

The Seven Seas Tattler Issue 5.03 – August 2021



Greetings, members of the Seven Seas Club and welcome to this August edition.

As we descend from the third wave we continue to live in a pretty chilly winter. The Cape has certainly been the recipient of some hostile cold fronts which then moved further north causing the mercury to plunge! We hope that you all have managed to remain warm and dry!

The Club reopened its doors recently and will continue to adopt the appropriate virus protocols. We hope that many of you will find opportunities to enjoy a few libations served by our friendly bar staff. You will be informed of club activities in the near future.

As always we welcome comments and contributions (jonathanagolding@gmail.com). We would particularly like any club or related experiences, stories, photographs and the like.

Tattler – We received the following feedback on the July edition of Tattler.

Dear Jonathan,

Lovely Tattler, enjoyed it all very much.
Just the job for a terrible rainy winter's day.

All the best,

Penny Standley

Hi Jonathan,

A great Tattler again and pretty smart
with the rugby and Monty Python links.

Enjoyed reading it very much.

Regards
Denzil

From the Chair

The Club has endured another month of lockdown due to Covid 19 with its financial implications.

The Club has re-opened and back in business.

There is a lot of international rugby coming up in the months to come and is an ideal opportunity for us as members to get together and support our Boks in their venture and support the Club at the same time.

Your committee will also look at other activities to generate additional income for the Club.

See you there

Regards

Kevin

From the Treasurers abacus

The recent exercise to refresh the information held in the Club's membership database was both opportune and illuminating for a number of reasons. Amongst these were;

- It preceded the coming into force of the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)
- It delivered some interesting insight into the "modus-operandi"/"standard operating procedure" of the past within the Club.

POPIA came into force at the beginning of July with the key goal of assuring everyone, that any personal data held by an organisation was held and used with the knowledge of the person to whom the data applied to, was current, necessary for day to day operation of the organisation, not made available to third parties and subject to the right of the individual to withdraw their consent for the information to be held and used.

Clearly, the act became necessary as a result of the commercial abuse of personal data that had become so prevalent and was well overdue. (We have all experienced the frustration/irritation of receiving a cold call/SMS/e-mail from someone who has obtained access to our personal data and wishes to sell us something we do not want or need.)

Given that your data is only handled by staff and committee members who have signed binding non-disclosure agreements, I am sure that the members can take confidence from the knowledge that we take the confidentiality of member's personal data very seriously. This confidence should be strengthened by the knowledge that you have the right to withdraw your consent for your data to be held and used by the Club for its' day-to-day operations.

As part of this effort, the requirement to confirm/update the "date of joining" delivered some interesting recollections. While membership today is without a doubt voluntary, very much sought after, and highly valued, this was not always necessarily the case at the time of joining. Many members (retired Naval Officers of course!) have recounted their experience as junior officers of having been "marched into the Club by their commanding officer and "ordered" to complete the relevant membership application documentation".(Clearly not a practice occurring in today's South African Navy).

The database update effort also delivered some illuminating insight into another part of the history of the Club – courtesy of the amazing memory of one of our members. The following is extracted from an email from one of our Ancient Mariners regarding the appearance of a joining date of 1977 in his personal data.

"This is incorrect. I joined the Seven Seas Club in or about February 1963. I think my Club Number was 192. I have had unbroken membership since joining, despite my being away from Simon's Town from 1978 to 1993.

I was Commissioned on 23 January 1963 and was shortly afterwards proposed for Club Membership by then Sub-Lieutenant R. L. Shelver and seconded by then Sub-Lieutenant V. F. Holderness. Both Rear-Admiral [JG] A. Rudman and Captain P. le Roux SA Navy were already Members. Apart from about ten civilians [Mayor, Chief Magistrate etc.] the Club was exclusively for Naval Officers with only a few senior SA Army and SA Air Force Officers who were members [or probably Associate Members]. The Barmen at the time were named Postie and Felix.

This 1977 date has been discussed in the past. There were some administration/accounting problems in the Club around that time. I was progressing my COQ course in 1977 when several Naval Officers were asked to again complete their membership application forms to put the records right. It appears that then Lieutenant-Commander J. Wainwright, my Course Officer who handled the matter, allowed the "new" date to be registered as my joining date. Commander C. Harris, when he was Chairman of the Club, undertook to correct the date"

While the record of the 1977 event exist, sadly, the records from 1963 are very sparse and do not include the joining documentation of this Ancient Mariner and it would appear that Cdr Harris was either not able to locate the applicable documentation or did not make the required update to the membership records.

This member retained his membership number of 192 until the end of 2017 when this was amended to membership number 40 during the consolidation of membership numbers undertaken at that time. If anyone (other than the member himself) can identify who this member is, I will be happy to buy them a beer as soon as the Club re-opens. (Article written in July 2021 during lockdown).

This episode spanning a period of nearly 60 years is another example of the value and importance of good record keeping in any organisation and illustrates the ever increasing loss of our Club's rich history and "organisational memory" resulting from so much of it being retained only in the minds of the surviving members.

Is there anyone out there willing to take up the challenge of committing the amazing and entertaining history of our Club and its' members to paper (or its' modern digital equivalent)?

Look forward to seeing you in the Club soon!

Doug Law-Brown
Honorary Treasurer

Club Managers Report

New Member

The Club welcomes on board Mr Erik Van Der berg from Capri who owns his own catering equipment business. We hope that Erik will have a long and happy association with our club.

We wish the following a very happy birthday!

Tattler - For our usual bit of fun, we have inserted shared birthdays in parenthesis.

- Capt M.J. Geddes – 01 August (1924 Sir Frank Worrell, West Indian cricket batsman and captain)
Capt P.R. Le Roux (Ret) – 03 August (1872 Haakon VII, King of Norway (1905-57), born in Charlottenlund Palace, Copenhagen)
Ms. E. Uys – 06 August (1644 Louise de La Vallière, French mistress of Louis XIV)
Mr S.J. Mc Donnell – 06 August (1809 Alfred Tennyson, British Poet Laureate of Great Britain (Charge of the Light Brigade)
Mr B. Duncan – 07 August (1881 François Darlan, French Admiral of the Fleet during WWII and Vichy Prime Minister)
Dr. H. Van Rensberg – 08 August (1953 Nigel Mansell, British auto racer (World F1 champion 1992, Indy Car 1993)
Mr S.F. Haselum – 08 August (1964 Giuseppe Conte, Italian jurist and politician, Prime Minister of Italy)
Mrs P. Luyr – 10 August (1874 Herbert Hoover, 31st US President)
Capt K.E. Packer (Ret) – 13 August (1888 John Logie Baird, Scottish inventor and father of the television)
Mrs M. Dilley – 14 August (1947 Danielle Steel, American author)

**Congratulation to our
100 Club Winners for July 2021**

Congratulations to these winners

John Winter 16 - R300

Jonathan Golding 98 - R300

Andy Wridgeway 49 - R300

John Lamont 97 - R1000

Aye,
Glen

Navy News

Maritime News Special Issue

Date: 27 July 2021/ Source: Naval Post AGS

Tattler - Something a little different. For those who may not know (Tattler cannot imagine why!) co-author Arnè Söderlund is a much respected member of our club. I am sure he would be delighted to sign your copy!

BOOK REVIEW - Iron Fist from the Sea: South Africa's Seaborne Raiders 1978-1988.
By Douw Steyn & Arnè Söderlund. Solihull: Helion & Company, 2015. ISBN: 1909982288.



The publication of *Iron Fist from the Sea: South Africa's Seaborne Raiders 1978-1988* by Douw Steyn and Arnè Söderlund capitalises on two important current trends in South African military literature. Firstly, most of the members of the so-called Border War generation, those who served in the South African military in various positions in the 1970s and 1980s, have retired. These men and women now have the time for reading, introspection and reflection and, more important, the will and time to write about their military experiences during a time of great turmoil in the history of South Africa.

One of the interesting features of the South African armed forces at the time was the extent to which it could rely on the best that white society could offer for thinking, skills and leadership. The military, as a result, became a relative progressive institution in society in general. This reality is reflected in the nature and scope of this particular publication.

Secondly, there is within the military publication genre a specific and distinct interest in special and special operations forces. It is possible to link this interest to the mystique of these kinds of forces and to argue that what made them special is also the reason why the public in general is interested in reading about the adventures and exploits of these, usually small, groups of secretive, highly skilled, well-trained and specialised soldiers.

The daring nature and cloud of 'we cannot talk about our operations' are precisely the reasons why the public are more interested in what these kind of soldiers have to say. Recently, a number of publications by special force operators have been published. Most of these publications fall within the autobiographical and 'history from below' categories with special force soldiers writing about their own personal experiences as part of the South African Special Forces.

