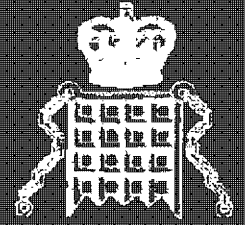


The Bond



NEWSLETTER OF THE
FEDERATION OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATIONS
AND THE
RETIRED MEMBERS SOCIETY

December 2008

Volume 13: Issue 4

Ron Sanders, ISO

11th September 1932 - 8th October 2008



Rawdon Crematorium chapel was filled to capacity when friends and family gathered to pay their respects to this remarkable man. Ron passed away suddenly in his sleep on 8th October following a short illness. As soon as the news spread, tributes from friends and former colleagues began to pour in.

Tales of Ron's Waterguard career and his reputation as a zealous and innovative revenue officer were reflected in tributes from colleagues in all fields of expertise. His dedication, leadership skills, compassion and the Sanders sense of humour were recurring themes - from his training instructor days at Southend to his time as head of training in Leeds and latterly as the Department's Chief Welfare Officer. Leeds proved a happy base for Ron not least that he met his dear wife Sheila there.

In 1972 he was awarded a prestigious Winston Churchill Fellowship which took him to the United States and to Hong Kong, Laos and Thailand to study the methods of other agencies fighting the war against drug trafficking.

His secondment to the British Virgin Islands proved a memorable period not only for those fortunate enough to share that experience first hand but for all of us who subsequently heard him relate the stories in a Caribbean accent interspersed with the Sanders' trademark laugh. Any contact with Ron Sanders made a lasting impression on all fortunate enough to have met him.

His final eight years in C&E were arguably his finest. He transformed the old reactive Welfare Branch into a proactive employee assistance programme designed to support staff and management cope with impending staff cuts and the major changes ahead.

Ron was deservedly honoured by HM the Queen in 1993 for his distinguished career when he was awarded the Imperial Service Order. He retired shortly thereafter and immediately diverted his energies to his charity work, counselling, to promoting CERSA for his retired friends, his public speaking and to organising reunions of one kind or another. He will be sorely missed.

Sheila and the family wish to convey their sincere thanks for the support they have received. Our thoughts and warm wishes are with them all at this sad time.

Ron served a short period of time with the Inland Revenue before he started his illustrious career with Customs and Excise as an Assistant Preventive Officer, Waterguard at Great Yarmouth. He moved to London Airport, Heathrow, in the early sixties and first came to prominence as a member of the newly formed Special Baggage Crew. This was a new concept in anti-smuggling detection, through gathering and recording intelligence. The initiative proved very successful and demonstrated Ron's enthusiasm, detection skills and his innovative ideas. It goes without saying that the Sanders infectious laugh would reverberate around the airport, something we can all recall when we think of the man.

He was not only a superb revenue officer but as far back as 1964 he was displaying his talents as a tutor at the Waterguard Training Centre in Southend. There are friends here today, trainees and trainers, who will gladly "swing the lamp" telling Sanders stories of expertise and escapades of that era. His dedication, practical knowledge and, not surprisingly, that sense of humour contributed to his success as a trainer. He became Chief Preventive Officer i/c training where not only the British students but also the representatives of foreign customs

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

administrations experienced the professional training regime established there which greatly enhanced the reputation of British Customs worldwide. The introduction of Drugs Training Courses was his next innovation which developed and percolated throughout the country.

In 1972 Ron was awarded a prestigious Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship which took him off to the USA to study the methods of the FBI, DEA and other agencies fighting the war against drug trafficking. This entailed a similar visit to Thailand, Laos and Hong Kong. (There was some confusion when the Asian officers mistook Ron for the real Winston Churchill!) Towards the end of his secondment he was due to visit the infamous Golden Triangle region in a police helicopter. Fortunately for him he was unable to keep that appointment because the aircraft was shot down en route. (How he missed that is another story.)

Mid 70s Ron managed the Leeds Training Unit and, happy days, met his beloved Sheila. Another memorable episode was on the British Virgin Islands in the early eighties, setting up control systems and training local customs staff. Many here today will remember Ron's colourful stories and hear him lapse into his Caribbean accent as was his wont. How wonderful that they managed a holiday reunion there earlier this year.

In 1986 he became Departmental Chief Welfare Officer and thus began another chapter of his multifaceted career. The best way to picture his arrival on the old welfare scene can be gleaned from these quotations from the welfare officers who were around at that time:-

Quotes:-

"Arrived like a breath of fresh air - a bundle of energy..."

