



## INDEFATIGABLE OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER 2017

Greetings on behalf of the IOBA  
Andrew, Steve, Tom, Richard, Ian & Tony

Many thanks must go to our very own 'Dumbledore', IT Wizard **Owen Sutton** for designing the Newsletter cover.

OWENSUTTON.com    Graphic & Web Design



**2017** I went into the AGM with a little fear of what might transpire; with many of the committee stepping down I wondered whether we would still have a committee at the end. That said, in time honoured tradition when the call to step up was announced I was pleasantly rewarded with the outcome. Some of the team had just changed roles whilst others had accepted extra duties. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those committee members who have stepped down for their support over the years and welcome into the

team those new members who have offered their services to the cause. I thank each of you for your time and commitment. The year has been full of memorable moments and I personally will never forget my first Sea Cadet Award as Chairman.

2018 will be another milestone celebration for me as I celebrate forty years since leaving TS Indefatigable and embarking upon my professional career. It is only when I reflect upon my career to date that all the pieces of the timeline make sense. When I was eight years old I joined the Cub Scouts and it was there that I first learnt the life-saving skill of first aid, naturally this skill was something I continued to develop through the following years of scouts, army cadets and subsequently the Royal Navy. You may recall from last year's newsletter of my rather short but eventful Naval career, so I will not dwell on that moment from my past, only to use it as another marker along the journey.

Having left the Royal Navy as a Seaman Sonar Operator/Submariner I could not see myself finding a comparable job on land. This progression from an established career path forced me to look somewhere else for inspiration. The next few years were really hard as I struggled to adjust; I sought a career in retail footwear management and thought I was doing well until a nightmare moment saw me institutionalised with a nervous breakdown at the age of 20. Believe me anyone who tells you that stress is good for you has never suffered its seriously traumatic effects.

So, as I alluded in my last message a “psychologically disturbed ex royal naval submariner” seeks opportunity to find himself. My brother Martin, also an ex Inde’ boy and royal naval submariner, was working for a drainage castings wholesaler who had just had a lorry load of parts returned that required cleaning and painting. Knowing I was out of work, Martin offered my services to the company who gave me two weeks work cleaning and restoring the parts. It was whilst working here that I got my first break, literally! The charge hand in the yard broke his arm so I was asked to stay on to support. Five years later I left having obtained a proficiency in Materials Handling Equipment (MHE) and the operation of an industrial radial drill to join Panasonic.

However, it was whilst working at Drainage Castings and Panasonic that I had the opportunity to fulfil that part of my life that I felt I had failed. In 1987 I joined the then Territorial Army as a signal man with 71 Signal Regiment based in Bexley Heath Kent. I was stationed in Windsor as part of the Berkshire Yeomanry and was really enjoying the dual life of daytime civilian weekend soldier. I could not drive at this time and so my only means of getting to the drill nights was if someone took me. 24 lessons with the British school of motoring were paid for by the TA and I passed my test first time. A reward for such was to become part of my life for the next ten years. Having told you that I enjoyed first aid – it may come as no surprise to you that I transferred to the Royal Army Medical Corp, still attached to 71

Signal Regiment I served until my wife gave birth to our second child in 1997 and we relocated to Northampton with Panasonic having reached the rank of Senior NCO. My military career took me on some very interesting adventures not only professionally but psychologically as well, one sent me mad the other made me more determined to prove myself and strive for excellence.

So, 20 years after leaving school I had finally found a career working in distribution as an MHE Operator within warehousing... or so I thought. With my knowledge of first aid and extended knowledge as a combat medical technician I was able to put these skills to better use. This did not go unnoticed by my employer who had seen the work I had been doing and the reports I had written in to accident investigation and had asked me to become the employees' safety representative.

This is where the next 20 years starts and a lifetime's dedication to the preservation of life was realised. Any of you who have seen my LinkedIn profile will know that I am now a Chartered Occupational Safety & Health Practitioner working for Aston Martin Lagonda Limited. I have a lot to thank Panasonic for and will always be grateful to John Walsh who recognised the potential within and gave me this career that I enjoy today. I have a passion and desire to inspire others to achieve all that they wish for and can add a sixth "British Safety Council Sword of Honour" to the list of notable achievements in my career to date. So, after almost forty years of work I look back at my career and reflect on where I started and where I am today, having hopefully truly made a difference to the lives of many and saved the lives of so many more.

I look forward to meeting up with many of you again at our reunion in June 2018 and I wish each one of you and your families a peaceful and rewarding Christmas and prosperous New Year.

God Bless  
Andrew

# A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

by John Pudney 65/66

Left home (Limavady Northern Ireland) on Friday morning with Jones No2 63/64, journeying by car, train, Taxi, Boat & car, finally arriving 12 hours later at the Carreg Bran in time for 'Vibrant Shirt Night' in aid of a very worthwhile men's charity.



Down to the school on Saturday morning after a 'big breakfast', only my 2nd time to arrive there by car - the 1st time being on 20th May 1965, when Capt. Wade & Boy Swan collected me from Bangor Station after a lonely journey from Euston on my own, all

250 miles by steam train! No barrier at entrance then & the Parade ground definitely seems smaller now, and the mast is missing!

Up the front steps - No Indefatigable name plaque, no boy under the bell - in fact NO BELL! Through the main door - no boy on duty - past Capt. Wade's office quickly; you didn't want to be marched in there! Past the large fire place previously hidden by Bursars' Office and out into the main hall - Shock/Horror - highly polished wooden floor now completely covered by carpet! From there into Mr Gage's room, wood panelling and ornate fire place still as in my day with the Inde bell residing in the fire place - I don't remember there being a bar in this room! Met up with more ex boys from 65/66, 6 out of 140 not bad after 50 years. Another 30 plus 65/66 ex-Inde boys are in touch via email thanks to Frank Lawler in Oz.