The authors of *Iron Fist from the Sea: South Africa's Seaborne Raiders 1978-1988* are very blunt in their view of these publications – "most of these books have only addressed the sensational actions of a few radical operators and have failed to document what it was really like to be a 'recce' operator or commando". And with that the authors of *Iron Fist from the Sea: South Africa's Seaborne Raiders 1978-*

1988 are implying that their publication is in many ways unique amongst the publications on South African Special Forces.

The purpose of the book, the authors explain, is to document the history of 4 'Recce' Commando, later to be named 4 Reconnaissance Regiment, and the operations undertaken between 1978 and 1989. Thus, the authors claim, they were able "... to produce [an] accurate history of seaward operations undertaken" during this period. The book is, however, much more than a unit history. It traces the development of a unique seaborne capability by the South African Special Forces; it provides an outline of the creation of a specific military unit that housed these South African "SEALS" and offers a detailed outline of the history of and unique operations these small group of men conducted, in cooperation with the South African Navy, between 1972 and 1990. The uniqueness of the unit is highlighted by the fact that, of the 480 soldiers who qualified as special force operators between 1978 and 1989, only 45 served in 4 Reconnaissance regiment.

In general, though, the book is an outstanding and important contribution on an area of which very little is known in South African society in general; even by those who served in the military at the time. It provides an excellent exposition of the highly secretive operations that the South African Special Forces conducted, in cooperation with the South African Navy, along the coastline of Southern Africa – as far as Cabinda on the west coast of Africa and Tanzania on the east coast.

There is always some danger that authors that are closely associated with their topic, such as Douw Steyn and Arnè Söderlund, may be subjective in their analysis. However, the most outstanding feature of the book is the primary research that the authors rely on in the writing of the book. They succeeded in getting access to previously classified documentation and were able to interview many of the men that were involved in the creation and development of the unit and the seaward capability and the planning and conduct of these operations. This is reflected in the detail with which the planning and conduct of many of the operations are discussed.

The writing and the book in general is enthralling. Yet, at times it tends to be very factual. This may be the result of one of the motivational factors for the book that the authors outlined in the preface. Few journalist, the authors note, were able to find reliable sources or establish contacts within the Recce community, especially after the failed 1985 operation in Northern Cabinda. As a result, they resorted to publishing stories based on assumptions and unreliable sources – the Angolan news reports being specifically mentioned in this regard. Thus, the authors argue, "... the secretiveness and silence we had prided ourselves on previously now prevented us from defending our honour. " This almost turns into a negative motivational factor for the writing of the book when the authors remark that "... we are doing every member of Special Forces – past and present – a great disservice if we continue to remain silent" and that "... it is time to document [the] history accurately using factual information rather than public versions – many of which are based on speculation or bravo – and to give a detailed account of our clandestine operations whether successes and failures."

Of course, the factual nature of the book is also its most outstanding feature and one that many historians will thank the authors for in years to come. The thoroughness of the research is impressive. Of course, it is possible that some special force operators, past and present, will resent the lifting or piercing of the corporate veil and the pros and cons of such a detailed discussion of the South African Special Force doctrine and standard operational procedures is probably up for debate. There is no doubt, though, that this particular publication contributes to a better understanding of special force operations within the larger military fraternity and the public in general during a time that many operations were conducted by these forces and in which very little information was shared with the outside world about the nature of these forces and the employment.

The book definitely challenges the opinion of many that special force operators are the most fearless and deadly killers. Instead, the image of Special Forces – working in close cooperation with certain naval contingents – portrayed by the book is that disciplined professionalism and clinical military effectiveness

is not always a guarantee for operational success. The Clausewitzian fog, friction and change, together with modern-day money, politics and gadgets, always have their say in these kinds of operations. And this is precisely why the book is highly recommended for military practitioners and the public alike – to provide an understanding of how military effectiveness is the result of both institutional professionalism and external factors over which armed forces seldom have any control.

Reviewer: Prof Abel Esterhuysen, Stellenbosch University

Tattler – I thought to just clarify the reference to “Clausewitzian fog”

Fog of war is attributed to Prussian General CARL VON CLAUSEWITZ, it is in fact a paraphrase of what he said: 'War is the realm of uncertainty; three quarters of the factors on which action in war is based are wrapped in a fog of greater or lesser uncertainty,
(Source: www.oxfordreference.com)

Featured War Hero : James Magennis

From: Wikipedia

Temporary Acting Leading Seaman James Joseph Magennis V.C. James Magennis was from Belfast and was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions in the Far East.

The Citation states:-

“The King has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the Victoria Cross for valour to Temporary Acting Leading Seaman James Joseph Magennis, D/KX144907.”

Leading Seaman Magennis served as diver in His Majesty’s Midget Submarine XE3 for her attack on 31 July 1945 on a Japanese cruiser of the Atago class. Because XE3 was tightly jammed under the target the diver’s hatch could not be fully opened, and Magennis had to squeeze himself through the narrow space available.

(Picture from Republic of Ireland Royal British Legion)



He experienced great difficulty in placing the limpets on the bottom of the cruiser owing both to the foul state of the cruisers bottom and to the prominent slope upon which the limpets would not hold. Before a limpet could be placed therefore Magennis had thoroughly to scrape the area clean of barnacles, and in order to secure the limpets he had to tie them in pairs by a line passing under the cruisers keel. This was very tiring work for a diver, and he was moreover handicapped by a steady leakage of oxygen which was ascending in bubbles to the surface. A lesser man would have been content to place a few limpets and then to return to the craft. Magennis, however, persisted until he had placed his full outfit before returning to the craft in an exhausted condition.

Shortly after withdrawing Lt. Fraser endeavoured to jettison his limpet carriers, but one of these would not release itself and fall clear of the craft. Despite his exhaustion, his oxygen leak and the fact that there was every probability of his being sighted, Magennis at once volunteered to leave the craft and free the carrier rather than allow a less experienced diver to undertake the job.

After seven minutes of nerve racking work he succeeded in releasing the mine carrier. Magennis displayed very great courage and devotion to duty and complete disregard for his own safety.

Featured War Hero : Daniel Laidlaw / The Piper of Loos

From: Wikipedia



Daniel Logan Laidlaw	
Nickname(s)	The Piper of Loos
Born	26 July 1875
Died	Swinton, Scottish Borders
Buried	
Allegiance	2 June 1950 (aged 74)
Service/branch	Norham, Northumberland
Years of service	
Rank	St Cuthbert's Churchyard, Norham
Unit	The King's Own Scottish Borderers
Battles/wars	World War I
Awards	Victoria Cross

Daniel Logan Laidlaw VC (26 July 1875 – 2 June 1950), nicknamed "The Piper of Loos", was a Scottish soldier and recipient of the Victoria Cross, the highest and most prestigious award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces, for his actions during the Battle of Loos in the First World War.

Early life

Laidlaw was born at Little Swinton, Berwickshire on 26 July 1875 and joined the Army in 1896. He served with the Durham Light Infantry in India where he received a certificate for his work during a plague outbreak in Bombay in 1898. In the latter year he was claimed out by his elder brother and transferred as a piper to the King's Own Scottish Borderers, in 1912 he transferred to the reserve. Laidlaw re-enlisted on 7 September 1914 and was appointed Acting Corporal before leaving to serve in France in February 1915.

First World War

Laidlaw was 40 years old, and a piper in the 7th Battalion, The King's Own Scottish Borderers, 15th (Scottish) Infantry Division British Army during the Battle of Loos in September 1915 when the following deed took place for which he was awarded the VC. Citation.

"London Gazette, 18th November, 1915. For most conspicuous bravery prior to an assault on German trenches near Loos and Hill 70 on 25th September 1915. During the worst of the bombardment, when the attack



was about to commence, Piper Laidlaw, seeing that his company was somewhat shaken from the effects of gas, with absolute coolness and disregard of danger, mounted the parapet, marched up and down and played the company out of the trench. The effect of his splendid example was immediate, and the company dashed out to the assault. Piper Laidlaw continued playing his pipes till he was wounded.”

He received the VC from King George V at Buckingham Palace in early 1916. This was followed by two promotions, to Corporal and then Lance Sergeant by the end of 1917. In the same year, the French awarded him the Croix de Guerre, which was commonly awarded to members of allied armed forces for heroic deeds. He was demobilised in April 1919 and transferred to the Class Z Reserve later that month.

Tattler - The pipes being played.
Click image alongside, to watch
Julia Read play “Battle's O'er”



Tattler – Who would have guessed? (Source: www.historic-uk.co/historyofscotland/).

How bagpipes arrived in Scotland is somewhat of a mystery. Some historians believe that bagpipes originate from ancient Egypt and were brought to Scotland by invading Roman Legions.

