

The Seven Seas Tattler Issue 7.12 May 2024



Happy May to all our readers!

This May edition of our Seven Seas Tattler, believe it or not, is the 96th! Yep, eight years of production. We (Colette and Jonathan) are pretty proud of ourselves.

Every edition has had, in our opinion, a beautiful masthead, all the works of Tracy-Lee Wise, for which we remain very grateful. But as with most matters, we believe it is time for a change! In club spirit we wish to offer enthusiastic club photographers the opportunity of having a picture they took proudly adorning our monthly magazine for a year!

Therefore we are asking all members for contributions and hope that we face a difficult (but happy) task of selecting one of your photographs. Once we have made the choice we will use some of the best runners-up in our magazine in future editions. **We sincerely look forward to receiving "entries"!**

Rules

- 1) Contributions must be photographs taken by a club member or their spouse.
- 2) The photographs should have a nautical theme. (Think club name!)
- 3) Submissions must be made to Colette and/or Jonathan (colettepatience@gmail.com, jonathanagolding@gmail.com) by 15 May 2024.
- 4) We must be granted the right to use your photographs in the Tattler.
- 5) The decision of the judges will be final.

This edition features an article on Graham Pollock, Elephant Seal Bulls, Spitfires carrying beer to the battlefields and Seafaring men and their tattoo's. We have an update from Eddie Noble on the progress of the Unmanned Surface Vessel being built in PE and a few more bit. We trust there will be items that interest you.

Any constructive feedback and contributions can be sent to (jonathanagolding@gmail.com or colettepatience@gmail.com). It will be much appreciated.

Editorial

Picture of the Month



This magnificent shot of the Milky Way above Lion's Head is published with the photographer's permission.

Nature Photographer | Kyle Goetsch Photography
+27721869180 | info@kylegoetsch.com | kylegoetsch.com

Cricket Legend

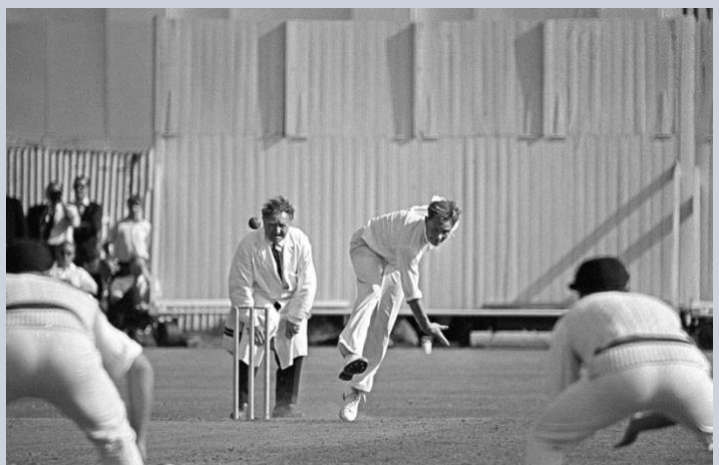
"To get Graeme to agree to play, I used to have to let him bat first." "and that is why he became a batsman and I became a bowler"

(Article written by Curt Johnson - found in SA Cricket - Blast from the past (Fan memories).

He was one of South Africa's very best fast men and the spearhead of the South African attack during the 60s.

Aged just 20, he took 3 for 61 and 6 for 38 in his debut test against New Zealand in Durban in 1961.

Strongly built, six-foot-two-inches tall and extremely hostile, he came charging in off of a lengthy run-up. He was genuinely fast, had a mean bouncer and bowled a great away swinger.



It all started with him bowling to his younger brother Graeme in the backyard in Port Elizabeth. He once said that "To get Graeme to agree to play, I used to have to let him bat first." "and that is why he became a batsman and I became a bowler". The brothers never faced each other in representative cricket.

During the England tour in 1965, he had the best performance of his career taking 5 for 53 and 5 for 34 in the second Test at Trent Bridge. In that three match series he took 20 sticks at an average of 18.30.

Along with newcomer Mike Procter, he formed a fearsome new ball attack, and against Bill Lawry's Australians in SA's last test series before isolation in 1970. The two of them took 41 of the 80 Australian wickets to fall in a 4-0 white wash.

In his 28 Tests, he took 116 wickets at 24.18.

In 127 First-Class Matches, He Took 485 Wickets At 21.89.

He was a decent batsman down the order too. Scoring two fifties in Test cricket. His best score came in a losing cause against Australia at Newlands in 1966/7, he scored 41 in the first innings sharing an 85 run ninth wicket stand with his brother and he scored 75* in the second innings coming in at number 10.

He ended with a Test batting average of 21.67.

Sadly his last over in international cricket remains incomplete. In the second over of the final innings of the 1970 tour, he pulled a hamstring and couldn't complete his over, limping out of the international arena for ever.

He was voted a Wisden Cricketer of the Year in 1966.

He went on to become the convenor of selectors for South Africa during the 1990s.

Oh yeah, his son wasn't a bad player either.

Peter Pollock

Tattler - interesting fact - "The brothers never faced each other in representative cricket."

For all the rugby men who wore a 1 or a 3!

(Prop forwards - most often the heaviest guys in the team!)



74 litres of wine per person per annum

You think that's a lot? Which country drinks that much? The answer may surprise you!

