

GENERAL STEVEDORING COUNCIL
50 YEARS YOUNG





GSC
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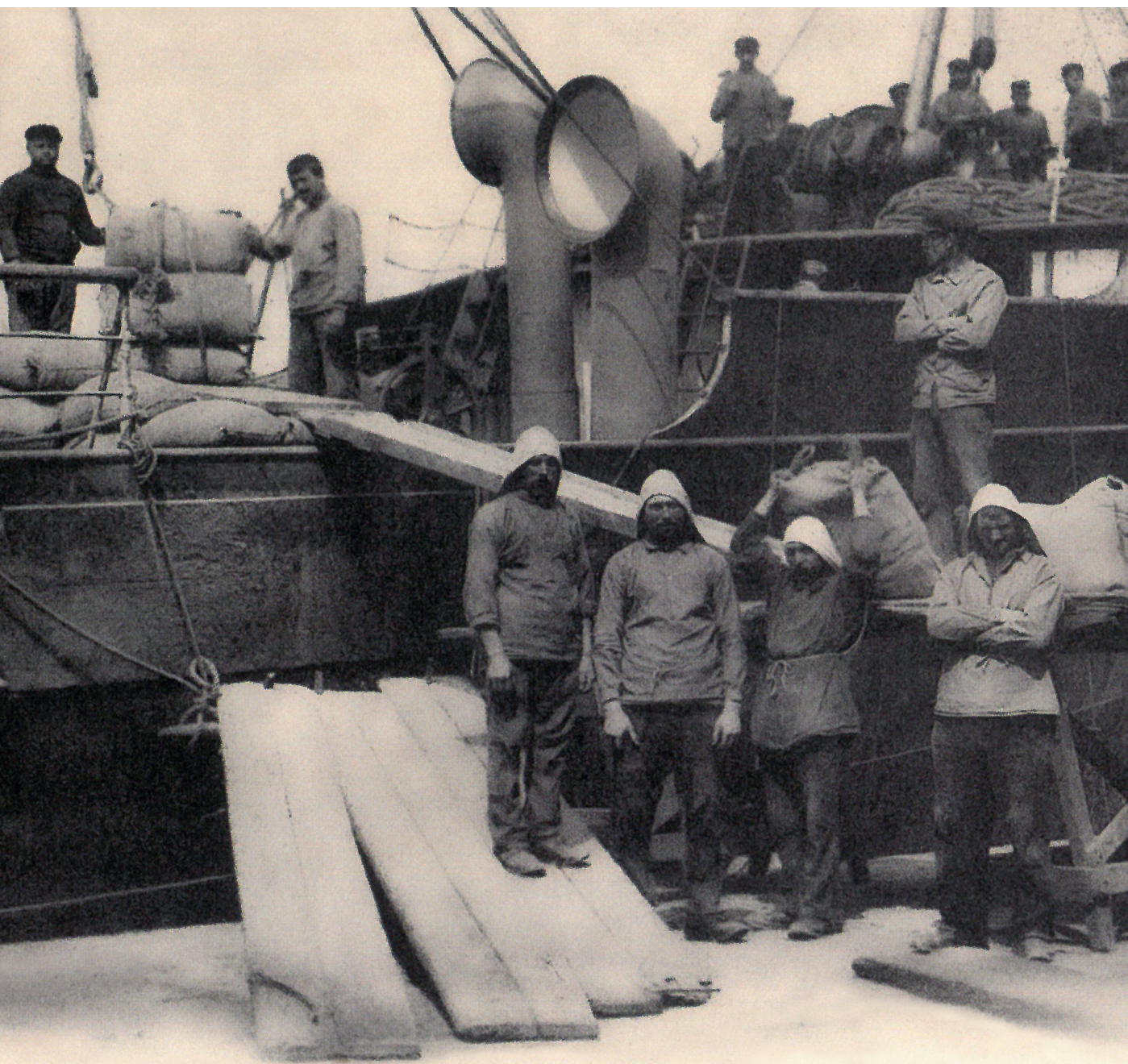


GENERAL STEVEDORING COUNCIL
(GSC)

MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK

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PREFACE

This book has been written as a dedication to the Founders of the General Stevedoring Council and to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of their legacy. It is based on the memories and records of the Members. It is intended both as a record and also as a tribute to the foresight of the Founders. The intent has been to gather as much first-hand information as possible together with pictures. Inevitably it has not been possible to include everything that has happened over fifty years so this book records the Annual General Meetings, the Management Courses and the memories of Members and Graduates. It also attempts to look towards the future.