"Best thing that ever happened to the old welfare branch - lifted it to new heights..."

"Changed for the better how they worked and how valued by managers and staff..."

"Shed the 'tea and sympathy' image of the old branch..."

"A man of vision - the creation of an employee assistance programme was down to his innovative thinking..."

"Provided genuine support and practical help both as a senior manager and as a friend..."

"An inspirational leader in the true sense, encouraging people to believe in their own abilities..."

"Kind, helpful, understanding, supportive, motivating, etc."

Recurring themes throughout the feedback on Ron Sanders.

Obviously not everybody could cope with this human dynamo (even although Ron did introduce "Coping with Change" courses!) His enthusiasm and sheer ability to promote the service was truly amazing and his powers of persuasion with top management were a skill rarely seen. He influenced policy development to facilitate the radical changes and downsizing that the Department was heading for. Ron created a modern proactive employee assistance programme that supported the people affected by job loss but also the operational managers at all levels who had never had to cope with personnel problems on such a large scale. Consider that during his tenure as CWO, major downsizing occurred because of Wet Warehousing and Distillery Reviews, Market Testing, EC Single Market reductions and the Fundamental Expenditure Reviews.

Ron was deservedly honoured by HM Queen in 1993 for his distinguished career when he was awarded the Imperial Service Order. He retired shortly thereafter and diverted his energies to his charity work, counselling, to promoting CERSA for his retired friends, his public speaking and to organising reunions of one kind or another.

I used to tease Ron for his use of "trainer speak" when he would say "Thank you for sharing that with us. I am proud to say today: "Thank you, Ron Sanders, for sharing such a large part of your wonderful life and your achievements with so many of us."

Ron was an APO at Gt Yarmouth with Jim Kinver. Jim was promoted to LHR and, in 1963, with Fred Vickers and John Turner, formed the first Special Baggage Grew. It was the result of a staff side idea arising from the fact that there were too many passengers to be dealt with by too few officers so passenger clearance was being done in a rush with increasing pressure from management in an attempt to avoid delays. It was also suspected that criminals were by passing the controls with the assistance of some airline staff.

The agreement was that the crew would be two PO's in the summer and four in the winter. They were allowed to choose in which terminal they would operate. They were free to roam amongst passengers in the arrival lounge and to select which passengers they would deal with. Initially officers were on the crew for 12 months but the early successes led to this being extended to two years. (In the mid '60's, as the numbers of crews were increased to meet the need, this was extended to 5 years)

I don't know when Ron arrived at LHR or when he joined the Crew but, when I arrived there on promotion in March 1964 he was on it with Jim Kinver and Jack Sutton. Their principal interest at that time was commercial watch smuggling and they were successful in detecting several groups, had some good court cases and provided long term targets for the Investigation Branch. At the same time the crew identified groups of East End small time criminals travelling to Zurich, picking up body belts of gold, smuggling these into India or Hong Kong, then returning to LHR via ZRH. On their return they carried nothing other than, sometimes, their "pay-off" in cash.

The approach adopted was to gather and carefully record intelligence from such "innocent" passengers; to use airline records, particularly tickets, to discern patterns of travel, and to liaise very closely with Special Branch and the C&E Investigation Branch. Intercepting such passengers at outward controls where they were not expecting a Customs presence, let alone an interview, often produced unbelievable cover stories, which added to the intelligence records.

This all happened many years before the department set up any form of intelligence structure. Ron was particularly noted for his determined attention to detail; one example was noting the registration numbers of cars in the car park adjacent to Uxbridge Magistrates Court in an attempt to identify friends of the accused.

I don't know when Ron left Heathrow : I find that amazing for it must have been a much quieter place after he'd gone for he was a noted presence: whenever he was on duty the laughter levels increased: it was even worse when Peter Dyne was on duty with him for they continually fed off each other.

I also "suffered" from being a tutor at WTC Southend alongside Ron for a couple of APO training courses in 1967/8, once when Ron Stephens was also there. The two Ronnies fed off each other also and there was much laughter in the tutors' room during breaks, to the chagrin and disapproval of the then CPO, Bill Waddington. The real suffering happened if one's own classroom was next door to that of Ron Sanders for one's own efforts could be drowned out by gales of laughter from next door!