However, Ancient Egypt does appear to have prior claim to the instrument from as early as 400 BC the ‘pipers of Thebes’ are reported to have been blowing pipes made from dog skin with chanters of bone. And several hundred years later, one of the most famous exponents of the pipes is said to have been the great Roman Emperor Nero, who may well have been piping rather than fiddling whilst Rome burned.

Whilst historians can only speculate on the actual origins of the Piob Mhor, or great Highland bagpipe, it was the Highlanders themselves that developed the instrument to its current form, establishing it as their national musical instrument both in times of war and peace.

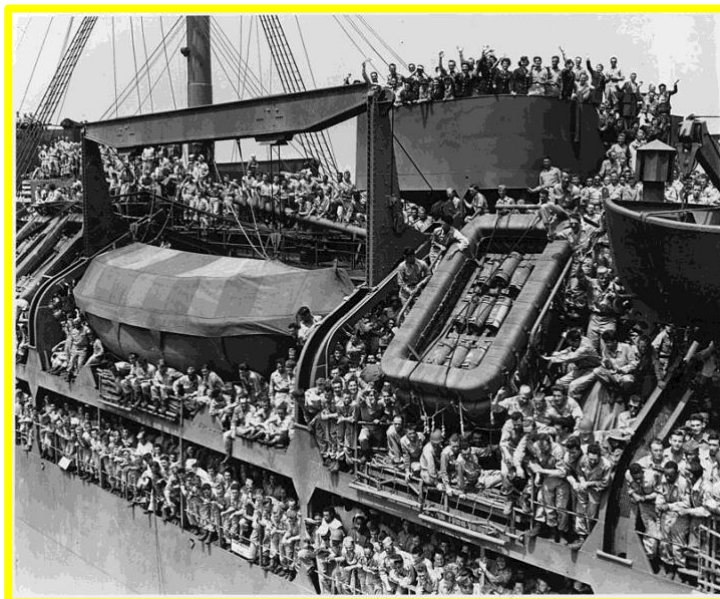
Feature – Coming Home 1945

From: Wikipedia

Tattler - a logistical nightmare!

In 1939, there were 334,000 servicemen, not counting the Coast Guard. In 1945, there were over 16 million, including the Coast Guard. At the end of the war, over 8 million men and women were scattered overseas in Europe, the Pacific and Asia. Shipping them out wasn't a particular problem but getting them home was a massive logistical headache. Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall had already established committees to address the issue in 1943.

When Germany fell in May 1945, the US Navy was still busy fighting in the Pacific and couldn't assist. The job of transporting 3 million men home fell to the Army and the Merchant Marine. 300 Victory and Liberty cargo ships were converted to troop transports for the task. During the war, 148,000 troops crossed the Atlantic west to east each month; the rush home ramped this up to 435,000 a month over 14 months.



Soldiers returning home on the USS General Harry Taylor in August 1945.

In October 1945, with the war in Asia also over, the Navy started chipping in, converting all available vessels to transport duty.

On smaller ships like destroyers, capable of carrying perhaps 300 men, soldiers were told to hang their hammocks in whatever nook and cranny they could find.

Hammocks crammed into available spaces aboard the USS Intrepid



Carriers were particularly useful, as their large open hangar decks could house 3,000 or more troops in relative comfort, with bunks, sometimes in stacks of five welded or bolted in place.

The Navy wasn't picky, though: cruisers, battleships, hospital ships, even LSTs (Landing Ship, Tank) were packed full of men yearning for home.

Two British ocean liners under American control, the *RMS Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth*, had already served as troop transports before and continued to do so during the operation, each capable of carrying up to 15,000 people at a time, though their normal, peacetime capacity was less than 2,200.

Twenty-nine ships were dedicated to transporting war brides: women married to American soldiers during the war.

Bunks aboard the Army transport SS Pennant



In December 1944, before *Operation Magic Carpet*. The Japanese surrender in August 1945 came none too soon, but it put an extra burden on *Operation Magic Carpet*. The war in Asia had been expected to go well into 1946 and the Navy and the War Shipping Administration were hard-pressed to bring home all the soldiers who now had to get home earlier than anticipated.

Troops performing a lifeboat drill on board the Queen Mary

The transports carrying them also had to collect numerous POWs from recently liberated Japanese camps, many of whom suffered from malnutrition and illness. The time to get home depended a lot on the circumstances. *USS Lake Champlain*, a brand-new *Essex-class* carrier that arrived too late for the war, could cross the Atlantic and take 3,300 troops home a little under 4 days and 8 hours. Meanwhile, troops going home from Australia or India would sometimes spend months on slower vessels.



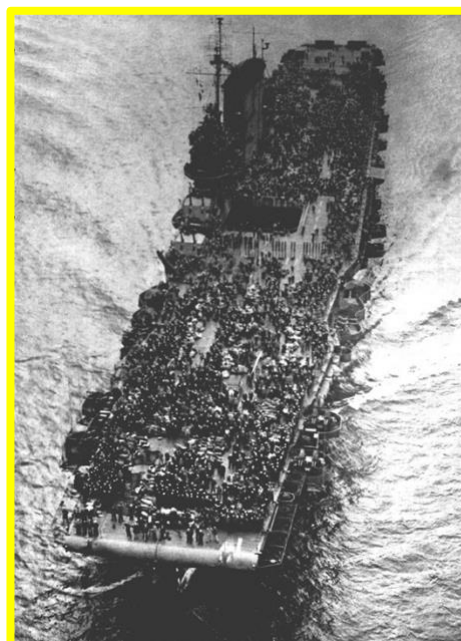
U.S. soldiers recently liberated from Japanese POW camps - Hangar of the USS Wasp during the operation

There was enormous pressure on the operation to bring home as many men as possible by Christmas 1945. Therefore, a sub-operation, *Operation Santa Claus*, was dedicated to the purpose.

Due to storms at sea and an overabundance of soldiers eligible for return home, however, Santa Claus could only return a fraction in time and still not quite home but at least to American soil.

The nation's transportation network was overloaded, trains heading west from the East Coast were on average 6 hours behind schedule and trains heading east from the West Coast were twice that late.

The crowded flight deck of the USS Saratoga



The *USS Saratoga* transported home a total of 29,204 servicemen during *Operation Magic Carpet*, more than any other ship. Many freshly discharged men found themselves stuck in separation centers but faced an outpouring of love and friendliness from the locals. Many townsfolk took in freshly arrived troops and invited them to Christmas dinner in their homes.

Still others gave their train tickets to soldiers and others organized quick parties at local train stations for men on layover.

A Los Angeles taxi driver took six soldiers all the way to Chicago; another took another carload of men to Manhattan, the Bronx, Pittsburgh, Long Island, Buffalo and New Hampshire. ***Neither of the drivers accepted a fare beyond the cost of gas.***

All in all, though, the Christmas deadline proved unattainable. The last 29 troop transports, carrying some 200,000 men from the China-India-Burma theater, arrived to America in April 1946, bringing *Operation Magic Carpet* to an end, though an additional 127,000 soldiers still took until September to return home and finally lay down the burden of war.

Overjoyed troops returning home on the battleship USS Texas



Pirates – The Story of 21st Century Piracy

Compiled by Colette Patience / Sources – Finweek/Offshore Energy news/The Economist/Matthew Newton SHILLINGS

This month we are not focusing on individual pirates but rather looking at piracy in the 21st Century. Pirate attacks are not a thing of legends or tales of the past, but current and on the rise.

Piracy has existed for as long as there has been maritime trade; it conjures images of sail ships, the jolly roger, treasure and buccaneers on the seven seas. Pirates in the twenty first century, however, are more familiar with semi-automatic weapons than a cutlass, while their treasure is less gold doubloons than hostages and the latest electric goods.



Source: / New York times – Gulf of Aden

According to the International Maritime Bureau (“IMB”), piracy can be defined as “the act of boarding any vessel with intent to commit theft or any other crime, and with an intent or capacity to use force in furtherance of that act”. Stamping out piracy is an ongoing battle, but in recent years we have seen some positive trends. Somali waters are perhaps the most well-known location of the modern-day pirates, largely due to headlines generated during the 2000s.

Since then, the region has managed to significantly reduce numbers of piracy incidents, in part due to surveillance from the air and sea, and an increased international cooperation between countries' navies. Though it is considered that the decisive factor was a concerted effort to improve security measures aboard vessels, particularly through the use of armed guards. This fall in numbers is – at face value – a global trend, with incidents of piracy falling worldwide in recent years.

2020 is, however, on course to buck this downward trend. The IMB's Piracy Reporting Centre recorded 98 incidents of piracy and armed robbery in the first half of 2020, up from 78 in the first half of 2019.

New era, new tactics?