What is not recorded is the enormous debt the Council owes to all those who have made the Council function, all the Presidents and, so far as the Council's Secretariat is concerned, the Members' secretaries/pa's who have been the cheerful, tolerant and unsung links. To them the Council owes a great debt of gratitude. Gratitude is also due to those Members who have provided great assistance in helping with the arrangements for the Management Courses. To them all – thank you.

Robert Kimber

May 2020



FOREWORD

“Every true history must force us to remember that the past was once as real as the present and as uncertain as the future”. This quote from the British historian George Macaulay Trevelyan is, in my opinion, one of the nicest and most correct definitions of what history is. And it describes perfectly what the GSC community is doing in this year 2020 at its 50th anniversary. While we are GSCommemorating the past, GSContemplating the present and GSCreating the future we are making history: past, present and future!

It all started on 3rd February 1970 when some bright entrepreneurial members of the stevedoring world from over the seven seas decided to engage in a new networking association where professionals could meet each other on regular basis to exchange ideas and create a benchmarking platform for industry experts. Members learn from and encourage each other or maybe - just lend a shoulder to cry on.

Throughout the decades the industry, and thus also the GSC membership and member companies, evolved by challenging the uncertainty of the future, coping with the industry disruptions and dealing with the continuous change which we constantly navigate.

Indeed, as this commemorative is being written, our world is dealing with the Covid 19 pandemic, which is forcing for the first time the cancellation of all GSC events for 2020, our 50th Anniversary year.

Today, the GSC still is an association of companies, both private and public, both family and corporate, active in terminal operations, stevedoring and port activities. Some of the early member companies remain very much involved and through the successful, and enthusiastically sought after, General and Senior Management Courses, the succession of generations is guaranteed.

The GSC has never been or indeed, wanted to be, a professional association or a lobbying organisation. It is much more than that! Thanks to its founding fathers, the (past and present) member delegates, associated members and graduates, GSC remains an association of friends and peers, competitors and colleagues from all over the globe, with sometimes conflicting interests, but motivated by collegiality and friendship.

With this book we commemorate these 50 years of friendship initiated by our founding fathers. Let it be a sweet expedition through our history to our present and an inspiration in the uncertainty of the future.

Bruno Valkeniers, Acting President 2019-2020
Secretary

May 2020



INTRODUCTION: IN THE BEGINNING THERE WAS...

In February 1970 a group of thirty stevedores from around the world gathered at the Whitehall Club in a snowy New York. They had come together at the request of Captain Owen Thomas (OOT) and Henk van Walt Meijer (Henk) to discuss the future of the stevedoring business worldwide. Everyone recognised clearly that the traditional stevedoring world was changing irrevocably and they wanted to look to a brighter future with optimism. That meeting resolved to establish the General Stevedoring Council (GSC) and as it is said – “the rest is history”.

Why was this group meeting? In 1969 the Furness Withy Group (FW) had decided to divest itself of all of their worldwide stevedoring interests – twenty and a half companies and OOT was instructed to deal with the matter. OOT was a Director of the FW subsidiary, Shaw Savill & Albion and heavily involved in the FW group’s cargo handling around the world. It is understood that OOT only agreed to carry out the instruction on the condition that he was able to establish an organisation that could retain the connections which he felt were so very important for the efficiency of FW’s shipping operations. When that was agreed, he set about discussing how those relationships and connections might be best achieved, with some longstanding industry friends in London, Rotterdam and around the world. In particular he spoke with Henk and Ken Cole. Ken also personally represented the interests of Reg Reed of James Patrick and Co Pty, Sydney. Patrick was very important to FW’s interests in Australia, whilst Henk represented the close friendship and business ties as the FW stevedore and agent in Rotterdam and Antwerp. Reg was also a long-standing personal friend of OOT due to his frequent visits to that part of the world. Everyone was very enthusiastic about the concept, so the planning then started for that Inaugural meeting, to be held in New York in February 1970.

As usual, when the stevedores’ Principal calls, everyone jumps to attention and comes! The meeting on February 3rd and 4th was chaired by OOT and was attended by 20 companies from

FILING NOTE

INTERNATIONAL STEVEDORING MEETING, FEBRUARY 3rd/4th 1970,
WHITEHALL CLUB, NEW YORK, U.S.A.