Despite, or maybe because of, all his hilarity he usually managed to produce the best results at the end of the course. And that in many ways sums him up in my mind: great humour covering a serious, dedicated and very effective officer in whatever task he undertook.

During his later period as CPO i/c WTC he introduced the Drugs Training courses. These courses trained officers to become Drugs Trainers themselves so that on return to their home station they would run their own drugs courses and so improve knowledge and expertise throughout the Waterguard.

He was well amused when he found that at Heathrow where Phil Connolly and I, both former Baggage Crew officers, were now the CPO's in Terminal 3 and had adapted the format of his course, together with the associated sample cases, for the drugs training officers to give talks to airline staff about the rapidly developing drugs problems, with very good results.

We kept in touch over the years but I next worked with Ron when he was Chief Welfare Officer and I was detached to work alongside him doing the Look after your Heart launch. As my brother Norman was his, and my, Ass Sec it was Ron's perpetual complaint that he was "sandwiched between the two Hodson brothers who not only looked alike, but talked alike, so much so he was never sure which one was telephoning him". Being Ron, he protested about this loud and long and with great humour, to all who would listen. It was during this period that I first heard of the suggestion to form C&E Retired Staff Associations in the larger conurbations. This project became very much Ron's baby in his retirement and, since the formation of the Federation in 1994, he was not only its secretary but has also been the principal driving force behind the formation of twelve very successful CERSAs as well as the equally popular annual reunions. With regard to the latter he annually demonstrated his well-developed powers of persuasion as he set about ensuring that one of the CERSAs would play host to the next year's reunion.

Gordon Hodson

"He enriched the lives of those he met" : "A Waterguard Character " :

"A fine Revenue Officer" : "A gentleman of the first order"

"A Waterguard Officer of the highest quality and always courteous, kind, understanding and helpful – and a damn good tutor"

These are but a few of the many tributes that have been made following the tragic death of Ron Sanders, who died on Wednesday 8th October 2008. They sum up the feelings of many who knew him, worked with him, were influenced by him and who will be remembered for the many attributes he held.

I first met him in 1964 as a fellow Instructor at the Waterguard Training Centre in Carby House, Southend-on-Sea and from then, we developed a friendship which has lasted over the years. We met frequently on further courses and subsequently he became CPO i/c Training in Carby House.

His dedication and expertise were greatly appreciated by all his students, as were representatives of Customs administrations from all parts of the world who came to the Training Centre in Southend.

Ron applied for and was successful in obtaining a Winston Churchill Fellowship award, taking him to the Far East where he worked with and learned a great deal about the worldwide problems of drug smuggling from Customs and Police in Malaysia much of which he was instrumental in bringing to the notice of the authorities in this country. He spent some time in the British Virgin Islands, setting up control systems and again conveying to local Customs staff the vast amount of knowledge that he had accumulated. He was a man of many parts,

becoming the Chief Welfare Officer in our own Department where he was instrumental in developing his skills to the benefit of many and also becoming a highly efficient T & DO

He will be missed by many for the sincere approach he made to encourage both new and serving Officers.

Our thoughts go out at this time to his devoted wife, Sheila who was such a support to him in all the fields in which he was involved, and also to his family. What better way to conclude this tribute to Ron with a phrase known to many "And so, from me, the other Ronnie, it's Good Bye to him"

Ron Stephen, Edinburgh

Ron arrived in the old C&E Welfare Branch like a breath of fresh air – a bundle of energy - he was instrumental in changing for the better the way we worked and how we were valued by C&E management. His enthusiasm and his sheer ability to promote our service was truly amazing. Where the Department is now in terms of providing employee assistance services is due in no small way to the direction Ron set and then fought for way back in the eighties .

I personally found him to be an inspirational leader in the true sense of the words – he encouraged me to believe in myself and my own abilities – encouraging me to go for promotion to Surveyor at a time when female Surveyors 'up North' were as rare as hens' teeth.(a slight exaggeration – but you know what I mean) !! Most importantly, Ron provided support, comfort and practical help both as a senior manager and as a friend when my late son was diagnosed with leukaemia and I was fearful about how I could possibly cope with all the pressures that were on me and my family at that time. That support never waivered and has never been forgotten. To me Ron was one of those people who will always figure as having had a really positive influence on me whenever I look back over my life.

Hope this helps Dave - look forward to catching up with you and Kay soon

Denise Halson (Nee Duffy)
denise.halson@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

One usually heard his infectious laugh before one came face to face with the great character Ron. Ron was the best thing ever to happen to the Welfare Branch. He brought to it his own brand of dynamism and charisma. He lifted the Branch to new heights gaining the respect of 'those who matter'.