The traditional modus operandi for pirates has not evolved dramatically over the years. It involves attacking vessels from astern, often at night, using grappling hooks and ropes to board the ship before anyone raises the alarm. To mitigate against this, vessels have long been warned not to drop anchor in high-risk areas and are increasingly being advised of the dangers of even drifting in these zones.

Modern maritime pirates target mainly bulk carriers to steal their cargo or kidnap their crew for ransom, boarding them with machine guns or machetes. Ironically, automation makes commercial ships much more vulnerable, since a large vessel can have as few as 15 crew.

The most recent and concerning pirate attack has been on the 2824 teu Hapag Lloyd chartered vessel, MV Mozart, on the 23rd of January 2021. During the attack, armed pirates boarded the ship and then broke into the ship's citadel, possibly via the use of explosives. Fifteen crew members were kidnapped from the container ship sailing through the Gulf of Guinea. One crew member, an Azerbaijani engineer, was killed. Even though the pirates had disabled the ship's electronics, three other crew members managed to escape and sailed the vessel to safety in Gabon waters. The fifteen captured seamen are Turkish nationals. The attack was the first major act of piracy targeting Turkish seamen since the 2019 abduction of 10 sailors off the coast of Nigeria. Turkish authorities negotiated the release of the hostages and after ransom demands were met, they were freed mid- February 2021.

As container vessels are not armed with weapons, armed pirates have an advantage. Gangs coordinate in strategic moves to onboard a ship. The only defence a ship is typically equipped with is a citadel in which the crew can lock themselves until the pirates disperse.

Where pirates have evolved is their capability to target ships at increasing distances from the coastline. We are typically seeing attacks take place between 45 and 75 nautical miles out to sea. There are also incidents recorded as far as 400 nautical miles from the shoreline. In these incidents, smaller ships are working in conjunction with a larger mothership that carries fuel, supplies and ammunition. Further, attacks are also becoming increasingly common during daylight hours.

There has also been some suggestion that informants are providing access to ship information making it possible for pirates to locate target specific vessels, which may have cargo of value, in the vast expanses of the sea. Crews of some hijacked vessels have said that the pirates appear to know specific details about the ship including its layout.

The cost of shipping itself has climbed globally as vessels try to avoid piracy hotspots, increasing the duration of their journeys, and hire armed security for protection.

In addition, shipping companies are now compelled to take out insurance against the scourge – not only for loss of cargo or damage to vessels, but for their crew. Some insurance companies offer packages which include cover for interest on loans to meet a ransom; the fees and expenses of independent crisis negotiators, interpreters, and public relations consultants; and the costs of medical and psychiatric care, including cosmetic surgery for victims.

Kidnap for ransom is trending as it is much easier, quicker and often more profitable to take human cargo rather than the entire vessel - which may be difficult to house and control. This trend is being driven primarily by events in The Gulf of Guinea where violence towards crew is also an increasing risk. Between January and July 2020 , 77 crew were taken hostage or kidnapped according to IMB's half year report. The Gulf of Guinea accounted for 49 of these kidnappings.

The maritime pirates operating in the Gulf of Guinea, like the Somali pirates of old, are known to have strong connections to their land-based counterparts, especially those operating in the Niger Delta - notorious for kidnap for ransom gangs. This gives them unique access to the markets that profit from piracy activity.

Piracy is still rooted in a tried and tested model, but there is evidence of its evolution from basic armed robberies. The relationship with land-based groups demonstrates an operation that goes beyond regional borders. While modern technology will continue to improve a pirate's capability and opportunities which means seafarers must continue to be vigilant and stay informed of trends.

Where are the hotspots? How the geography has changed.

The geography of those attacks has significantly shifted. There are four traditional hotspots for piracy: the Gulf of Aden, associated with Somali pirates of the 2000s; Southeast Asia; the Gulf of Mexico; and finally, the Gulf of Guinea which reportedly accounts for the majority of maritime kidnappings in the world. There is a concern though that an economic downturn, of the sort caused by the COVID 19 pandemic, will cause a rise in piracy in other regions of the world as individuals search out alternative means of income.

Experts warn that the real picture could be far worse, as many incidents are not reported due to the reluctance of private companies to damage their reputations by exposing flaws in their security systems.

Though very different parts of the world, the same factors explain why piracy has risen in these areas: - Corruption; - The weak rule of law and unstable governments mean authorities are unable to respond to the threats; - Economic conditions have led some people to resort to illegal activity. Piracy is a lucrative job.

These factors are likely to be exacerbated by the COVID 19 pandemic as security is directed to other priorities and the global economy suffers a downturn. This is reflected in the number of kidnap incidents since lockdown 2020; with 32 of the 49 crew kidnap incidents in the Gulf of Guinea.

Gulf of Mexico - Maritime security officials say attacks have returned in the Gulf of Mexico due to instability in the region. The security forces available are also focused on inland issues during the current pandemic. When Mexico opened its oil industry to international investment it led to that sector being seen as a lucrative target. Though private sector involvement has been rolled back since Lopez Obrador became President, attacks are still occurring on ships and platforms tied to Mexico's oil industry, robbing crews of money and seizing personal belongings and technical equipment.

Asia -The number of piracy and armed robbery incidents reported in Asian waters has more than doubled in the first half of 2020 compared to last year. There were 51 incidents reported from January to June, compared with 28 for the same period in 2019.

The half-yearly statistics were released by the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Centre on 16 July. Most of the incidents in the Singapore Strait this year occurred in the hours of darkness and involved bulk carriers - although tankers and tug-boats were also targeted. ReCAAP has attributed a lack of law enforcement, patrol and surveillance to the spike in incidents.

Gulf of Guinea - off West Africa is increasingly dangerous for commercial shipping, accounting for the majority of maritime kidnappings worldwide. Where Asia may experience the most piracy incidents, which are generally thefts, the Gulf of Guinea, particularly the Niger River Delta region, is the most perilous route for ships' crews. "The incidents are targeted at the kidnappings of the crew and the attacks are a lot more violent than other parts of the world". "Violence against crews is a growing risk in a workforce already under immense pressure. In the Gulf of Guinea attackers armed with knives and guns now target crews on every type of vessel. Everyone's vulnerable. Nigerian pirates are boarding ships quickly and engaging in fierce gun battles before snatching victims or setting them adrift, retreating into the Niger Delta's maze of rivers where it is difficult for security forces to find them.

Attempts to mitigate this are hampered somewhat by the fact that none of the countries in this region allow for private security on board. Only those with memoranda of understanding with local navies, who in turn provide security, are allowed to operate. This obviously comes at a premium.

Gulf of Aden - Maritime piracy hit world headlines in 2009 when Somali pirates boarded the US-flagged Maersk Alabama in what was the first hijacking of a US ship in 200 years. The dramatic incident focused

attention on a wave of attacks off the coast of Somalia which severely disrupted shipping for several years, and inspired a popular Hollywood film, Captain Phillips.

Piracy in the Gulf of Aden and the Somali waters was fuelled by the collapse of their central government and the ensuing civil war. Their fishing waters were rich and unprotected by the Somali navy and foreign ships took advantage of this and came closer to the coastline. Local fishermen began to band together to protect their resources. An escalation began, leading to weapons being used and tactics such as taking over foreign vessels until their owners paid ransom. After seeing the profitability of ransom payments some financiers and militiamen began to fund pirate activity, splitting profits with the pirates.

The security focus less than a decade ago was in the Gulf of Aden, regarded then as the most dangerous waters in the world. Somali pirates persistently hijacked large cargo ships. But a combination of coordinated international naval efforts, improved local governments and enhanced security measures aboard ships, including armed personnel, reduced the threat of pirates off the East African coast.

The shipping route around the Horn of Africa and the Suez Canal is a conduit for about 10% of the world's trade. A concerted international response helped control the threat in that particular region by establishing a Maritime Patrol Security Area. The tanker Aris 13 was carrying fuel from Djibouti to Mogadishu and was hijacked in March 2017. This was the first reported hijacking of a commercial ship in 5 years.

What's the authorities' response?

The response to maritime piracy requires state cooperation; to date three agreements have been set up in different regions of the world. The members to these regional agreements agree to arrest, investigate, and prosecute pirates on the high seas, and to suppress armed robbery in their respective territorial waters.

The collection and dissemination of data on maritime crimes is one of the most important practical tasks carried out by the regional agreements, because to efficiently coordinate cooperation between maritime security actors it is crucial to have available all relevant information on the threat at hand.

While the setup of the regional agreements is certainly a milestone in counterpiracy governance, the different regions are faced with a variety of challenges concerning cooperation in general and the implementation of the agreements' provisions, in particular: - Concerns over territorial sovereignty; - Lack of national capacities; - Gaps in scope.

