Eltham Hotel Outing
June 17th 2016

G’day you seafarers, did you miss out on a darn good enjoyable outing. With almost a full bus, about 24/25 passengers who congregated at the South Tweed Bowls Club for a 9.30am kick off. It was a very nice bus/coach but because of my size it could have been a tad wider. The seats were comfortable and just far enough apart.

Well, we took off on time and headed towards Eltham, NSW. Naturally we had to stop at the Condong Bowls Club, more for a nice cuppa than for a wee! stop. It was a small stop, just long enough for one or two cups and a tab-nab or two. The club did a nice job and was very gracious to our requirements. Most welcome and enjoyable.

Everyone was back aboard when the driver, Rob, kicked off for the next part of the trip. This time it was away from the highways and on to the byways and countryside. The road was bent more than a piece of spaghetti, but with a reasonable surface. As we progressed, mostly uphill, the views became better and better. You can see across acres and into the distance. Wonderful, but no good for my camera, it can’t see more than a field away and those views deserved a much better lens.

The lads and lasses aboard were just keeping the voices in motion and everyone seemed to be listening to what everyone else was talking about. This was a very good indication to two visitors, Bob and Peter, who because of the way everyone enjoyed each other’s company, so much so that they have become tentative members of our group. Many happy returns Bob and Peter, come on in and join us.
There was a couple of areas that were so stunning that the voices fell into silence, it was a journey worth repeating a couple or more times. It wasn’t a long trip and we were soon pulling into the car/bus park at the Eltham Hotel. As the picture shows, it is a good looking hostelry. As we disembarked and walked in to the bars, the clouds became darn dark and threatening, yet before we had all got our first throat lubrication glass in hand, the sun was shining and it was a delightful day. This day, a Thursday, actually pulled in a whole car park of customers cars. Not a single car had just a single person in it. One couple came all the way from Tully for lunch, that’s how good the meals turned out to be, good quality and no shortage of quantity either. It’s not a small car park.

After a delightful lunch, served by smiling workers, and everyone talking and moving around and mingling it was another plus for the gang and the trip. One or three of the guys went outside for a breath of smoky air, if you get my drift. It was during this time that the ladies decided that they had heard enough, for the present, about the different ships and places the lads had graced with their presences. They wanted to see and have MORE action, and where better than the local shopping centre. Rob, our transport operator was coerced into taking the girls on a five minute drive to the local shops for fifteen minutes. Huh! That was the longest fifteen minutes anyone has ever seen. “Clunes” must have been a good visit. Ah well, it kept them and the local shop owners happy.

As time marched on, as time will, it was decided that the trek should be once more commenced. All aboard. Good, all comfy, onwards. The trip was once again travelling on the spaghetti roadway, but it was a mite easier on the bus and it was mainly downhill. Once more we were rolling along the highway. This took me back a few years to when I was a truckie.

The paddocks of sugar cane were still growing, the river was still flowing and the only real change from about 25 years ago is there is more industry and certainly more houses. Our party were now looking ahead with pleasure to another visit to Condong Bowls Club. It is definitely a wee stop this time, for most of us I would say. Once again we were welcomed in to the generous hands of the club, with open doors and a few more ales to help us on the rest of trip home. One sad point here, we just missed “Happy Hour” and cheap drinks.

Wow, you stay at home members have missed a really good days outing for a cheap cost. There is another trip in a couple of months, get your names on the pad as it may well be over booked, as this one was. As they say, first in best dressed!

Our thanks to the soft hearted driver Rob, a good and careful driver, we do hope to have him again with his comfy chariot.

Jack Secker
Now there is a sequel Eltham story, in that on returning home after dropping off a few lads to their respective abodes, a phone message awaited from the Condong Bowls Club, one of the lads had left his car keys there, so on returning to South Tweed Bowls, to see if he was still there was told they had just put him in a taxi home.

So back to Condong Bowls to retrieve his keys, by now on returning it was dark and not liking night driving anymore decided to call it a day.

On the way to a luncheon the next day in Brisbane, I dropped the keys back to South Tweed Bowls Club where the errant Mariner was able to pick both his keys and car that day. All’s well that ends well!!!!!!

Brian Hunt

President’s Report 2016
Well members and guests a very eventful year and one which has involved countless hours of work. Obtaining funds for the erection of the monument has taken on gigantic proportions, virtually a full time job for me.

We have been successful in obtaining four grants this year, one for $5,000 towards the monument from the Federal Government, under the “Stronger Communities Programme” another one for $5,000 also from fed govt under the “Volunteer Grants” this one we will only be able to partially use toward the monument as the wording of the grant is for “outside furniture and equipment” with this we hope to have the flag pole, three flags and diorama’s in that description.

