

TABLE TALK / TO THE POINT :

FEBRUARY 2011

SIMON'S TOWN DOCKYARD LAUNCH : On a blustery Friday 28 January, an historic ship launch took place off the Synchronlift in the Armscor Dockyard at Simon's Town, albeit not a Navy or Dockyard achievement. A shipbuilding company, KND, (Kobus Naval Design!) Projects leased No 2 Shed in April last year and with a work force of about 25 skilled staff, has completed the construction of their first vessel *OPS 301*, a 30 m high speed (30 knot) aluminium hulled crew transport for a company in Nigeria. This is the largest self propelled vessel ever constructed in Simon's Town.



***OPS 301* after leaving Refitting Shed No. 2
at Simon's Town. – Photo : R. Adm. Söderlund.**

With three water jets and a composite (ballistic) protected cabin for 24 passengers and accommodation for a crew of five, she is fairly revolutionary. A Two Star Admiral (Rear Admiral) of the Nigerian Navy (plus 2 One Stars) attended the ceremony (in civilian dress) and intimated that the company had impressed them and that their product may well meet their specific naval requirements. A second but smaller vessel is already in production and a further order is awaited. With productivity equal to European standards, the company won the contract in the face of Australian and Asian competition. Great to hear a success story once in a while!! – *R.Adm. (JG).Arné Söderlund – Spindrift/Spunyarn. (*One Star).

British Prime Minister David Cameron has announced that he intends to make it more difficult to claim benefits.

From next month all the forms will be printed in English.

FIGHTING THE PIRATES : The S.A. Navy has announced that its ships will soon be carrying out anti-piracy patrols in the Mozambique Channel. Initially the Support Ship *SAS Drakensberg* and a Frigate, possibly *SAS Mendi*, will be involved. *Mendi's Sea Lynx* helicopter is likely to prove to be a very potent weapon in the search for and arrest of pirates. – *Cape Times*

Piracy is a war-like act committed by private parties (not affiliated with any government) that engage in acts of robbery and/or criminal violence at sea. - Wikipedia

CROSSED THE BAR – F.D. (DOUG) JONES : SAIMENA Founder Member Doug Jones (Honorary Fellow 1975049) was born in England on 19 October 1921 and died in Cape Town on 6 December 2010.

After completing an engineering apprenticeship at the J. I. Thornycroft shipyard at Woolston, Southampton, from where he watched German bombs falling on the adjacent Supermarine factory where *Spitfire* fighters were being built, Doug joined the Royal Navy. He spent some time in salvage tugs, a dangerous enough occupation in peacetime and even more so when the danger of enemy attack was added to those of natural marine hazards. Doug served from 1941 to 1947 when he transferred to the RNVR with the rank of Engineer Sub Lieutenant.

Settled in South Africa with his wife Sybbie, who died a few years ago, Doug, an authority on marine and land boilers, became an active member of SAIMENA and the Naval Officers' Association of South Africa. His cheery smile will be missed by both organisations. – RIP Doug.

This year we will experience 4 unusual dates.... 1/1/11, 1/11/11, 11/1/11, 11/11/11. Now, take the last 2 digits of the year in which you were born plus the age you will be this year and it will equal 111

SA AGULHAS REPLACEMENT : As one of the original signatories to the Antarctic Treaty, South Africa maintains modern and sophisticated research facilities in Antarctica, and now has a new, multi-role ship under construction to support and extend its polar scientific platform. Entrusted by the country's Department of Environmental Affairs to the Rauma yard of STX Finland, the 134m vessel will become the crucial logistical component of the South African National Antarctic Programme.

Due for delivery in the first half of 2012, the €16 million build project constitutes one of the largest-ever civil trade agreements between South Africa and Finnish industry.

The diesel-electric newbuild will not only be used to carry scientists and research equipment for the National Antarctic Programme, but will also serve as a resupply ship, icebreaker and expedition vessel, with the capability to spend months at sea in the role of a mobile laboratory. Furthermore, the ship will be equipped to keep a continuous record of weather data for meteorological institutions around the world. Expeditions will take place during the Antarctic summer, between November and March. Over the remainder of the year, the vessel's duties will include relief of stations in the Antarctic islands.

Accommodation will be provided for a crew of 45 plus some 100 researchers or passengers.

