

The Seven Seas Tattler Issue 5.12 – May 2022



Good day Club Members. Welcome to the May Tattler.

We hope that you will enjoy the Tattler and find some of the content to your liking. We want to remind members that they are entitled to advertise their wares, free of charge. Also, that others may advertise at a very reasonable rate. The club benefits from this income. Please feel free to contact me (jonathanagolding@gmail.com) about this, any feedback and/or contributions.

We remind members whose birthdays are omitted that this is entirely due to the club's database not having this information. We apologise and request that you let us update our records!

From the Chair

The Club had a very fruitful AGM on Fri 22 Apr 22. On completion, we had a short meeting of the new committee in which I was re-elected as Chairman with Doug Law-Brown as Honorary Treasurer and Owen Pfuhl as the Honorary Secretary.

We have budgeted a requirement of R80k to be raised in the current Fin Year to recover the financial knock the Club experienced resulting from the lockdowns during the Coronavirus Pandemic and the period without tenants. Members are encouraged to come forward (and be prepared to participate!) with fund-raising ideas. Looking forward to your innovative ideas and ways you are prepared to involve yourselves.

See you at the Club

Regards
Kevin

Tattler - Many of you are aware that Euan Smith has officially become a "swallow" and will be relocating to his "Other home" in England this month for what they call their summer! He has submitted the following:

Tattler has very kindly given me this opportunity to say a few words as I leave the post of Honorary Secretary for The Club. I would like to say that it has been a singular honour to serve our wonderful club in this position for two years. It has been a traumatic period in the life of The Club and indeed in all our lives, but I am glad to say that we appear to be reaching the end now and coming back to a normal way of life. it makes me very proud to have been part of a committee which has weathered these storms in a determined, flexible, sympathetic, and extremely effective manner. As a club we have had more issues to deal with than anything short of conflagration in our long history and we have prevailed. I would particularly like to thank John Winter for stepping up when The Club needed him and being my ears, eyes, and hands whilst I could not physically be in Simon's Town. John you are a Star, Thank You! Kinga and I are now off to become "sparrows" apparently - thanks Kevin - well some sort of migratory animals, probably more like a Wildebeest in my case. We will miss you all while we are away and look forward to many homecomings in future. I will still be helping out where I can with the technology for The Club. I love that that in doing so I will keep in touch and have an active part in our comradeship. So, it's not "goodbye" just "so long for now".

Euan

Tattler wishes Euan and Kinga well and looks forward to their return later in the year.

Quiz night feedback.

On the 13th of April, the club hosted its 18th quiz.

Over the period some 1260 questions were prepared. Some 6300 answer sheets provided to participants. And some amazing tech (courtesy of our own Euan Smith) to enable what we believe to be a world-class offering..

We had a good turnout of some 20 participants (members, partners, friends and family). We were thrilled!

Our ambition and objective are to provide an evening of fun and entertainment to our members. We sincerely believe we are achieving this. There is no entry fee. Whilst we guarantee no prizes we have always been able to rustle up token gifts for the winners.

We are very happy to receive really positive feedback from those that attend. Having some fun is the order of the day (evening)! It is believed that we are achieving our objectives.

The quiz is arranged to have seven sets of 10 questions in different categories. Here are some questions from 2 categories in our recent quiz:

Music - Songs with one word Titles

- 1) Which band did "Words", released in 1968
- 2) A Fleetwood Mac song from 1977, hopefully not a nightmare

- 3) A major battle in Belgium, a London railway terminus and a song by Abba
- 4) A "continental" song by Toto?
- 5) In this song, Sting (Police) attempts to get a prostitute to change her ways! (R.....)
- 6) An expression of worship, Leonard Cohen did the original
- 7) Nelly Furtado being a great white shark?
- 8) A song about the recent past? (The Beatles)
- 9) Frankie Avalon sung about this planet back in 1959
- 10) One Direction singing about an oft hated subject at school?

Sport

- 1) Born Rocco Francis Marchegiano, he is the only heavyweight champion boxer (champion between 1952 to 1956, 49 fights, 49 wins) to retire undefeated. He was known as xxxxx Marciano. First name/nickname please
- 2) A Trinidadian former international cricketer, widely acknowledged as one of the greatest batsmen of all time. He topped the Test batting rankings on several occasions and holds several cricketing records, including the record for the highest individual score in first-class cricket, with 501 not out . Who?
- 3) Which South African holds the men's athletics 400 metres world record?
- 4) Who led the first South African rugby team to tour overseas – to Britain in 1906?
- 5) The 4 x 100m men's swimming relay team won the gold medal for SA at the Olympic Games in Athens. They clocked 3 minutes and 13.17 seconds. The South African squad was Roland Schoeman, Lyndon Ferns, Darian Townsend and who?
- 6) Which opening batter played cricket for both Australia and South Africa?
- 7) South African driver, Desiree Wilson was one of few women to ever compete in Formula 1 racing. Also the only ever winner! (In a depleted field of ten runners at Brands Hatch, Wilson piloted her four-year-old red Wolf WR4 to victory – the first and so far only victory for a woman). How many women have raced at this level? (2, 5, 7, 8?)
- 8) The surname of the two South African brothers both racing in the motorcycle premier class, MotoGP, this year?
- 9) South African Wheelchair-racer and hand cyclist Ernst xxx xxx competed in his seventh Paralympics in Rio; his first was Barcelona in 1992. He has one gold, one silver and one bronze medal. Ernst who?
- 10) Who wore "south African" underpants so famously after winning the rugby world cup?