"Tiny Vatican City consumes more wine per capita than any other country in the world, according to information from the California-based Wine Institute. According to the Wine Institute's latest statistics, the Vatican consumed 74 litres of wine per person, around double the per-capita consumption of Italy as a whole."



Tattler - a little digging showed that this is a 10 year old report. - The following is more recent!

A lot of reporting came out in 2014 after the Wine Institute of California's statistics showed that the people of the Vatican — mostly clergy and those who work for the Catholic Church — drank more wine per capita than any other place in the world, but according to the Académie du Vin Library, by 2021 Portugal took the top spot for per capita wine consumption.

To read More click on this link: <https://www.grunge.com/621432/the-vatican-sets-this-surprising-record-in-wine-consumption/>

Bonus Music Feature

Some of you enjoy classical music, some enjoy rock and some enjoy both.

How about a top rock guitarist doing a bit of opera?

Here is Jeff Beck doing a little Puccini! Enjoy - it is superb! Click on the image below to play the video.



Remarkable Ocean Mammals

This fantastic story illustrating the huge intelligence of the Whale Shark. Click on the link alongside to watch the video. (Credit - The Visibles)

Brilliant!

David Hersh produced this bit of brilliance. Thanks to him! Click on the image alongside to view.

A whale giving birth in False Bay attracted sharks. Dolphins appeared out of nowhere and swam in circles around her keeping sharks away. They stayed with her until she & her baby were safe then escorted her to safety.



May Day

(Source - Britannica)

Tattler - we have combined and edited two sources

The observance probably originated in ancient agricultural rituals, and the Greeks and Romans held such festivals. Although later practices varied widely, the celebrations came to include the gathering of wildflowers and green branches, the weaving of floral garlands, the crowning of a May king and queen, and the setting up of a decorated May tree, or Maypole, around which people danced.

Such rites originally may have been intended to ensure fertility for crops and, by extension, for livestock and humans, but in most cases this significance was gradually lost, so that the practices survived largely as popular festivities.



In 1889 an international federation of socialist groups and trade unions designated May 1 as a day in support of workers, in commemoration of the Haymarket Riot in Chicago (1886). Five years later, U.S. Pres. Grover Cleveland, uneasy with the socialist origins of Workers' Day, signed legislation to make Labour Day—already held in some states on the first Monday of September—the official U.S. holiday in honour of workers. Canada followed suit not long afterward.

May Day - Workers marching in Moscow's Red Square, May 1, 2015.

In Europe May 1 was historically associated with rural pagan festivals, but the original meaning of the day was gradually replaced by the modern association with the labour movement. In the Soviet Union, leaders embraced the new holiday, believing it would encourage workers in Europe and the United States to unite against capitalism.

The day became a significant holiday in the Soviet Union and in the Eastern-bloc countries, with high-profile parades, including one in Moscow's Red Square presided over by top government and Communist Party functionaries, celebrating the worker and showcasing Soviet military might. In Germany Labour Day became an official holiday in 1933 after the rise of the Nazi Party. Ironically, Germany abolished free unions the day after establishing the holiday, virtually destroying the German labour movement.

With the breakup of the Soviet Union and the fall of communist governments in eastern Europe in the late 20th century, large-scale May Day celebrations in that region declined in importance. In dozens of countries around the world, however, May Day has been recognized as a public holiday, and it continues to be celebrated with picnics and parties while serving as the occasion for demonstrations and rallies in support of workers.



Seal Bulls

Tattler - I had no idea that they were this big!



Tammy Eggeling is dwarfed by a towering 'beachmaster' – a dominant southern elephant seal bull. Up to five metres long, heavier than a rhino and with a mouthful of 30 sharp teeth, these bulls can weigh up to four tonnes, while adult females are around 900 kg. (Photo: Christopher Jones)

Zafar Monier keeps a safe distance from the business end of an elephant seal beachmaster. One of the largest bulls on the island is known as 'Bliksem'. Monier describes him as a 'ferocious guy... a machine with a goliath gene'. He has a harem of 98 cows this year, compared to about 30 last year. (Photo: Dylan Seaton)



Did you know this about Sly?

Many suggest some or all of the following about Sylvester Stallone - he is stupid, he can't act, he was lucky to get the Rocky role.

Tattler found the following and has verified most of its content.



Back in the day, Stallone was a struggling actor in every definition. At some point, he got so broke that he stole his wife's jewellery and sold it. Things got so bad that he even ended up homeless. Yes, he slept at the New York bus station for 3 days. Unable to pay rent or afford food. His lowest point came when he tried to sell his dog at the liquor store to any stranger. He didn't have money to feed the dog anymore. He sold it at \$25 only. He says he walked away crying.

Two weeks later, he saw a boxing match between Mohammed Ali and Chuck Wepner and that match gave him the inspiration to write the script for the famous movie, ROCKY. He wrote the script for 20 hours! He tried to sell it and got an offer for \$125,000 for the script. But he had just ONE REQUEST. He wanted to STAR in the movie. He wanted to be the MAIN ACTOR, Rocky himself. But the studio said NO. They wanted a REAL STAR.

They said he "Looked funny and talked funny". He left with his script. A few weeks later, the studio offered him \$250,000 for the script. He refused. They even offered \$350,000. He still refused. They wanted his movie, but NOT him. He said NO. He had to be IN THAT MOVIE.