He was shrewd. For example he would meet the Chairman of the Board and suggest new initiatives. Having gained the Chairman's support he would then submit his initiatives to his Assistant Secretary (Gordon, your brother Norman had no chance !) emphasising the Chairman's support - very cunning as otherwise they would likely 'not get off the drawing board'.

On a personal level Ron lifted my self confidence immensely. He reported the previously reported 'aggressiveness' as 'positive decisiveness' !

Ron was a conman who cost me dear on more than one occasion. I would have a meeting with him to discuss my overloaded work schedule only to come out with no reduction but happily agreeing to take on a new project which I had been specially selected for. I was delighted having been told that ,I alone, had the necessary skills to perform the task !!

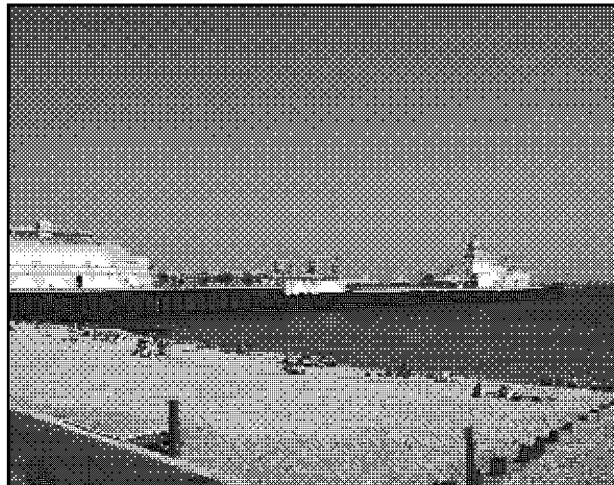
It was many years later that I realised that I may very well have been conned !.

He made me believe that I could achieve anything I chose and my self confidence has remained high ever since which is solely down to Ron who believed in me or at least he said he did and I believed him ! I consider myself very fortunate to have met and worked with him, the like of which we are unlikely to ever meet again.

Best wishes
Dave Trathen

2009 REUNION

**Monday 4th May to Wednesday 6th April
Lansdowne Hotel, King Edward's Parade, Eastbourne.**



The Hotel is holding 45 double and 16 single rooms at £50 dinner, bed and breakfast per person per night until 31 December 2008. Bookings can be made for Sunday 3rd May and Thursday 7th May at the same rate.

Bookings made after 31 December will enjoy the same rate subject to rooms being available, eg if no single rooms available after 31 December a double will be offered with a £15 supplement.

All rooms are en suite with approximately half having a sea view. The Hotel has games facilities and two snooker rooms. There are some 22 lock up garages available at a charge of £6 per day. Bookings to be made with reservations at 01323 745 483, quoting Federation of Retired Customs & Excise Staff Assoc. - FoCERSA. A non refundable deposit of £30 per person is payable on booking.

NB: *All* HMR&C retirees whether or not CERSA or RMB members are welcome.

www.bw-lansdownehotel.co.uk



Terms and conditions overleaf

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR GROUP RESERVATIONS

CONFIRMATION:

All provisional bookings will be held for up to 14 days. Confirmation must be received in writing to secure the booking during this time, otherwise it will fall void. This can be sent by post, fax, and e-mail.

ROOMING LIST:

Guests will book individually and pay a non refundable deposit of £30.00 to secure their reservations. Any unsold allocation will be released **01.12.08**.

CANCELLATION:

In the event of cancellation of a group reservation, the following charges will be applied.

The scale of charge is:

From 6 to 3 months notice of cancellation	No charge
From 3 months to 2 months	50%
From 2 months to 3 weeks	75%
Less than 3 weeks notice	100%

PRICES:

All prices are current and include VAT. Prices quoted will be fixed, barring circumstances beyond our Control.

GENERAL

The Hotel Proprietors Act 1956 is displayed in Reception. The hotel will not accept responsibility for any loss or damage to guests property unless it has been deposited specifically with the Hotel management for safe keeping and a receipt obtained.

.....

I have read and accept the terms and conditions as detailed above.....

Date:..... Name:.....