Looking ahead, threats to maritime security cannot be understood in isolation, as they are deeply interrelated and tied into international trends. Due to the many different countries bordering these regions, different jurisdictions, vastness of territorial waters, a multinational approach will be needed to formulate an effective response.

The latest IMB report urged a structured and more cooperative response from governments to address piracy, including improved patrolling of the sea, intelligence sharing, and the elimination of pirate safe havens on land. It also encouraged shipping companies to improve security on board their vessels – a precaution which is declining in some areas.

In the words of Aslak Ross, the head of HSE & Marine Standards at Maersk – "We have seafarers that are afraid of pirates – that shouldn't be the case in 2021".

Editorial

“On a Wing and a Prayer....”

Tattler – watch this video by clicking on the image below!



Tattler - Anybody know the story about the Aussie surfer and Olympic medal winner? The man suffered a horrific wipe-out 6 years ago. It left him with bleeding on the brain and unable to walk. He re-learnt how to walk, then he re-learnt how to surf.....



Owen Wright in action in the Tokyo Olympics

We pinched the following from Agence France Presse July 27, 2021

Surfing is one of five additional sports proposed by the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee to bring more youthful and vibrant events and culture into the Olympic programme. In 2016, its inclusion was approved by the International Olympic Committee.

Being the inaugural Olympic surfing event, all the countries who have qualified will be eager to make their mark. The world's top surfers will celebrate their sport's Olympic debut by competing on Japan's spectacular Pacific coastline.

Aussie Surfer Owen Wright Caps Incredible Comeback With Olympic Bronze Medal

Australian Owen Wright had to relearn how to surf and walk after suffering a horrific brain injury in 2015 -- now he's an Olympic bronze medallist. Wright claimed a podium finish on Tuesday as surfing made its Olympic debut, beating Brazil's world number one Gabriel Medina in a tense play-off at Tsurigasaki Beach.

But the 31-year-old had times when he couldn't even remember his name less than six years ago, after a huge wipe-out in training left him with bleeding on the brain. "I didn't count myself out -- that's the thing," an emotional Wright said after the medal ceremony. "I guess that's why I still imagined these big, lofty goals. Because I've come back from something that I wouldn't expect to come back from anyway. I don't mind aiming for the top."

Wright said his symptoms persisted for three years after the accident, with memory loss, motor issues and "a roller-coaster of emotions". But he refused to give up on his dream of winning an Olympic medal,

and kept himself going by visualising it around his neck. "I had to push each limit and with all that came massive breakdowns, to the point where I didn't even know who I was or my name," he said.

"I pushed myself to the absolute nth degree to get here today. I think that's what gave me my strength and why I'm standing up here today."

Wright said he and his team-mates had been given a pep talk by some of Australia's Olympic legends, including Cathy Freeman.

Recap of current events at home and further afield.

Tattler – In the July Tattler we recapped current affairs and events from 2016 to2019. In this edition, we recap 2019 to date. Enjoy the read.

2019

F1 Season Champion – Lewis Hamilton was the Driver Champion and the Constructors' Champion was Mercedes Pole Trophy: Charles Leclerc
Grand Slam winners: Australian Open – Novak Djokovic, Roland Garros – Rafael Nadal, Wimbledon – Novak Djokovic, US Open – Rafael Nadal
Some of the celebrities we've lost this year/ Doris Day-An indisputable icon of the big screen, the actress, singer and animal welfare activist - most memorable may be her haunting rendition of "Que Sera, Sera (Whatever Will Be, Will Be)" / Carol Channing-broke through as Lorelei Lee in Gentlemen Prefer Blondes in 1949./ Tim Conway-The co-star of Carol Burnett's iconic variety show /Ross Perot-One of the richest men in the United States at the time, he ran for president in 1992 as an independent candidate / Lee Iacocca-Best known for the development of the Ford Mustang and Pinto, the auto exec also co-authored several books / Diahann Carroll-The actress, singer, model and activist / Karl Lagerfeld-The iconic, sometimes controversial German fashion designer /Albert Finney-From 1974's big-screen Murder on the Orient Express, to Erin Brockovich and Skyfall, the English five-time Oscar nominee /Gloria Vanderbilt-The heiress, artist, author, actress and fashion designer/ Peter Fonda-Son of Henry, brother of Jane / Ginger Baker-English drummer and co-founder of the band Cream,
January-The second Test match in the series between South Africa and Pakistan takes place in Cape Town. South Africa wins the match within four days, by 9 wickets. South Africa takes a 2-0 lead in the 3-match Test series. The third Test match in the series between South Africa and Pakistan takes place in Johannesburg. South Africa wins the match within four days, by 107 runs. South Africa wins the 3-match Test series, 3-0.
January-The commission of inquiry into allegations of State capture in South Africa (which is led by Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo) resumes after the December break.
January-The fifth ODI match in the series between South Africa and Pakistan takes place in Cape Town. South Africa wins the match by 7 wickets, with 60 balls remaining. South Africa wins the 5-match ODI series, 3-2 .
February-The third T20I match in the series between South Africa and Pakistan. Pakistan wins the match by 27 runs. South Africa wins the 3-match T20I series, 2-1 .
February 7-President Cyril Ramaphosa delivers his second State of the Nation Address (SoNA) and the final SoNA of the current administration, before the National Elections
February-the second Test match between South Africa and Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka wins the match within three days, by 8 wickets. Sri Lanka wins the 2-match Test series, 2-0.
8 May-South African General Elections held.
Large protests against gender-based violence and femicide occur after the news of UCT student Uyinene Mrwetyana's murder at the hands of the Claremont Post Office worker.

October-African Netball Championships was held in South Africa and hosts South Africa were the winners of the tournament.
November-South Africa were crowned world champions defeating England 32–12 in the final of the 2019 Rugby World Cup in Japan
Donald Trump made history on June 30 when he became the first sitting U.S. president to set foot in North Korea. As 2019 came to a close, no progress had been made in containing, let alone dismantling, North Korean’s Nuclear ambitions.
Brexit Upends British Politics. The United Kingdom ended 2019 with clarity about Brexit, but it took a turbulent journey to get there. May was forced to delay Brexit until October 31, and then resigned after the House of Commons voted down her deal three times. Boris Johnson won a Conservative Party vote and became prime minister on July
The Central American Migrant Exodus Grows. The photo of the father and daughter from El Salvador who drowned trying to cross the Rio Grande in April symbolized a U.S. asylum process in crisis.
Tensions Flare in the Persian Gulf. War in the Persian Gulf seemed imminent at several points in 2019. By year’s end, there was talk that as many as 14,000 U.S. troops could be headed to Saudi Arabia.
The Amazon Burns. Mounting evidence that the planet is warming still has not galvanized global action. Brazil is a case in point. For decades, loggers and farmers have been clearing the Amazon rainforest and setting what’s left on fire in order to grow crops and graze cattle. The 80,000 fires set in 2019 were the most in a decade. The year ended with scientists warning that deforestation in the Amazon had reached a point where it might become a savanna, which would “release billions of tons carbon into the atmosphere.”
India embraces Hindu Nationalism. The consequences of India’s potential move from a secular state to a Hindu one are hotly debated. Muslims account for 15% of the population.
The U.S. House Impeaches President Donald Trump December 18 2019.
“The Year of Protests” may be the best summary for 2019. Hong Kong’s gained the most attention. The trigger was the one country, two systems pledge that governs the city’s relations with mainland China. Rather than fade, the protests grew into a push for more democratic rule. Algerians took to the streets in February, forcing President Abdelaziz Bouteflika to resign. In April, Sudanese protestors pushed out their President. In October, a transit-fare-hike sent Chileans into the streets to protest inequality, while a proposed tax in Lebanon on WhatsApp unleashed a flood of anger. Demonstrations rocked Iraq beginning in October as protestors challenged the country’s governing institutions. In November, the end of fuel subsidies sent Iranians into the street. Protests also rocked Bolivia, India, Nicaragua, and Russia. For all the talk that authoritarianism is rising, millions of people continue to risk their lives to make governments responsive to their wishes.
In April, a fire devastated Paris’s historic Notre Dame Cathedral.
In Japan, Naruhito acceded to the Chrysanthemum Throne upon the abdication of his father.
Allied leaders marked the seventieth anniversary of D-Day in June.
In October, U.S. Special Forces killed Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State.
A 6.4-magnitude earthquake struck Albania in November, killing fifty-two people.
Aung Sang Suu Kyi appeared at the International Court of Justice in The Hague. Genocide against the Rohingya in Myanmar, triggering new calls that she be stripped of her Nobel Peace Prize.