Test yourselves! Better still, come and join our regulars! Let's see if we can get 30 or 40 participants!

NEXT QUIZ EVENING – 11 May 2022!

What Is the Origin of the Word "Quiz"?

The word, was already in use by 1782, meaning 'an odd or eccentric person', and had been used in this sense by Fanny Burney in her diary entry for 24 June 1782. 'Quiz' was also used as a name for a kind of toy, something like a yo-yo, which was popular around 1790. The word is nevertheless hard to account for, and so is its later meaning of 'to question or interrogate'. This emerged in the mid-19th century and gave rise to the most common use of the term today, for a type of entertainment based on a test of a person's knowledge.

<https://www.lexico.com/explore/what-is-the-origin-of-the-word-quiz>

Tattler – we thank the following for their kind words and loyal support on quiz nights.

Dear Jonathan,

We would like to again thank you and Euan for a most enjoyable quiz night. The camaraderie last night was enhanced by the mixed make-up of some teams and certainly allowed us to get to know fellow members a lot better. The closeness of the final scores was evidence of an exciting but not over-competitive atmosphere and saw new winners crowned. Interestingly enough, one of the 'mixed' teams which had never played together before. It was an evening of fun and knowledge (as much gained by us as given) and also showed that individuals are just as welcome as teams. We much enjoyed the high spirits of the evening – with special thanks to Euan for the bottled spirit he so kindly sponsored.

Roll on the next quiz evening.

Lyn and Arne Soderlund

Hi Jonathan,

Many thanks for an enjoyable evening last night. Please thank Euan as well. We hope to attend again.

Regards

Erik McKenzie

As enthusiastic quiz goers we attend a number of quizzes at some clubs, hotels and even one in the UK several years ago. The Seven Seas quiz is the best presented quiz that I have ever attended. The questions and categories are good in my opinion. The other quizzes are open to the public which may have a bearing although you do encourage the bringing of guests. This venue surpasses most venues. It would just seem that there is little quiz interest by club members which is a pity. Most quizzes charge a fee that probably goes towards the prize money or the expenses. You do not. The winter months may prove to be a draw card because yachtsman sail on Wednesday and not after dark which makes our timing good with less parking difficulties. The overall results of the teams are a good barometer and it may be an idea to make the questions even less testing and reassess later.

Kind Regards

Ian Fishley

Club Manager's Report

Congratulation to our 100 Club Winners for April 2022

Capt Jorrie Jordaan: R600 (2 x R300)

Capt Bill Rice (Ret): R300

Mr Euan Smith: R1000

We wish the following a happy birthday. May the year ahead be very kind to them all!

Tattler - (Our usual bit of fun - birthday's shared with.....)

Mr K.C. Welthagen – 02 May (1916 - Glenn Ford, actor)

Mr I. Wright – 02 May (1892 - Baron Von Richtofen, Germany's' WWI "Red Baron")

Mrs R Moore – 02 May (1729 - Catherine II Empress of Russia (Catherine the Great))

Prof G.J. Kruger – 10 May (1838 - John Wilkes Booth, actor, assassinated President Abraham Lincoln)

Mr A. Collingridge – 15 May (1859 - Pierre Curie, chemist, research on radioactivity)

R Adm D.R. Faure (Ret) - 16 May (1905 - Henry Fonda, actor)

Mr P.A Venter – 19 May (1945 - Pete Townshend, musician, member of the "Who")

Capt T.J.D. Thiart (Ret) – 20 May (1944 - Joe Cocker, singer)

Capt P.S. Barnard (Ret) – 20 May (1908 - James Stewart, actor)

Mr D.E. Mac Kenzie – 21 May (1916 - Harold Robbins, novelist)

Mr M. Salda – 23 May (1951 - Anatoly Karpov, Russian Chess player)

Mr S.P.G. Luyr – 28 May (1908 - Ian Fleming, novelist, creator of James Bond)

Mr G.R Glen – 29 May (1917 - John F. Kennedy, 35th U.S. President, assassinated in office)

Capt B.R. Carter – 30 May (1672 - Peter I (Peter the Great), Emperor of Russia)

New Members

We welcome the following new members and hope their stay is long and happy!

Mrs Edith Linda Sone, married to Roy and resides in Simon's Kloof Simon's Town. Edith who is self-employed is a registered Nurse.

Mrs Colette Patience married to Bruce and resides in East Claydon in the UK. Before retiring, Colette worked in a Management Capacity at Mutual and Federal. Colette is also the co-editor of the Tattler.

Aye,
Glen

SPECIAL FEATURE / Den of Antiquity - Junk and Disorderly

Tattler - A rather quaint name for a museum in Simon's Town owned by our very own Arne (Angel) Soderland!

This superb showcase of all conceivable types of memorabilia and unusual collections can be viewed by appointment. Euan Smith, my wife Jen and I had a very entertaining and educational tour, hosted by Arne.

Wow! From Victorian clothing to Jan Smuts. From model ships to cigarette lighters. From military uniforms to dentist drills! From rum and beer to medals to vomit bags. An eclectic set of unique collections that Arne has assembled and studied. His knowledge is second to none and the tour of the museum was way beyond my expectations.