FEDERATION OF CERSAs

Chairman	Peter Trevett	Salway House, Bagshot Road, Fox Corner, Worplesdon, Surrey, GU3 3PT	01483 233027 <i>p.trevett@btinternet.com</i>
Vice-Chairman	John Wright	8 Churchill Road, St Albans AL1 4HQ.	Phone/fax: 01727 845535 <i>jrswright@ntlworld.com</i>
Secretary	Paul Houghton	1 Lawn Avenue Allestree Derby DE22 2PE	01332 552293 <i>paul@focersa.org.uk</i>
Treasurer	Tony Cross-Rudkin	25 Bertram Drive North Meols, Merseyside CH47 0LN	0151 632 5612

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33, Overcombe Drive,
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Weymouth
Dorset, DT3 6QF.

Dear David,

On a beautiful day in June 1996, some twelve years ago, Bryan Liddle and I, and our wives, Ann and Ann (believe it or not), attended a delightful garden party at West Wellow, not far from Southampton. It was the occasion of Bob Buenfeld's retirement, and his "ranch" became a meeting place for lots of "Cussies", who came to offer good wishes to their friend Bob and his lovely wife Sue. The day was a great success, and enjoyed by friends and colleagues from many parts of the country. Incidentally, my invitation included an order to wear my long black 'mac', which I did, but it was bloody hot in June, I can tell you!!!

One who attended was Alan Hay, a former Preventive Officer at Poole, who arrived in his nineteen thirty something Rolls Royce, which he parked on Bob's drive. Unfortunately for Alan, and even more calamitous for Bob and Sue, the "Roller" proceeded to leak oil on to the driveway, and followed this up by breaking down shortly after leaving West Wellow.

I hope that Alan won't mind this little bit of adverse publicity, albeit twelve years ago, but by a stroke of good fortune we were on hand to render assistance, and Bryan Liddle attached Alan's vehicle to his car and skilfully towed it to a local garage. This activity was recorded on my "Brownie Box", and I enclose some photographs noting yet another chapter in the lives of retired Custom Official at play.

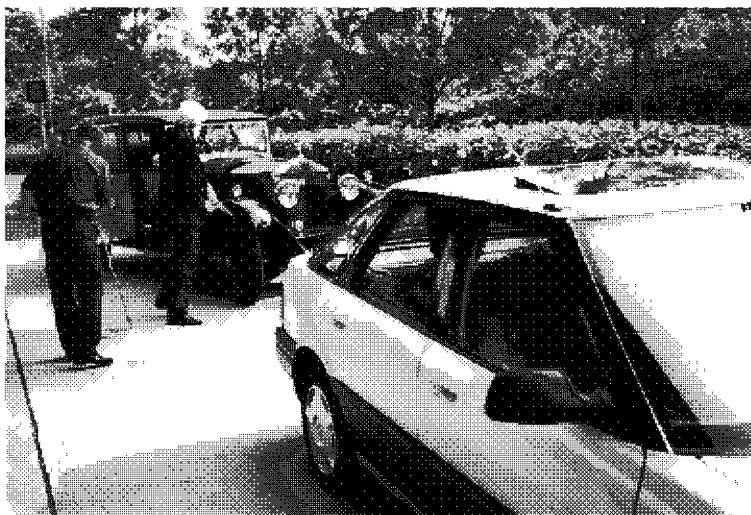
Brian Searle



Bryan Liddle chats to Alan Hay in a lay-by off the Main A.16 Salisbury - Southampton road, the topic of conversation being Alan's broken down "roller".
14th June 1996.



Bryan Liddle successfully tows Alan Hay's Rolls Royce into a garage off the A.36 highway. 14th June 1996.



The job complete. Bryan and Alan remove the towing ropes which had secured the crippled Rolls Royce to the rescue vehicle.
14th June 1996.

Graham Askew, ex Newcastle/Northern England Collection is reputed to have moved to South Africa on DD. He may not yet have retired. If anyone knows of a contact address, please let me know.
Dave Taylor, Editor

WILIAM J. "BILL" MITCHELL (1927 - 2008)

Bill Mitchell was born and brought up in Poole, and joined the Inland Revenue Department on leaving school. He enlisted in the Royal Navy at the age of eighteen in January 1945, and after training he was sent to the Far East, and was there when Japan surrendered to the Allies in August 1945. Shortly after cessation of hostilities, Bill returned to civilian life with the Inland Revenue, subsequently joining HM Customs Waterguard as an APO in Southampton in 1951. He later obtained a permanent post in his beloved

Poole from where he was promoted to Preventive Officer in 1963. He then spent some time on detached duty before taking up a permanent post in Dover in 1965.