We have also been successful in a Jupiters Casino grant of $1158.50. This is for four banner, harness, ladies badges and a new double sided printer and inks for the presidents use. The harness we have already purchased and was used at the last Anzac Day. The ladies badges will be ordered as we collate the information from our ladies. The printer will be put on hold as mine has mysteriously started working again. Also a grant of $1000 from Div 14 Gold Coast Council.

Now to the monument, your committee have had quite a few meetings the last of which only two weeks ago with the Gold Coast City Council in which it was resolved to ask the council if we could move our site to our 2nd choice for two main reasons, closer to the road which means easier access for construction and we won’t need to hire a crane to lift the anchor in to place, the delivery truck will have that capacity. Nor will we have to hire a concrete pumping machine for the base and wall.

One added bonus was that at that position the council would allow a permanent flag pole, half the cost of a portable one, that is if we could even get one built. Probable a saving of $4,000, but if we sub contract it out, as suggested by our consultant Warren Keats, to this end we are seeking a 2nd quote, but partially on hold as the council have suggested we narrow the monument by one metre. This will make only a little difference as we will take half a metre from each end. We will still site the monument towards Sutherland Reef where the anchor came to rest 130 years ago. The permanent flag pole will be 6.5 metres in height and a cross tree to house the two red ensigns, the Australian flag at the top.

We will still have to have public liability insurance. This I’m also working on as the RSL have found out that we are not covered by their current public liability insurance. I have asked an insurance company who specialise in public liability for quotes for the monument and Bunnings sausage sizzles.

You may also notice that the monument fund has only one expense and that is for the PO Box, both the fund secretary Jack and the association secretary Terry have incurred considerable expenses to the tune of $600, to keep the monument funds as high as possible, the association has paid those expenses. Now both Jack and Terry have not claimed all their bills and apart from their time I applaud their generosity. Postage, ink, presentation folders, envelopes and paper do not come cheap.

Much has been said about the efforts of members to raise funds, but my own thoughts are that you lads could put your own talents to work to raise some funds, something like Eileen and I did at Condong Bowls, organising a bowls tournament. What about a whist or card night, a progressive dinner, a wine tasting afternoon or evening, a cricket or football match, a BBQ, the list is endless just a little imagination and a few hours organisation.

In conclusion a very special thanks to Jack for our newsletter and the quiet ones behind the scenes who put it together along with running the web page, Bill and Shirley in Cairns, to Terry and Kay who stepped up to the plate in an emergency and took over from Jack, to become a very able and competent secretary, I am now reliant on Terry for some very sound advice. To the treasurer Rob who has battled unchartered waters with the poor health of his wife Pat, he now has to care for her 24/7. Rob still managed to get to every meeting bar one. To Graham the monument treasurer he has been a tower of strength with his knowledge and advice. Last but by no means least Warren our monument consultant, his experience and creative ideas have steadied the ship quite regularly, a consultant in every use of the word.

Now I couldn’t finish without thanking you chaps, who have regularly attended some boring meetings, provided the prizes bought your raffle tickets without question and made my job so much more worthwhile. The only person left is my wife Eileen who has put up with the five card trick, on the computer up to 50 hours a week, meetings and never doing to-day what I could leave until to-morrow at home, we will be taking a break for a couple of weeks in January as there is no meeting that month, without Eileen I would not have been able to complete half of what we have achieved, thanks honey and thank-you lads.

Brian Hunt, President
THE SHIPPING FORECAST

From Faeroes and Forties to North German Bight, Humber and Thames, Dover and Wight, Plymouth and Portland, Biscay and Sole, Fastnet and Lundy (where puffins patrol).

Iceland and Malin plus Cromarty, Fair Isle, Fisher and South Irish Sea, Trafalgar and Fitzroy, Forth and the Tyne, Bailey, Rockall, Shannon in line.

Accepted by shore folk but maybe obscure, Though focal for seamen sailing offshore, Diction is clear in a slow measured pace, For writing it down in a nautical space.

Viking, Utsire, of course Hebrides, These regions distinct as part of our seas, Enduring and well known by Seamen out there, Remembering well the old Finisterre.

All form of vessels that steam round our land, Depend on the weather for voyages planned, With ferries and freighters, fishermen too, Tankers and coasters just butting through.

`Prospects are stormy` `visibility low`, whatever the forecast it’s handy to know, Winds perhaps veering or pointer to fall, A Mariner’s ready for sunshine or squall.

Good Night Gentlemen and Good sailing.

Joe Earl, May 2015

The Treasurer reports that a healthy return on raffles held came to $532 so congratulations winners and thank you to donors and competitors.