Thanks Angel - we really enjoyed the guided tour!



Your experiences at sea

Tattler - How many of our readers have experienced seas like this? Quite a few I am sure. Maybe they would like to tell Tattler their stories?

Watch this video of a New Zealand Navy Vessel HMNZS Wellington by clicking on the image below:



Classifieds



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Good member, Owen Pfuhl offers the following:

Owen can be contacted at:

email: owenpfuhl1957@gmail.com

cell phone: 0824834802

(For illustration purposes only)

NB: Place your orders by Wednesday. Deliveries will be done strictly on a Monday at 11h00 am, in the parking area at the Club.

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Navy News

Maritime News – Yesterday's science fiction, today's reality

Source: Navaltoday.com

The US Navy has used an all-electric, high-energy laser weapon to defeat a target representing a subsonic cruise missile in flight in what it claims to be a “historic test”.

Known as the Layered Laser Defense (LLD), the weapon was designed and built by Lockheed Martin to serve as a multi-domain, multi-platform demonstration system.

It can counter unmanned aerial systems and fast-attack boats with a high-power laser—and also use its high-resolution telescope to track in-bound air threats, support combat identification and conduct battle damage assessment of engaged targets, according to the navy.



Target Drone During High Energy Laser Engagement (Photo courtesy of Lockheed Martin)

“Innovative laser systems like the LLD have the potential to redefine the future of naval combat operations,” said Chief of Naval Research Rear Adm. Lorin C. Selby. *“They present transformational capabilities to the fleet, address diverse threats, and provide precision engagements with a deep magazine to complement existing defensive systems and enhance sustained lethality in high-intensity conflict.”*

The drone shoot-down by the LLD was part of a recent test sponsored by the Office of Naval Research (ONR) at the US Army’s High Energy Laser Systems Test Facility at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. The demonstration was a partnership between ONR, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Research and Engineering) and Lockheed Martin. During the recent test at White Sands, the LLD tracked or shot down an array of targets - including unmanned fixed-wing aerial vehicles, quadcopters and high-speed drones representative of subsonic cruise missiles.

The LLD testing supports a broader effort by the naval research and development community, partnered closely with the fleet, to mature technologies and field a family of laser weapons that can address multiple threats using a range of escalating options.

These capabilities range from non-lethal measures, such as optical “dazzling” and disabling of sensors, to the destruction of a target.

Laser weapons provide new precision and speed of engagement for naval war fighters. They also offer simplified logistics that are safer for ships and their crews, as lasers are not dependent on the traditional propellants or gunpowder-based ordnance found on ships.

Instead, modern high-power lasers run on electricity, making them inherently safer and able to provide weapon capability as long as a ship has power. This also means the cost per engagement for a laser weapon can be very low, since the only consumable item expended is fuel to run the system.

For years, the Department of Defense (DoD) and all the Services have recognized the promise of directed-energy weapons such as lasers, and continue to prioritize research.

Recently, the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, the Hon. Heidi Shyu, re-affirmed that directed energy is one of the DoD's critical technology areas.

In 2014 ONR saw the laser weapon system tested successfully aboard the USS Ponce in the Persian Gulf. More recently, ONR fielded the laser weapon system demonstrator aboard the USS Portland in 2021.

Profile Feature – Admiral Hugo Hendrik Biermann

Source: Geni, Military Wikipedia

Admiral Hugo Hendrik Biermann

Birthdate: August 06, 1916

Death: March 27, 2012 (95)

Immediate Family: Son of Hugo Hendrik Jacobus Biermann and Catharina Maria Biermann.
Husband of Margaret Elaine Biermann.
Father of Private User and Private.
Brother of Stefanus (Chips) Cornelis Bierman, Rear Admiral; Pieter Willem Biermann; Private and Philip Wessels Biermann



After two years training on the South African Training Ship General Botha from 1932 to 1933, he entered the British Merchant Navy as a cadet and served until 1938 when he was transferred to the Maritime Department of the South African Railways and Harbours.

He began his naval career in 1938 as a sub-lieutenant in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve in the 1930s. In January 1940 he was called up for full-time service and transferred to the Seaward Defence Force.

Promoted lieutenant in mid 1941 he commanded HMSA Ships Imhoff, Roodepoort and Aristea before being promoted to Lieutenant Commander in command of the salvage vessel HMSAS Gamtoos. The crew of the HMSAS Gamtoos cleared several Mediterranean ports of sunken and

scuttled ships, and at Marseilles, Biermann blew a hole in the harbour wall so that he could enter the Vieux Port and begin work. The Gamtoos went on to salvage the Sidi Aissa, towing it away to clear the valuable graving dock at La Ciotat by 14 December 1944. This earned Lt Cdr Biermann the Order of the British Empire, an honour he shared with the entire ship's company.

The citation for his OBE reads: On the recommendation of the British Admiralty, the then Lieutenant-Commander H. H. Biermann, an officer in the South African Naval Forces [SANF], was appointed an Officer of the Military Division of the Order of the British Empire [OBE] "for distinguished service during the invasion of Southern France."

After the war and with the establishment of the South African Navy (Permanent Force) in May 1946, he was appointed Lieutenant-Commander and Captain of the Algerine class minesweeper, SAS Bloemfontein, commissioning her in Devonport on 8 September 1947 and as Senior Officer of the minesweeping squadron.