Bill obtained a vacancy in Weymouth in 1970, and remained in the port until his retirement in January 1987. He was a very knowledgeable PO, and had the opportunity of promotion to HEO during the mid-seventies, but turned it down in favour of the sweet life in Dorset.

In retirement, he was a founder (and regular) member of the Weymouth Customs "Monday Club", but with his passing, very few old colleagues remain to continue with the aims of the club.

Bill Mitchell, who was almost an ever present over a twenty year period at the Southampton Waterguard Reunion Association's bi-annual luncheons at Cosham, and more recently at Eastleigh, passed away on 30th. August 2008,

and the deepest sympathy and kindest regards are extended from the membership, and from all his other colleagues, to his dear wife, Anne, and to their two sons, Graham and Andrew, and their families,

Brian Searle

(Chairman, Southampton Waterguard Reunion Association)

Replies to or comments about this mailing, including any errors or omissions, should be addressed to me at trevor.tomasin@hm-waterguard.org.uk or broadcast to all your ex-colleagues on the hm-customs-waterguard-l@rootsweb.com list.

Contributions to the site are always welcome - see www.hm-waterguard.org.uk/Contributions.htm

Hi Everyone

I have made a new section for verse - songs, poems & limericks etc. - on the Sports & Pastimes sub page. If you have any

Since the last Waterguard Web Site Newsletter the following pages have received some attention:

- # Anecdotes-London Sub-Page (additional text) - Neil Bailey remembers Percy Hodges - Office PO at KGV / Woolwich River Station - and the 'bumf' for circulation.
- # (The) Customs Journal Sub-Page - A new sub page with PDFs of Journals! This page and it's associated PDFs will grow as more editions come to light and are submitted for inclusion.
- # History-Snippets Sub-Page (additional text) - Malicious Shooting by a Revenue Officer in Cornwall - 1834.
- # People-Colleague 1945-1972 Sub-Page (additional text) - H Peter Kershaw has submitted his Waterguard CV.
- # People-Sports & Pastimes Sub-Page (additional section, image, PDF & text) - New section - 'Verse' - now includes the songs from the 'Music' section and a 'new' poem called 'A Dream of a Job' by TWC.
- # Pictures-Groups Sub-Page (additional image) - Ted Shreene, Vic Roberts, John Gregory, Ernie Parker, Nobby Clark & Evan Jones at Northholt in 1953 submitted by Jim Allen.
- # Pictures-Sports & Pastimes Sub-Page (additional image & text) - The 'Football' section now has the WTC (Course 78) Football Team which entered the 1968 Lupton Cup
- # Pictures-WTC Course & Class Photos Sub-Pages (additional image) - 1968 - Gordon Hodson's class.

If you would like a free Waterguard e-mail address similar to mine - your.name@hm-waterguard.org.uk - as an addition to your existing e-mail arrangements, then please ask for one. There is an application form and more details at www.hm-waterguard.org.uk/Help & FAQs-Configuration of WTG e-mail.htm

Cheers and Merry Christmas to you all!

Trev

www.hm-waterguard.org.uk & www.tomasin.org.uk

7th Annual Golf Day for the Centenary Shield

Retired Staff are invited to take part in the competition for the CENTENARY SHIELD 1903/2003 which has been arranged for Monday 15th June 2009 at Morley Hayes, Morley Derbyshire DE7 6DG, on the A608 just north of Junction 25 on the M1. It has its own helicopter pad and can be viewed at <http://www.morleyhayes.com/static/manor.htm> Also invited this year are R&C Sports Club Members who are due to retire in 2009/10. Tee times will be from 1000 hrs and a green fee of £18.00the same as last year is anticipated....but could be a £1 or so more.

No formal catering arrangements have been made but there is an excellent "Roosters Bar" which provides light snacks and full meals.

Retired Members Society of The R&C Sports & Leisure ASSOCIATION will give support for travel/accommodation/green fees to RMS Members in accordance with their guidelines. (See the web pages for details. www.focersa.org.uk link to RMS.) If you are interested in playing, please contact me early. I need to have "firmish" numbers by late March so would appreciate early entries. If you enter by post could you note the envelope clearly GOLF, please. If you require overnight accommodation I can supply you with local tourist information.