Next we went down to the Assembly Hall for the IOBA A.G.M. More carpets, no 16mm projector for Saturday night movies or the old B&W TV. And Mr Davis' light for Visual Morse signalling is missing! AGM over, it's up to the Dining Hall for lunch. We never got smoked salmon, prawns and salads back in the day but you could always tell the day of the week by the menu – always fish on Fridays and jelly on Sundays, plenty of white bread with butter.



*The Gang of 65/66 John Pudney Mick Gorgan Ken Tatlock Mark Chatman Dermot O'Toole*

Now for a tour of the old school. Up the central stairs quickly passing the Tuck shop - no Captain's wife in it now – on to the central corridor (watch out for The Grey Lady), Boot Locker & Laundry Basket both gone. Turn right to the Sick Bay. No black draught or white bottle doled out by the Seamstress today. Into the Nozzer's dorm - 'Palm Line' my 1st dorm. The Company Ship's photographs and flag are missing and I would give anything for one of the Palm Line counterpanes now.



Away to the Senior Boy's end – a quick check in Furness Withy dorm – more carpet, probably for the best as very poor floor in this dorm – never won a cake here. On to the top landing to my last dorm; name long since forgotten. Night heads open during the day??....a must for the over 60's after a heavy night!

Down stairs to the Galley hatch but it's no longer there, past the ablution block – no more shimmying up the Galley passage walls to hide. Then out past the Spud Lockers now missing! But one thing they cannot move, change or destroy – NOZZER'S ROCK, now a “no climbing” sign attached. Strange in a Mountaineering School!



Round to front of school passing Mr Dean's wire splicing classroom, around the new block, water fountain now a flower bed, football pitch now a car park & rugby field overgrown with trees!! A quick look into the swimming pool, now heated they say – big change from the 1st Division to swim being the Icebreakers!! Basketball/football court is no longer – where Mr Bond's leg/ankle got broken; was it retaliation I wonder? Mr Yeat's Sail Loft still standing but the 5's court alas is no longer! Laundry building is still in place; is there any hot water and hard soap?

Time to take a look at the jetty so down the Burma Road we go, no Cutters on their buoys now, but a new sailing centre has sprung up, however the old jetty with round house is still the same. The Cutters were decommissioned in 1966 when the Hood cutter sank on its moorings. The last two Cutters, Hood & Raleigh Divisions were pulled out by 'boy power' and dragged to their final resting place just behind the Captain's house.







Looking to the left of the jetty you will see a pile of rocks, some of which were cleared from the beach by Inde boys after the Army had blown them up, ready for the arrival of an ex Merchant Navy motor driven Lifeboat. Not the ex Inde one in the photo that was recently found in a field on Anglesey.

Back up to the school and off to St Mary's Church to see the new Inde window, I don't remember the hill being this steep or the main road being so busy!! From St. Mary's down to Nelson's Statue, first time seen from the shore. Nelson was always a marker not to be passed in a boat unless you wished to be washed under the Britannia Bridge. Time for a rest before the Reunion dinner which proved an excellent night and a good time was had by all, with raffle prizes galore.



This has been my 1st. reunion but I'm looking forward to visiting again in 2020 for the 55th anniversary, when hopefully I will meet up with many more ex-boys from my year. Although I found many changes in the old school it's great that it is still standing and put to good use. I still have many wonderful memories of the teachers and the boys there, and their part in preparing me for my career in the Royal Navy. My arm still start to wave about in time to the music every time I hear Joe Loss's Latino Cha-Cha thanks to Mr Davis' Signals Display.

We departed Llanfair PG on Sunday morning by car, the last time for me being over 50 years ago in December '66 on my way to join the Royal Navy at HMS Raleigh. The journey then entailed a walk to Llanfair PG station for trains to Plymouth, changing at Bangor, Chester, Crewe, Birmingham, Bristol and Exeter, all on one bag meal!!





*HMS Mohawk alongside Ireland Island Bermuda 1969.*

I served 12 years in the Royal Navy serving in the Engine Room & Regulating Branches, including the Med & West Indies for a year (tough but someone had to do it!), the Far East, Scotland and finally Northern Ireland where I meet my wife Lorna. On leaving the RN I worked for 38 years in a large Dupont Chemical Plant and retired in 2015, 8 days before my 65th birthday. I'm now a full time husband, father and grandfather, and wondering when I ever found the time to work!

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*“I don’t know what it is Steve, but there is something strangely familiar about this ‘Jihadi John’ character that I can’t quite put my finger on. Any ideas?”*

# WALTER PRICE-ROBERTS' EULOGY

by his Daughter, Sue Green



Walter was born in Holyhead, Anglesey, North Wales on the 27th December 1937, the son of a Blacksmith and the Grandson of a carpenter.

Walter had a tough childhood, losing his Father at the age of three, with little money his Mother had to raise him and his siblings singlehanded. His Mother was a strict Welsh Methodist with Walter and his two brothers and sister in their Sunday best sent to church three times on a

Sunday (woe be tied any of them if they got dirty on the way home!). It must have been of some enlightenment when as a young boy soprano he was chosen to sing in Bangor Cathedral. He attended the local school and didn't learn English until the age of 7 speaking only welsh, which he never forgot. Walter, naturally left handed often recalled how his arm was tied behind his back to ensure he wrote "correctly". Despite this ordeal his beautiful writing was always commented on.

At the tender age of 14 he joined TS Indefatigable for a life at sea. It was a strict disciplined regime, but here he found solace, support and friendship. Many of his peers were from similar poor backgrounds. Anyone from Anglesey will have fond memories of seeing the young trainee sailors in their neatly pressed navy

uniforms in and around the village of Llanfair PG or hoping for a lift home or to Liverpool.

Walter left the “Inde” and joined the Merchant Navy; this young teenager serving on various ships and Lines travelling to places around Africa and the Mediterranean. Unfortunately his naval career was abruptly cut short when he fell from the Ship’s Bridge and sustained a head injury. Luckily he survived and eventually made a full recovery but always joked later in life that this was the reason he had never experienced a headache.

