



# INDEFATIGABLE

OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION



2016 NEWSLETTER





INDEFATIGABLE OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER 2016

Greetings on behalf of the IOBA  
Andrew, Martyn, Tom, Steve, Owen, Malcolm & Tony



**2016** In January 1977 a petulant and some would say often arrogant young boy said goodbye to his mother and family on the doorstep of their terraced house in Fulham, London and boarded a train bound for Bangor North Wales. This journey was to change the life of this young boy, for had he not made that journey who knows where he may have ended up?

I can recall stepping off the train at Bangor station and waiting to catch the bus to Llanfair as though it were yesterday.

Getting off the bus and walking down to the school was to be the start of a new life for me.

At the age of 14 when most students are choosing their options for GCSE this particular young lad decided to use the 15p dinner money his mother had given him to make the daily trip across London to play tennis. I can recall telling the school I was looking after my sick grandma in Harrow, I can also recall the moment when I did finally attend school and the head master phoning my mum for confirmation of the truth. Needless to say "six of the best" followed soon after the phone was put down.

I have my Uncle Geoff Warr, another Indefatigable old boy to thank for helping to turn my life around. It was Geoff who suggested I attend the school that he had attended in 1963-64. The school had prepared Geoff for a career at sea and I recall visiting my aunt in Northampton on my occasions to find that Geoff was away on another voyage in the Merchant Navy.

When I was eight I joined the cub scouts and remained a member until I was old enough to join the Army cadets. So if someone had said to me I would go to a boarding school in North Wales and be prepared for a life at sea – I may have said – you must be joking!

I was in Rodney Division number 78 – Number 78 in 1978 something at the time that had not meant anything, but looking back perhaps it was an omen?

I have some fond memories and some not so fond. The school at the time only taught six subjects that were academic and worthy of examination, after all this was a school that prepared boys for a lifetime at sea. I did not enjoy any of the seamanship lessons with Mr Boyce, but I will never forget the PE Lessons with Pete Burrell, god rest him. I will also never forget the kind support offered to me by Clive Middleditch a former teacher of Technical Drawing at the school, who not only encouraged my technical capability but also helped me with my record collection (I am sure Clive will recall). Having been born the son of an engineer who built Vincent motorcycles for racing in his spare time it was no surprise that I took a keen interest in the lessons of Mr Carter and his practical and theoretical lessons on engineering. My finest hour and most memorable moment was the day I passed out. The school passing out parade was also to be the day I received the Captains award for Art, the Manx Marine award for Technical Drawing and marched out for a third time to collect my Royal Naval entrance certificate. I also know it was in that one moment my mum was very proud of the young man I had become.

So a lifetime at sea! I joined the Royal Navy in August 1978 and having wanted to be a cartographer found myself despondent when the intake in 1978 was only two and I was not chosen. Therefore, having completed basic training and my course in seamanship I volunteered for the only thing that would stimulate me, I volunteered for the elite core and chose to be a submariner.

My career in the Royal Navy was however only a short one, having served two periods of detention including Christmas and New Year in DQ's Portsmouth I eventually convinced Flag Officer Submariners that a mutual separation would be in both our interests. When they give you 60 days for "asking a question"—you realise that life owes you more than this. It was then in July 1980 after two years that I was finally dismissed the service. Disgraced if you like, but I will always look back on those years and reflect that this was the point at which I became a professional. If nothing else the years from 8-18 had taught me, self-discipline, respect for self and others, motivation, drive, determination and most of all trust, team work and what it means to fail. Failure as servicemen has potentially catastrophic consequences. Something that your average civilian has no concept of and will never understand until they come face to face with the enemy and you have to place all your trust in those around you to win through that moment.

In the August of 2008 during the bank holiday weekend I told my wife I was going to make a visit back to the school. I do not know what prompted this visit other than a desire to reflect on something from 30 years previous. This particular trip was however memorable for a few reasons. Firstly, arriving and finding the place surrounded by barbed wire fences and security guards. Secondly asking the guard if I could come in and take a few pictures only to be told – No.

A four hundred miles round trip was slowing turning into a bit of a disaster. Not put off by this particular setback I returned on the Monday to find a different guard on duty, one who clearly understood the nostalgia of the occasion. "If it takes you a few minutes to turn round at the end of the road, I have not seen anything" came the reply. With that I promptly thanked the man, took a few pictures and left.

It was on my return home that I thought "What if" I sat at my PC and typed into the search engine "Indefatigable" to my surprise I

discovered that there was an old boy's association, but the bigger shock was finding out that Tom Keys the treasurer and members officer lived less than a mile away in the same Northamptonshire Village.

2009 Was therefore the first time I was able to return to the school and truly reflect on the past. It was with fond memories that in 2010 I was reunited with one of my closer friends at the school Dave Shaw (Rodney 80) Dave and I have shared many memories since and regularly attend the reunion. It was on one such reunion weekend that I heard our former chairman Bill O'Leary ask for support, Tom was wishing to stand down as Treasurer and that without a treasurer the association could not continue. I took up this challenge and accepted the cry for help. Treasurer of the old boy's association "how hard could that be". It is so much more fun counting someone else's money than it is managing your own!!

A pleasure that I was only able to enjoy for two years, as unbeknown to me there was a bigger plot a foot. Bill had decided he wanted to step down as chairman and had asked me if I would accept the role. Who in their right mind wants to try and follow in Bill's footsteps this was always going to be a huge task? So what does a psychologically disturbed ex royal naval submariner do next?