Vessel operation has been assigned to the South African company Smit Amandla Marine, and crew will be trained at the Wartsila Land and Sea Academy in Turku.

The power and propulsion plant will be based on four main gensets driven by six-cylinder models of the Wartsila 32 series medium-speed engine design. Electrotechnical specialist

Converteam has been contracted to deliver a transformerless power solution, including two 4.5MW propulsion motors supplied by PWM MV7000-type converters. By way of the multi-drive architecture, the propulsion converters will also feed energy to the tunnel thruster motors. Benefits of the technology include improved efficiency and availability of the propulsion train, lower overall maintenance costs, and weight savings, with a corresponding reduced footprint. – *The Naval Architect – RINA – January 2011.*

I was driving to work one morning when I saw an AA van parked at the side of the road. The driver was sobbing uncontrollably and looked very miserable. I thought to myself “That guy's heading for a breakdown.”

NEW SIMON’S TOWN TOURIST ATTRACTION : It was a most eventful Dec/Jan for some of us in the Cape as we were finally able to open SAS *Assegaai* ex SAS *Johanna van der Merwe*, to the public – the first step of a dream seven years in the making. Although still afloat, and accessible only by ferry (for the paying public) she has attracted over 1 400 visitors since first opened on 22 Dec. The preps for her opening included docking for hull cleaning and painting.

So far some R60 000 has been raised, with R20 000 from a local ‘swallow’ who has a business nearby. See <http://www.scenicouth.co.za/attractions/museums/> - R.Adm (JG) Arné Söderlund SAN (Retd).

It is understood that the damaged section of railway line between Glencairn and Simon’s Town will reopen to rail traffic in March, making it easier for tourists staying in Cape Town to visit the home of the South African Navy.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST : HMT *Saucy*, seen here laid up in Portsmouth during the early 1960s, was one of a class of twenty one *Assurance* Class ships built between 1940 and 1942 by Cochranes of Selby, Yorkshire, for the British Admiralty. This is the class of salvage tug aboard which the late Doug Jones served during World War II and which featured in a film called “The Key,” released in 1958.

With a Standard Displacement of 700 tons, the *Assurance* Class tugs were propelled by a single steam-reciprocating engine of 1350 ihp, manufactured by Charles D. Holmes, of Beverley. This power plant gave the tugs a service speed of 13 knots.

Four were lost during the war and several were sold out commercially afterwards. These included *Irving Tamarack* (ex *Assiduous*), *Zurmand* (ex *Dexterous*), *Vernicos Marina* (ex *Frisky*) and *Melanie Fair* (ex *Tryphon* ex *Stormking* ex *Stormcock*).



H.M. TUG SAUCY AT PORTSMOUTH DOCKYARD IN THE EARLY 1960s. SHE WAS COMMISSIONED AT SELBY ON 27 FEBRUARY 1943 AND SERVED THE BRITISH ADMIRALTY UNTIL 1 MARCH 1965 WHEN SHE WAS SOLD TO THE TSAVIRLIS GROUP AND RENAMED *NISOS CHIOS*. THE SHIP INBOARD OF SAUCY IS THE AIRCRAFT TRANSPORT *SKUA*, WHICH WAS USED TO FERRY FLEET AIR ARM AIRCRAFT BETWEEN AIRCRAFT CARRIERS AND SHORE BASES. – PHOTO : MARTIN WILLIAMS.

HM Tug *Saucy* was sold to the Greek Tsavirlis Group during the 1960s and was operated by them as *Nisos Chios*.

A man and his wife receive a letter from their daughter who went to study overseas:

My beloved Parents, I miss you so much. I don't know when I'm coming home, but it seems not anytime soon. It breaks my heart to think that by the time I get back you'll be too old. So enclosed you will find a bottle of a potion I have invented. It will make you young, so when I return you'll be the same age as I left you.

NOTE: "Please take only one drop"

So they open the envelope and in it there is a bottle with a red potion... The husband looks at the wife and says: "You go first." So the wife opens the bottle and takes a drop, thereafter the husband follows. Indeed they do turn 5 years younger.

A year passes and the daughter returns home to find her mother young and beautiful, carrying a baby on her back. The mother proceeds to tell her daughter how the potion worked and made her look young.

The daughter is delighted and asks about her father. "Your father, my child, got so jealous that I was young and beautiful so he drank the whole bottle."

"So where is he?"

"Oh, that's him I have on my back."