Walter would later in his retirement join the “Inde Lads” Old Boys Association, and at their reunions shared many of the memories from the time on the training ship, the strict masters, and the instilling principals learnt. Here Walter renewed friendships past and present. He was proud each year to attend.

To raise funds for the “Old Boys” Association he would happily spend hours in the months before the reunion in his workshop creating a gift to auction at the AGM. These beautiful pieces of work he created all by head and hand. Many a time he would bring the work into the house to complete the finishing touches and polishing if his workshop was too cold, enabling the final piece to be ready in time. It was always a delight when he proudly showed off the finished item, often recalling the history and significance behind the carving. His only concern was that it was liked enough to raise sufficient funds. He needn’t have worried. Though Walter never made a fuss of the monies he raised, (in excess of £3,000) the family were very proud of his achievement.

After his naval career came to an abrupt end, Walter travelled to Wolverhampton to board with his half-brother and his family. He quickly found a job as a Porter in the Old Victoria Hotel and it was here that he met Margaret, who was working as a Kitchen maid. For these two teenagers it was love at first sight, Margaret often recalling the first sight of this “Bobby Dazzler” walking down

the hotel steps in his immaculate porter uniform. At the tender age of 19 and 18 they married and went on to have two children Susan and David. Living initially with Margaret's parents and after a short return to Wales, Walter found a new job at Goodyear's, Wolverhampton factory. It was a manual hard job – his skin often engrained with the carbon black – and the shift work meant long tiring hours lifting huge weights of rubber but he was fit and strong. His time at Goodyear continued and he moved on to a white collar role and normal working hours, he became involved in the unions, often spending long evenings with the management fighting for the rights of his fellow workers.



During these years Walter and Margaret both worked hard to buy their first house, and their first car, Walter having only a few lessons before the purchase. It was on its maiden run that the family recall the shouts of joy as he overtook his first vehicle; a tractor! The family had many memorable holidays camping in Wales and during one week's camping on a beach on Anglesey – it was the summer of 76, one of the hottest summers on record – a terrific thunderstorm broke in the night. All huddled together as the weather broke and torrential rain hit the beach, water

threatened to wash away the tent and pour in. The family were safe and dry as poor Walter was blocked the water from coming in while he slept through it. Soaked to the skin he vowed never again to go camping!!



After 35 years at Goodyear, Walter had the opportunity to take early retirement at 55. This early retirement meant he and Margaret could continue to improve the home they loved. It meant time with their Grandchildren, Lucy and Thomas, and many more

happy shared holidays. The family spent every Christmas Day together for a huge Christmas feast and then a competitive game on the Wii or charades. With lots of laughter and good humour the day very often went on late into the night and through Boxing day too!! The family to Walter always came first and they shared special bond, supporting each other in good times and bad.

Walter's illness was only discovered in December 2016 and though shocked to be told it was pancreatic cancer he was determined to remain positive. During his time in hospital Walter continued to fight bravely and with dignity right to the very end, despite the pain, thanking the nurses for every attention he received.. Thankfully he saw all those closest to him before he sadly passed away on the evening of Wednesday, 25th January 2017.

**Walter Price-Roberts, 1937 – 2017**

***'Eight Bells... Watch Over'***

# TUGS OF WAR

by Mike Rotherforth



HMRT Enigma - 1945

Tugs played a vital role in both World Wars, and particularly in the dark days of the Second World War when we were in desperate need of the vital supplies being brought over the Atlantic in the convoys of Merchant Ships.

Most were manned by the T124T (H.M. Rescue Tugs) section of the Royal Navy a lot of these being experienced Merchant

Seamen and Trawler men recruited by the Royal Navy. Some were manned by Royal Navy itself, and some by Merchant Seamen who flew the Red Ensign.



It was a difficult and dangerous job – out in all weathers, and on many occasions coming under enemy fire. Many of these men lost their lives in the course of their service. 20 Tugs were lost during the war either by enemy

Cartoon depicting the downing a Fokker Wulf



action or capsizing in seas they were never designed to cope with. The tugs worked not only in Home Waters. Wherever the Merchant Navy and Royal Navy went, there were tugs. The sight of a tug steaming into view must have cheered many a sailor as his ship, disabled by enemy action or breakdown, wallowing in



the oceans, a sitting duck to U-Boats, the Luftwaffe, or Japanese Kamikaze Pilots. Admiralty figures show that 3 million tons of Merchant shipping plus their valuable cargoes were saved by their Rescue Tugs, also 254 Allied warships and countless lives.

It was not only ships that the tugs towed. 160 tugs were deployed during the Normandy invasion alone. They were vital to the success of D-

Day, and on 7th June 1944, it was tugs that towed the Mulberry Harbours to Arromanches, without which the Normandy Invasion might have been a very different story. They also towed the massive 'Conuns' that carried the vital PLUTO (Pipe Line Under The Ocean) from the Isle of Wight to Cherbourg. Without these



pipelines carrying petrol and oil across the Channel the armies could not have moved an inch.

One of the men who served with the HM Rescue Tugs was Alan Benstead. Alan was born in 1926 in the Marfleet area of Hull. He left school when war broke out, doing various delivery jobs before signing on for the Naval Tug Rescue



Service in 1941. The more astute reader will have noticed that Alan was only 15 at this time but he doctored his ID card DOB to look more like 1925! It is difficult to believe now, but one of the tasks that Alan took part in was to tow a floating dock weighing

2750 tons from Iceland to Australia. A difficult passage in peacetime but to undertake this in war-time at a speed of just 3 kts doesn't bear thinking about!



Alan died in July 2015 but his widow Sandra has lent the IOBA Alan's photo album which contains many fascinating photos of life with the HMRT and it is hoped that this can be displayed at the AGM for all to enjoy.