1. The meeting agreed that an organisation be set up whose objects are to promote mutual co-operation and support in stevedoring and related matters.
2. A Steering Committee was appointed which it was agreed would subsequently become the governing body of an organisation which it was agreed will be called General Stevedoring Council.

3. The Officers elected are as under:

President:	Mr. H.A. van Walt Melijer (Europe)
proposed by:	Mr. A. Goethals
seconded by:	Mr. T. Vorberg
Vice-President: Mr. R.C. Reed (South Hemisphere + Asia)	Vice-President: Mr. G.E. Bart (North America + Caribbean)
proposed by: Mr. J.E. Alexander	proposed by: Mr. C.M. Williams
seconded by: Mr. J.M. Dickinson	seconded by: Mr. A. Lane

Mr. R.C. Reed proposed that the Secretariat should initially function from the President's area.

The newly elected President agreed and requested that Furness, Withy & Co. Ltd. participate to form the Joint Secretariat with Coms. Swire's Stevedoring Company. The two Officers nominated are Dr. A.D.J. Brantenhoor and Captain O.O. Thomas.

4. It was agreed that the Joint Secretariat would after preliminary consultations draw up a suitable charter for circulation and approval by all members.
5. It was agreed that members would pay a funding fee of 500 U.S. dollars.
6. It was agreed that the Joint Secretariat would also act as Treasurer and would in due course prepare a budget.



around the world, with 27 representatives, whose companies operated in 70 ports. There were also three observers from three further companies. The meeting fully endorsed the ideas put forward by OOT and Henk and so the General Stevedoring Council (GSC) was established as from 3rd February 1970. At the end of meeting, the appointed Officers were; Henk as the 1st President, Reg Reed as Vice President, OOT as Secretary and Tony Brantenaar as Treasurer. At a follow up meeting in Rotterdam with OOT and Henk Bas van der Sluijs, who did not attend that first meeting, was asked by OOT to be his Deputy. When Bas accepted OOT advised him “You will never forget this day!”

The first Articles of Association were adopted 12 months later at the 1st Annual General Meeting that was held in Rotterdam in February 1971 and chaired by the 1st President, Henk. By that time there were eighteen Member companies in the Council.

The Council was granted a Royal Charter by the Queen of the Netherlands dated 24th November 1971.

The concept for the Council was that it would be an Association/Network of like-minded people who were business owners and senior executives involved in the stevedoring and cargo handling business around the world. The network would be able to provide help for Members when travelling in another Members’ areas with business introductions. It was also intended to start Management Training for the next generations of management for the Member Companies. The Council was to be organised in three geographic Sections each providing a Director of the Board for that year. These were the European Section, the North America and Caribbean including Bermuda Section and the Southern Hemisphere, South America and Asia Section. Each was to nominate a Board member and also a Chairman. The Board would be the current President, the incoming President for the following year and the outgoing President as Second Vice President. The arrangements for

ATTENDERS OF INAUGURAL MEETING, NEW YORK, 3/4 FEBRUARY 1970:

First Officers:

H A van Walt Meijer	President
G E Bart	Vice-President
R C Reed	Vice-President

First Joint Secretaries:

A D J Brantenaar
O O Thomas

Representatives attending inaugural meeting, New York, 3/4 February 1970:

G Abuanza	New Orleans
J E Alexander	Buenos Aires
G E Bart	San Francisco
M J Belcher	Kingston, Jamaica
A D J Brantenaar	Rotterdam
E R Bunch	Hampton Roads
W F Chapman	London
D R Dick	Santiago
J M Dickinson	Rio de Janeiro
S J Edgington	Buenos Aires
P V O Evans	Montreal
J J Gavne	Santiago
W Geldert	Sydney
A Goethals	Paris
C Gunther	New York
D Heinrichs	Bremen
J H Hopkins	Vancouver
A Lane	Boston
G M Miller-Stirling	Johannesburg
A C Otter	New York
R C Reed	Sydney
R G Rennie	Johannesburg
O O Thomas	London
T Vorberg	Hamburg
H A van Walt Meijer	Rotterdam
C M Williams	Hamilton, Bermuda
M C Woodall	Montreal

Represented as observers at inaugural meeting, New York, 3/4 February 1970:

The Hongkong & Kowloon Wharf & Godown Company	Hongkong
Joseph J Lee & Co SA	Antwerp
The Sumitomo Warehouse Co Ltd	Tokyo

24 november 1971

nr. 45

Wij Juliana, bij de gratie Gods,
Koningin der Nederlanden,
Prinses van Oranje-Nassau, enz, enz, enz.