In 1950, he was transferred to Defence Headquarters and served on the staff of the then Director-General of the SA Naval Forces. Two years later he attended the British Naval Staff Course at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and was appointed as naval attaché at South African House, London with the rank of Commander.

Commander Biermann was appointed naval and marine chief of staff on 1 December 1952 and promoted to the rank of Commodore, jumping 2 ranks. During his tenure the Simonstown Agreement was signed on 30 June 1955. He held that rank until 1 April 1957, with the handing over of the Simon's Town Naval Base, he was promoted to Rear-Admiral.

On 1 December 1965, Rear-Admiral Biermann was promoted to Vice-Admiral and Chief of the Navy, the first time this title was used in South Africa.,

In 1972, he took over the position of Chief of the South African Defence Force and promoted to Admiral, the first time this rank was used in the South African Navy.

In 1977 he authored "The South African Response." The Southern Oceans and the Security of the Free World: New Studies in Global Strategy (1977).

The navy's submarine base was named after him.

Biermann died at the age of 95 at a retirement home, Silvermine Village, near Cape Town. He was buried with full military honours.

Decorations and Awards

He received the Star of South Africa Decoration on 13 May 1960 in recognition of his exceptionally meritorious services, as well as Order Of May To Naval Merit in the grade of "Grand Cross Admiral Guillermo Brown from Argentina and the Knight Grand Cross of the Order of Infante Dom Henrique of Portugal. He was the first recipient of the Southern Cross Decoration, which he received on his retirement as Chief of the SADF in 1976.

Feature – Idle Women – The Land Girls of the Waterways/UK History

Source: <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/canal-history/war-on-the-waterways/idle-women-the-land-girls-of-the-waterways>



Women trainees keep the waterways operating during WWII.

Most people are familiar with the 'Land Girls'; women who volunteered to work the land to aid the war effort during World War Two. Less well known, however, is the story of the efforts of the Inland Waterway women or 'Idle Women' who volunteered to operate canal boats carrying vital goods and supplies during the Second World War.

In 1939 many boatmen joined the armed forces leaving the women and the older men to run the boats. The Ministry of War Transport realised that vital supplies such as coal and food could be transported along the canal and began to recruit boaters.

Daphne March and Molly Traill had been working on Heather Bell transporting goods as varied as coal, flour, and even Spam to Nottingham! Molly went to the Ministry in 1941 to suggest that they recruit women to help, and eventually, the Women's Training Scheme was initiated.

Applicants need only be 'of robust constitution'

Many of these women were barely into their twenties, and most had no boating experience; each receiving just six weeks training at the start of their posting. They came from all walks of life; debutantes, bombed out East-enders and even a soon-to-be duchess operated the boats. One of the trainers, Kit Grayford, was a former ballet dancer. The Department of War Transport's only requirement was that young women who applied had to be 'of robust constitution'.

Why were they called 'Idle Women'?

The nickname derived from the IW initials on their cheap, blue badges which stood for Inland Waterways. However, the boat people, born and bred on the canal system referred to the group as the 'Idle Women', and the name kind of stuck.

Idle they most certainly were not

The boat crews numbered three women to handle the diesel-powered narrowboats, each one towing its butty boat. The work was hard; each pair of boats carried heavy loads of up to 50 tonnes – mainly steel from London to Birmingham, before returning to the capital laden with Warwickshire coal to be shovelled directly on to canalside factory wharves.

For this round trip of some three weeks on board consisting of 18-20 hour days, the 'girls' were paid £3 per week, with the option of a week's unpaid leave afterwards.

Life was hard. The cabins were tiny. Two shared the motor cabin and one had the butty cabin. Keeping their bedding rolls dry was difficult. Space was so limited that it was possible to light the primus and make a hot drink without leaving bed! They washed in a small basin unless they moored for the night near a public bath, and toilet facilities were 'bucket and chuck it.'

Unlike the Land Girls, they received no extra rations subsisting on "cocoa with condensed milk, national loaf and peanut butter". The girls had emergency ration cards, which made shopping difficult when many shops operated on a 'regulars only' policy. If they were lucky, they got fresh milk & eggs as they passed farms. One would cycle fast to get the goods and join the boat at the next lock.

The women took turns at lock wheeling (going ahead on a bike to prepare the lock) and steering. Whilst steering the butty, it was possible to read or prepare dinner at the same time.

Do we know who the women were and where they were from?

There were approximately 48 women altogether, all aged between 18 and 35. Before the war, the women worked in varied professions including, teaching, factory work, acting, and making aeroplane parts. Some took to working on the boats like ducks to water, others didn't last a whole trip. Most of the women can be identified in photos and film clips, but a few can't. It is thought that there were never more than 11 crews working at one time.

Most of the work was done for the Grand Union Canal Carrying Company. The main trainers were Kit (Eily) Gayford and Daphne French. Before the War, Kit was a pastry cook, a dance teacher, and a public health lecturer.

We know most about the women who wrote books. Eily Gayford wrote 'The Amateur Boatwoman', Susan Woolfitt wrote 'Idle Women', Margaret Cornish wrote 'Troubled Waters', and Emma Smith wrote 'Maidens' Trip'.