After a while, the studio agreed, gave him \$35,000 for the script and let him star in it! The rest is history! The movie won Best Picture, Best Directing and Best Film Editing at the prestigious Oscar Awards. He was even nominated for BEST ACTOR! The Movie ROCKY was even inducted into the American National Film Registry as one of the greatest movies ever!

P.S. After the movie came out he tracked down the guy who bought his dog and bought it back for 10k.
Source: BelowZeroToHero

Brands “became” Product Names

Like many women, and more than a few men, my wife uses the term Hoover as opposed to vacuum cleaner. There are more than expected such brands that so dominated the marketplace that their brand "became" the product name.

Tattler - I did a little digging and found many similar examples! Some, totally amazed me!



Did you know, for example, that items referred to as jet skis, fibreglass, frisbees, breathalyzer and jacuzzis are actually brand names and NOT the generic product!

You might think you're riding around on a Jet Ski, but if it's not made by Kawasaki Heavy Industries, it's just a personal watercraft. Owens Corning is the company with the legal right to call their product fibreglass. A term used worldwide, it should really be known by everyone else as glass wool unless they placed their order with the company who trademarked the name along with the colour 'pink' when they started to dye their product in the 1950s. Despite a court battle in 2010 to prove that the word Frisbee had become part of common language and so couldn't be a trademarked name, the challenge by Manley Toys Ltd failed and the name for a flying disc continues to be only legally usable by Wham-O. Breathalyzer is owned by the Indiana University Foundation.



Despite a court battle in 2010 to prove that the word Frisbee had become part of common language and so couldn't be a trademarked name, the challenge by Manley Toys Ltd failed and the name for a flying disc continues to be only legally usable by Wham-O. Breathalyzer is owned by the Indiana University Foundation.

In 1931 Indiana University professor Rolla N. Harger created the contraption—originally called the Drunk-O-Meter—as a device to test the sobriety of drivers. Suspected tipplers breathed into a special balloon, and Harger's device got a reading on how much they'd had to drink. By 1936 Harger had patented his creation, and he eventually signed the invention over to Indiana University.

Jacuzzi is a company with an impressive range of products including mattresses and toilets. The name has become the colloquialism for what should otherwise be called a hot tub or whirlpool bath.



Here is a selection of a few others

Tupperware, Velcro, weed eater, Elastoplast, post-it, astroturf, bubble wrap, jeep, lilo, Kleenex (in America)

Jonathan, this is a fabulous story and such an interesting phenomenon. Apparently in the marketing business it is known as Genericization or Trademark erosion!

Brands that become product names are thought to have high levels of recognition and dominance in their markets usually the result of successful marketing campaigns, product innovation, and quality assurance. I imagine with Trademark erosion product owners could be faced with legal implications of having to actively protect the “distinguishing” features of their Trademark. It underscores the power of branding in shaping consumer behaviour and perceptions, and brand management in keeping distinctiveness and relevance over time.

Add social media to the mix from a marketing perspective. I find “choosing” these days really exhausting with the torrents of on-line information. There is undoubtedly a resurgence in marketing as a career choice with 3 or 4 year degree courses in Digital Marketing. Despite all this, I still go shopping for a “Kreepy” and proudly display my barracuda purchase. Another one is a thought I have multiple times a day “just google it”.

Tattler - There are many more I'm sure. Maybe readers would like to tell us of a few that they know and use?

Some brand and marketing related humour!



Why did the marketer dump her boyfriend?
Lack of engagement.



FIAT:
Failure in Italian Automotive Technology
Fix It Again, Tony!
Feeble Italian Attempt at Transportation

AMC:
All Makes Combined
A Major Cost
A Mutated Car
A Morons Car
Another Major Catastrophe

Club Matters

Club Manager's Report

Congratulations to our April winners 100 Club Draw

Mr S.B. Gourley – R300
Mrs A. Stannard – R300
Mr A. Belshaw – R300
Mr R. Hartley – R1000

We wish the following members a very Happy Birthday. May the year ahead be filled with good health and happiness. For our usual bit of fun we note some historic events and dates.

Mrs R. Moore – 02 May

1903 - American paediatrician Benjamin Spock—who wrote a number of influential works on child rearing, notably *Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* (1946), which sold more than 50 million copies worldwide—was born.

Mr I. Wright – 02 May

1611 - The King James Version of the Bible was first published.

Lt J. Payne (Ret) – 06 May

May 6, 1937: The Hindenburg disaster occurred when the German airship LZ 129 Hindenburg caught fire and was destroyed during its attempt to dock with its mooring mast at Naval Air Station Lakehurst in New Jersey, USA.

Prof G.J. Kruger – 10 May

May 10, 1869: The First Transcontinental Railroad was completed in the United States, connecting the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads at Promontory Summit, Utah.

Mr J. Lucas – 11 May

1997 - IBM's chess-playing computer Deep Blue defeated Garry Kasparov in the last game of a six-game match to claim a 3.5–2.5 victory (it won two games and had three draws); it marked the first time a current world champion had lost a match to a computer under tournament conditions.

Mr A.H. Collingridge – 15 May

1940 - Nylon stockings first went on sale to the general public, and American stores sold out in days.