Accept the offer to be Chairman of the Indefatigable Old Boys Association . To uphold all of its traditional values and help to remember the heritage and nostalgia that is associated with the name.

I will serve you as you Chairman so long as you see fit to have me at the helm. God bless you all

Andrew Butler

# ALL ABOARD THE DANNY by Sally Dobbing



The *Daniel Adamson* is a remarkable survivor from the steam age and a most unusual vessel. She was built in 1903, for the Shropshire Union Railways & Canal Company (SURCC), to tow barges laden with goods from the inland towns of Cheshire and the Potteries to the great seaport of Liverpool. This was at a time when old-fashioned sailing ships still jostled for space on the Liverpool waterfront with the great steamships and ocean liners of the Edwardian era.

The twin screw, coal-fired steam tug was originally named *Ralph Brocklebank* after a former chairman of the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board and saw service in the First World War working for the Royal Navy as an unarmed patrol boat around the Liverpool coastal area. In 1922 she was purchased by the Manchester Ship Canal Company and in addition to towing duties, she also started to carry passengers between Manchester and the canal entrance at Eastham (*editor-no relation!*) From the late

1920s she carried a succession of eminent visitors including King Fuad of Egypt, King Faisal of Iraq, King Amanullah of Afghanistan, and the Sultan of Zanzibar

The Manchester Ship Canal had opened in 1894, the brainchild of a group of Manchester mill owners and businessmen led by an engineer and boilermaker from County Durham called Daniel Adamson. Manchester was the cotton capital of the world at this time, and creating its own dock system meant that the city could bypass the high taxes levied by the Port of Liverpool, and bring ocean-going cargo steamers the thirty-six miles inland to the heart of 'Cottonopolis', aka Manchester. In 1936 *Ralph Brocklebank* was given a radical refit and renamed Daniel Adamson in honour of the canal's founding father.

Her technical upgrade in 1936 was straightforward, the wheelhouse and bridge were raised and she acquired a new upper deck and two saloons. The interior, however, is more intriguing. The contract went to Heaton Tabb & Co.; a wholly owned subsidiary of the Belfast shipbuilders Harland & Wolff Ltd, and as such they had experience of fitting out the interiors of



some of the grandest Atlantic liners in the world. Daniel Adamson now boasted the thoroughly modern Art Deco style, a miniature version of one of the newer generation of Atlantic liners, such as the stylish French ocean liner SS Normandie or Liverpool's own magnificent Cunard-White Star flagship RMS Queen Mary.



The stalwart tug served through the Second World War and the 1950s but in the 1960s her towing duties became less frequent. The *Daniel Adamson's* decline mirrored the ship canal's demise as containerisation became widespread. Eventually, Manchester Docks could not compete and they closed in 1982. The octogenarian tug was moved to Ellesmere Port Boat Museum in 1986 but she soon fell victim to the funding cuts and over the next decade the *Danny's* condition deteriorated. To add insult to injury, she was vandalised, partly set alight and in 2004 she was earmarked for scrap.



Word of this soon got round the maritime community grapevine, and within days the momentous decision to try and save her was taken. To cut a long story short, the *Daniel Adamson* Preservation Society was formed, the *Daniel Adamson* was bought for the princely sum of £1, and the restoration campaign was underway. With the help of volunteers, local and national industry, good will and Lottery Funding the *Daniel Adamson has been restored* to full working order. This means that she can once again sail under her own steam and from May 2016 a new generation of enthusiasts have been be able to marvel at her unexpected Art Deco interiors and experience the thrill of steam.



The Daniel Adamson Preservation Society have contacted the IOBA asking for volunteers to keep the project going. They are currently looking for more Skippers, Deckhands and Engineers. There are also opportunities to volunteer for front-of-house, meet-and-greet, educational projects and catering. So if you have an interest in steam, engineering, boats, tourism, education, fundraising, marketing or events, then why not take a look at their website and follow the link to volunteers.

<http://www.thedanny.co.uk>

## MERSEY TRAINING SHIPS MEMORIAL

by Tony Eastham

I was hoping to bring you good news on the progress of the Mersey Training Ships Memorial but 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 is with great regret that we have had to withdraw our plans for Port Sunlight.

# WALTER PRICE-ROBERTS

A tribute to a true gent

As we were about to go to press we learnt of the passing of Walter Price-Roberts. Known by all for his carvings and generosity, Walter's woodwork donations have raised thousands of pounds for IOBA's worthy causes. This is our brief tribute –







# FROM A BOY TO A MAN

by Dermot O'Toole



Having spent my childhood and teenage years messing about in small boats in Derbyhaven, Isle of Man (a tiny village of forty dwellings as close to the sea as it gets), a sea-going career in the Merchant Navy seemed inevitable however I never imagined for one minute that it would extend to over half a century!

After leaving secondary school soon after my fifteenth birthday in July, 1964, and with no academic qualifications whatsoever, my father made application to the *Indefatigable Sea Training School for Boys* where I began the first of four terms in September of that year. Although I have many pleasant memories of my time at the school, it was certainly an eye-opener and far from what I expected. Bullying was not uncommon among the complement of 150 boys and it took considerable time for me to adjust. "Keep your head down, say little as possible and everything will be alright", were words of wisdom advised by the older boys.