I would also add that donations of $67 was received along with grants totalling $7158.50. Details being $1000 from Div 14 Gold Coast Council, $5000 from the Federal Government Volunteer Grants and $1158.50 from the Qld Government/Jupiters Casino. It certainly pays to be incorporated.

We have also been successful in obtaining this year, a grant for $5,000 towards the Monument from the Federal Government, under the “Stronger Communities Programme”

News Flash - 25/07/2016 we have just heard the great news that the “Volunteer Grant” of $5,000 we will be able to use the funds towards the Monument, eg The Flag Pole Flags + 6 Dioramas, these alone will be just short of that total, we have now raised $11,200 a third of the way.

Of Monument donation note would mention among other worthy generous folks Dave & Meg in Kyogle who not only cooked up a storm in Pizza culinary for our ‘Return-to-the-Country’ trip., but donated the proceeds.

It should also be noted the Michael Fitzsimon is now the new Treasurer. He comes highly regarded as he has managed the social books for the South Tweed Bowls for over 18 years.

2016 Elected Committee
President: Brian Hunt BEM JP
Vice President: Graham Moon
Secretary: Terry Docker
Treasurer: Michael Fitzsimon
Management Committee President: Robert Armstrong
Bosun/Master at Arms: Steven Stanley

SEQ SLOP CHEST
We have for sale ……..

Metal MN Lapel Badges $8 each
Metal Vindicatrix Lapel Badges $5.00 each
Nil Stock - MN Assoc Blazer Badges $21.00 each
Nil stock - MN Assoc Cap Badge $17.00 each
Nil Stock - Club Shirt (Large) $40.00 each
Club Caps $15.00 each

All Communications to
Brian Hunt on 07 5513 0178
Preferably email at brian.hunt8@bigpond.com

AGM Meeting Report

Wednesday 18th July 2016. There was a very good turnout of members and Vindi girls also. There were 30 signatures in the book, but unfortunately some of the lady visitors failed to sign the Muster Record Book. After a couple of phone calls it was agreed that there were a certain six ladies and possibly seven. All in all we had about forty attendees.

The next social event is our annual ‘Return to the Country’ trip down to visit our mates Dave and Meg Witcombe and their family at Kyogle, NSW.

Let’s all make the effort and fill the coach (which is already booked and seating limited) In fact only four seats left.

Our President Brian called the meeting to order and announced the General meeting was in order at 1100hrs and gave his usual talk on escape procedures, should
they be needed. He then thanked everyone for attending this important gathering. Then he welcomed a member who had been on-board for 12 months but had not been able to attend any meetings or outings for all of those 12 months. It must have been a really grand holiday! We all welcomed Kev Dixon on his first visit. Next in line were two new members. Bob Whylie was first and is a social member. He was followed by Peter Ellem who was a shipwright. Welcome aboard gents, it’s good to see you. I will get more information regarding as time goes by.

Stephen Stanley joined just a couple of months ago. He is a big man and a real Bosun looking man. Well he also looks very much like one of the M.A.A. crewmen that travelled on the Bloemfontaine Castle. He was a big man too, and was big enough to bully almost the whole crew, except for Big Emma, (this was just a cruel name for our Bosun). The second day the M.A.A. was aboard he tried it on with the Bosun and it was a stare match and Big Emma won hands down. No one seemed to hear what was said between the two men, but many of us saw the one punch fight. Bosun needed just one punch to the solar plexus, hard enough to stop a freight train. After that when both men were walking on the same deck, Maa Lamb turned and took a different course to where he was going. He lasted one trip on the ‘Bloem’. Oh yes, Stephen is our First Master at Arms. He is the man that keeps the peace and also raises funds by fining members for their misdemeanours on the day. Watch out guys, the fines can be as much as a whole 50c. Ladies are exempt from his eagle eyes.

In our latest register you will find a new name, it is John Crooke. John is a benefactor and is helping us to raise funds for our new Monument. We welcome you John as we definitely need lots of help, he was elected by a unanimous vote to be an Honorary Member. At the end of the general meeting there was a comfort break and the committee stood down to await the elections for the next committee.

The meeting was called to order and the electing commenced. It was much as we expected, and Brian was re-installed as President, Terry was again the Secretary, and the only change was that of Robert Armstrong who was exchanged to Michael Fitzsimon the new Treasurer. Welcome Michael. Graham Moon was reinstalled as Vice President. After the selection of the committee members, the meeting went very quickly and soon closed for another year.

All that was left was to enjoy the snacks and tea and coffee, and for the more serious of the members, ‘bar’ opened for the stronger requirements of the dry throats. The lamp swinging went on for about another hour before the group started breaking up and headed homewards.