**Paul Houghton 1 Lawn Ave, Allestree, Derby, DE22 2PE Tel:- 01332 552293
e-mail :- pauljhtiqqer@yahoo.co.uk**

et al

For info of your members as appropriate. Mid South Darts Comp on 30th January 2009 ... details on web pages www.focersa.org.uk link [darts.htm](#)

It is probable in the NEW YEAR there will be a RC SL Web Site so we may in future simply have the link to that page on the FOCERSA site. Until then I'll keep posting the items I get

Regarsd (sic)

Paul

2009 CERSA DORSET AUTUMN BREAK

Hot on the heels of a very successful break in 2008, we have rebooked at the Northfield Hotel, Minehead for 2009. The dates are Tuesday 22nd September to Friday 25th September.

Dinner, Bed and Breakfast @ £60.00 per person per night. A deposit of £25 per person will be required by mid February 2009.

Anyone interested please contact Dave Simm on 01202 517672 as soon as possible.

With regard to the other ship involved in collision with the **Magdeburg**, she was the NYK Lines cargo liner Yamashiro Maru finished at the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries shipyard in 1963, so she was less than a year old at the time of the incident. NYK claims that she was the first merchant vessel to be equipped with a bulbous bow to make her more

efficient. This has been questioned, however. On the National Maritime Museum website I did find a copy of a photograph of her after the accident and some of the damage can be seen. The caption says it was taken at Albert rather than KGV and I wonder if it is the same one taken by Allen Nicholls.

I have seen claims that the Magdeburg was built to carry missiles so had few cargo bulkheads, explaining the speed of her demise. However, she was built in 1958, before the Cuban revolution, and Castro did not formally ally himself with the Soviet Union until several years later so the 'missile carrier' claim is certainly untrue but it would be interesting to know the state of her cargo holds.

We would also like to hear from folks who were familiar with the incident of have memories of it.

Bob Couttie

Administrator

Maritime Accident Casebook

www.maritimeaccident.org

Tom Walters

The many friends and former colleagues of Tom will be saddened to learn of his death aged 86 in Farnborough Hants.

Tom joined HM Customs and Excise after wartime service in the RAF much of it spent in India. After the usual spell as unattached officer he was fixed in London North Purchase tax and was assigned to an area of the West End containing the highs and lows of the "rag trade" as the design and manufacture of ladies fashion was known. When I joined the same office in 1953 he was a tax expert in this field and a very cheerful colleague who was always willing to share his knowledge with you. Later he was promoted and after touring the country as an unattached Surveyor was appointed to Woking LVO but not for long as further promotion took him to Holborn LVO as Assistant Collector. Following retirement in 1988 he used his interest in people for voluntary part time service in the Farnborough Citizens Advice Bureau for more than twenty years until just before he died. A remarkable record of work for the community.

We shall miss him in Hants/Surrey CERSA and our sympathy goes his widow Marion and his family.

Nigel Bellchambers

nigel.bellchambers @ntlworld.com

ELECTRONIC ARCHIVE

The address of 'The Bond' page is

<http://www.hm-waterguard.org.uk/Bond.htm>

and the e-mail address for subscribing to the distribution list is

subscribe-to-the-bond@hm-waterguard.org.uk

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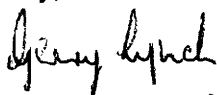
Dear Editor,

Ray Gregory's piece "Fool's Gold" in the June *Bond* reminded me of an incident at Gatwick in 1972. It was during the influx of Asians expelled from Uganda by the Last King of Scotland, when most of them had to leave with just what they stood up in and what they could carry. Many of them customarily kept part of their wealth in gold, mostly in jewellery but some in coin.

I was tarmac duty officer one night watch, when an aircraft cleaner brought into the office an item she had found on a Donaldson aircraft - who remembers them? It was a beautifully sewn sleeve of worsted, about 7 or 8 inches long and an inch wide and I found it to contain seven sovereigns. I thanked her and phoned her duty manager to say that the coins were seized. They were sent with a report to the Bank of England - and the twist was in their return report to us.

They said that the Royal Mint had examined the coins and that they all had the correct weight and purity of gold. The Mint certified that two of the sovereigns were definitely genuine, two were definitely counterfeit, and they could not say with certainty whether the other three were genuine or not! Funny old job, indeed. No problems like that with today's brass sovereigns.