2020

The COVID-19 Pandemic. Things that start small can reshape the world. Few people noticed when news emerged December 2019 that China had begun monitoring the outbreak of a new pneumonia-like virus, or even on January 11 after China reported its first death from the disease. Nearly a year later, COVID-19 had changed life as we knew it. The World Health Organization estimated in October that as much as 10 percent of the world’s population had

<p>already contracted COVID-19; by year's end some 1.7 million people had died from it. The year closed on a positive note as vaccines were approved in record time. The challenges now are distributing them widely and equitably while preparing to do a better job stopping the next pandemic. The novel coronavirus will not be the last of its kind.</p>
<p>On March 11, the NBA officially suspended the season due to COVID-19, becoming the first league to halt play.</p>
<p>On March 24, it became official: The Olympics would be postponed. They were supposed to start in Tokyo on July 24, but they're now set for July 23, 2021</p>
<p>F1 Season Champion – Lewis Hamilton was the Driver Champion and the Constructors' Champion was Mercedes again for the 7th year in a row</p>
<p>F1 top crashes from the season: Lance Stroll in Tuscany at 170 Miles an hour, Alexander Albon in GB he lost the rear of his car, Lance Stroll ended up upside down in Bahrain, The multicar crash occurred in Tuscany, Alexander Albon took another hit in Bahrain, Daniol Kvyat took a big hit in GB, Giovinazzi and Russell Collided in Belgium, Another multicar crash in Tuscany – this crash was a domino effect, Romain Grosjean survived a crash in which his car set on fire against a barrier in Bahrain</p>
<p>Grand Slam Winners: Australian Open – Novak Djokovic, Roland Garros – Rafael Nadal , Wimbledon – Cancelled, US Open - Dominic Thiem</p>
<p>Grand Slam Winners Women: Australian Open – Sofia Kenin, Roland Garros – Iga Świątek, Wimbledon – Cancelled, US Open – Naomi Osaka</p>
<p>Although these started in late 2019, Australia continued battling a devastating wildfire season in January.</p>
<p>No one saw it coming Jan. 8 when Prince Harry and Meghan Markle announced they were stepping down from their duties in the royal family. They said they would be financially independent and split their time between the U.K. and North America.</p>
<p>Celebrities who lost their lives in 2020 - Kobe Bryant, the former NBA superstar and Los Angeles Lakers legend, died at age 41 in a helicopter crash/Rush' drummer Neil Peart dead at 67/'Monty Python' star Terry Jones dies at 77-Jones was a founding member of Monty Python's Flying circus, a troupe whose anarchic humour helped revolutionize British comedy. He appeared in the troupe's TV series and films such as Monty Python and the Holy Grail and The Life of Brian./Kirk Douglas-US Actor/Max von Sydow, the legendary Swedish actor,/ Kenny Rogers singer/Bill Withers singer/Legendary folk singer-songwriter John Prine /Brian Dennehy, actor /'Rock 'n roll icon Little Richard dies at 87'/Dame Vera Lynn, the endearingly popular "Forces' Sweetheart" who serenaded British troops abroad during the Second World War. She was 103./Carl Reiner, comedian and creator of 'Dick Van Dyke Show'/Peter Green, the dexterous blues guitarist who led the first incarnation of Fleetwood Mac in a career shortened by psychedelic drugs and mental illness/ Olivia de Havilland, Oscar-winning actor/Filmmaker Alan Parker, one of Britain's most successful directors, whose movies included Bugsy Malone, Midnight Express and Evita, died at 76 on July 31 after a long illness./Rock legend Eddie Van Halen dies at 65/Sean Connery, the accomplished Scottish actor who starred as James Bond in the 1960s, died at the age of 90 on Oct. 31.</p>
<p>5 March-The COVID-19 pandemic spread to South Africa, with the first confirmed case announced on 5 March 2020 by Minister of Health Zweli Mkhize.</p>
<p>Joan Ruth Bader Ginsburg dies – she was an American lawyer and jurist who served as an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States</p>
<p>15 March-President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the nation and announced that there shouldn't be any gathering which is more than 100 people until further notice to avoid the spreading of COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
<p>23 March-President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the nation and announced a 21-day national lockdown effective from midnight 26 March through to 16 April,[8] with the deployment of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and South African Police Service (SAPS) to support the government.</p>

27 March-The first person was confirmed to die of COVID-19 case, announced by Minister of Health Zweli Mkhize.
9 April – the President announced a two-week lockdown extension, until the end of April.
18 April-President Cyril Ramaphosa announces that lockdown restrictions will be gradually eased. Mines can resume work at 50% capacity and the economy is expected to contract by 6.1% this year.
April-President Ramaphosa's efforts to combat the coronavirus pandemic receive praise. South Africa has confirmed 3,953 cases and 75 deaths so far.
Cuba sends 200 doctors to South Africa.
May-South Africa enters Level 4 of the national lockdown to ensure the economy can gradually reopen with some easing of other restrictions.
July-COVID-19 pandemic: 159,333 confirmed cases and 2,749 deaths. The worst affected area is Western Cape. Thousands of students return to classes after schools were closed for four months due to the coronavirus. Public hospitals are short on medical oxygen. Family and social visits remain banned. South Africa's oldest pub, The Perseverance Tavern, closes due to the COVID-19 lockdown. More than 17,000 excess deaths from May 6 to July 14 were reported while confirmed COVID-19 deaths have surpassed 6,000.
August-A fire burns the 139-year-old Grey Street mosque in the Durban, South African.
November-Former president Jacob Zuma testifies before a state commission investigating allegations of corruption from 2009 to 2018.
December-Ace Magashule is asked to step down from the African National Congress after being charged with 21 counts of corruption.
December 18-COVID-19 pandemic: Minister of Health Zweli Mkhize said scientists had discovered a new variant of virus, called 501.V2 Variant. The number of confirmed cases passes one million in SA.
July – The 3TC Solidarity Cup, a charity cricket match with an experimental 3 team format, was played. It marked the return to cricket in the country following the easing of coronavirus related restrictions.
8 August to 27 September – 2020 Rugby Championship, featuring Argentina, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand.
Many well know people died during 2020 - Denis Goldberg(accused number 3 in the Rivonia trial)/Zindzi Mandela/George Bizos(Human Rights Lawyer)/Richard Maponya, 99, entrepreneur and property developer/Joseph Shabalala, 78, founder of Ladysmith Black Mambazo /Sol Kerzner, 84, hotelier, founder of Southern Sun Hotel Group and Sun International/Constand Viljoen, 86, military officer and politician/Allan Heyl, bank robber (Stander Gang)/Ewie Cronje, 80, South African cricketer/Elsa Joubert, 97, South African Sestigers writer/Nigel Weiss, 83, mathematician/Corra Dirksen, 82, rugby player (Northern Transvaal, national team)/ Zindzi Mandela, 59, diplomat and poet, daughter of Nelson Mandela/Elize Cawood, 68, actress (Dis ek, Anna)/Ismail Ebrahim, 73, cricketer (Natal)/Peter Cronjé, 70, rugby union player (Golden Lions, national team)/Gregory de Vink, 22, racing cyclist; traffic collision /Stephen Gray, 78, writer (Time of Our Darkness)/Rolf Stumpf, statistician, Vice Chancellor of Nelson Mandela University /Gordon Forbes, 86, tennis player.
You would have to go back to 1968 to find a year filled with as much turmoil.
The U.S. Senate Acquits Donald Trump of Impeachment Charges. Donald Trump began the year as the third president in U.S. history to be impeached, joining Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton. On February 5, the Senate acquitted Trump on both articles of impeachment
Belarusians Protest for Fair and Free Elections. On August 9, Belarusian president Alexander Lukashenko, a man known as “Europe’s last dictator,” claimed he had won 80 percent of the vote in the country’s presidential election Thousands immediately took to the streets to protest what they saw as a stolen election. Lukashenko succeeded in resisting the protestors because of his vast security apparatus and support from Russia
Tensions Flare Between Iran and the United States. Bad blood between Tehran and Washington still persists after four decades. A U.S. drone strike killed Qasem Soleimani, the