Naval discipline was the order of the day at the *Indefatigable*. Nevertheless, the actions of certain teaching staff implementing it were often far from satisfactory. I remember one officer in particular - Bond - who would call you to attention, lean forward until his nose was in your face, then thrust his fist into your stomach for no apparent reason other than demonstrating his authority. In his presence, running down the Central Hall, or either of its staircases was a crime and therefore an invitation for

physical assault! The same officer, along with his side-kick Crux, took a disliking to a boy of Drake Division. Often, after "lights out", the two overnight duty officers would proceed to the boy's dormitory, frog march him to the Central Hall where they would secure him in a laundry basket and fire him down the steep staircase leading to the galley. On another occasion after "lights out", the same boy was placed in a laundry basket by the two officers and then thrown into the freezing-cold swimming pool.

Despite being a non-academic, I was fortunate to secure a deck apprenticeship with London and Overseas Freighters and left the *Indefatigable* in December, 1965. I had never flown on a plane before so the journey from Heathrow to Sicily to join my first ship in January, 1966 was a frightening ordeal. At the time, the majority of officers on the *London Valour* – a tanker carrying grain from South America to Russia – were probably no more than thirty years of age however, as a sixteen-year-old, they appeared to me to be old men in their sixties! Sadly, the ship which gave me many happy memories was wrecked off Genoa, Italy in 1970 with great loss of life.



On joining my second ship in Montreal in September, 1966, the *London Banker*, I was pleasantly surprised to meet up with Keith McCart - an ex-Inde boy, two terms behind me and now embarking on his maiden voyage. Although I have no memory of him at the school, we sailed together as deck apprentices for the next nine months. Keith only remained at sea for three years before embarking on a long career in the police. We have not seen each other since parting company in New York in July, 1968, and although he now resides in Thailand, we hope to meet up later this year.



Gaining my Mates Foreign Going Certificate in 1971, I spent the next seven years with Manchester Liners and the Ocean Weather Ship Service. After passing my Masters Certificate in 1979, I made the move to waters closer to home. I was fed up travelling the world and being away from

home for long periods of time. That year, I joined the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company (the oldest operating shipping company in the world) with the intention of spending one season in the Irish Sea. Thirty-eight years on – twenty of which in command – I have finally taken the decision to call time on a career spanning six decades.

Going to sea might not be everyone's choice of a career but it certainly shaped my future and helped to fulfil many expectations in life not always realised. Although my son James also had a

fascination with the sea at a young age, he instead learnt to fly at the age of sixteen, opted for a career in aviation and today is a captain with DHL.

Since walking down the gangway for the last time six months ago, I constantly meet people in the street who stop and ask: “Are you bored now that you have retired?” Wherever did they get that idea from? For me, there are not enough hours in the day to fulfil my pastimes of long-distance race-walking, tramping up and down the mountains of the Lake District, and putting pen to paper as part-time author with a third book soon to be published.

The *Indefatigable* has undoubtedly played a major role in my long and successful journey to retirement. Although it was tough growing from a boy to a man overnight, I still have many wonderful memories of the school, its teachers and pupils. In company with my two brothers – also attendees during the 1960s – I look forward in 2017 to once again making the pilgrimage to Plas Llanfair where another memorable day is sure to be guaranteed.

Kindest regards,

Dermot O'Toole, (105) 64/65  
16, Park Close,  
Glen Vine,  
Isle of Man,  
IM4 4HB

And Dermot's brother Eamonn adds:-

I left the Isle of Man in January, 1962, and with two other Manx boys, Chris Kneale and Martin Bell, made my way to the Sailors Home in Liverpool before being transported to the *Indefatigable* the following day. It was certainly a real eye-opener to me;



coming from the small village of Derbyhaven with a population of no more than eighty persons. Meeting boys from all over the U.K, some with dubious characteristic leanings, made me grow up quickly. Although by today's standards, conditions were harsh, the discipline didn't do me any harm.

I joined my first ship, the *London Victory* as a deck apprentice on Easter Sunday, 1963 and we sailed from Dunkirk for Cuba two days later. After obtaining my First Mates Certificate in May, 1969, I left London and Overseas Freighters Ltd, and joined Canadian Pacific for the next three years in the rank of second and then chief officer.

I married my wife Ruth in 1972, and following the birth of my second son, came ashore for a brief period. After a year selling cavity loft insulation, I returned to sea and took a job as mate with Rawbottoms coasting around the U.K. In May, 1976, I joined the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company Ltd, as second mate and stayed there until my retirement in March, 2006 having completed 43 years at sea.

Pete Davies was Hood Divisional Officer in my day and we met again during the late 1980s. He had recently taken a job as a coastguard in Ramsey, Isle of Man and later at Holyhead. I believe he died soon after retiring during the mid-1990s. My two brothers, Dermot and Brendan also attended the school during the 1960s and went on to enjoy long careers at sea.

Finally, I am looking forward this year to my first re-union and hope to meet some old faces such as Andrew Sinclair, Martin Bell, Chris Kneale, Bob O'Leary and others I can't call to mind.

Eamonn O'Toole, (136) 62/63.

# I ALWAYS CRY AT WEDDINGS

by Tom 'Tiny Tears' Keyes



Congratulations go to Ian Parr (74/75) who married Deborah at St Mary's Church, after last year's AGM. The bride was given away by Marc Hardman (a remarkable event in its own right – as no one can ever recall Marc giving anything away before) and the Best Man was Ash Price. Steve H. and Bill O. (who will both do anything for a free drink) were the official witnesses. Of course the Inde Standard was present even if the bearer did get the wrong idea!



"Well you said the Standard is to cover the Wedding!"