Susan Woolfitt married Sir Donald Wolfit (Shakespearean actor and director) in 1935. They split (hence the different surname spellings), their two children were evacuated to boarding school, and Susan joined the training scheme.

Margaret Cornish was previously a clippie in Oxford and a teacher. Her local authority ordered her to evacuate to an unknown destination with pupils or resign. Margaret resigned and joined the scheme. Emma Smith (Elspeth Hallsmith) worked for MI5 but hated being confined to a small room. She left and transferred to the scheme.

The propaganda crew was EvelynAudrey&Anne, spoken as one word. They became the most efficient crew on the scheme. Audrey Harper (24) was the steerer on the motor, Sun. Their butty was the Dipper. They performed before Ministry officials and appeared in a Pathe News film. They were the inspiration for the 1944 film, Painted Boats. They didn't enjoy stopping to perform for the Ministry men and the film crews. Evelyn Hunt previously worked for the Camouflage Directorate, Audrey abandoned nursing training and Anne was an Oxford science graduate.

There were a few that didn't last long including, the 'Dresden Chinas', two sisters who sunbathed and spent more time focused on their immaculate appearance than anything else. Others include Bash, formerly a factory worker with 6 hard-drinking brothers, who thought the other girls were too 'stuck up', and Mary, who had wrongly been released from a mental health institution. She was taken away in a taxi never to be seen on the boats again.

So, what happened to the women after the war?

After the war, they all went their separate ways. Olga Kevelos became a motorcycle racing champion, winning her first gold medal in the 1949 International Six-Day Trials. She also drove Formula III racing cars at Brands Hatch. She studied French Medieval History in Paris and as a contestant on Mastermind her chosen specialist subject was Genghis Khan.

Kit Gayford was awarded MBE in 1945 for training the girls.

Audrey Harper married a diplomat and lived in Rhodesia and Tasmania. Emma Smith worked for Laurie Lee whilst he was writing 'Cider with Rosie' and wrote novels herself.

Sonia South married an illiterate boatman, but the marriage didn't last. She later (1952) married Tom Rolt who co-founded the Inland Waterways Association in 1946. Sonia was part of their first delegation to the Ministry of Transport. She campaigned hard to improve conditions for the boat families. The couple also worked to preserve and run the Talyllyn railway and Sonia advised on the restoration of SS Great Britain and some National Trust properties. Sonia worked for the Landmark Trust, advising on furnishing and libraries. Sonia was vice president of the Inland Waterways Association when she was awarded OBE in 2011. She died in 2014.

And, how are they remembered today?

The Canal and River Trust have photos and articles on their website and the Pathe Newsreels can be viewed online. There is also a BBC interview with Emma Smith, by Sophie Raworth at Nottingham.

Some of the women have attended reunions, including watching a travelling play on a canal boat that commemorated their work in 2017. There is a plaque at the Stoke Bruerne Canal Museum to commemorate their work, which was unveiled by Sonia Rolt in 2008, and a plaque in memory of Kit Gayford on a mile marker 79 miles from Braunston.

Editorial

Tattler - The Smith name in rugby (especially for our friend Euan Smith!)

The Springboks have had 8 players with the surname Smith, not to be confused with the three named Smit.

Dan and Toki Smith played for the boks in Britain in August 1891;
There was a long wait, up till 1938 before George Smith was selected;
Nelie started his Springbok career in August 1963 against Australia;
Next was David, after another long gap, in May 1980 in Britain;
He was followed by Franco in 1997;
And Juan in 2003;
More recently, sevens star, Kwagga played his maiden game against Wales in June 2018.

Australia have had ten rugby stars with this less than rare name. Notables include the brilliant flanker, George and a centre with the remarkable first name of Lancelot!

The All Blacks? New Zealand has had no less than thirteen of them and one Smyth. Several of these have been exceptional rugby players including Aaron, Ben and Conrad.

Up North, Scotland have had 15, including the world class prop Tom who sadly passed away in April this year. Wales have only had 3 (but have had, wait for it.....70 with the name Jones!). England don't really count do they? (They insisted on breaking their list into different decades for some odd reason and the search job was just too difficult!). And those damn Irish chaps - Attempting an alphabetic search gave it to me in first name order! - I was not going to search through over 11 hundred of the buggers!) The British and Irish Lions have had 13 Smith blokes and two Smyth fellows. (And 17 Jones)

So, is it a really common name. Well, not compared with Jones !!!



Bok strong man, Juan



Brilliant (scrum half) Aaron



George, one of the very best flank forwards

Scot (and British and Irish Lion) prop Tom Smith RIP

For the rugby enthusiasts

History of Rugby Football by Ben Johnson

The origins of the game, now known across the world simply as rugby, can be traced back over 2000 years. The Romans played a ball game called *harpastum*, a word derived from the Greek word “seize”, the implication of the name being that somebody actually carried or handled the ball.

More recently, in medieval England, documents record young men leaving work early to compete for their village or town in games of football. Laws were passed, in Tudor times, forbidding the “*devilish pastime*” of football, as too many injuries and fatalities seriously depleted the available workforce. The participants of this *devilish pastime* are recorded thus... “The players are young men from 18-30 or upwards; married as well as single and many veterans who retain a relish for the sport are occasionally seen in the very heat of the conflict...” A description that some might say is as applicable today as it was all of those years ago.