# MERCHANDISING

by Ian Parr

Items from the Indefatigable Shop are now available all year round on the Rolldove Studio web site. New and exciting products being added throughout the year and this facility offers you the choice of buying now and having goods shipped to you or buying now to reserve goods for collection at the reunion. The shop will of course be at the JSMTC as usual.

To visit the new online shop please use the links on the Inde OBA website or visit: [www.rolldovestudio.co.uk](http://www.rolldovestudio.co.uk) and select INDEFATIGABLE in the navigation bar. Ideas for merchandise are always welcome and it is your ideas that are Rolldove's inspiration. Below are a couple of examples of Ian work (*difficult to photograph but beautiful to hold – Editor*) so why not contact Ian at [ianparr1959@hotmail.com](mailto:ianparr1959@hotmail.com) and talk over your design.



And it's not just engraved glass, there's: Bodywarmers, Postcards, Fridge magnets, 'The Inde' books, Nozzers Rock, Posters, Ties, Photos....

....In addition it is possible to purchase raffle tickets for the AGM glass engraving prizes all year round. At just £5.00 each your number will be emailed to you and entered into the draw at the AGM.

# PEN PICTURE OF OUR GENERAL SECRETARY

by Richard Lawson



So, it's September 1985. Thirteen years old, 4 foot nothing and size 13 (child) feet. I don't remember much of the journey to Anglesey apart from crossing the Britannia bridge turning left and seeing the Indefatigable sign for the very first time. The nerves kicked in and inside I was screaming "what have I done, please Dad take me home".

Both of my older brothers (Daren and Gary) had been to Indefatigable and survived so the pressure was on me to survive too!

The goodbye from my Dad was

very short and there I was, bag in hand, given a number (152) and starting a 3-year journey that I will always remember. I had some fond and not so fond experiences and memories but it made me who I am today and wouldn't change a thing. The education wasn't brilliant but all the teachers tried their best to control 150 unruly teenagers. I really didn't have a favourite subject although if pushed I would have to say Seamanship. I think the main reason being that it was practical and didn't rely on my grey-matter. I joined the band which from my perspective was the final nail in my educational coffin. I enjoyed it so much that I was more interested in playing the bugle and drums than doing revision but it payed off as I left as Band Major.

With my younger brother (Michael) attending the school in the 90's we hold a significant record as having the most siblings (4 in total) attending the school.

Having left school in Jun 1988 with few academic qualifications I joined the Civil Service as a labourer on a short-term contract. Somehow, I managed to convince my boss that I was worth keeping and two years later I transferred to the clerical function as an Administrative Assistant. 29 years later I am now an Assistant Director still working in the Ministry of Defence. I personally put this down to my experiences at school. Although I let myself down educationally the life skills I gained at Indefatigable provided me with confidence to believe in myself and that coupled with true grit, determination and a bit of luck on the way has made me the leader that I am today.

I joined the IOBA a few years ago after my younger brother and I attended a re-union with the intent of visiting the school for one last time. Although the school has undergone some cosmetic changes in the main it was still Indefatigable. The welcome my brother and I received at the reunion was fantastic. The bond between young and old was very noticeable and we were made to feel part of the Inde family. I met up with some friends from my year but also made some new friendships. Having something in common and a friendly atmosphere really made the experience memorable.

I did go back the next year and I thought to myself, what can I give back to Inde after all the years it looked after me and my family. So, after a brief conversation with Steve Humphries, here I am 3 years later serving as your General Secretary. I am honoured to have been given this role and will endeavour to give it my all during my tenure. I promise to support Andrew and the committee and of course you.

My first task after general duties is to think about a strategy to increase our membership numbers over the coming years. Although I have some ideas I definitely don't have the monopoly on them. So, if you have any ideas on how we can increase membership please get in contact with me or speak to me at the next reunion.

# STRANGE BUT TRUE!!

by Our Cub Reporter

Some people make the strangest requests. When the out going (*that should read 'outgoing' – Editor*) IOBA Chairman, Bill O'leary (74/76) was asked what he'd like by way of a 'thank you' he replied "It would be wonderful if you could get me a **glass handbag** to match my favourite shoes". We were only too happy to oblige!



Steve (aka *'Jihadi John'*) presenting Bill with his engraved handbag. (*it's a lantern – Editor*)



## CONGRATULATIONS!!

Last year we reported on the celebrity wedding of the year between Ian Parr (75/76) and Deborah. Now we are delighted to report that **lan** is finally pregnant! "*We are soooo happy! We like the fashion for naming children after where they are conceived*" said Ian. Apparently the couple can't decide between 'Kneetremblerundernelsonsstatue' and 'Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantys iliogogoch'!

# TREASURER'S REPORT

by Tom Keyes

## Interim Financial Statement as at 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017

Opening Balance 1st Jan 17	£15,195
Revenue	£8,296
Expenditure (Including an accrual for shop items)	<u>£5,510</u>
Current Balance	<u>£17,981</u>

### Membership Statement.

The Committee have some concerns with this critical area, in as much as the number of members who do not renew their membership annually has increased sharply, particularly since the 150<sup>th</sup> reunion. Efforts are made to contact the members who do not renew, but we tend to find emails bounce back, indicating the member has changed his email address, so we follow up with a phone call where we have the details; finally we try making contact by ordinary Royal Mail. When all efforts fail we then transfer the members details into an area of the database referred to as the Delist area. **Current membership is 250. This is a fall of 47 since the previous year. It is essential that members notify us of address changes both for their residence and/or their emails PLEASE.**

## WHAT DID "INDE" EVER DO FOR US

by Martin Hartland

For whatever reason I've been thinking about my time at the school. Where on earth, would you meet people you would still be in contact with nearly 40 years later? What other school could teach you respect, friendship, cleanliness, decency. What school gave you football, rugby, sailing, basketball, Nozzers Rock a freezing cold swimming pool, Sunday night films, a career, but most of all made you what you are today? **The "Inde" that's who!!**

# 'GRIFF' REMEMBERED

by Martyn Hunt 82/85



On 8th June each year, members of Four Assault Squadron Royal Marines gather to remember the crew of LCU Foxtrot Four, bombed and sunk during the Falklands Campaign. The landing craft, commanded by C/Sgt Brian Johnston QGM, was dispatched from HMS Fearless to recover vehicles at Goose Green. In poorly-charted waters and under significant threat of air attack, the vehicles – which were desperately needed for the advance on Stanley – were loaded. But during the return trip F4 was bombed by Argentine Skyhawks and sunk, killing six of her eight crew, among them was Inde Boy Robert D Griffin 74/76.