Nobody fluffed their lines although someone (who shall remain anonymous ... for the price of a crisp fiver in the charity box!) did ask "Is this the first time the ensign has been flown at a funeral?"!!



The wedding cake was made by Elaine and featured a view of the Old School. Good luck Ian and Debs we wish you all the best.



# KING BILLY IS BACK!!

by Tony Eastham



King Billy – our only tangible link back to every Boy who signed on to Indefatigable – has been restored to his former glory. Gone is the “*‘nice boy’ being taken by surprise from behind*”, and instead, we now have a much more lifelike rendition of the regal prince the figurehead is meant to portray.

The IOBA voted for the restoration in 2014 and a survey was undertaken to assess the extent of the work required. Then, thanks to the incredible generosity of IOBA members, and a phenomenal donation from an IOBA member who wishes to remain anonymous, the figurehead conservator Richard Hunter was commissioned to undertake the work.

The restoration took place over many months at the Mersey Maritime Museum, Liverpool, thanks to the cooperation of Ben Whittaker (curator) and was unveiled by IOBA President Sir Michael Bibby Bt. DL, ably assisted by ‘our Steve H’.



Before and After – no more Peely-Wally! The colour of the tunic has been restored to a more historically correct shade of blue and the medals and decorations are now crisp and well defined. The ‘serious’ work cannot be seen; stabilising the wood, stopping the rot and filling the cracks but without this there would be no figurehead.



Most Inde Boys will have spent some time polishing the brass plaque on King Billy's back and during the restoration this plate was removed revealing the names of the IOBA members who undertook extensive repairs in 1997: Harry Traynor,

Alf Eady, Jack Harrison and Jim Clark. The figurehead contains a Time Capsule from 1997 and this has been left undisturbed. Our King Billy will now take pride of place in an exhibition in the Mersey Maritime Museum, Liverpool,

IOBA Members present at the unveiling were:

IOBA President Sir Michael Bibby Bt. DL. Andrew Butler (77/78): IOBA Chairman, Martyn Hunt (82/85): IOBA Vice Chairman (& Karen), Steve Humphries (75/76) IOBA Secretary, Tom Keyes (63/64) IOBA 'good egg', Malcolm Williams (75/76): IOBA Merchandise (& Angie), John Aspinall (59/60): (& Val), Marc Hardman (61), Ian Parr (74/75) (& Deborah), IOBA Members Brian & Norma Croxton, John Wilson: CEO Liverpool Seafarers Centre, Richard Hunter: Figurehead Historian & Restorer, Ian Murphy: Deputy Director Maritime Museum and Ben Whittaker: Curator of Maritime History





# CAPTAIN IRVIN

Originally published in 'Sea Breezes'



On New Year's Day Captain George Washington Irving of Bebington, Cheshire, became Captain-Superintendent of the Indefatigable and National Sea Training School for Boys at Plas Llanfair, Llanfair P.G., Anglesey, in succession to Captain W. A. Bambra who retired at the end of December after holding the post since September 1940. Formally in command of ships belonging to the United Africa Co., Ltd. (now the Palm Line, Ltd.) Captain Irving is the son of the late Captain Charles Irvin and the fourth generation of a family of Shipmasters.

Captain Irving was employed in the steamer *Canadian Importer* when that vessel went on to her bean ends in the North Pacific Ocean on a voyage from Vancouver to Australia with a cargo of timber, and he was one of the 13 members of the crew who volunteered to seek assistance in one of the ships lifeboats. They were



15 days in the boat and had sailed just over 1000 miles to within 100 miles of San Francisco, before they were picked up by two American tugs, which proceeded to the derelict vessel and towed her into Victoria, B.C. Captain Irvin obtained his second mate's certificate at Liverpool and served with Elder Dempster and Co., Ltd., in their West African service, until passing for his master's certificate, again at Liverpool, in June 1925, when he joined Pacific Steam Navigation Company as fourth officer of the *Orita*.

After a few years in the service of this company he transferred to Coast Lines, Ltd., serving as navigating officer in their cross-channel passenger service between England and Ireland. He later served as chief officer of the Atlantic Coast. From Coast Lines, Captain Irving transferred to the Moss Line Ltd., as chief officer and after serving a year in this capacity he was promoted to command, at the age of 28, of the steamer *Lormont*, being employed on the Liverpool-Bordeaux-Biscay service.

In 1935 Captain Irving joined United African company as chief officer, being appointed to command in the following year and has served as master continuously for the past 13 years up to his present appointment. He has commanded most of the vessels in the company's fleet. At the outbreak of the Second World War, when homeward bound from Freetown, via Hamburg in command of the steamer *Ethiopian* he ran the gauntlet of submarines and got his ships safely into Liverpool; he was later in many convoys which were attacked by submarines and aircraft.

Captain Irving served as Commodore of the African coastal convoys and also British coastal convoys. He was in command of the motorship *Congonian* when she was torpedoed 300 miles to the westward of Sierra Leone and, as the crew manned the guns and try to fight off the submarines the ship was torpedoed a second time sinking in a matter of minutes. Captain Irving jumped into the water from the sinking vessel and was rescued by the only surviving lifeboat which was adrift for 36 hours before being picked up by the cruiser *Devonshire*. After serving as spotting





officer in the *Devonshire* he was landed at Freetown and repatriated to England.