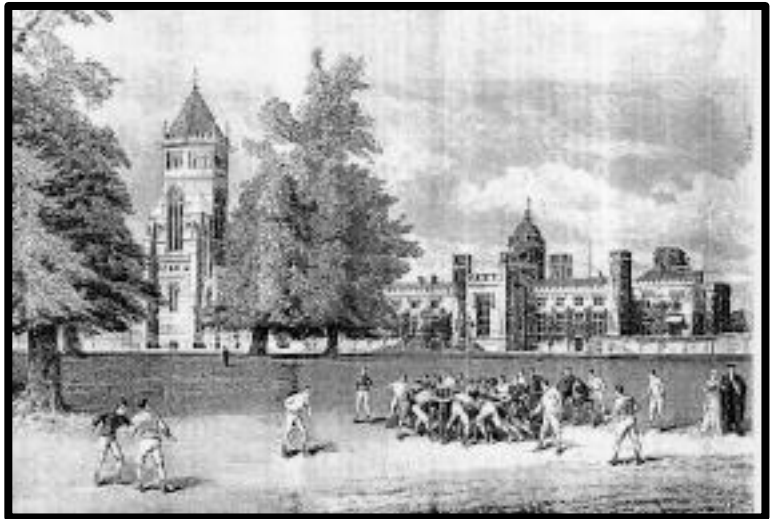
Shrove Tuesday became the traditional timing for such conflicts. Rules differed from one part of the country to the next, from Derbyshire to Dorset to Scotland, records reveal many regional variations to the game. The games often took place over an ill-defined pitch – the ball being kicked, carried and driven through town and village streets over fields, hedges and streams.

The roots to the modern game of rugby can be traced to a school for *young gentlemen* in the Midlands of England, which in 1749 finally outgrew its cramped surroundings within the town centre and moved to a new site on the edge of the town of Rugby in Warwickshire. The new Rugby School site had “...every accommodation that could be required for the exercise of young gentlemen.” This eight-acre plot became known as the Close.

The game of football, which was played on the Close between 1749 and 1823, had very few rules: touchlines were introduced, and the ball could be caught and handled, but running with ball in hand was not permitted. Progress forward towards the opposition’s goal was generally made by kicking. Games could last for five days and often included more than 200 boys. For fun, 40 seniors may take on two hundred younger pupils, the seniors having prepared for the event by first sending their boots to the town cobbler to have extra thick soles put on them, beveled at the front to better slice into the shins of the enemy!

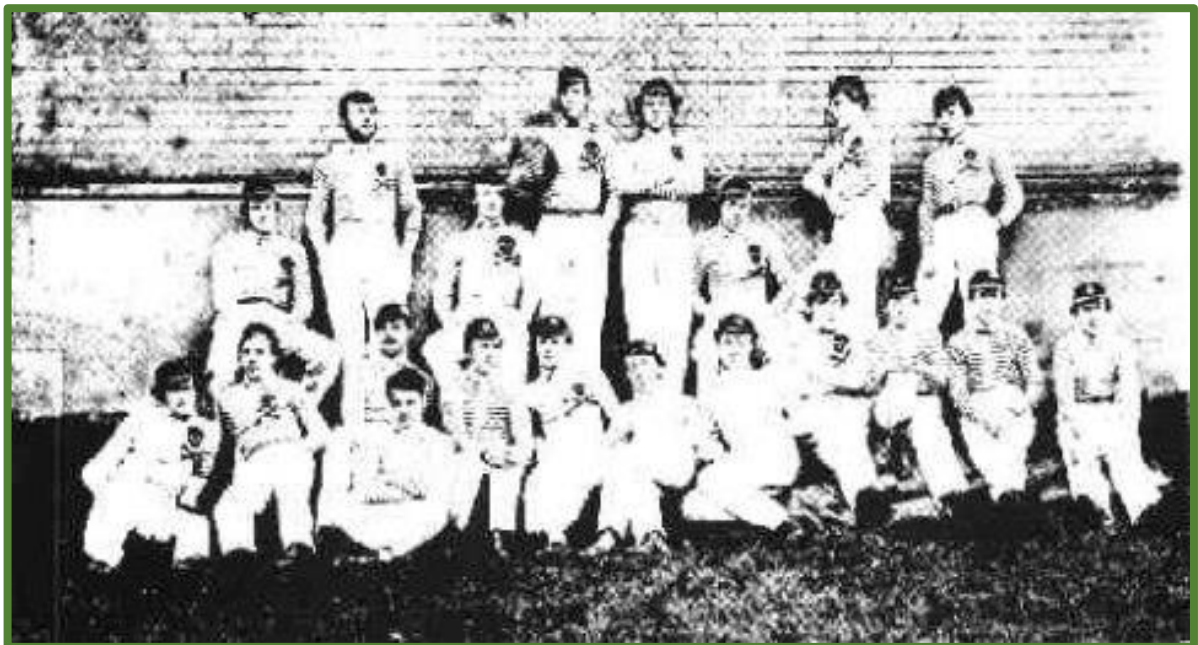
It was during a match on the Close in the autumn of 1823 that the face of the game changed to the one which is recognisable to day.

A local historian described this historic event as follows: “with a fine disregard for the rules of the game as played in his time, William Webb Ellis first took the ball in his arms and ran with it, thus originating the distinctive feature of the Rugby game.”