R Adm D.R. Faure (Ret) – 16 May

1986 - The action blockbuster *Top Gun* was released in American theatres, and it made Tom Cruise an international star.

R Adm (JG) A. Soderlund (Ret) – 17 May

1792 - Meeting on what is now Wall Street in New York City, 24 businessmen took the initial steps to forming the New York Stock Exchange.

Capt T.J.D. Thiart (Ret) – 20 May

1946 – Cher American singer and actress Cher, who was known for her flamboyant style, was born.

Capt P.S. Barnard (Ret) – 20 May

1873 - Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis were granted a patent for using copper rivets to strengthen certain areas of trousers, notably pocket corners; the patent was credited with giving rise to blue jeans.

Mr D.E Mac Kenzie – 21 May

1932 - American aviator Amelia Earhart became the first woman to pilot an airplane solo across the Atlantic Ocean.

Mr M. Salda – 23 May

1934 - Bonnie and Clyde, notorious American outlaws, were killed in a police shoot-out near Gibsland, Louisiana.

Capt L.J.P. Connolly (Ret) – 28 May

1804 - Napoleon proclaimed the establishment of the French Empire.

Mr S.P.G. Luyt – 28 May

1908 - Ian Fleming British author Born London, England.

Capt J.P. Beukes – 29 May

Mount Everest summit reached by Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay. Following numerous failed attempts by others, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay became the first climbers to surmount Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world (29,032 feet [8,849 metres]), on this day in 1953.

Mr G.R. Glen – 29 May

Paper Clip Day honors that little piece of wire that keeps our papers tidy and organized. Fastening papers together is believed to have started back in the 13th century when short pieces of ribbon were placed through parallel cuts in the upper left-hand corner of pages.

But most people credit Johan Vaaler, a Norwegian inventor with a degree in electronics, science and mathematics, for creating the paper clip back in 1899. His invention was a wire with only one turn, unlike the one that we use today which has two turns.

During the second world war, Norwegians were prohibited from wearing any buttons with the likeness or initials of their king on them. In protest, they started wearing paperclips, because paperclips were a Norwegian invention whose original function was to bind together. This was a protest against the Nazi occupation and wearing a paperclip could have gotten them arrested.

New Members

Lt S.L. (Louis) Van Der Walt (Ret) and Nolene Marie resides on the farm Jan-se-Wil in Graafwater, Clan William District.

Aye,

Glen

April Quiz Evening

On the 10th of April the club hosted another rip-roaring quiz. Five teams contested the bragging rights! Scores were very close but the eventual winners snuck in by just a few points. Here they are receiving their token prizes.



Congratulations!

We wish to remind all members that the club quiz.....

- 1) Is held once a month on the second Wednesday
- 2) Has no entry fee - come and enjoy a free night of fun
- 3) Welcomes all members and their guests. Come as a team of 4, as a group of 3 or 2 or as an individual - everybody is accommodated!
- 4) Is about fun. While it is always competitive, the emphasis is on enjoyment
- 5) Is an opportunity to interact with other club members and make some new friends
- 6) Starts promptly at 19h00 and finishes at 21h00

If you have any questions, queries or concerns, contact one of the hosts, Euan Smith, Doug Law-Brown or Jonathan Golding (euansmith@gmail.com, dougl@icon.co.za, jonathanagolding@gmail.com) who will happily apprise you of the details.

Maritime and Naval / Military - Stories, News and Sport

Locally Designed and Built Unmanned Surface Vessel - Update

Source: Eddie Noble

After the initial article in The Tattler in February of this year, here is a brief update of the progress of this remarkable little vessel.



With the design completed and reviewed with the foreign customer in February, full scale production started at the Legacy Marine shipyard in Port Elizabeth. Legacy Marine is a super-efficient aluminium boat builder, ideally suited for this project.

With the keel strip being laid (unfortunately the customer could not be present for the customary keel laying ceremony) and cut files being completed, all the necessary parts were constructed and hull assembly started in earnest.



With hull construction completion planned for early May, internal outfitting will commence. The engine (Volvo Penta D6-400 with duo-prop stern drive) has arrived and will be fitted after necessary other systems are in place.

Development of the fully autonomous VOYAGER AI navigation system is in full swing, and will utilise all navigation equipment (GPS, AIS, echo sounder, radar, compass, INS) , RF data Link, SATCOM, situational awareness cameras (with AI) and a potent electro-optic system for this important navigation function and mission control. The Voyager AI autonomous system offers full IMO Degree four autonomy (Fully autonomous ship: the operating system of the ship is able to make decisions and determine actions by itself).



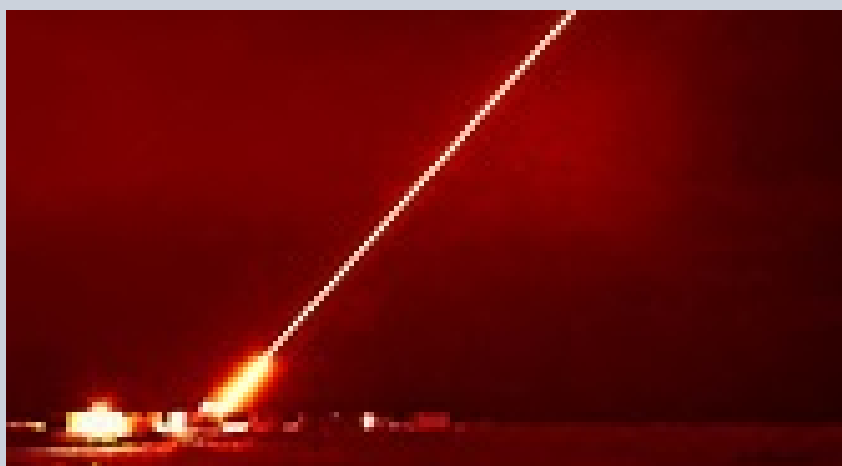
Tattler - Watch this space for more developments..... soon!