leader of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Iran retaliated with rocket attacks on U.S. bases in Iraq. The United States imposed new sanctions on Iran.
Oil Prices Tank. 2020 was not a good year for oil producers or oil companies. The COVID-19 outbreak sent economies around the world into a tailspin, depressing the demand for oil. Most oil-producing countries faced tough economic times going into 2021.
The Killing of George Floyd. Racism has been called America’s original sin. But it is a sin that extends beyond the United States. On May 25, George Floyd, was arrested in Minneapolis. One of the arresting officers kept his knee on Floyd’s neck for eight minutes and fifteen seconds, killing him.
Climate Disruptions Continue. catastrophic wildfires, bigger and more frequent storms, and more intense droughts. The economic slowdown caused by the pandemic did trigger a steep drop in carbon emissions But that decrease came against the backdrop of the world hitting new emissions highs in 2019 and the likelihood that economic activity will pick up in 2021. In all, the world continues to hurtle toward a point of no return. Indeed, we may already have passed it.
China Asserts Itself. “Strategic engagement,” the idea that economic engagement would lead to Beijing becoming “a responsible stakeholder” in world politics, might have met its demise in 2020. China threw its weight around across the globe throughout the year, seemingly not minding whom it offended. By year’s end, China’s relative success in handling the pandemic and stimulating its economy had seemingly convinced Beijing that it was winning its contest with the West. Rather than fearing calls by U.S. officials for a decoupling of the two economies, China embraced steps designed to decouple from the West on its own terms.
Joe Biden Wins the Presidency. Americans felt passionately about the 2020 presidential election. The proof is in the turnout: More than 159 million people voted. Trump refused to concede, however. On December 14 the Electoral College elected Biden president.
In January, the United Kingdom officially withdrew from the European Union.
In February, protests in North East Delhi over India’s new Citizenship Amendment Act killed at least fifty-three people.
In March, Turkey launched a major military operation against Syria after Syrian and Russian air and artillery strikes killed at least three dozen Turkish soldiers.
In April, Kim Jong Un missed a major North Korean celebration, sparking rumours that he was dying.
In May, Israel swore in its new unity government, ending for the country’s longest political crisis. In June, North Korea blew up the inter-Korean liaison office that served as a de facto embassy for North and South Korea.
In October, Bolivia held parliamentary and presidential elections, resulting in the return of former president Evo Morales’ party to political power.
In December, the U.S. government acknowledged that a massive and sophisticated cyberattack, most likely conducted by Russian intelligence services, had penetrated the computer networks of a range of U.S. government agencies and corporations.

2021

F1 Season current leader – Max Verstappen and the top of the constructor standings is Red Bull
Grand Slam Winners: Australian Open – Novak Djokovic, Roland Garros - Novak Djokovic , Wimbledon – Novak Djokovic , US Open – Up Coming
Environment Minister Barbara Creecy reports that rhinoceros poaching in South Africa is down for the sixth year in a row, to 394 animals killed in 2020 for their horns. She attributed the decline to both the COVID-19 pandemic and to work by rangers and security personnel and noted that it is still a major problem.
20 Jan 2021 — Trump left the White House with his wife, Melania, at about 8:20 a.m., refusing to take questions from the press.

Celebrities who died in 2021. "The Love Boat" star Gavin MacLeod/Robert Downey Sr., the filmmaker, actor and father of Robert Downey Jr/Olympia Dukakis, Hollywood's favourite late bloomer best known for her Oscar-winning turn in 1987's "Moonstruck,"/Britain's Prince Philip died on April 9 at the age of 99. The husband of Queen Elizabeth II "passed away peacefully" at Windsor Castle/Oscar-nominated actor George Segal/Controversial Hustler founder Larry Flynt, who also fashioned himself into a champion of the First Amendment/Legendary actor Christopher Plummer/Legendary broadcaster Larry King
More than 400 vessels were left waiting at either end of the canal when the 400m-long Ever Given became wedged across it on 23 March.
Former president Jacob Zuma defies the Constitutional Court and refuses to testify to the Zondo Commission.
In February Port Elizabeth is officially renamed Gqeberha. Other major name changes include Kariega (formerly Uitenhage) and Chief Dawid Stuurman International Airport (formerly Port Elizabeth Airport).
1 March The government announces plans to establish a special Land Court.
24 March Queen Mantfombi Dlamini Zulu is named regent following the death of King Goodwill Zwelithini.
At the end of March President Ramaphosa calls upon members of the African National Congress (ANC) who have been charged with corruption or other serious crimes to step aside within 30 days or face suspension.
18 April 2021 Table Mountain fire
May – The trial of former president Jacob Zuma on corruption charges is set to begin.
In February Caster Semenya, 30, announces she will appeal to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) so that she can compete as a female in track meets. Her birth certificate identifies her as female and she has always identified as female, but she has high levels of testosterone that keep her out of international competition.
11 Jul 2021 — Billionaire Sir Richard Branson has successfully reached the edge of space on board his Virgin Galactic rocket plane.
20 Jul 2021 — Billionaire Jeff Bezos has made a short journey to space, in the first crewed flight of his rocket ship, New Shepard. Are you now an astronaut? The answer appears to be no, at least in the eyes of the US Federal Aviation Administration, which last week revised its definitions on whom it considers to be an astronaut. But for Richard Branson, the billionaire who went to space a week earlier, on a rocket plane operated by Virgin Galactic, a company he founded, the answer might be yes.
July/August 2021: 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo
Well known people that have passed away in 2021 -/King Victor Thulare III, 40, royal, king of the Pedi people (since 2020)/Hannes Viljoen, 77, rugby union player (Natal, national team)/Jackson Mthembu, 62, politician (Minister in the Presidency)/Marius van Heerden, 46, Olympic middle-distance runner (1996) /Joseph Sonnabend, 88, physician and HIV/AIDS/Sibongile Khumalo, 63, singer/Lewis Wolpert, 91, South African-born British developmental biologist/Karima Brown, 54, journalist/Cliff Simon, 58, South African-born American actor (Stargate SG-1); in a kiteboarding accident/12 March - Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu, 72, Zulu king/Christof Heyns, 62, human rights lawyer/Patrick O. O'Meara, 83, South African-born American educator and author/Mantfombi Shiyiwe Dlamini Zulu, 68, Queen regent of the Zulus/Percy Tucker -founder of Computicket,/ Lieb Bester-actor/Seranti Rheeders-singer from Leriekeraai/
Kenneth Kaunda
Former President of the Republic of Zambia dies in June
Jacob Zuma jailed according to contempt order.
Lilibet Diana Mountbatten-Windsor (born 4 June 2021) is the daughter of Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex. She is the eleventh great-grandchild of Queen Elizabeth II and is eighth in the line of succession to the British throne.

Unusual musical instruments – Marble Machine (Source:Wikipedia)

Mad man Martin Molic, member of Wintergatan and inventor of the Marble Machine, unveiled his custom music box in 2016.

Besides the unbelievable woodworking and musical prowess involved, what makes this thing amazing is that it's powered by a hand crank that continually passes 2,000 marbles through it.



They dump in at the top and gravity does the rest, plinking strings, tinkling off a xylophone, hitting MIDI drum pads, and more. There are countless paths for the marbles to take that play various melodies.

Tatter - Think this is a prank?

Watch and listen by clicking on the marble bag:



Simon's Town Historical Mile

Tattler – Thought this would be an interesting read since our Club House is adjacent to the Historical Mile. (Source – Article published in 2017 in The Heritage Portal online).

The Historical Mile lies along the M4 Main Road, commencing at the Simon's Town Railway Station Goods Depot (-34.185327, 18.424996) to Belmont Road (-34.195760, 18.445253). This includes Station Road, St. George's Street and Queen's Road and all of the properties along both sides of these roads between the specified co-ordinates (click here to view on google maps).

Whilst elements of the Historical mile had been in existence since the 1740s, it was the General Plan of Simon's Town drawn up by Surveyor L.M. Thibault in 1815 that captured the significant buildings. On 27th May 1814 Simon's Town was proclaimed a District entirely separated from Cape Town and the Cape District. The town developed in a linear pattern, dictated by the narrow stretch of level ground between the beach and the mountainside. Whilst the initial buildings were comprised of a mix of Cape Vernacular, Cape Dutch and utilitarian storehouse designs, the increasing prosperity and demand for shops, offices and living accommodation brought architects such as Sir Herbert Baker (1862-1946) and John Parker (1866-1921) to the town. Parker alone was largely responsible for today's appearance of the central core of the Historical Mile. Apart from designing the iconic British Hotel, the adjoining ABC Building, the United Services Institute, Simon's Town High School (now the Public Library), various shops and numerous private houses, Parker brought the Victorian fashion of cast iron "Broekie Lace", balconies supported on slender cast iron columns and decorative cast iron railings. Many of these features still exist today, and collectively they form the defining aspect of the Historical Mile and its Sense of Place. Other elements such as the Lanes and the Steps that provide access to properties higher up the mountain slopes further contribute to that Sense of Place, together with glimpses of the Naval buildings within the Dockyards. This visual impact is complemented by the recorded history of events, activities and the people who resided in and visited the Historical Mile; it is truly unique not only within South Africa, but in many respects the Southern Hemisphere. It is therefore vital that this vista, and its associated history, be conserved for future generations.

50 years ago - August 1971

General

1 August - In New York City, 40,000 people attended the Concert for Bangladesh, a pair of fundraising concerts organized by former Beatle George Harrison and Indian sitar player Ravi Shankar in order to raise money for UNICEF.

5 August - The DC-10 jumbo jet went into commercial service, starting with an American Airlines flight from Los Angeles to Chicago.