We did have a surprise visitor. Founder Member Andy Squibb came all the way from Taree for this meeting with his lady Julie. It was good to see them both and Andy is looking fine thanks to Julie’s caring. Andy has had lots of health problems over the last few years, so it was all the better to see him getting around a bit.

Jack Secker

(More photos on our website)
Frank Joseph Henry Gardiner DOB 1942 was raised in the London Docklands within sight of the River Thames, and so it was natural that as a boy his vivid imagination should have been fired by the majestic and ever varying panorama and daily bustle on this mighty river, with the masts of ocean vessels towering over rooftops and gliding silently between chimney pots.

He became fascinated by the historic vessels of yesteryear, with the famous London clipper ships and Blackwall frigates sparking a particular passion and devotion. The artist showed an early and precocious talent for watercolour painting, but it was to be decades before he would turn to maritime art as a full-time career.

After studying at Lister Technical College for three years, where his strong architectural principles were fostered, he later became well known as an illustrator of manuscripts, stamps and banknotes, before deciding upon a career in the Civil Service, as an illustrator in the Department of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings. In just two years he rose to head a group of twelve artists who were responsible for public illustration work all over England. This department is better known today as English Heritage, and his work can still be seen on postcards throughout the country.

Frank Gardiner first began to exhibit at the Royal Society of Marine Artists in 1971, and rapidly gained numerous commissions from his association with the renowned and long established Parker Gallery in London. With an ever increasing popularity and his work then booked up to two years in advance, he was able to retire at the age of 50 to concentrate fully on his first love – marine art.

The style of his work has remained remarkably consistent over the decades, with the architectural principle a recurring guide throughout. His bustling scenes of boats in company or scenes involving human history show all the spirit and evocation of a vanished and bygone age, and they have achieved wide acclaim.

He works today primarily in watercolours, with a perfectionist's attention to scale, detail and perspective. His personal library of both books and archive material is truly astonishing, his studio awash with hundreds of antique photos, maps, shipwright's plans, sketches and nautical ephemera, as well as ships' models, which he also loves to build, and it is this overriding passion that he has for his work which is so evident in his finished paintings.

The fully rigged ship *Arranmore* was built in Glasgow in 1893 for Thompson, Dickie & Co. She was steel-built without an engine other than a boiler to run steam driven winches.

In 1903 *Arranmore* was wrecked at Algoa Bay, a wide inlet along the South African east coast, 425 miles east of the Cape of Good Hope. Ashore for five months, she was then towed almost seven thousand miles to the River Clyde, and in 1910 she was sold to the Hamburg based company of H. Fölsch & Co. and renamed the *Waltraute*.

In 1913 she was dismasted and became the rest ship for the Hamburg Seaman's Mission and also for the German submariners. In 1914 a boiler/generator and electric lights were fitted as well as two extra decks provided from cargo hold areas.

In 1920 she was surrendered as War reparations, being acquired by the British Shipping Federation, who again renamed her in 1923, this time as the *Vindicatrix*. In 1939 with the outbreak of World War II *Vindicatrix* was towed to Sharpness on the River Severn and there commissioned as the National Sea Training School for merchant seamen.

*Vindicatrix* was finally scrapped in 1967.
Panama has opened the long-awaited US$5.4 billion (A$7.2 billion) expansion of its shipping canal, completed after nearly a decade of work forecast to boost global trade and improve the 80-kilometre shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

The Chinese container ship Cosco Shipping Panama entered from the Atlantic to begin the first crossing of the roughly 80-kilometre-long waterway, set to emerge at a ceremony attended by thousands of onlookers, several heads of state and foreign dignitaries.

The Panama Papers scandal, in which millions of documents were leaked from law firm Mossack Fonseca, revealed how some of the world's richest people use offshore companies to avoid tax and launder money. The consortium led by Spain's Sacyr and Italy's Salini Impreglio led the US$5.4 billion ($7.2 billion) project that will triple capacity so that the canal can now host 98 per cent of the world's shipping.

Panama's plan behind the expansion is to triple the $1 billion in revenue it currently gets from canal shipping fees. However, that goal might still be a decade or more away, according to officials from the Panama Canal Authority, the autonomous Government agency that runs the waterway. The Spanish and Italian led consortium that carried out the expansion are demanding hundreds of millions of dollars in cost overruns.

“Everybody is always overly optimistic,” said deputy chairman of Seaspan Corporation Peter Shaerf, a container ship group with a fleet of 100 vessels. But regardless of the cost, he said the augmented canal was “wonderful” and “will have a huge impact on trade”.

The expansion is “one of the engineering wonders of the world”, said Mr Shaerf, speaking at a lavish party for canal clients and investors.