Ellis had apparently caught the ball and, according to the rules of the day, should have moved backwards giving himself enough room to either punt the ball up field or to place it for a kick at goal. He would have been protected from the opposing team as they could only advance to the spot where the ball had been caught. In disregarding this rule Ellis had caught the ball and instead of retiring, had run forward, ball in hand towards the opposite goal. A dangerous move and one that would not find its way into the fast developing rule book until 1841.

The rules and the fame of the game spread quickly as the Rugby School boys moved onwards and upwards, first to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The first university match was played in 1872. From the universities, the graduating teachers introduced the game to other English, Welsh and Scottish schools, and overseas postings for the Old Rugbeians who had moved through to the army officer class, promoted its growth on the international stage. Scotland played England in the first International game at Raeburn Place, Edinburgh in 1871.



The photograph above shows the *young gentlemen* of 1864 that formed the backbone of the Rugby Schools First XX. The skull and crossbones badge on the front of their kit, perhaps attests to the gentle nature of the game, the shape of the ball was determined by the pig's bladder used for the inside.

History – 6 May 1840: The Penny Black revolutionises communications in Britain.

Source: History Extra, Wikipedia

The Penny Black was the world's first adhesive postage stamp used in a public postal system. It was first issued in the United Kingdom (referred to in philatelic circles as Great Britain), on 1 May 1840, but was not valid for use until 6 May. The stamp features a profile of Queen Victoria.



In 1837, British postal rates were high, complex and anomalous. To simplify matters, Sir Rowland Hill proposed an adhesive stamp to indicate prepayment of postage. At the time it was normal for the recipient to pay postage on delivery, charged by the sheet and on distance travelled. By contrast, the Penny Black allowed letters of up to 1/2 ounce (14 grams) to be delivered at a flat rate of one penny, regardless of distance.

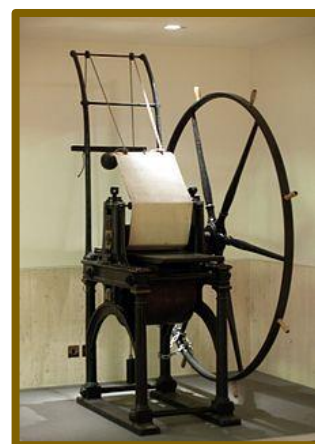
Rowland Hill had a vision. While a small boy in Kidderminster, he had watched in embarrassment as his mother scrabbled for money to pay the postman. By the 1830s, Hill, now a teacher and social reformer, was determined to push through a change that he believed would transform the Post Office into a force for progress: universal penny postage, paid in advance.

By May 1840, Hill's scheme was up and running. As he explained, people would prove that they had paid by using "a bit of paper just large enough to bear the stamp, and covered at the back with a glutinous wash, which the bringer might, by applying a little moisture, attach to the back of the letter". He enlisted the Royal Mint chief engraver to create a memorable image – a picture of Queen Victoria. Today we know his creation as the Penny Black.

The first stamps went on sale on 1 May, and the system came into operation five days later. One schoolboy recalled that he did not "fancy making my mouth a glue pot," while the newssheet *The Town* ran a saucy poem:

*"You must kiss our fair Queen,
or her pictures, that's clear.
Or the gummy medallion will never adhere.
You will not kiss her hand,
you will readily find
But actually kiss little Vicky's behind."*

The Penny Black was an instant hit. Within a week the presses were working round the clock producing 600,000 stamps a day. The stamp had become an icon, a symbol of national pride: an image of Britannia itself.



The Jacob Perkins' press, which printed the Penny Black and the 2d Blue, in the British Library Philatelic Collection.

This month in History

50 years ago - May 1972

General

2 May - U.S. Patent 3,659,915 was issued to Corning Glass, the first ever for fibre optic cable.

6 May - Five American soldiers were rescued 13 days after their helicopter had crashed in Vietnam. The five had been presumed dead until two of them had reached a radio to signal a distress call.

9 May - Israeli special forces stormed a hijacked Belgian jet and freed all 97 hostages on board, killing two of the three hijackers. Sabena Flight 571 had been sitting at the Lod Airport in Tel Aviv after being captured the day before by three men, who threatened to blow the jet up unless Israel released imprisoned Arab guerrillas.

11 May - All 74 persons on board the British merchant ship Royston Grange were burned to death after it collided with the oil tanker Tien Chee in a fog off of the coast of Uruguay. Flaming oil from the tanker (which lost 9 people) created a ring of fire around the freighter.

13 May - A type Ia supernova in SN 1972e, in the galaxy NGC 5253, was observed on Earth, eleven million years after it had happened. Another supernova from NGC 5253 had been observed in 1895.

13 May - The nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, first of the Nimitz class group of the ten largest "supercarriers" in the world, was launched. It would be commissioned on May 3, 1975.

22 May - Richard M. Nixon became the first United States President to visit Moscow (and only the second President, after Franklin D. Roosevelt, to visit the Soviet Union), as he and Henry Kissinger arrived to begin a summit meeting with Soviet First Secretary Brezhnev

28 May - The former King Edward VIII of the United Kingdom, later the Duke of Windsor, died at the age of 77 in his home in France, more than 35 years after he gave up his throne in order to marry Wallis Warfield Simpson. King Edward, whose reign lasted from January 20 to December 11, 1936, left no children.