DragonFire Laser Programme Accelerating to Equip Royal Navy Ships

Source: MilitaryLeaks

Tattler - Yesterday's Science-Fiction!

The UK DragonFire laser programme – led by MBDA, with partners Leonardo UK and QinetiQ – is accelerating following a decision from the UK Ministry of Defence to install the weapon system on Royal Navy ships. The decision, announced by Defence Secretary Grant Shapps, will see the DragonFire laser weapon system rapidly develop from a demonstration programme to an operational capability for the Royal Navy.



The next stages of this development will include further live firings and the manufacture and installation of weapon systems onto Royal Navy platforms.

The UK DragonFire programme brings together the best of UK industry. It leverages MBDA's decades of weapon system manufacturing expertise, Leonardo's position as a world leading authority in laser technology, electro-optics and advanced targeting and QinetiQ's experience as the only UK company to successfully develop and safely operate high-energy laser sources in the UK and coherent beam-combining technology.

Mark Stead, Leonardo UK SVP Radar and Advanced Targeting, said: “Leonardo welcomes the commitment to UK science and engineering represented by today’s announcement. The development of DragonFire is securing vital skills and security capabilities onshore in the UK, keeping them available to support our Armed Forces and generate world-class, readily exportable products.”

Steve Wadey, Group CEO, QinetiQ, said: “Today’s announcement is a positive endorsement of UK industry and government working together, to deliver equipment to the front line. Our team of scientists and engineers who have developed this world leading capability have played a unique role in developing a technology that will provide real operational advantage.”

Chris Allam, MBDA UK Managing Director, said: “MBDA are proud to lead this laser weapon programme that will give the UK Armed Forces game-changing operational advantage to protect and defend themselves, and the UK’s strategic assets.”

The UK DragonFire programme is a flagship example of the Government’s new Integrated Procurement Model, designed to reform defence procurement and drive increased pace in the delivery of military capability. The latest announcement follows a series of highly successful firing trials that demonstrated the capability of the DragonFire laser weapon system.

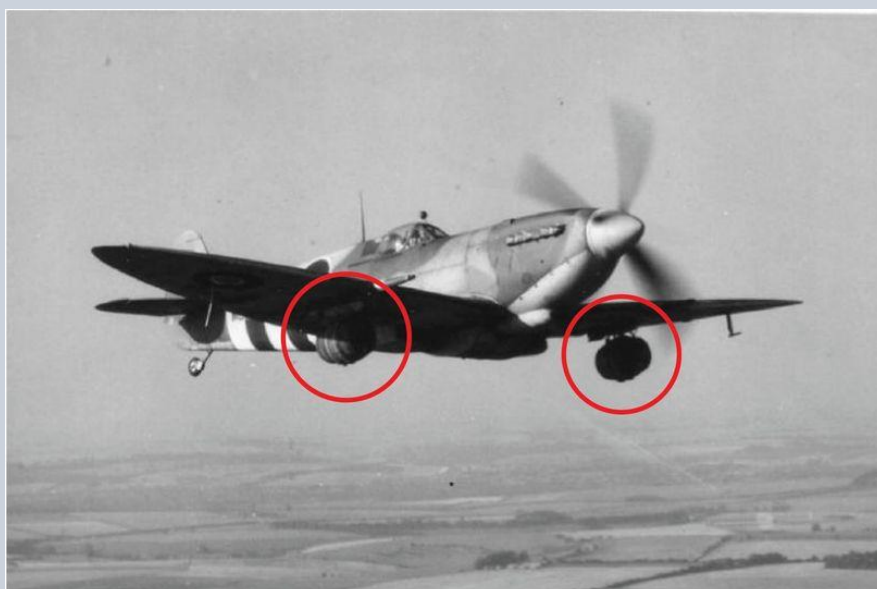


DragonFire has been developed through a £100 million joint investment by industry and the UK Ministry of Defence, working with Dstl. The decision by the UK Ministry of Defence to progress the programme ensures that the companies involved can retain, maintain and grow the critical hi-tech skills, knowledge and jobs that contribute to the UK economy. Future exports of DragonFire to the UK’s allies will further support these benefits.

“Flying Pubs” – Spitfires Flew Beer to Normandy

Source: From PlaneHistoria – by Jo Ferris

Tattler - For those who enjoy a beer. Imagine this as a delivery system!



On June 20, 1944, a fortnight after the D-Day landings, a special correspondent from Reuters reporting with the Allied Forces in France alerted British newspapers that the only libation on offer in the small cafes just miles from the landing sites was cider.

Spitfires replaced drop tanks with beer barrels to enable British soldiers to have a beer after the D-Day landings.