But wait there is more news A Chinese container ship has hit a wall of the recently-widened Panama Canal, amid concerns that it has less space for manoeuvres and could be unsafe. It is the third accident of this kind since the multi-million dollar expansion opened a month ago.

Workers' groups say the new locks are too small for safe operations now that the canal can take ships three times larger than before. The Panama Canal authority says it is investigating the incidents. The Xin Fei Zhou, owned by China Shipping Container Lines, suffered a large gash in its hull and is now undergoing repairs.

The new locks are designed for ships to use tugboats to guide them through the canal. In the old canal locomotives (known as "mules") would keep the ships correctly aligned as they passed through.

A study for the International Transport Workers' Federation released earlier this year concluded that the new lock chambers were too small for the tugboats to be able to manoeuvre properly.

Work on the expansion began in September 2007 and was originally planned to finish in 2014. Following delays caused by construction workers' strikes and disputes over cost overruns, the date for completion was pushed back to April 2016. The first voyage through the new expanded canal was on 26 June.
**Efficient Ship Propeller Design**

**10 Factors to consider**

Over the years there have been significant research and development in the field of propeller designs to ensure safety of goods, passengers and the crew, and at the same time saving a lot of money by increasing its efficiency.

Propulsion systems for surface ships and underwater vehicles have followed the standard propulsion mechanism for many years. Propellers have to be designed in a way to reduce noise and vibrations and hence cavitation to the lowest possible level in order to achieve propeller efficiency. Modifications made in the basic propeller geometries do not change the way we determine and analyse propeller performance.

Basically, a propeller design is carried out by one of the two following methods:

- **First of all, based on the results of the open-water tests on a series of model propellers.** The different propellers tested have varied parameters such as number of blades, blade area, pitch ratio etc. Based on these results and the requirement of the vessel, the parameters can be selected to obtain the suitable design.
- **The second method involves doing the old way! i.e., using the first principle.** This involves finding the chord length, section shape, pitch etc., then finding the torque, thrust and the efficiency. This method is used to design propellers which require features other than the regularly designed propellers, like propellers which are needed to work in an uneven wake pattern or which is heavily loaded and liable to cavitation.

A propeller design should be initiated only after the design criteria is selected. The design criteria acts as a boundary condition to the propeller design. While designing a propeller various factors should be kept in mind so as to design a very efficient propeller. The following are the factors that help in improving the propeller efficiency.

1. **Propeller Diameter:** It is observed that the speed of the shaft and the propeller diameter are very closely related. A low shaft speed (given diameter) is very beneficial from efficiency point of view. However, it leads to high shaft torque subsequently large shafts and gearboxes. Therefore, while designing the propeller a balance must be found to ensure its performance.

2. **RPM:** Selection of RPM of the ship plays a very important role in the propeller design. The rotational speed chosen for the vessel must be different from the resonant frequencies of the shaft, hull and other propulsion machinery. It is often seen that low RPM design increases the propulsive efficiency by 10 to 15 percent.

3. **Number of blades:** The number of blades chosen has an effect on the level of unsteady forces acting on them. Considering the efficiency point of view, optimum open water efficiency increases with increase in the number of blades.

4. **Blade Outline:** Blade outline plays a very important role in propulsive efficiency. Research and experiments using propellers with various blade areas have shown that efficiency increases by decreasing the blade area. This is because the frictional drag increases with increased blade area. However, it should be kept in mind that the strength of the propeller cannot be compromised by decreasing the area to large extent. Tip of the propeller has to be kept narrower in order to ensure efficient flow of water through the blade.

5. **Angle of Attack & Camber:** The design of angle of attack of the propeller and its corresponding chamber depends on the design lift which has to be determined by the naval architect. If a larger angle of attack is chosen then the section designed would be less susceptible to pressure side cavitation and more susceptible to suction side cavitation. The reverse also holds true if the angle of attack is decreased.

6. **Pitch/Diameter ratio:** To achieve the best propulsive efficiency for a given propeller diameter, an optimum Pitch/Diameter ratio is to be found, which again corresponds to a particular design rate of revolution.

7. **Stern Tunnels:** these devices help in reducing the wake peak effect for ships having V-shaped sterns, thus reducing the effect of vibration. They are horizontal hull appendages placed above the propeller, they deflect the water towards the propeller ensuring even flow through the propeller.
8. **Schneekluth ducts**: These type of devices redirect the flow to the upper portion of the propeller disk thus equalising the effect of wake and improving hull efficiency. These are also capable of accelerating the flow by means of the aerofoil shape cross section. This is done by creating a low pressure area in front of the duct which is achieved through its design.

9. **Grouches Spoilers**: Their function is to redirect the flow horizontally in towards the propeller. They are small curved triangular plates welded in front, top and side of the propeller. These were designed to prevent the formation of keel vortices for U-shaped stern ships.