Beschikkende op de versoekschriften ter bekoming van erkenning van de daarin genoemde, voor minder dan dertig jaren aangevane, verenigingen door goedkeuring van hare daarbij overgelegde statuten;

Gelet op de voorschriften der wet van 22 april 1855 (Staatsblad no.32) in het algemeen en op art. 6, tweede lid, diar wet in het bijzonder;

Op de voordracht van de Staatssecretaris van Justitie van 17 november 1971 Hoofdafdeling Privatrecht, Onderafdeling Rechtspersonen, nr.ver. 69.939;

HEBBEN GOEDGETVONDEN EN VERSTAAN:

de overgelegde statuten der navolgende verenigingen goed te keuren en deze verenigingen mitsdien te erkennen, te weten:

1e. enz.

11e. Algemeen Stuwadoors Verbond, gvestigd te Rotterdam;

12e. enz.

Onze Minister van Justitie is belast met de uitvoering van dit besluit.

Soesdijk, 24 november 1971

(get.) JULIANA

De Staatssecretaris van Justitie,
(get.) J.H.Groenheide.

Voor uittreksel conform,
Het Hoofd van Post- en Archiefsaken
van het Ministerie van Justitie,
voor deze,

Nopre.170/7726

meetings would include visits to ports and presentations by industry speakers as well as by Members. The meetings and other activities would not involve commercial matters but would provide a forum to exchange views about new cargo handling methods and issues affecting stevedores. It was, and remains, the intention that meeting attendees should sit around one table rather than in theatre style so as to be able to see each other. It was also important that the programmes and arrangements should be done with style to suit the standing of the attending delegates unlike normal industry conferences!

Fifty years later, sadly, all those attending have departed but their legacy has gathered strength from the foundations of the GSC that those senior figures laid at the inaugural meeting. Their legacy – set out in the notes of that meeting – has flourished in a rapidly changing world for those engaged in the shipping, ports and cargo handling business. The Membership of GSC and the people involved may have evolved over these fifty years but the core strength of the organisation's friendships have only strengthened as everyone looks to the future.

This book is intended to celebrate the past by briefly looking at the industry as it was before GSC and then recount the GSC events and meetings and personalities that have featured during this half-century.

And lastly a number of friends of the Council have bravely taken a look into the future!

Robert Kimber, Honorary Secretary



For the **35th AGM in 2005** the Council returned to Hong Kong with Erik Christensen of Modern Terminals as the President. 35 representatives and 3 Associates attended. Eleven outside speakers together with two GSC Representatives spoke to the meeting on subjects predominately related to the Chinese trading area and how the changing trading patterns were changing the role of container terminals. John Laister from South Africa also gave a presentation about the effects of black economic empowerment was changing South African business. The attendees were given a guided tour by a number of Managers of the Modern Terminal facility at Kwai Chung Container Port. For those used to container terminals spread over very large areas this terminal was a real eyeopener.

In line with the importance that Members attach to the Council's management courses RK had been asked to prepare a paper setting out options for their future. There was a clear wish by the Members that the existing twelve-day General courses should continue but that there also should be a shorter seven day course for more senior managers. This strategy was discussed and approved. It was agreed that because of the demand from Members for these courses there would be a Council course each year alternating between General and Senior. Norman Stark volunteered to host the first Senior course in February 2006 before the already planned 2006 11th General Course. To settle the future rotation the second Senior course would be in 2007 and the 12th General course would be in 2008.



Alice & Erik Christensen

The meeting enjoyed excellent social programmes with an evening at the greyhound racing and the concluding dinner was held at the Hong Kong Country Club on St Patricks Day. This lead to some very memorable, and lusty, Irish singing lead by Norman Stark and Frank Cushnahan.

MTL very kindly had managed to make available tickets to visit the Annual Hong Kong Rugby Seven tournament which was happening at the same time. As it happened the Samoan Rugby Seven team were staying in the same hotel as GSC was. Getting into the lifts with these giant players made one feel for their opponents!

In September 2004 the European Section held its' meeting largely on a ferry whilst travelling between Stockholm and Tallin in Estonia. There had been a very good attendance and the Port of Stockholm had arranged an excellent programme. The annual London meeting took place as usual in early December.