After a short leave, Captain Irvin was then appointed master of the steamer *Lagosian*. He was in convoy at the landing of the First Army at Algiers, discharging a cargo of ammunition, and while returning from Gibraltar the ship was torpedoed, breaking in two when the boilers exploded. Captain Irvin had to jump from the bridge, a height of 50ft. from the waterline, and injured his arm and face. He was in the water for an hour before being rescued by an Admiralty tug which landed all survivors at Bathurst, where he was conveyed to hospital.

On repatriation to England, and after a short leave, he was appointed to command the motorship *Gambian*, serving on convoy duties in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and he was in the ship when she loaded at Suez for the landings in Normandy. From the end of the war until his present appointment he continued in the company's West African service. Captain Irvin became a Younger Brother of Trinity House in 1947.

*Thanks to Mike Groden 64-66 for tracking down this article from the February 1950 issue of Sea Breezes*

# **MINUTES OF THE 2016 AGM** by Steve **Humphries**

**INDEFATIGABLE 1864 – 1995 OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION  
1983 – 2016**

**Welcome to the 33rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and the  
Indefatigable Old Boys Association Annual Reunion.**

## **OPENING ADDRESS**

**Welcome: Bill O'Leary 74/76 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.

### ***The 33<sup>rd</sup> DAY Plan:***

**08:30 – 09:00** Meet at **Carreg Bran Hotel** for initial check-in.

**09:00 – 09:30** Down to **JSMTC Indefatigable** by **09:30 latest**.

**09:30 – 09:45** Introduction from IOBA Chairman in the Lecture  
Hall (Assembly Hall).

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

**12:00 – 14:30** JSMTC Main Building open to tour at leisure.

**12:30 – 14:00** Lunch (11:30 CASH BAR open until 14:00).

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

### ***The 33<sup>rd</sup> EVENING Plan:***

**17:00 – 18:00** Witness the marriage of 'Deborah & Ian Parr  
74/75' at **St Mary's Church**. **ALL WELCOME**.

**19:30 – 23:59** 33rd Reunion Hot Carvery Dinner at **Carreg Bran  
Hotel**.

## **2016 AGM MINUTES. Held at JSMTc INDEFATIGABLE:**

Saturday: 11th June 2016 @ 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. But by all means, 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 MBE (IOBA Honorary Member), Pat Moran (Hon IOBA Member), Rev. Canon Bob Evans (IOBA Honorary Member), Ray Manley 1952, Walter Price-Roberts 52/53, John Nippers 60/61, Graham Payne 61/63, Steve Spencer 62/64, Clive Ellis 1963, Mark Chatham 65/66, Frank Lawlor 65/66, Gary Gray 65/66, Barry Cottiss 69 /70, Terry & Chris Dewfall 74/75, Gavin Duffy 75/76, Steve Paris 76/78, Gareth Bramwell 85/87, Gus Williams 86-87, Aaron Hewett 91/94

I have to apologize on behalf of all our Welsh members, as Wales are in the euro qualifiers for the first time in 38 years today!

### **OBITUARIES RECEIVED 2015/2016:**

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

**Paddy Miller** (Indefatigable 1948/50) died 29<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

**Robert Coote** (Indefatigable 1965/66), died 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

**Jim Barnes** (Indefatigable 1967) died 17<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

**Nobby F Clark** (Indefatigable 1948) died 27<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

Michael L.B. Ireland (Indefatigable 1947/48) died 20<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

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

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 2015 AGM:**

The 2015 AGM Minutes were printed in the 2015 Newsletter. Actions resulting;

#### **Indefatigable Figurehead refurbishment Update:**

Richard Hunter (who is our Figurehead Historian) was planning to work on King Billy towards late summer 2015, then Ben Whittaker at Liverpool Museums (Mersey Maritime Museum) had been instructed that our monies had to go via them rather than direct to Richard Hunter, and so £2500 was given to the MMM. In the meantime Richard became ill which took us up to Christmas/New Year.

It's now looking that work on the figurehead is to be complete over the summer in August/September/October 2016, when a brand new Figure Head exhibition will have opened and Ben Whittaker at the MMM will be able to prioritise this project. IOBA members would be welcome to attend, particularly for opening up the time capsule to see what is in there.

All funds we donated to the MMM are still ring-fenced for this project, and Ben continues to liaise with Richard.

The condition of King Billy has been one of great concern for many years and our view is that the Maritime Museum is not going to do anything about it themselves. Therefore unless we intervene it will deteriorate further. As for ownership of 'King Billy', the MMM have full rights over ownership as the IOBA gifted King Billy to them in 1998.

As agreed at the 2014 AGM, the IOBA commissioned '*Richard Hunter, Figurehead Historian*' to carry out a full report on the condition of King Billy. A full inspection was carried out by *Richard* on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014, with Marc Hardman in attendance. We received the written report on 20<sup>th</sup> November, which concluded urgent restoration was needed to reverse the decline. A report (costing the IOBA £160) concluded that full restoration would cost £2,500.

### **Liverpool 'Training Ships' Dedication**

Tony Eastham 75/76, IOBA Newsletter Editor.

We are now in partnership with the 'HMS Conway Association' commissioning a memorial for all the Liverpool Training Ships moored on the River Mersey, this will be in excess of £ xxxx, <http://ts-indefatigable-oba.org/?p=2013> / <http://www.merseytrainingshipsmemorialtrust.org/>

### **This is where we are up to with the memorial;**

- A design competition has produced one clear winner.
- Pamela Brown MBE (IOBA Honorary Member), agreed to be Patron.
- 4 Trustees (2 x IOBA and 2 x COBA) valid for 3 years and 2 years.
- Bank account open.
- Still pursuing Charity status
- Meetings with architects and Cammell Laird in the near future.