10. **Rudder Bulb System**: Kappel propeller comprises of smoothly curved extended blade tip towards the suction side of the blade which reduces the energy loss from the tip vortex flow. Integrating a rudder bulb and flaring the Kappel propeller hub cap will provide additional reduction in the energy loss from hub vortex and drag from the hub -rudder profile. The rudder bulb system also reduces cavitation increasing the total efficiency of the propeller assembly. A Kappel propeller and a rudder bulb system is designed for a target ship and accordingly engine is selected as per the power/rpm requirement. It is important to properly optimize these two parts to achieve improvement in fuel saving, efficiency and reduction in emission.

Apart from the points discussed above, it is really important that the designer check for serious cavitation problems at various stages of design.

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**Orion's Belt**

*Orion's Belt*, also known as the *Three Kings* or *Three Sisters*, is an asterism in the constellation Orion. It consists of the three bright stars Alnitak, Alnilam and Mintaka.

Looking for Orion's Belt in the night sky is the easiest way to locate Orion in the sky. The stars are more or less evenly spaced in a straight line and so can be visualized as the belt of the hunter's clothing. They are best visible in the early night sky during the Northern Winter/Southern Summer.

The same three stars are known in Spain, Portugal and South America as *Las Tres Marias*. They also mark the northern night sky when the sun is at its lowest point, and were a clear marker for ancient timekeeping. In the Philippines and Puerto Rico they are called the *Los Tres Reyes Magos*.

Ok so what is the connection to the Sphinx and the Pyramids. The Great Sphinx is a colossal statue with the face of a man and the body of a lion. Carved out of the surrounding limestone bedrock, it is 57 metres (187 ft) long, 6 metres (20 ft) wide, and has a height of 20 metres (66 ft), making it the largest single-stone statue in the world. The Great Sphinx is one of the world's largest and oldest statues, yet basic facts about it such as the real-life model for the face, when and why it was built, and by whom, are debated. These questions have collectively earned the title “Riddle of the Sphinx”, a nod to its Greek namesake, although this phrase should not be confused with the original Greek legend.

The Great Sphinx is commonly accepted by Egyptologists to represent the likeness of King Khafra (also known by the Hellenised version of his name, Chephren) who is often credited as the builder as well. This would place the time of construction somewhere between 2520 BC and 2494 BC. An argument put forward to support the Orion Correlation Theory is that the construction of the Great Sphinx was begun in 10,500 BC, that the Sphinx's lion-shape is a definitive reference to the constellation of Leo; and that the layout and orientation of the Sphinx, the Giza pyramid complex and the Nile River are an accurate reflection or “map” of the constellations of Leo, Orion (specifically, Orion's Belt) and the Milky Way, respectively.

A date of 10,500 BC is chosen because they maintain this is the only time in the precession of the equinoxes when the astrological age was Leo and when that constellation rose directly east of the Sphinx at the vernal equinox. They also suggest that in this epoch the angles between the three stars of Orion's Belt and the horizon were an “exact match” to the angles between the three main Giza pyramids. These propositions and other theories are used to support the overall belief in an advanced and ancient, but now vanished, global progenitor civilization.

The Sphinx and the Pyramids, a sight marvelled at by many seamen years ago sailing down the Suez Canal, alas though still there of course now surrounded by building, major roads and the spread of suburbs completely now block this view. Good views from Google Earth though if you have a computer............
**SS Sirius (1837)**

The Sirius was a side-wheel wooden-hulled steamship built in 1837 for the London-Cork route operated by the Saint George Steam Packet Company. The next year, she opened transatlantic steam passenger service when she was chartered for two voyages by the British and American Steam Navigation Company. By arriving in New York a day ahead of the *Great Western*, she is usually listed as the first holder of the Blue Riband, although the term was not used until decades later.

Sirius was 178 feet 4 inches (54.4m) long from stem to stern and a depth of hold of 18 feet 3 inches (5.6m). She had a beam of 25 feet 8 inches (7.8m) and a draught of 15 feet (4.6 m). The ship had a burthen of 412 tons and a gross tonnage of 703.

The ship had a two-cylinder steam engine built by Wingate & Co. driving two paddlewheels. Her boilers provided steam to the engine at a working pressure of about 5 psi (34 kPa). The engine produced a total of 500 indicated horsepower (370kW) and the ship had a maximum speed of 12 knots (22 km/h; 14 mph). The ship could carry a maximum of 450 long tons (460t) of coal, enough to steam 5,365 km; 3,334 miles at an average speed of 12.4km/h; 7.7mph.

