolet (2), BMW (2), Volvo (2), BMC (2)
Top car types by numbers:	Lola T70 (2), Chevron B8 (2), Mini Cooper (2), Lotus 23 (2)
Driver nationalities:	ZA (26), GB (9)
Engine positions:	mid-engined (61%), front-engined (33%), rear-engined (6%)
Oldest known drivers:	Jack Holme (58), John Love (45), Frank Wingels (41)
Youngest known drivers:	Christine Beckers (24), Eddie Keizan (25), Robin Widdows (27)
Woman drivers:	Christine Beckers

September 1969

Albums released this month, 50 years ago

Album	Artist
I Got Dem Ol' Kozmic Blues Again Mama!	Janis Joplin
Through the Past, Darkly (Big Hits Vol. 2)	The Rolling Stones
Easy	Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell
Then Play On	Fleetwood Mac
The Band	The Band
Hot Buttered Soul	Isaac Hayes
Puzzle People	The Temptations
Together	Diana Ross & the Supremes and The Temptations
New York Tendaberry	Laura Nyro
Abbey Road	The Beatles
2 Ozs of Plastic with a Hole in the Middle	Man
Canned Wheat	The Guess Who
Four Sail	Love

Love Chronicles	Al Stewart
Nice	The Nice
Noah	The Bob Seger System
Rock & Roll	Vanilla Fudge
Spare Parts	Status Quo
A Step Further	Savoy Brown
Supersnazz	The Flamin' Groovies
These Things Too	Pearls Before Swine
Townes Van Zandt	Townes Van Zandt

And the movies

September 13	Bara no sôretsu	Drama
September 15	Battle of Britain	Action
September 18	Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice	Comedy
September 28	The Bed Sitting Room	Comedy

" Jack of the Dust" - Do/did we have these?”

Jack of the dust is an obsolete enlisted rating of the United States Navy and was used in the Navy Supply Corps.

The term has its origin in the Royal Navy of the early 1800s when ship's stewards or purser's assistants were known as "Jack-in-the-dust", referring to the dusty atmosphere in the bread storeroom (called the "bread-room") created by issuing quantities of flour and dried biscuit.

Other names used for Jack of the dust were "Breadroom Jack", "Dusty Boy", "Dips", and "Jack Dusty".

The US naval rating was discontinued in the late 19th century, but the term survived as a formal title until World War II. "Jack of the dust" is still used today on some ships as an informal title for a culinary specialist in charge of the canned goods storeroom.

Understanding Engineers

A priest, a doctor, and an engineer were waiting one morning for a particularly slow group of golfers.
The engineer fumed, "What's with those guys? We must have been waiting for fifteen minutes!"
The doctor chimed in, "I don't know, but I've never seen such inept golf!"
The priest said, "Here comes the green-keeper. Let's have a word with him."
He said, "Hello George, what's wrong with that group ahead of us? They're rather slow, aren't they?"
The green-keeper replied, "Oh, yes. That's a group of blind firemen. They lost their sight saving our clubhouse from a fire last year, so we always let them play for free anytime."
The group fell silent for a moment.
The priest said, "That's so sad. I think I will say a special prayer for them tonight."
The doctor said, "Good idea. I'm going to contact my ophthalmologist colleague and see if there's anything he can do for them."
The engineer said, "Why can't they play at night?"

The Old Prospector

An old prospector shuffled into the town of El Indio, Texas leading a tired old mule.

The old man headed straight for the only saloon in town, to clear his parched throat.

He walked up to the saloon and tied his old mule to the hitch rail.

As he stood there, brushing some of the dust from his face and clothes, a young gunslinger stepped out of the saloon with a gun in one hand and a bottle of whiskey in the other.

The young gunslinger looked at the old man and laughed, saying, "Hey old man, can you dance?"

The old man looked up at the gunslinger and said, "No son, I don't dance... never really wanted to"

A crowd had gathered as the gunslinger grinned and said, "Well, you old fool, you're gonna dance now!" and started shooting at the old man's feet.

The old prospector, not wanting to get a toe blown off, started hopping around like a flea on a hot skillet.

Everybody standing around was laughing.

When his last bullet had been fired, the young gunslinger, still laughing, holstered his gun and turned around to go back into the saloon.

The old man turned to his pack mule, pulled out a double-barrelled 12 gauge shotgun and cocked both hammers.

The loud clicks carried clearly through the desert air. The crowd stopped laughing immediately.

The young gunslinger heard the sounds too, and he turned around very slowly.

The silence was deafening. The crowd watched as the young gunman stared at the old timer and the large gaping holes of those twin 12-gauge barrels.

The barrels of the shotgun never wavered in the old man's hands, as he quietly said;

"Son, have you ever kissed a mule's ass?"

The gunslinger swallowed hard and said, "No sir... but.... I've always wanted to"

There are a few lessons for all of us here:

*Don't be arrogant.
*Don't waste ammunition.
*Whiskey makes you think you're smarter than you are.
*Always make sure you know who is in control...
*And finally, don't screw around with old folks; they didn't get old by being stupid....

I just love a story with a happy ending, don't you?

To close - Only in Ireland! (True story!)

It's the time of year when a number of Dublin's loved flying rats go into full-on party mode.

That's thanks to the pear trees located in Marino in the north of the city that are starting to drop their ripe and juicy fruit.

The pigeons from Dublin get their fill of the delicious fruit on an annual basis.

However, as Dublin Live reports, as mature pears fall to the ground, they start to ferment. And the eager birds end up having somewhat of a fiesta on the intoxicatingly sweet treats.

The Marino residents Facebook page is warning people to be on the lookout for the tanked-up birds as they overindulge on the ripe fruit.