As published with the 2014 IOBA Newsletter: At the 2009 AGM Malcolm Williams 75/76 put forward a proposal "exploring the potential for a permanent reminder of the Indefatigable and possibly the other [training] ships to be located near the Mersey either Albert Dock or the Sloyne [shore]." A lot of water has passed under the bridge since then, but finally things are starting

to move. A working party has been formed comprising two Indefatigable and two Conway Old Boys. Adhering to strict Terms of Reference, a number of locations and a number of outline designs have been considered, along with several other aspects including planning permission, funding, ongoing maintenance and an achievable time-scale. The working party are now at the stage to put a definitive proposal to their respective memberships at their AGMs for approval.

In broad terms, an elevated position directly overlooking the Sloyne has been identified as the location that offers the best prospects of success, with the minimum of 'red tape'. The style of the memorial, which will incorporate all four training ships, will be a large sheet of metal (approx. 1.5m tall by 3m wide) but the precise design has not been decided. Full details of the proposal will be published on the web site in advance of the AGM but in the meantime if you have any experience in planning permissions, design, civil engineering or draftsmanship skills, or you simply want to get involved, we'd like to hear from you.

### **There were four proposals passed to the 2015 AGM;**

- 1. Full IOBA approval of the Project.**
- 2. Partnership with the Conway Group and any other forthcoming sponsors of the Liverpool 'Training Ships' Dedication.**
- 3. Committee to govern IOBA expenditure for the Liverpool 'Training Ships' Dedication.**
- 4. The IOBA to support funding initially up to £2000, the Conway Old Boys also to agree the same initial funding of £2000, to be placed within the Mersey Training Ships Memorial Trust account.**

### **Mersey Training Ships Memorial Trust website links:**

**<http://ts-indefatigable-oba.org/?p=2013>**

**<http://www.merseytrainingshipsmemorialtrust.org/>**

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2015/2016**

Bill O'Leary 74/76, 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.

**JUNE 13<sup>th</sup> 2015.** 32<sup>nd</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 on this on the website.

**SEPTEMBER 6<sup>th</sup> 2015.** Merchant Navy Memorial Day in Liverpool: Once again John Aspinall 59/60 paraded the IOBA Standard. Merchant Navy Day is the annual celebration of the British Merchant Navy and a memorial service for the 36,000 seafarers who died at sea in World War 2. The service is attended by diplomatic representatives of Britain's allies during World War 2 who pay homage to their own considerable losses of merchant seafarers serving in British Ships. The IOBA wreath was laid along with many others, Merchant Navy veterans, High Commissioners and Naval Attaches from many countries linked with the Port of Liverpool, including Navy in Canada, plus the Lord Mayor of Liverpool and Mayors of the Merseyside Boroughs. IOBA members present; Mrs Pamela Brown: Hon IOBA Member, Pat Moran: Hon IOBA Member, John Farrell 49/50, Russell Jones 55/56, John & Val Aspinall 59/60, Tom Keyes 63/64: IOBA Membership Secretary, Bill O'Leary 74/76: IOBA Chairman & Steve Humphries 75/76: IOBA Secretary.

**JANUARY 14<sup>th</sup> 2016.** Pat Purser's papers were presented to *Sarah Starkey, Curator of Archives, National Museums Liverpool* (Mersey Maritime Museum) and added to the Indefatigable archives. Howard Trillo (Indefatigable-Staff 87/92) came by them: *'These were Pat's 'Morning assembly' scripts, some typed but*

*the majority hand written “1977 – 1990” most are through the 1980s.*

**JUNE 9<sup>th</sup> 2016.** The 2015 winners of the 10<sup>th</sup> Indefatigable Cup 'UK Most Improved Unit' were **T.S. St VINCENT SCC: Brentwood Unit in Essex.** On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June Steve Humphries and I visited the Unit to present the Indefatigable Trophy to CPO (SCC) Natalie Walsh, the Commanding Officer of **T.S. ST VINCENT** along with a cheque for £750 on behalf of the IOBA. **T.S. ST VINCENT SCC is affiliated to the HMS St Vincent Association', Gosport.**

The Indefatigable Award for the 2016 Sea Cadet Unit winner will receive '£1000' in 2017 (current agreement in place from 'main' IOBA funds).

### **OTHER POINTS:**

I again 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 annual reunion. It has proved very successful to date and we would very much like to see it continue. And as before, I again ask you to spare a thought for our service men and women serving overseas on operations. They and their loved ones need your prayers.

Finally, as always, 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 and 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.



## **IOBA SHOP:**

Malcolm Williams 75/76, IOBA Merchandise.

**INDEFATIGABLE Glass engravings:** The IOBA continues to exhibit Ian Parr's items at each reunion, and OB's can pre-order direct from 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)

**Still in stock: Padded Bodywarmers** in Navy Blue £25.00

Using either Logo 1 'THE INDE' or using Logo 2 'IOBA' Water repellent & Windproof.

**IOBA Tie's** £12.00

This year there is no new stock, as we are depleting items in readiness for a volunteer to take over IOBA Merchandise from Malcolm, this will be directly after the 2017 reunion. Volunteers please contact Malcolm: 07758 161374 [malcolmm@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:malcolmm@hotmail.co.uk)

## **IOBA NEWSLETTER:**

Tony Eastham 75/76, IOBA Newsletter Editor.