There were no available transport planes to deliver non-critical supplies to the forward landing grounds. To address this, several Spitfire squadrons based out of RAF Tangmere ingeniously adapted by using a 45-gallon drop tank—typically reserved for fuel—after steam cleaning it for the transportation of ale.

The Spitfire Mk IX represented an advanced iteration of the iconic fighter, equipped with pylons beneath the wings capable of holding bombs or extra fuel tanks.

It was ingeniously discovered that these bomb pylons could be repurposed to transport beer kegs. Historical photos reveal the use of kegs in various sizes, though it's unclear if these could be jettisoned during emergencies. When flown at higher altitudes, the beer would be naturally chilled by the cold air, arriving perfectly cooled for enjoyment.



Officially, it wasn't until July 12 that "real British beer" was formally delivered to the troops fighting in Normandy, and even then it was limited to one pint per man.

However, well before this date, resourceful RAF and USAAF pilots had taken it upon themselves to covertly transport beer into Northern France, with their aircraft fondly termed "flying pubs" by the servicemen.

In South Africa we would say "Boer maak a plan" - clearly the poms had their own planmakers!



Sea Men and their Tattoos

Source: Compiled by co-editor Colette from various sources

Sailor tattoos go back thousands of years. While today anyone can get an anchor, a swallow or a sailboat tattooed on their body, in the past these tattoos had a distinct meaning. "Navy tattoos" and sailors have a long and intertwined history. Tattoos have been a tradition among sailors for centuries, dating back to the age of exploration and maritime trade. Sailors often got tattoos as symbols of their experiences at sea, their loyalty to their country or naval branch, and as protective symbols against the dangers of the ocean.

Sailors often choose nautical symbols for their tattoos, such as anchors, ships, compasses, and nautical stars. These symbols represent their connection to the sea and navigation. Sailors would often get tattoos in various ports of call around the world, commemorating their travels and experiences in different regions. Each tattoo might represent a specific port visited or a memorable event during their voyage. A kind of Logbook if you will.

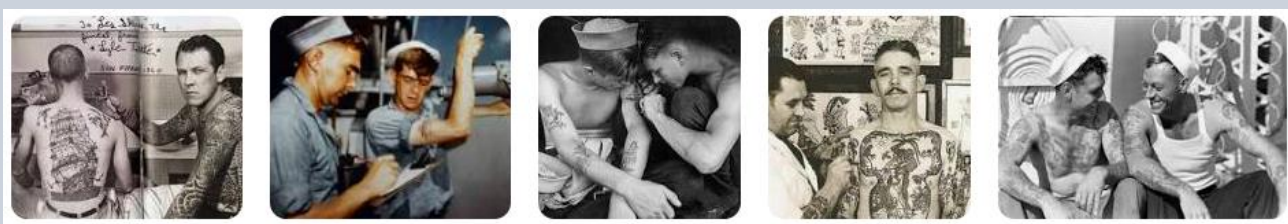
Many sailors get tattoos to honour their military service and their branch of the navy. This could include tattoos of the navy insignia, the emblem of their ship or unit, or slogans like "Semper Fortis" (Always Courageous), the motto of the U.S. Navy.

Sailors have a rich tradition of superstitions, and tattoos were sometimes seen as protective symbols against the dangers of the sea.

Overall, navy tattoos have a deep cultural significance among sailors, serving as visual markers of their experiences, identities, and connections to the sea. They continue to be a cherished tradition among naval personnel around the world.

The roots of traditional tattoos go back to the 16th century (from the Samoan word tatau, meaning "to strike"). They were brought to Europe by sailors as a souvenir from the Pacific islands, where the natives decorated their bodies with them. With sailors, we mean people who are sailing with sailboats and not motor yachts. Originally, gunpowder and urine were used instead of ink.

Most commonly, tattoos served as a kind of logbook — a history confirming a sailor's experience at sea and a reminder of the places they'd visited and achievements accomplished. Certain motifs were also used to show their courage and skill.



What is the meaning of a swallow tattooed on a sailor? Or even two? One thing is for sure, you'd definitely have a highly experienced sailor in front of you. Only a sailor who had sailed 5,000 nautical miles was allowed to get a tattoo of a swallow. And why the swallow in particular? Strongly associated as a symbol of return, the swallow is able to cover great distances and still get back home. Because of this, the tattoo was also used for good luck and protection.





And if you saw a sailor with a tattoo of a swallow pierced with a dagger, they'd most likely had it tattooed in memory of a fellow sailor who'd died.

This tattoo could only be earned by those who'd sailed around Cape Horn — the bravest and the best, who had fearlessly set out on the high seas completely at its mercy. Similarly, only a sailor who had circumnavigated Cape Horn could wear an earring and always on the ear that had faced the mainland.



Even the humble turtle illustrated sailing experience and a turtle shell was proudly displayed by sailors who had crossed the equator. Tattoos depicting Neptune also demonstrated this fact.

Motifs from the animal kingdom were (and still are) very popular. Can you guess which sailors would get a polar bear tattoo? Unsurprisingly, it was those heroes who had crossed the Arctic Circle. Submarine crews in the navy got a dolphin tattoo and a shark was a symbol of protection and almost sacred respect (due to the shark's extraordinary abilities). For those who don't sail, it has become a symbol of sheer strength.