Sirius was one of the first steamships built with a condenser that enabled her to use fresh water, avoiding the need to periodically shut down her boilers at sea for cleaning. Unfortunately, this also resulted in high coal consumption. She was the largest of the St George company’s steamers and was designed for their prestige Cork-London service, on which she began in August 1837.

At the time Sirius was completed, two other companies were building steamships for proposed transatlantic passenger services. British and American's British Queen fell behind when the firm building her engines went bankrupt. Construction on the rival Great Western continued without interruption and she was ready for her first voyage by April 1838. One of British and American's directors suggested the company charter Sirius to beat Great Western. Overloaded with coal and with 45 passengers, Sirius left Cork, Ireland on 4 April and arrived in New York after a voyage of 18 days, 4 hours and 22 minutes (8.03) knots.

The normal westbound passage by sailing packet was 40 days. When coal ran low, the crew were alleged by the newspapers to have been forced to burn cabin furniture, spare yards and one mast, inspiring the similar sequence in Jules Verne's book “Around the World in Eighty Days”. However, in reality the crew were able to manage and conserve the stocks of coal by burning four barrels of resin instead, and still had 15 tons of coal left on arrival in New York. Great Western departed Avonmouth four days after Sirius and still came within a day of overtaking her. Because Sirius was clearly too small for the Cork-New York crossing, she completed only one additional round trip before she was returned to her owners and, after a voyage to Saint Petersburg, resumed her regular St George company service, though on the Cork-Glasgow route.

In 1839, the British Admiralty released bids for transatlantic mail service to Halifax. The St. George Steam Packet Company bid 45,000 pounds for a monthly Cork-Halifax service including Sirius and 65,000 pounds for a monthly Cork-Halifax-New York service. Great Western also bid a monthly Bristol-Halifax-New York service. However, the Admiralty rejected both bids because neither company offered fortnightly service in their bid response and the contract was finally awarded to Cunard.

In late 1840 Sirius was sent to Gibson's Dry Dock at Hull for new boilers, but remained there over two years as the dry dock had to be specially lengthened. In the face of financial difficulties, the St George company was refinanced in 1844 and took the style City of Cork Steam Ship Company, with which Sirius continued her regular employment on the Irish Sea.

The Sirius was wrecked in 1847. On 16 January, on a voyage to Cork from Glasgow via Dublin with cargo and passengers, she struck rocks in dense fog in Ballycotton Bay, Ireland. Despite being refloated, she was found to be leaking badly and, in steaming for the shore, was wrecked on Smith's Rocks, half a mile from Ballycotton. The only lifeboat launched was heavily overloaded; swamped by heavy seas, the twelve passengers and two crew were drowned. Most of the 91 on board were rescued by rope passed to the shore, though twenty lives in all were lost.

While we may never know why this ship was named Sirius but many ships have had this name from naval ships to a Greenpeace vessel. Though Sirius is the brightest star in the Earth's night sky. The name is derived from the Ancient Greek Σείριος (Seiros), meaning “glowing” or “scorcher”. 
It’s an area shrouded in mystery with stories of unexplained disappearances and strange happenings. So its no wonder that Bermuda is also home to one of the biggest shipwreck sites in the world.

With more than 300 identified wrecks off its coast, it has become a virtual time capsule preserving historic wrecks in the Atlantic that are hundreds of years old. It’s one of the planet’s greatest mysteries: Why has the Bermuda Triangle claimed so many ships and aircraft?

Scientists believe they are now a step closer to an answer after the discovery of a series of underwater craters at the bottom of the Barents Sea, off the coast of Norway. While it’s not close to the Bermuda Triangle, which stretches from Florida to Puerto Rico and the mid-Atlantic island of Bermuda, it’s hoped the craters are the key to finally explaining the baffling phenomenon.

The craters, which measure up to 800m wide and 45m deep, are believed to have been created by methane building up in sediments on the sea-floor of the gas-rich Norway coast. They then leak, “popping” through the sea bed and into the water above.

Multiple giant craters exist on the sea floor in an area in the west-central Barents Sea..... and are probably a cause of enormous blowouts of gas “The crater area is likely to represent one of the largest hot spots for shallow marine methane release in the Arctic.

Details of the discovery will be released at the annual meeting of the European Geosciences Union in April 2016, where experts will analyse whether these kind of bubbles could place ships in danger. There is a version (of theories) that the Bermuda Triangle is a consequence of gas hydrates reactions. They start to actively decompose with methane ice turning into gas. It happens in an avalanche-like way, like a nuclear reaction, producing huge amounts of gas. “That makes the ocean heat up and ships sink in its waters mixed with a huge proportion of gas.