At Indefatigable, Rob was an inspirational Petty Officer and Drum Major, winning the Capt. Darrigan Prize. He was born to be a Royal Marine, that's what he always wanted to do, and aged 17, that is exactly what he did; joining the ranks of what is reputedly the world's toughest military unit. He served in Northern Ireland, Sardinia and Norway before joining the Falklands Taskforce in 1982, aged just 22.

**The IOBA Committee have decided that a fitting memorial to 'Griff' would be to rename the Less Fortunate Member Award in his honour. So this assistance will from now on be known as the:**

### **'Robert Griffin Award'**

The guidelines for nominations will remain unchanged:

- £300 max. Nominees will be asked to submit an approximate overall costing to justify.
- To include; UK Travel expenses / Accommodation / Reunion Dinner & Bar.
- Must be a fully paid up member of the IOBA.
- Not previously been to an AGM under the terms of this award.
- Administered by the **'Robert Griffin Award'** coordinator with the final decision made by the IOBA committee.

Nominations should be made in the first instance and in confidence to Martyn Hunt 82/85: [\*\*martyn269@yahoo.co.uk\*\*](mailto:martyn269@yahoo.co.uk)

All details will be kept confidential.

# THE PANAMA CANAL MULES

by Joe Earl

There was many a lad on a tanker, a liner or tramp of the sea,  
That saved up bread for the `mules`, and one of those lads was me,  
Informed by the crew it was routine, and nice to be such a pal,  
By hoarding grub for old Dobbin, working the long canal.

For weeks while crossing the ocean, earning a Deck boy's pay  
I stored all scraps and loaves there, plenty every day,  
Later on, arriving, you could `knock me down with a feather`,  
For it weren't the type of mule, with legs and reins of leather.



**A Panama Canal 'Mulas' at work**

These beasts had ruddy big engines - a locomotive wide,  
The game was up I knew it - I'd been taken for a ride,  
Quick as a flash, in a hurry, I dumped my donkey stores,  
Not acting like a lubber or a stranger to these shores.

I pretended I wasn't so stupid but wise to their childish game,  
Patting myself on the back, for avoiding terrible shame,  
But Galley boys and Peggy's that fell for the seamen's ruse,  
Will never forget those mules - and bread they didn't use.

# MINUTES OF THE 2017 AGM by Steve

Humphries

**INDEFATIGABLE 1864 – 1995**

**OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION 1983 – 2017**

Welcome to the 34th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and the Indefatigable Old Boys Association Annual Reunion 2017.

## **OPENING ADDRESS**

Welcome: Andrew Butler 77/78 IOBA Chairman:

I extend a warm welcome to all members and guests here today, and especially to those new members attending the Reunion and AGM for the first time.

## **2017 AGM MINUTES. Held at JSMTc INDEFATIGABLE:**

Saturday: 10th June 2017 @ 09:50 hrs.

Voting at this AGM is to be by Full Members only, those guests present who wish to vote next year, please see the committee during the day for your membership form. If you are not a Full member, but wish to add something to the AGM, please feel free to raise it under Any Other Business.

Apologies for absence;

Sir Michael Bibby (IOBA President), Pamela Brown (IOBA Honorary Member), Rev. Canon Bob Evans (IOBA Honorary Member), Brigadier Bill O'Leary 74/76 (IOBA Honorary Member), Ray Manley 1952, Clive Ellis 1963, Chris Dewfall 74/75, Gavin Duffy 75/76, Gavin Williams 78/79, Graham Payne 61/63, Gareth Bramwell 85/87, Aaron Hewett 91/94, Steve Spencer 62/64, Martin Bell 1962, Ian Patterson 59/65 (Staff Families Member), Ian Woodcock 76/77, George Brown 90/94, Thomas Dez-La-Lour 87/89, Tom Harvey 76/77, Steve Paris 76/78, Jon Pope 61/62, William Gyte 65/66, Jimmy Hart 59/60, Tony Barclay 80/81 & Gary Gray 65/66.

Lt Col Alan Wylie (JSMTC Commandant) and WO1 Mathew Fletcher (JSMTC RSM) are both overseas and sent us the following message: *"Please accept our sincere apologies, but we regret that we will not now be able to attend the dinner. It will be sorely missed as the IOBA hospitality is outstanding!"*

### **OBITUARIES RECEIVED 2016/2017:**

It's with immense sadness that I have to read out the names of those who have passed away since the last AGM:

**Hugh Abbott** (Indefatigable 1950's) passed away in 2016.

**Harry Robinson** (Indefatigable 1941-42) passed away on 9th July 2016. Harry was one of the founding members of the Indefatigable Old Boys Association (IOBA) in 1983, and he was also the Secretary of the IOBA Southern Branch (back in its time).

**Bernard Millichamp** (Indefatigable 1947-49) passed away on 6th September 2016. Bernie was one of the founding members of the Indefatigable Old Boys Association (IOBA) in 1983, and also was the IOBA Newsletter Editor and Secretary during 1983 – 2000.