Dragon tattoos adorned sailors who had sailed in China. The golden dragon, on the other hand, was reserved for individuals who had crossed the International Date Line — an internationally agreed line that runs around the world at the 180th meridian, marking the transition from one calendar day to the next.

A rose pierced with a dagger is a symbol of a sailor who's brave and willing to battle against anything. Even against something as sweet and pure as a rose.



Fast reactions in poor weather conditions, holding the helm, and keeping the boat perfectly positioned are important skills for a sailor. HOLD and FAST inscribed on the fingers, one word on each hand, meant that if you were headed out on rough seas, you could be sure this sailor wouldn't let you down.

These tattoos helped fill the void of loneliness and the absence of women on board (although there were exceptions) over long periods at sea. And occasionally they had specific meaning.



Hula girl beauties belonged to men who sailed in Hawaii. Pin-up girl was simply a reminder of the love they'd left ashore. Mermaids were chosen by those who wanted to demonstrate their love for the open sea. A sea that seduces them despite its inherent danger and unpredictability.

Sailing has always been a demanding and risky profession which led to a high degree of superstition. As a result, certain tattoos were inked in the hopes of warding off bad luck and bringing good fortune.

An anchor is the safest and most secure thing at sea, and it has long been a symbol of protection, stability, and security. Representing honour, loyalty, and, of course, hope, an anchor tattoo was frequently accompanied by a heart, the words "Mom" or "Dad," or a sweetheart's name. Anchor tattoos were also for sailors who had successfully completed a journey across the Atlantic Ocean.



The lighthouse is a symbol of light, hope and protection. Seafarers look to it and are guided by it in times of need. Occasionally, it could also symbolize God as the principal bearer of light.



For superstitious sailors, pig and rooster tattoos were adorned as protection against shipwrecking and a guarantee of survival. But why these animals, which can't even swim or save us from drowning? The answer is that these animals were often kept on board in wooden crates which rarely sank in an accident, often being washed ashore with the animals still safe and sound.

These tattoos were worn on the feet or ankles. But if there was a pig on the left knee and a rooster on the right foot, then the tattoo signified the old saying: "Pig on the knee, safety at sea. A cock on the right, never lose a fight."

Purely for superstitious reasons, a nautical star or compass rose tattoo was to help sailors voyage at night and return them home safely.



Tattoos that represent a role on a ship was reserved for lower deck officers (lieutenants bosun — boatswain) and were worn on the hand between the thumb and forefinger. On the left hand, it indicated that the officer had sailed all the oceans and on the right, it showed that they had sailed the seven seas.



A tattoo of a knot tied on a rope around the wrist was reserved for those who took care of the ship — the bosun and the deck officers.

In the 19th century, the red devil was a common tattoo for engineers, firefighters, machinists, electricians and all who worked in the engine room, known as "The Pit". The conditions and the extreme temperatures there were often likened to the fiery depths of hell.

The dice tattoo was for risk-takers and those who loved to gamble.

And what do nautical tattoos mean today?

Nowadays, tattoos don't really tell us anything about a sailor's experience but nautical symbolism is still very popular and when created by the hands of professional tattooists, they are beautiful works of art.

This month in History - May 1974 50 years ago

General

1 May - The first successful nuclear fusion using a laser, (inertial confinement fusion), was achieved by scientists at KMS Industries, at Ann Arbor, Michigan, targeting a deuterium-tritium pellet and collecting the evidence with neutron-sensitive nuclear emulsion detectors developed by physicist Robert Hofstadter. After confirmation of the results, the breakthrough was announced 12 days later, on May 13.

6 May - Willy Brandt, the Chancellor of West Germany, presented his resignation to President Gustav Heinemann after his personal assistant, Günter Guillaume, had been discovered to be a spy for East Germany.

6 May - Johannes Vermeer's painting *The Guitar Player*, stolen from London on February 23, was recovered by Scotland Yard after a caller said that it could be found in the cemetery adjacent to the St Bartholomew-the-Great church at Smithfield, London. The painting, more than 300 years old, was relatively undamaged except for some dampness.



17 May - The first Synchronous Meteorological Satellite, SMS-1, a weather satellite placed in geosynchronous orbit, was launched from Cape Canaveral, to be placed at a point 22,951 miles (36,936 km) above the Earth's equator.

18 May - India became the sixth nuclear power, with the successful test of a low-yield weapon at the Pokhran Test Range in the state of Rajasthan. The test was code-named Project Smiling Buddha. The other nuclear powers at the time were the U.S., the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, France, and the People's Republic of China.

21 May - The largest case of cheating at the United States Naval Academy was carried out at Annapolis, Maryland, when at least 60 and perhaps as many as 150 of 965 sophomore midshipmen were caught with the answers to the final exam in the Academy's class on navigation.

22 May - What is now the world's largest national park, the Grønlands National Park, was established by Denmark with the protection of 700,000 square kilometres (270,000 sq mi) of uninhabited territory in northeast Greenland. In 1988, it would be expanded to its current size of 972,000 square kilometres (375,000 sq mi).



23 May - The Airbus A300, the world's first twin-engine, double-aisle (wide-body) airliner, was introduced into commercial service with a flight by Air France from Paris to London.