6 August - Chay Blyth, a Scottish yachtsman who was nicknamed "Wrong Way Chay" by the British press, completed his trip around the world, becoming the first person to make a "solo nonstop sea voyage in a westerly direction", sailing against, rather than in the same direction as, the wind and prevailing sea currents. On his 59 feet (18 m) ketch, British Steel.

10 August - The Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971 was signed into law by U.S. President Nixon, authorizing the U.S. Coast Guard to issue specific regulations on the standards for boats operating in coastal waters.

16 August - The Pakistani ship SS Al-Abbas was destroyed and sunk in the Bay of Bengal by commandos of the Bangladesh guerrilla group Mukti Bahini. The Bengali naval frogmen, trained by the Indian Navy, attached limpet mines to the underside of the large freighter while it was anchored at the port of Chittagong, as one of the major acts in Operation Jackpot.

26 August - The first online library computer network, OCLC, began for cataloging at Ohio University, initially as a plan for college libraries in the U.S. state of Ohio to be able to inquire about their respective book holdings via modem. Founded in 1967, OCLC stood for the Ohio College Library Center, and would be limited to that state until 1978, when it changed its name (but kept its initials) as the Online Computer Library Center. In 2003, it would become the producer of WorldCat for use on the internet.

Sport

1 August - The German Grand Prix at the Nürburgring was won by Jackie Stewart driving a Tyrrell-Ford.

7 August - South Africa's national rugby union team, the Springboks, finished their tour of Australia with an 18 to 6 win in their test match against the Wallabies, the Australia national rugby union team at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

8 August - Sixth-seeded Ken Rosewall won the singles title, in the US Pro Tennis Championships, his third U.S. Pro title, and the accompanying \$10,000 first-prize money.

15 August - Jo Siffert, driving a BRM won the Austrian GP in Spielberg.

24 August - India sealed a maiden cricket test series victory against England at The Oval.

31 August - Australian long-distance runner Adrienne Beames became the first woman to break the three-hour barrier in the marathon, finishing in 2:46:30 at Werribee.

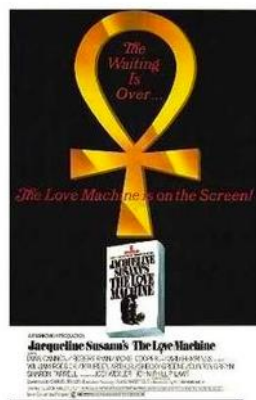
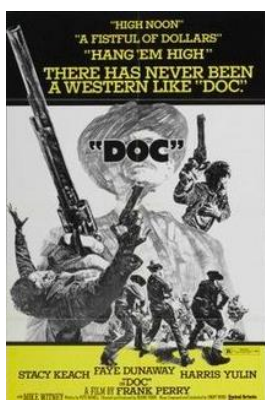
Music

Tattler - Blast from the past : The Who - "Won't get fooled again "- an August 1971 hit. Click image below to take a listen.



Singles	Artist
"Never Ending Song of Love" (#7)	The New Seekers
"Devil's Answer"	Atomic Rooster
"I'm Still Waiting" (#8)	Diana Ross
"Won't Get Fooled Again"	The Who
"What Are You Doing Sunday" [E]	Dawn featuring Tony Orlando
"Heartbreak Hotel"/"Hound Dog" [U]	Elvis Presley
"Let Your Yeah Be Yeah"	The Pioneers
"Soldier Blue"	Buffy Sainte-Marie
"Hey Girl Don't Bother Me" (#9)	The Tams
"Bangla Desh" [K]	George Harrison

Movies





The Omega Man reached number one in its fifth week on the circuit. The Omega Man is a 1971 American post-apocalyptic action film starring Charlton Heston as a survivor of a global pandemic.

The Omega Man is the second adaptation of Matheson's novel. The first was The Last Man on Earth (1964), which starred Vincent Price. A third adaptation, I Am Legend, starring Will Smith, was released in 2007.



Tattler – And for our ladies, the man himself

And, this month, a century ago

21 August 1921 - The Observer, London's Sunday newspaper, warned in an investigative report that ZR-2 had structural defects, including girders within the frame that had bent under the weight of the airship. The newspaper speculated that repair of the defects would take at least three weeks or the flight would have to be postponed until 1922

24 August 1921 - The crash of the U.S. R38 dirigible ZR-2, the world's largest airship, killed 44 of its crew of 49. ZR-2 was on its fourth trial flight before its scheduled delivery to the U.S. Navy and had gone aloft at 7:00 in the morning. At 6:30 p.m., as the airship was returning to a landing at RNAS Howden in Yorkshire, it suffered a structural failure in mid-air, then exploded and crashed into the Humber Estuary in north-east England. A subsequent investigation determined that the frame of girders buckled while the pilot was attempting to turn the airship at a speed of 50 miles per hour (80 km/h).

Tattler – specially for Frans and Theo

EVER SINCE I WAS A CHILD, I'VE ALWAYS HAD A FEAR OF SOMEONE UNDER MY BED AT NIGHT. SO, I WENT TO A SHRINK AND TOLD HIM:

"I've got problems. Every time I go to bed I think there's somebody under it. I'm scared. I think I'm going crazy."

"Just put yourself in my hands for one year," said the shrink.

"Come talk to me three times a week, and we should be able to get rid of those fears."

"How much do you charge?"

"Eighty dollars per visit," replied the doctor.

"I'll sleep on it", I said.

Six months later, the doctor met me on the street.

"Why didn't you come to see me about those fears you were having?" he asked.

"Well, eighty bucks a visit, three times a week, for a year, is \$12,480.00.

A bartender cured me for \$10.00.

I was so happy to have saved all that money that I went and bought me a new pickup truck".

"Is that so?"

With a bit of an attitude, he said, "and how, may I ask, did a bartender cure you?"

"He told me to cut the legs off the bed.

Ain't nobody under there now".

FORGET THE SHRINKS...

HAVE A DRINK & TALK TO A BARTENDER!

IT'S ALWAYS BETTER TO GET A SECOND OPINION!



Tattler – I think I may have previously used this in Tattler. If so, it is still worth another "turn"!

Beijing Hotel Brochure – Translated as only they can:

A friend went to Beijing recently and was given this brochure by the Hotel.

It is precious. She is keeping it and reading it whenever she feels depressed.

Obviously, it has been translated directly, word for word from Mandarin to English....

Getting There:

Our representative will make you wait at the airport. The bus to the hotel runs along the lake shore.

Soon you will feel pleasure in passing water. You will know that you are getting near the hotel, because you will go round the bend. The manager will await you in the entrance hall. He always tries to have intercourse with all new guests.

The hotel:

This is a family hotel, so children are very welcome. We of course are always pleased to accept adultery. Highly skilled nurses are available in the evenings to put down your children. Guests are invited to conjugate in the bar and expose themselves to others. But please note that ladies are not allowed to have babies in the bar.

We organize social games, so no guest is ever left alone to play with them self.

The Restaurant:

Our menus have been carefully chosen to be ordinary and unexciting. At dinner, our quartet will circulate from table to table, and fiddle with you.

Your Room:

Every room has excellent facilities for your private parts. In winter, every room is on heat. Each room has a balcony offering views of outstanding obscenity! .. You will not be disturbed by traffic noise, since the road between the hotel and the lake is used only by pederasts.

Bed:

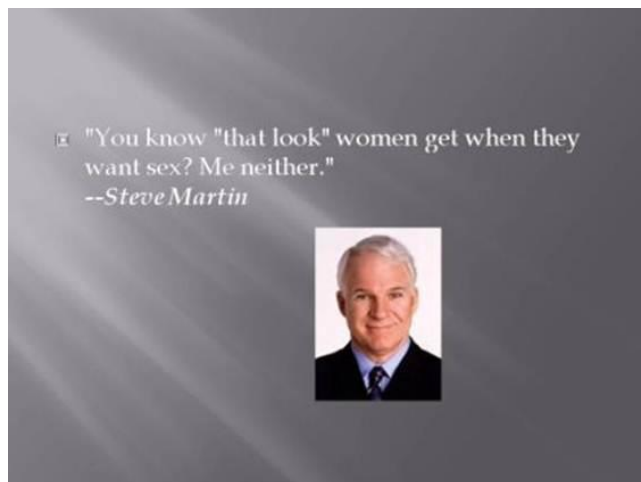
Your bed has been made in accordance with local tradition. If you have any other ideas please ring for the chambermaid.

Please take advantage of her. She will be very pleased to squash your shirts, blouses and underwear. If asked, she will also squeeze your trousers.

Above all:

When you leave us at the end of your holiday, you will have no hope. You will struggle to forget it."

Thinking you, Your Management



Tattler - Well that's it for this month. Look after yourselves and those close to you