**Walter Price-Roberts** (Indefatigable 1952-53) passed away on 25th January 2017. Walter was a highly respected member of the Association, whose words were always welcomed at the AGM. He only spoke when he had something of value to offer and he was listened to because of the eloquent manner in which he spoke; we will miss those words of wisdom. Walter's skills as a carpenter helped to raise in excess of three thousand pounds for the IOBA which went towards the annual donation to the most improved Sea Cadet unit. We are very pleased, proud and honoured to have had Walter as a member.

**Thomas William Roberts** (Indefatigable 1957) passed away on 11th May 2017.

I would ask you all please to stand for a minutes silence to remember all those who have passed the bar since the last reunion.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 2016 AGM:**

The 2016 AGM Minutes were printed in the 2016 Newsletter. Actions resulting;

**Indefatigable Figurehead refurbishment:** Completed 2nd November 2016. See Chairman's report.

**Liverpool 'Training Ships' Dedication:** On hold February 2017. Unfortunately the project has run aground. The location (Port Sunlight River Park) has proved to be unsuitable for the long term. Although the site gave good views of the Sloyne and the land owners were very supportive, a report from a structural engineer indicated that long term maintenance costs could be crippling due to the unstable nature of the underlying ground. It's with great regret that we have had to withdraw our plans for Port Sunlight.

**Reunion Lunch admin charge:** Last year, a new catering service charge of £890 was introduced for use of the catering facilities (having lunch on reunion day), and that's before any food costs. We have enjoyed many years being covered by an MOD allocation on behalf of JSMTTC, which we're extremely grateful for. Time has finally caught up with us, as we're NOT directly part of the Military. WO1 Mathew Fletcher (JSMTTC RSM) has been in negotiations on our behalf with the caterers Sodexo and has agreed:

- £15 per head including labour costs for lunch, plus bar staff as part of the package.
- Self Service from hotplate/cold plate and self-clear of tables to a central collection point which reduces staff required.
- Some slight amendments to the menu to reduce costs, but not dissimilar from last year.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2016/2017**

Andrew Butler 77/78 IOBA Chairman;

We have important matters to discuss namely: 'Committee Elections' – therefore I have nothing to add at this point.

Below are the key events we have attended over the past year.

**11th June 2016:** 33<sup>rd</sup> Reunion - It seems just like yesterday that we were enjoying ourselves here at JSMTTC, another year gone by! Many of you may have read my report which is in the Newsletter.

**4th September 2016:** Merchant Navy Day 2016 - Liverpool Merchant Navy Service and parade from Church of Our Lady and Saint Nicholas to the Pier Head memorial. Merchant Navy Day is the annual celebration of the British Merchant Navy, with the memorial service held for the 36,000 seafarers who died at sea in the Second World War. Wreaths were laid by, among others, the Indefatigable Old Boys Association, Merchant Navy veterans, High Commissioners and Naval Attaches from many countries linked with the Port of Liverpool, including the Canadian Navy. I regret I was unable to attend MN Day. Martyn Hunt 82/85 IOBA Vice Chairman laid a Wreath on behalf of the Indefatigable Old Boys Association. IOBA members present: Mrs P A Brown, Revd Canon. (Bob) Evans, Martyn Hunt 82/85, Tom Keyes 63/64, Pat Moran, John Farrell 49/50, Russell Jones 55/56, John & Val Aspinall 59/60 & Steve Humphries 75/76.

**2nd November 2016:** Indefatigable Figurehead refurbishment - The figurehead has been restored by world renowned figurehead conservator Richard Hunter, thanks to a donation of £2,500 to fund the project from the Indefatigable Old Boys Association. Janet Dugdale Director Maritime Museum and Museum of Liverpool said: 'We are delighted to be able to unveil King Billy and we thank the IOBA for their kind generosity'. Names of those present: Sir Michael Bibby Bt (M.D. Bibby Line Group): IOBA President, Andrew Butler (77/78): IOBA Chairman, Martyn Hunt

(82/85): IOBA Vice Chairman & Karen Hunt, Tom Keyes (63/64) IOBA Treasurer & Membership Secretary, Malcolm Williams (75/76): IOBA Merchandise & Angie Williams, John Aspinall (59/60): IOBA Standard Bearer & Val Aspinall, Marc Hardman (1961): IOBA Standard Bearer, Ian Parr (74/75) & Deborah Parr: IOBA Members, Brian & Norma Croxton: IOBA Members, Steve Humphries (75/76): IOBA General Secretary & Archives, John Wilson: CEO Liverpool Seafarers Centre, Richard Hunter: Figurehead Historian & Restorer of King Billy, Ian Murphy: Deputy Director Maritime Museum and Museum of Liverpool, Ben Whittaker: Curator of Maritime History Maritime Museum and Museum of Liverpool.

See the project yourself at Merseyside Maritime Museum, Albert Dock, Liverpool. L3 4AQ / Tel: 0151 478 4401

We would like to personally thank all those members of the IOBA for the incredible generosity for raising £2,500 needed for the project, and £1,000 from an IOBA member who wishes to remain anonymous. Our thanks also goes to *Richard Hunter, Figurehead Historian* and Ben Whittaker – Curator of Maritime History and Technology.

**2nd JUNE 2017:** The 2016 winners of the 11<sup>th</sup> Indefatigable Cup for the 'UK Most Improved Unit' were **T.S. DEFIANCE – NEWHAVEN & SEAFORD (UNIT 442)**. **Tom Keyes, Steve Humphries and myself** travelled to the Unit to make this very special presentation to **Heather Wells CPO (SCC)** Commanding Officer of **T.S. DEFIANCE**. The 'Indefatigable Cup', known once as the 'Merseyside Navy League – Swimming Gala Trophy', and a monetary award on behalf of the IOBA for £1000. The Unit made sustained progress throughout 2016, with an effective training programme and taking part in District and Area events. This has required huge effort and commitment and they thoroughly deserve the award. The Sea Cadet unit was awarded a Burgee by the Captain of the Sea Cadet Corps, Captain Phil Russell RN, the Burgee is the highest award that can be awarded to a Sea Cadet Unit in recognition of the hard work of the Volunteers, Cadets and UMC.