**Newsletter 2015** You should have all have received your copy of the 2015 'IOBA Newsletter' this February. 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 2015 edition. It really is your stories that make it such a fascinating read. We now need your contributions for the 2016 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. Our thanks goes to Marc Hardman 61 for effort in sticking licking(!) and

posting the newsletters to us all. You may have noticed a lighter newsletter, which had its benefit in lowering postage costs by 50%. We can lower total costs far greater by sending to those who wish an electronic copy emailed to them, PLEASE consider this option by informing the Membership Secretary Tom Keyes 63/64 emailtkeyes@gmail.com

### **IOBA WEBSITE:**

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

**[www.indeoba.com](http://www.indeoba.com)**

Owen Sutton 91/95 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 in May, not great timing for reunion payments but hopefully it didn't cause you too much disruption.

### **IOBA Image Archive**

The IOBA image archive continues to grow and now contains 2125 photographs to date, 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.

**[www.youtube.com/user/indeoba](http://www.youtube.com/user/indeoba)**

**[www.flickr.com/photos/indeoba/sets/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/indeoba/sets/)**

## **SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS 2015/2016:**

Andrew Butler 77/78, IOBA Treasurer.

**2015/2016 Accounts Presentation & Report:** If you would like a Summary of Accounts for 2015/2016, please feel free to see Andy direct for a copy, which he can send to you at a later date.

Accounts bullets;

- 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).
- Savings Account to be shut (no benefit).
- Our accounts were audited by Tom Keyes and Andrew Butler (self audited as we are not charity status).
- Value of IOBA artifacts £200k +

Annual Subscriptions currently are: £15/year or £65/5 years, Over 65's remain £10/year or £45/5 years. 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 do now accept PayPal, so you can pay your subscription online by clicking the appropriate 'Pay Now' button.

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

## **MEMBERSHIP:**

Tom Keyes 63/64, IOBA Membership Secretary.

Presentation & Report followed including origins of members.

Membership Stats: May 2015 Full Members = 301.

Membership Stats: May 2016 Full Members = 288.

## AOB

### **1) Liverpool duties: Pat Moran (Hon IOBA Member).**

Pat is now unable to undertake any of the duties he has traditionally done on behalf of the IOBA i.e., supplying three wreaths on Remembrance Sunday one each for the Cenotaph, the Cathedral and the Pier Head service on Armistice Day.

Wreath layers and Standard Bearers are only paraded at the Cathedral and the Sailors Church on MN Day. IOBA Standard Bears currently are Marc Hardman 1961 and John Aspinall 59/60.

We would like to request any 'younger' IOBA members (Military/None Military) who reside in the Merseyside area, who would be willing to take on coordinating the above (as Pat has), we very much appreciate any of your time for the above. Russell Jones 55/56 [rrussell1940@gmail.com](mailto:rrussell1940@gmail.com) is happy to coordinate anyone forthcoming.

### **2) Reunion LUNCH admin charge:**

Time and true costs have finally caught up with us - A new catering service charge £890 for 2016 now exists for using the catering facilities (having lunch on reunion day), that's before we cover your food costs. We have enjoyed many years being covered by an MOD allocation on behalf of JSMTTC, which we're extremely grateful for, as I said time has finally caught up with us, as we're NOT directly part of the Military. So what do we do?

- **Please let us know your views.**
- **Lunch YES / NO.**
- **Other options.**
- **Package it differently to cover the cost (£10 entry into the old School & £15 for lunch).**
- **Cost lighter Lunch + admin charge.**

### **3) IOBA Membership STATS are very disappointing -** Richard Lawson 85/88.

Membership Stats: June 2000 Full Members = 198  
Membership Stats: June 2001 Full Members = 225  
Membership Stats: June 2002 Full Members = 262  
Membership Stats: June 2003 Full Members = 261  
Membership Stats: June 2004 Full Members = 277  
Membership Stats: June 2005 Full Members = 228  
Membership Stats: June 2006 Full Members = 198  
Membership Stats: June 2007 Full Members = 305  
Membership Stats: June 2008 Full Members = 325  
Membership Stats: June 2009 Full Members = 289  
Membership Stats: June 2010 Full Members = 283  
Membership Stats: June 2011 Full Members = 287  
Membership Stats: May 2012 Full Members = 261  
Membership Stats: June 2013 Full Members = 265  
Membership Stats: May 2014 Full Members = 290  
Membership Stats: May 2015 Full Members = 301  
Membership Stats: May 2016 Full Members = 288.

## **COMMITTEE ELECTIONS**

### **NEWSLETTER EDITOR:**

**2016 – 2019 NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Tony Eastham 75/76 has been the IOBA Newsletter Editor since 2010.

**Proposer:** Marc Hardman 1961.

**Seconder:** John Aspinall 59/60.

Carried unanimously.

### **CHAIRMAN:**

As most of you will be aware, both Steve Humphries and I were voted in again at the 2015 AGM to our Committee positions for a further 3 years. We both deem this a great privilege and are both committed along with the other members of the Committee to continue to serve you as Members of the Association. Since the AGM, I have thought long and hard about the succession planning of these two posts and have discussed with the

Committee a solution I deem to be the most suitable and beneficial to the Association. Our Association, like every military unit and charitable organisation, requires new blood at the helm on a regular basis; this ensures new ideas and fresh initiatives are generated and delivered, that old practices and paradigms are put to bed, and more importantly, that younger members join the Committee in order to ensure longevity.

To that end, and to ensure a smooth transition for a new Chairman, I have therefore decided to stand down at today'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.