**Methane Ice**

Methane clathrate or, also called methane hydrate, hydromethane, methane ice, fire ice, natural gas hydrate, or gas hydrate, it is a solid clathrate compound in which a large amount of methane is trapped.

The sedimentary methane hydrate world reservoir probably contains 2 to 10 times the currently known reserves of conventional natural gas, as of 2013. This represents a potentially important future source of hydrocarbon fuel. However, in the majority of sites deposits are thought to be too dispersed for economic extraction. Other problems facing commercial exploitation are detection of viable reserves and development of the technology for extracting methane gas from the hydrate deposits.

A research and development project in Japan is aiming for commercial-scale extraction near Aichi Prefecture by 2016. In August 2006, China announced plans to spend 800 million yuan (US$100 million) over the next 10 years to study natural gas hydrates. A potentially economic reserve in the Gulf of Mexico may contain approximately 100 billion cubic metres (3.5×1012 cuft) of gas. Bjørn Kvalme and Arne Graue at the Institute for Physics and technology at the University of Bergen have developed a method for injecting CO2 into hydrates and reversing the process; thereby extracting CH4 by direct exchange. The University of Bergen's method is being field tested by ConocoPhillips and state-owned Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEC), and partially funded by the U.S. Department of Energy. The project has already reached injection phase and was analysing resulting data.

Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas. Despite its short atmospheric half life of 12 years, methane has a major global warming potential. The sudden release of large amounts of natural gas from methane clathrate deposits has been hypothesized as a cause of past and possibly future climate changes.

People have been burning coal, oil and natural gas for more than a hundred years. Methane hydrates, on the other hand, have only recently come under controversial discussion as a potential future energy source from the ocean. They represent a new and completely untapped reservoir of fossil fuel, because they contain, as their name suggests, immense amounts of methane, which is the main component of natural gas.

Methane hydrates belong to a group of substances called clathrates – substances in which one molecule type forms a crystal-like cage structure and encloses another type of molecule. If the cage-forming molecule is water, it is called a hydrate. If the molecule trapped in the water cage is a gas, it is a gas hydrate, in this case methane hydrate. It would be noted that methane hydrates can only form under very specific physical, chemical and geological conditions.

Climate scientists like James E. Hansen predict that methane clathrates in the permafrost regions will be released because of global warming, unleashing powerful feedback forces which may cause runaway climate change that cannot be halted.
A crusty old Aussie Bosuns Mate found himself at a gala event hosted by a local liberal arts college. There was no shortage of extremely young idealistic ladies in attendance, one of whom approached the Mate for conversation. “Excuse me, sailor, but you seem to be a very serious man. Is something bothering you?” “Negative, ma’am. Just serious by nature.” The young lady looked at his awards and decorations and said, “It looks like you have seen a lot of action.” “Yes, ma’am, a lot of action”. The young lady, tiring of trying to start up a conversation, said, “You know, you should lighten up a little. Relax and enjoy yourself.”

The Bosuns Mate just stared at her in his serious manner. Finally the young lady said, “You know, I hope you don’t take this the wrong way, but when is the last time you had sex?” “1955, ma’am.” was the gruff reply. “Well, there you are, no wonder you’re so serious. You really need to chill out! I mean, no sex since 1955!”

A man from out east had always dreamed of owning a cattle ranch and had finally saved enough money to buy his dream spread in Wyoming. His best friend flew out to visit and asked, “So, what’s the name of your ranch?” His buddy told him that he had a really hard time coming up with a name that he liked.

He and his wife couldn’t agree on what to call it so they settled on, “The Double R Lazy L Triple Horseshoe Bar-7 Lucky Diamond Ranch.” His friend was really impressed and then asked, “So where are all the cows?” To which the new rancher replied, “We had quite a few...but none of them survived the branding!”

A man goes into the confessional box after years being away from the Church. He pulls aside the curtain, enters and sits himself down. There’s a fully equipped bar with crystal glasses. The best vestry wine, Guinness on tap, cigars and liqueur chocolates nearby and on the wall a fine photographic display of buxom ladies who appear to have mislaid their garments.

He hears a priest come in: “Father, forgive me for it’s been a very long time since I’ve been to confession and I must admit that the confessional box is much more inviting than it used to be”. The priest replies, “Get out, you idiot, you’re on my side”.

One day an Irishman goes into a pharmacy - reaches into his pocket and takes out a small Irish whiskey bottle and a teaspoon. He pours from the bottle onto the teaspoon and offers it to the chemist. “Could you taste this for me, please?”

The chemist takes the teaspoon, puts it in his mouth, swills the liquid around and swallows it. “Does that taste sweet to you?” says Paddy. “No, not at all,” says the chemist. “Oh that’s a relief,” says Paddy. “The doctor told me to come here and get my urine tested for sugar.”