**Web:** <http://www.newhavenandseafordseacadets.org/>



The Indefatigable Award for the 2017 Sea Cadet Unit winner will receive '£1000' in 2018 (current agreement in place from 'main' IOBA funds). This covers 400 SCC Units, around 19,000 Cadets.

### **Other Points:**

I urge you to consider nominating someone for the 'less fortunate member' scheme for next year. It really can make a considerable difference to them in determining whether or not they can afford to attend the reunion. It has proved very successful to date and we would very much like to see it continue.

Finally, I would like to thank on your behalf, all members of the committee who have continued to work tremendously hard in supporting the Indefatigable Old Boys Association. They are the backbone of our organisation, the cement that keep it all together, and the oil that keeps it lubricated and running smoothly. But most importantly, I would like to thank you, our members, for your continuing support in keeping our Association alive. THANK YOU.

### **IOBA SHOP:**

Malcolm Williams 75/76, IOBA Merchandise.

**Indefatigable Glass Engravings:** Ian Parr 75/76 - OB's can pre-order direct with Ian. Please note that a small profit from Ian Parr's goods ordered via our website will be refunded back to the IOBA main funds. The following link will take you to the shop for Indefatigable engravings:

[www.rolldovestudio.co.uk/rolldoveshop/cat\\_603654-Indefatigable-old-boys-association.html](http://www.rolldovestudio.co.uk/rolldoveshop/cat_603654-Indefatigable-old-boys-association.html)

In stock: IOBA Logo Padded Bodywarmers, IOBA Ties, etc.  
This year there is no new stock, as we are running stock down in readiness for a volunteer to take over IOBA Merchandise from Malcolm Volunteers please!!

## **IOBA NEWSLETTER:**

Tony Eastham 75/76, IOBA Newsletter Editor.

Newsletter 2016 You should have all have received your copy of the 2016 IOBA Newsletter in March. If you have not and you are a paid up member then please see Tom/Steve/Tony and we'll get one in the post to you. Thank you to everybody who contributed to the 2016 edition. It really is your stories that make it such a fascinating read. We now need your contributions for the 2017 Newsletter. The format doesn't matter, it's the content that we need. Have you got any new ideas or items you'd like to see? Come and have a word or drop the Editor a line. You would have noticed a lighter newsletter but with no change in content or quality, which had reduced postage costs by 50%. The average cost per Newsletter is now £2.84, including postage. We can lower total costs further by emailing to those 'who wish' an electronic copy. Please consider this option by informing the Membership Secretary Tom Keyes 63/64 <emailtkeyes@gmail.com>

## **IOBA WEBSITE:**

Steve Humphries 75/76, IOBA General Secretary.

Owen Sutton 91/95 (IOBA Webmarster) continues to give Steve advice and guidance on anything he can help with, and ultimately, the responsibility for the website remains with him. He has reminded us that the website is now setup in word press so that anyone with a username and password can add/edit/remove content (no IT skill required!). Some of you did notice the website crashed again (!) earlier in the year, not great timing for reunion payments but hopefully it didn't cause you too much disruption. Owen has started building a NEW website that will be hosted by Owen, at a much reduced hosting fee. It is hoped the NEW site will be up and running by this Christmas.

[www.ts-undefatigable-oba.org](http://www.ts-undefatigable-oba.org)  
[www.indeoba.com](http://www.indeoba.com)

**IOBA Image Archive**The IOBA image archive continues to grow and now contains 2125 photographs, drawings, and moving images of and about the Indefatigable. Some of them are modern images of reunions & events, of the IOBA today and OBs as they look now but the majority are 'historic' scenes dating from 1864 to 1995. If you have any images relating to the 'Indefatigable School' or the 'IOBA' that you're willing to share on our flickr account please contact Steve Humphries.

**SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS 2016:**

Tom Keyes 63/64: IOBA Treasurer & Membership Secretary.

PowerPoint Presentation & Report. If you would like a Summary of Accounts for 2016, please feel free to see Tom direct for a copy, which he can send to you at a later date. Key points

- 31/12/2014 = £18,936.
- 31/12/2015 = £14,499. (fall covered late process of the 2014 150<sup>th</sup> Reunion and 2015 Reunion)
- 31/12/2016 = £14,467.89
- Savings Account shut (no benefit).
- Our accounts were audited by Tom Keyes and Andrew Butler (self-audited as we are not charity status).
- Value of IOBA artefact £200k +

**MEMBERSHIP:**

Tom Keyes 63/64, IOBA Treasurer & Membership Secretary.

PowerPoint Presentation & Report. Key points:

- Membership Stats: May 2015 Full Members = 301.
- Membership Stats: May 2016 Full Members = 288.
- Membership Stats: May 2017 Full Members = 251.

Annual Subscriptions currently are: £15 (Per Year), or £65 (Five Years), Over 65's remain £10 or £45. To join the IOBA, simply click on our website, print the form out, fill in your details and send it to the Treasurer (all the details are on the form – you will

require Adobe, as it's in PDF, for which there is a Link access on the website). Remember we accept PayPal, so you can pay your subscription online by clicking the appropriate 'Pay Now' button.

Download at: [www.ts-undefatigable-oba.org/join.htm](http://www.ts-undefatigable-oba.org/join.htm)

## **AOB**

Steve Humphries 75/76, IOBA General Secretary;

**Indefatigable Lifeboat:** Early in May the old fibreglass Indefatigable Lifeboat was found on Anglesey. On 'facebook' matters snowballed somewhat, where Old Boys (not all IOBA members) wanted to see and pay for the old fibreglass Lifeboat. From a historical point-of-view, it's full of memories, but dare I say it (SteveH), that's all! From an association point of view, we couldn't comment at the time (so close to the AGM). SteveH asked Phillip Masterson 90/93 (P.O. of Hood division 92-93) to have a platform at the AGM to put forward to IOBA members any idea's he may have. It's great to see so much interest in this Indefatigable relic, but we have stressed for now that the IOBA can't be held responsible or be part of the lifeboat for those invited to sail on the boat during any reunion. So with the MODs permission it was arranged to just exhibit the lifeboat down at the old school on this reunion day.