My time as Chairman has been a great privilege. During my 10 years, we have been able to rebuild a number of bridges with JSMTI Indefatigable and are now back where we belong, an integral part of the Old School and with a relationship that is as strong as it once was in the early days. I have been extremely humbled by the incredible generosity of you all, not just with the outstanding monetary donations and funds raised for our charitable causes, but by your personal support to me in achieving our Association aims. I thank you all.

A letter was posted within the 2015 IOBA Newsletter – IOBA Website - and I'm told EVEN on three Indefatigable Facebook accounts! This was for a plea for potential candidates to inform me of their intention to stand for election at this AGM. I would sincerely hope that there are a number of you that would wish to be considered and I stand by of course to answer any questions you may have about the role. Suffice to say, it will be one that you will enjoy every moment of, I certainly have right up until I pass the mantel on today.

**Voting procedure:** Today there may well be others who haven't yet expressed their formal interest.

We have now reached that moment on the agenda of 'who would like to be considered to stand to be the 'Indefatigable OBA Chairman' 2016 – 2019. If there is more than one candidate today, you will all be asked to leave the hall and then be called back individually to make your bid to the assembled members as to why it is you wish to be considered. Questions of course may well be forthcoming from the members. When this is complete, and again whilst you are out of the hall, I will ask for a show of hands for each candidate. In the event of a tie I will have the casting vote. You will then all be called back in and I will announce the name of the successful candidate and formally pass over the reins for the new Chairman to continue with the remainder of the AGM.

**CHAIRMAN:**

Bill O'Leary 74/76 has been the IOBA Chairman since 2006 and is standing down today. Only one nomination has been received:

**2016 – 2019 CHAIRMAN: Andrew Butler 77/78.**

Proposer: Martyn Hunt 82/85.

Secunder: Charley Claridge 62/63.

Carried unanimously.

**New CHAIRMAN: Andrew Butler 77/78.**

*(APPLAUSE)*

Today marks the end of the Chairmanship for Bill (our fourth Chairman since 1983). He has done an outstanding job shaping this organization for the past 10 years to what it is today, putting the IOBA truly on the map. Bill, aka - BRIGADIER O'LEARY QVRM TD DL VR – I wonder how 'we' shall remember you – I think "BILL O'LEARY OB 74/76", wouldn't you agree?!!

I have to say for someone from our humble beginnings, you have done very well, and if I may say on behalf of the IOBA, we are all

proud to have followed you. Some of you may be unaware, since May 2015, Bill's current post is Assistant Deputy Military Secretary. This is a new Army Reserve 1 star post created to lead on the Career Management integration of Regular and Reserve Forces. Your energy and devotion to the role will be impossible to match but you leave the IOBA a better organisation and on a stronger footing for those who follow you.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you (Bill) for your hard work, commitment and inspirational leadership in building this strong and prosperous organisation.

**Note:** Because Andrew Butler has now become the IOBA Chairman, Andrew has now stepped down as the IOBA Treasurer, and proposes Tom Keyes 63/64 to become the IOBA Treasurer.

**2016 – 2019 TREASURER & MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:**  
**Tom Keyes 63/64.**

Proposer: Andrew Butler 77/78.

Secunder: Martin Bell 1962.

Carried unanimously.

**Advanced notice of Committee Elections due in 2017:**

**VICE CHAIRMAN:** Martyn Hunt 82/85 will be standing down in 2017, Martyn will have been our Vice Chairman for 3 years.

**MERCHANDISEING:** Malcolm Williams 75/76 will be standing down in 2017, Malcolm (ably assisted by Angie) will have been running our Merchandise for 7 years.

**GENERAL SECRETARY:** Steve Humphries 75/76 will be standing down in 2017, Steve will have been our Secretary for 17 years. Steve would like to fall back to become the '**ARCHIVES SECTRARY**' (custodian links with IOBA items at Lambeth, Anglesey & Liverpool).

All VOLUNTEERS for the above three posts, please contact [steve\\_c\\_humphries@btinternet.com](mailto:steve_c_humphries@btinternet.com) 07703454495



## EVENTS

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

**Liverpool 'Merchant Navy Day' Sunday 4th September 2016.**

The proposed date for the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual IOBA Reunion is Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2017: NOW BOOKED.

**St Mary's Church: 17:00 – 18:00** You are all very welcome to witness the marriage of Deborah & Ian Parr 74/75 down at St Mary's Church. The Parish of Llanfairpwll and Llanddaniel-fab: St Mary's Church, Llanfairpwll is situated on the banks of the Menai Straits. St Mary's is the Parish Church for Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch [Saint Mary's Church by the white hazel pool, near the fierce whirlpool with the church of Saint Tysilio by the red cave!]

**Reunion Dinner: 19:30 – 23:59** 33rd Reunion Hot Carvery Dinner at Carreg Bran Hotel We would be extremely grateful for any quality RAFFLE PRIZES, there will be included very generous AUCTION items for our fund raising projects such as: **Annual Sea Cadet Award; Less Fortunate Members; King Billy Figurehead refurbishment; Mersey Training Ships Memorial Trust.**

There is time to purchase tickets from Ian Parr 74/75 at £5 each. This year two specially designed and engraved pieces will be offered as RAFFLE PRIZES

AOB Nil

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

Saturday: 11th June 2016 @ 09:50 – 11:40 hrs.

**Steve Humphries – IOBA Secretary:**  
[steve\\_c\\_humphries@btinternet.com](mailto:steve_c_humphries@btinternet.com)