Sport

14 May - 1972 World Championship Tennis Finals. Ken Rosewall won the singles title and the \$50,000 first prize.

14 May - The Monaco Grand Prix in 1972 was run in extremely wet conditions. The circuit had been changed to move the pits from the start-finish line to the harbour straight, though they were moved back to their original location the following year. Frenchman Jean-Pierre Beltoise (BRM) won his only championship F1 race.

24 May - Glasgow Rangers of Scotland win 12th European Cup Winners Cup against Dynamo Moscow of the Soviet Union 3-2 in Barcelona.

27 May - Indianapolis 500: Mark Donohue wins after leading only the final 13 laps; owner Roger Penske's first of eighteen Indy 500 victories.

Music



Rolling Stones

The Supremes



Fleetwood Mac

Movies



"PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM"

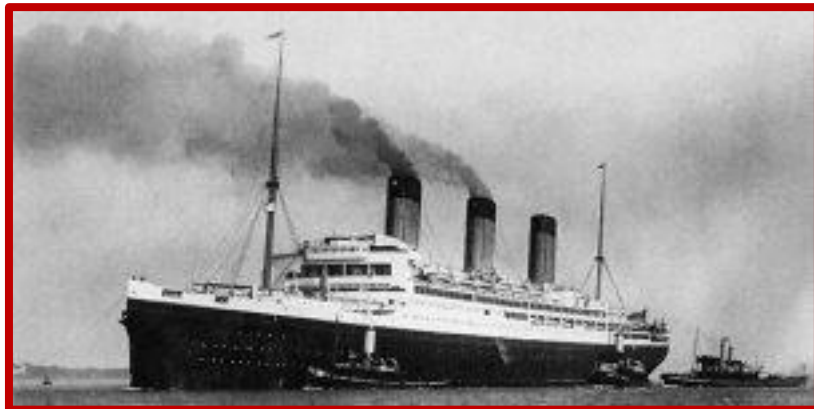
Tattler - Many of you will remember this famous line delivered by Humphrey Bogart in Casablanca (1942).

"Play it Again Sam"

Overanxious film critic Allan (Woody Allen) sinks into a depression after his wife leaves him. Concerned, his married friends Dick (Tony Roberts) and Linda (Diane Keaton) encourage him to meet new women. Inspired by Humphrey Bogart's dark persona, Allan attempts to emulate him in flirting with women. However, his frail personality ensures that his every attempt blows up in his face. His hapless romantic life reaches catastrophic levels when he develops feelings for Linda.

And, a century ago (May 1922)

16 May - White Star Liner Majestic completes 5½ day maiden voyage.



Tattler - This was almost exactly 10 years subsequent to the voyage of the Titanic.

30 May - In Washington, D.C., United States, the Lincoln Memorial is dedicated

Why does the Lincoln Memorial have 36 columns?

The final design featured 36 exterior columns to symbolize the 36 states in the Union at the time of Lincoln's death. The names of these states appear in the frieze above the columns.

Why does the Lincoln Memorial have 87 steps?

There are 87 steps from the Reflecting Pool to Lincoln's statue in the monument. The number 87 represents 'four score and 7' as Abraham Lincoln spoke in his famous Gettysburg Address.



Service<https://www.nps.gov/linc/learn/historyculture/lincoln>

Tattler – Laughs

An old Marine Pilot sat down at the Starbucks, still wearing his old USMC flight jacket and ordered a cup of coffee.

As he sat sipping his coffee, a young woman sat down next to him.

She turned to the pilot and asked,

Are you a real pilot?

He replied, 'Well, I've spent my whole life flying planes, first Stearmans, then the early Grummans... flew a Wildcat and Corsair in WWII, and later in the Korean conflict, Banshees and Cougars. I've taught more than 260 people to fly and given rides to hundreds, so I guess I am a pilot, and you, what are you?

She said, 'I'm a lesbian. I spend my whole day thinking about naked women. As soon as I get up in the morning, I think about naked women. When I shower, I think about naked women. When I watch TV, I think about naked women. It seems everything makes me think of naked women.'

The two sat sipping in silence.

A little while later, a young man sat down on the other side of the old pilot and asked:

"Are you a real pilot?"

He replied, 'I always thought I was, but I just found out I'm a lesbian.'



Do you know that Stephen King has a son named Joseph?

Seriously, not joking!

Yes Joe King

A wife treats hubby by taking him to a Strip Club for his birthday...At The Club, The Doorman Says, "Hi Jim, How are You?" The wife asks, "How does he know you?" Jim says, "Oh dear, I play football with him." Inside the Bartender Says, "The Usual, Jim?"

Jim says to Wife, "Before you say anything, He's on the Darts Team."

Next a stripper Says, "Hi Jim! Do You Crave the Special Again??"

The Wife storms out dragging Jim with her & jumps into a taxi...

The Taxi driver Says, "Hey Jimmy Boy! You picked up an ugly one this time...."

Jim's Funeral is on Sunday!!!

"Want proof that men are more creative than women ? Women will gladly pay someone else to build them a pair of big boobs, while men spend years crafting their own, using nothing but beer and pizza." — Scott E. Frank.

Tattler - That's it for another month. Keep well and safe!