**35<sup>th</sup> Annual IOBA Reunion:** Confirmed Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2018

## **COMMITTEE ELECTIONS**

Andrew Butler 77/78 IOBA Chairman.

## **MERCHANDISE:**

Malcolm Williams 75/76 has been running the IOBA Merchandise since 2010 (7 years) and would now like to stand down.

Nominations for 2017 – 2020 IOBA MERCHANDISE:

Ian Parr 74/75. Unanimously passed

## GENERAL SECRETARY:

Steve Humphries 75/76 has been the IOBA General Secretary & Archives Secretary since 2000 (17 years). As most of you will be aware, once Bill O'Leary 74/76 handed his 10 year Chairmanship to me (Andrew Butler) the following was agreed:

*"To ensure a smooth transition for a new Chairman, Bill O'Leary decided to stand down at last year's AGM in order for a new Chairman to work closely with Steve and the other Committee members prior to Steve standing down in 2017. This is absolutely the best course of action and is predicated on nothing more than a desire to ensure the new Chairman is 'properly educated' by Steve whilst he is still serving as our Secretary."*

A letter was posted within the 2015 IOBA Newsletter and Website. Steve has stated he would like to remain a serving Officer, coordinating between the IOBA and SCC HQ for 'UK Most Improved Unit Award' in Lambeth, the MMM (Liverpool) and IOBA Items at JSMTc, which fits in well with being the IOBA Archives Secretary, which he enjoys.

## Nominations for 2017 – 2020 IOBA GENERAL SECRETARY:

Richard Lawson 85/88

Proposer: Andrew Butler 77/78

Secunder: Martyn Hunt 82/85

## ARCHIVES SECRETARY:

A new standalone role (custodian links with IOBA items at Lambeth, Anglesey & Liverpool).

## **Nominations for (No Date) IOBA ARCHIVES SECRETARY:**

Steve Humphries 75/76

Proposer: Ian Parr 74/75

Secunder: Nick Undy 83/86 (*plus every other man jack in the room!!*)

## VICE CHAIRMAN

Martyn Hunt 82/85 has been the IOBA Vice Chairman since 2014 (3 years).

## Nominations for 2017 – 2020 IOBA VICE CHAIRMAN:

Steve Humphries 75/76

Proposer: Andrew Butler 77/78  
Secunder: Adam Meacham 80/81

#### LESS FORTUNATE MEMBERS REPRESENTATIVE:

Martyn Hunt 82/85 has been acting this role since 2014 (3 years) and he would like to stay on.

Nominations for (No Date) LFMR:

Martyn Hunt 82/85

Unanimously passed

#### **EVENTS**

Andrew Butler 77/78 IOBA Chairman;

Please check regularly on <http://www.indeoba.com> for updates, where you'll see various activities the IOBA participates in.

- **Saturday 24th June 2017:** National Armed Forces Day Parade – Liverpool.
- **Sunday 3rd September 2017:** Merchant Navy Day Liverpool.
- **Saturday 9th June 2018:** Is the proposed date for the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual IOBA Reunion.

#### **TONIGHT**

We are extremely grateful for any quality RAFFLE PRIZES, items for our objectives and projects which include:

- Annual Sea Cadet Award (Indefatigable Trophy).
- Indefatigable Figurehead refurbishment (completed November 2016).
- Less Fortunate Members to attend future reunions.
- Keeping Old Boys in touch with one another.
- Bringing members together from time to time for a reunion celebration.
- Encouraging members and all Old Boys to keep alive the INDEFATIGABLE tradition by whatsoever means the Committee might think appropriate.

There are four FUND RAISING RAFFLES: We are extremely grateful for;

- TABLE PRIZES (£1 per strip).
- TWO GLASSWEAR (HAND) ENGRAVINGS generously given and by Ian Parr 75/76 (£5 each TICKET).
- INDEFATIGABLE watercolour MONTAGE generously given and by Di Rotherforth (Wife of Mike Rotherforth 60/61) (Auction).
- TWO £250 LUXURY HOTEL PRIZES The travel club for hotel lovers £500 generously given by Ian Woodcock 76/77 (£5 per TICKET).

<https://www.mrandmrssmith.com/summer-sun>

### **The 34th DAY Plan 10th June 2017:**

**08:00 – 09:00** Meet at **Carreg Bran Hotel** for initial check-in.

**09:00 – 09:30** Down to **JSMTC Indefatigable** Introduction from IOBA Chairman in the Lecture Hall (Assembly Hall).

**09:45 – 11:30** IOBA AGM in the Lecture Hall (Assembly Hall).

**11:30 – 15:00** JSMTC Main Building open to tour at leisure.

**11:30 – 15:00** Nuffield Sail Centre (Boathouse) – Lounge facility.

**11:30 – 13:30** IOBA Shop (JSMTC Main Building).

**12:00 – 14:00** LUNCH (JSMTC Main Building) CASH BAR open.

**15:30 – 16:00** IOBA Members to be off site JSMTC.

### **The 34<sup>th</sup> EVENING Plan 10<sup>th</sup> June 2017:**

**16:30 – 17:30** St Mary's Church will be open.

**18:00 – 19:30** Meet for Drinks at Carreg Bran Hotel.

**20:00 – 23:59** Seated for the 34th Reunion Hot Carvery Dinner

### **The meeting is now closed, thank you**

Saturday: 10th June 2017 @ 11:37hrs.

**Steve            Humphries            –            IOBA            Secretary:**  
**steve\_c\_humphries@btinternet.com**