

# LETTERS



## † IN MEMORIUM Andrew Cecil McMurray 9 Dec 1924 to 11 Dec 2004

R Adm (JG) Andrew Cecil McMurray SM, who retired from the South African Navy in 1978 after a distinguished career of 35 years, died in Cape Town two days after his 80th birthday.

His last appointment before retiring was that of Director Naval Operations at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria.

In his last seagoing appointment he was Officer Commanding the Type-12 frigate SAS *President Pretorius* in which he visited Argentina, Australia and Angola.

Widely admired for his friendliness and approachability, Andrew McMurray was a highly respected officer who held key roles in the expansion and modernisation of South Africa's fleet in the post-war years.

Born in Kenilworth, Johannesburg, in 1924 he joined the South African Naval Forces for wartime service in January 1943, as an Able Seaman.

He was appointed Secretary to the Director of the SA Naval Forces, Commodore James Dagleish CBE, in late 1945 and he joined the Permanent Force as a sub-lieutenant in May the following year.

Among the highlights of his early post-war service was his participation, in a temporary appointment to the Loch Class frigate HMSAS *Transvaal*, in 'Operation Snoektown' - the annexation in December 1947 of the Prince Edward Islands in the Southern Ocean.

In December 1961 McMurray, in the rank of commander, became the SAN's Senior

Staff Officer Plans, and as such he became involved in converting destroyers to carry helicopters, the acquisition of a fleet replenishment tanker (SAS *Tafelberg*), acquisition of submarines and of a torpedo recovery vessel.

In 1964 Andrew McMurray was appointed to Naval Headquarters in Simon's Town as Staff Officer Operations to the then (Naval Chief of Staff), Vice Admiral HH Biermann, to whom he later served in a similar capacity in the newly-established Maritime Headquarters at Youngsfield. Biermann had then been redesignated Commander Maritime Defence, in addition to Chief of the Navy.

When McMurray was appointed in command of the frigate SAS *President Pretorius* in mid-1967 it was in the rank of temporary captain, and he was promoted substantive captain in November 1968 and awarded the Southern Cross Medal soon after this.

In 1970 he was put in command of the SA Navy's technical school, SAS *Wingfield* at Goodwood, and was moved to Defence Headquarters in Pretoria in 1974 in the rank of substantive commodore.

After his retirement in 1978 as Director Naval Operations, the Commodore (a rank later changed to Rear Admiral (Junior Grade) returned to Simon's Town to live, and he was elected as a councillor on the Simon's Town Municipal Council.

As holder of a foreign-going master's certificate, Andrew McMurray was a member of the Society of Master Mariners of Southern Africa, and he was also a member of the SA Institute of International Affairs and a Life Fellow of the Navy League of South Africa.

He leaves his wife Anne, to whom he had been married since June 1948, and their two daughters and grandchildren.

Roger Williams

## ✉ Addressed to the Editor

Please accept my sincere apologies for being so remiss in writing to acknowledge receipt of your letter 29th November 2004. On behalf of all here at Nazareth House, I say a very sincere thank you to the officers and crew-members of the SAS *Outeniqua* for their generous gift of R4 865,41.

I understand that your ship's company has been loyal supporters down the years. For your help and concern we are deeply grateful and ask God to reward you with all the favours and blessings that you so ardently desire for yourselves, your families and friends. As SAS *Outeniqua* graciously retires from active service, we wish all her crew a happy transition to their new posts.

Gratefully,

Sister Elizabeth M<sup>c</sup>Ginley - Nazareth House

## ✉ Addressed to the Editor

The tragic and untimely death of my son Julian on the 12 February was a traumatic experience for my family. It is still difficult to come to terms with our loss but the support from family and friends help us to cope in this difficult time. We only have fond memories of Julian and if one considers the many friends he made and who attended the funeral on a normal working day then we were truly blessed by God. Excellent and swift police investigation promises to provide imminent closure to this tragedy.

I wish to thank my colleagues from the different ships and other units who stood by my family and their support in this time of sorrow. Special thanks to our coxswain, WO' Vincent, for his support after the incident. Special mention must be made of every civilian connected to the SA Navy who supported my family since the night of the accident. Losing a child is devastating but the affection and care displayed by the community helped to lessen the pain. On behalf of my family I want to thank everybody for their unselfish support and for your prayers.

WO' RT Marks - SAS *Spioenkop*

## Sadly Missed

*The thoughts and prayers of all in the SA Navy go to the bereaved families and loved ones of the following members:*

PO Bongani Clerment Sithole of Fleet Command

Mr Albertus Louis Kruger of Navy Yard Simon's Town

Mrs Margaret Joan Green of Fleet Command