27 May - Valéry Giscard d'Estaing was inaugurated as President of France at the Élysée Palace. His four-minute inaugural address was one of the briefest in history, and had only 12 sentences. (Tattler - maybe other politicians could learn from him?) Five hours later, Giscard d'Estaing appointed Jacques Chirac, the Minister of the Interior, as Prime Minister.

30 May - NASA launched India's ATS-6, sixth of the Applications Technology Satellites, the world's first direct broadcast satellite, and the most powerful communications satellite launched up to that time.

Sport

4 May - The Scottish Cup, Scotland's knockout tournament was won by Celtic F.C. of Glasgow, 3 to 0 over Dundee United.

12 May - Australian John Newcombe won the \$50,000 World Championship of Tennis (WCT) final over Swedish teenager Björn Borg, after losing the first set. The score was 4-6, 6-3, 6-3, 6-2.

12 May - Brazilian driver Emerson Fittipaldi won the 1974 Belgian Grand Prix at Nivelles-Baulers.

15 May - The British & Irish Lions toured South Africa, with matches in South West Africa and Rhodesia. Under the leadership of Willie John McBride, the Lions went through the tour undefeated, winning 21 of their 22 matches and being held to a draw in the final match, albeit in controversial circumstances. The 1974 squad became known as 'The Invincibles' and regarded as the greatest rugby tour in history.

19 May - Australia won the 1974 Federation Cup women's tennis tournament, held in Naples, Italy, defeating United States in the final.

25 May - Boxer Rodrigo Valdez of Colombia became the new World Boxing Council (WBC) middleweight champion, knocking out Bennie Briscoe of the U.S. in a bout at Monte Carlo in Monaco for the vacant WBC middleweight crown. World Boxing Association (WBA) champion Carlos Monzón had been stripped of his WBC title for earlier having refused to fight.



26 May - Swedish driver Ronnie Peterson won the 1974 Monaco Grand Prix on the Circuit de Monaco.

29 May - The UEFA Cup, a knockout tournament for the winners of the cup-winning soccer football teams in Europe, was won by Feyenoord, the 1974 champion of the Netherlands

Movies



Music



And, 100 years ago (May 1924)

3 May - The steamship SS Catalina, known as "The Great White Steamer", and for making thousands of trips between Los Angeles and Santa Catalina Island in the U.S. state of California, was launched for the first time. Over the next 51 years, it would transport as many as 2,000 passengers at a time on the 2½ hour and 26 miles (42 km) trip to and from Santa Catalina, carrying 25 million people over the years, more passengers than any other vessel anywhere in the world, according to the Steamship Historical Society of America.

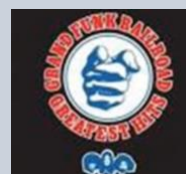
10 May - J. Edgar Hoover, a 29-year-old lawyer, became the U.S. Justice Department's Acting Director of the Bureau of Investigation, the predecessor to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

18 May - In the last Olympic rugby union game ever played, the United States defeated France, 17 to 3, before 30,000 fans at the Stade Olympique in Colombes, as part of the 1924 Summer Olympic Games.

28 May - The League of Nations demanded the secret of the "death ray" which British inventor Harry Grindell Matthews had claimed to have invented and which he had demonstrated on April 26.

ON YOUR TURNTABLE 50 years ago

Maybe you liked "The Locomotion" by Grand Funk?



Click on the image to play

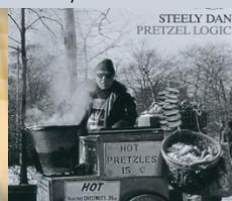
Or was it Chicago "I've been searching so long?"

Possibly the Carpenters?

Was it Billy's "Piano Man"?

Or some good ol' rock from ZZ Top?

I know, it was this Steely Dan hit!

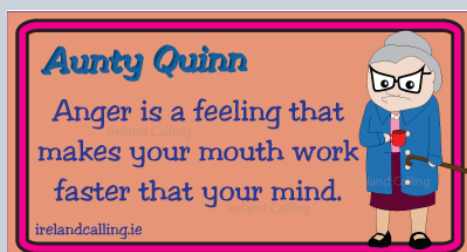


Tattler – Laughs

Your monthly video clip - The brilliant Michael McIntyre
- on shopping Click on the image below to watch.



Whoever snuck
the s in "fast food"
was a clever little
bastard.



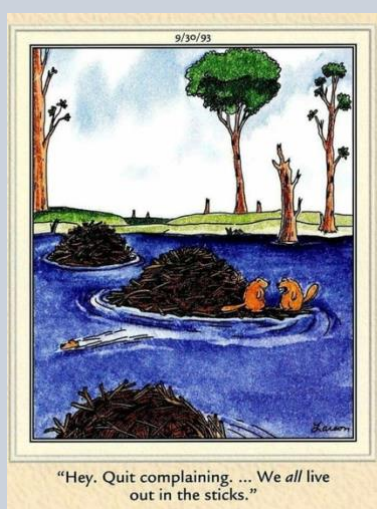
Mick and Paddy are on a cruise.

Paddy says, "It's awfully quiet on deck tonight."

Mick says, "Everyone will be watching the band."

Paddy says, "There isn't a band playing tonight."

Mick says, "I definitely heard someone say, 'A band on ship'"



Tattler – That's it for this month folks