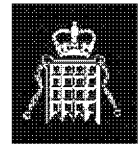
Yours sincerely,



Gerry Lynch



GRAVESEND WATERGUARD REUNION ASSOCIATION



Tel. 01474 352894

Email : ivordavis@tiscali.co.uk 16 The Rise, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4BX

Dear Colleagues,

I have to advise that I will be unable to attend any future 'Old Reunions because of my injured leg. I have been advised that it will never get any better as a result of the M.R.S.A, that I contracted in the Intensive Care Unit at Darenth Valley Hospital.! So, I shall just have to live with it as best I can! Because of my restricted mobility I have to make special arrangements to travel to London. My wife insists on travelling with me if I go on long journeys and I have to use taxis at the beginning and end of each train journey. A summary of each trip to London from Gravesend looks like this:

Taxi to Gravesend & Return	£12.00/£ 14.00
Train to CHARING CROSS x 2	£20.00
Taxi to the CIVIL SERVICE CLUB & Return	£20.00
TOTAL - Minimum:	£52.00

As you can imagine this is a very high price to pay to attend a Reunion that has been attended by only two or three others! Indeed, at one meeting last year the members attending numbered TWO - myself and one other!

SO, REGRETTABLY, I SHALL NOT BE ATTENDING ANY FUTURE MEETINGS.

I shall however continue to place the Advertisements in the Bond and on the Waterguard Website
Ivor Davis..

CLOSURE OF THE SWANSEA PIERHEAD OFFICE

Dear Editor,

The Swansea Docks Pierhead office, ex-Waterguard and latterly general H.M C&E building, is due to close next year. It is proposed to mark this sad occasion with a buffet in the Swansea Dockers club on Friday the 13th February next, anyone interested in joining their ex-colleagues to 'swing the lamp' ad nauseum, can get full details from:

Kim Fenton **01792 634028**
Stuart Fenton **01792 634016**
Roger Fraser **01792 634002**

I would be grateful if you could publish this in the Bond,
Regards,

Ron Woodland
01554 820477
ron@maesderw2.fsnet.co.uk

Dear Dave

I am trying to "wind-down" and wish to dispose of my Cutler Street Bonded Warehouse notes, as I just do not have the time to write a Customs History of that building. Would you please publish the attached request in the next issue of The Bond, hopefully someone will find the time etc. to publish a definitive article/book/pamphlet before it is too late.

Many thanks

Sincerely

Chris Carr <gbperfins@tiscali.co.uk>

From The Editor:-

I have now edited this newsletter for nigh on 10 years, and it is to be hoped that it has in the main been useful, and at times entertaining.

However, times change and with them priorities.

I have taken on another project which is very time-consuming and must therefore now relinquish my post.

Having dropped many hints over the past year or two, I am not optimistic that anyone will come forward to replace me. This saddens me, but it appears to be he way of the world: no-one wants to contribute any more.

The Waterguard Rootsweb site has prospered, and those from that discipline have an excellent channel of communication through it, as well as a superb historical archive. Trevor Tomasin must be congratulated on his foresight, drive and determination as well as dedication in producing that facility.

There is an archive of back-issues of The Bond held on it, and I will ensure that any "missing" issues are made available to complete the record.

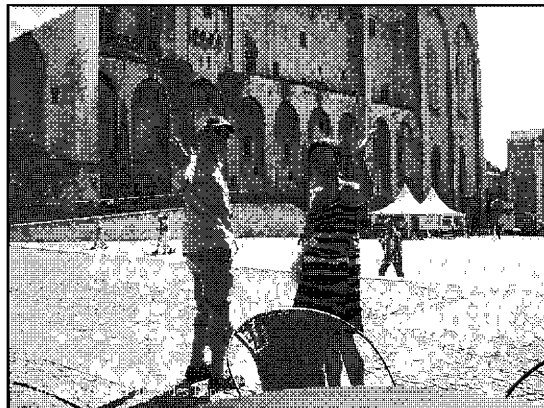
It is a pity that there is not a comprehensive collation of the history of other disciplines in The Department. Perhaps, one day, when some political tyro re-invents the Service, there will be a flurry of rooting around for information regarding the Ancient Arts of Customs and Excise.

I will be willing to give advice and information to any replacement, and may I take this opportunity to thank all who have contributed to the newsletter over the period of my tenure. Hopefully I will be able to attend the odd reunion in the future.

Best wishes, and please keep in contact by email:

jdavidtaylor@btinternet.com

Dave Taylor



*If this newsletter is not required,
or if you have
changed your address
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