Irish singing lead by Norman Stark and Frank Cushnahan.

The **36th AGM in 2006** was held in Copenhagen with Lars Karlsson presiding. The delegates and their partners assembled to be welcomed Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra and for her to open the meeting by ceremonially moving a sack onto a ship with a cargo hook!

The President noted that the changed format of meetings seemed to have been welcomed by Members as there were record numbers now attending GSC meetings. Nearly all the speakers at this meeting focused on the challenges being posed in the Baltic Region by a Russia that was pushing to regain its' influence in the region and the world.

RK reported on the 1st Senior Management course that Norman Stark had done so much to organise in Vancouver. The course had been very well received by the participants and indeed Members attending this AGM were pleased with the outcome for their participants.

The concluding dinner was held at the old Royal Shooting Club at Sølyst on the shore of the Öresund. Everyone enjoyed a fine firework display after a very fine dinner during which they were entertained by a magician with some amazing card tricks that are still wondered at today!



Copenhagen AGM 2006

Tom Simmers presided at the **37th AGM in 2007** in New Orleans. The meeting was held at The Royal Sonesta Hotel on Bourbon Street right in the heart of the French Quarter. This was the year after Hurricane Katrina had devastated the city so the high attendance of 38 was very much welcomed and appreciated by the President. The welcome reception was held on the banks of the Mississippi River. This was the first attendance of Doug Schultz since he had taken over the leadership of the restructured Patrick Stevedoring Pty. At the Mardi Gras Ball, held at the Royal Sonesta's Ballroom, Tom Simmers handed over to the incoming President, Roberto Murchison in the grandest of styles. This took the form of a very memorable and noisy Madi Gras Parade complete with motorcycle policemen and a 50 piece jazz band and musicians. The President being carried into the hotel ballroom on a coach escorted by the police. After the Presidential handover Roberto Murchison was carried out in the coach!

The meeting was dominated by the effects of the hurricane vividly described by the United States Coast Guard and discussions as to how companies should prepare for disasters.

The New York Members Meeting and Working Lunch moved to the iconic surroundings of the New York Yacht Club.



New Orleans 2007



Tom Simmers New Orleans, Mardi Gras city



Eva Björström

For the second father and son meeting the **38th AGM in 2008** was in Buenos Aires with Roberto Murchison. This was a well attended meeting with 41 attendees plus wives/partners.

Members remembered Derek Lygo of MTL, Arthur Novacek of Eller and Neville Conyers of Bermuda. All had been great supporters of the Council over many years. The meeting considered and agreed some amendments to the Membership rules and also pressed Members to make good use of the Council's website for which the content was now fully managed by the Secretariat.

Roberto Murchison writes about his GSC memories:

"Thoughts and memories from our participation in the GSC

The GSC has been the most important business association Grupo Murchison has belonged to. Over the years both my father and myself took our turn being Presidents of the Council and we have sent some 24 managers to the general management and senior management courses.

The AGMs are certainly an event I have always looked forward to every year, and have enjoyed meeting friends and updating what is happening in the industry.



Roberto & Guillermo Murchison

I have fond memories of all AGMs but I recall very specially the one we had in New Orleans, where Tom Simmers was the President and he came in with a Mardi Gras Parade escorted by two police motorcycles in the hall where we were holding the dinner, he then proceeded to hand me over the chairmanship chain and I was escorted out with the same parade!!!

Attending the annual meetings has also been a highlight, but the one I remember most is during my Presidency, when I attended the London luncheon for the first time. We stayed at a gentlemen's club, where we could not walk around with papers. I was impressed by the ceremonious dinner we had, where we said grace before dinner and later on I was asked to toast Her Majesty, the Queen, since I was the President, which being the only Argentine I thought was quite funny.

The networking opportunities for all our managers who have attended courses, AGMs and annual regional meetings has been tremendous and we are always very grateful to the GSC for this opportunity and network.

Reaching a 50th anniversary milestone makes us all very proud and we look forward to continue supporting and strengthening this organization.”

During the Presidential year there had been well attended New York and London meetings respectively attended by 86 and 44 Members and Guests. The London Luncheon had also moved to the Oriental Club thanks to Lennart Hellstenius.



Buenos Aires AGM 2008

On the final day of the meeting Roberto had arranged a tour of his company's Container and Car terminal at Zárate, Province of Buenos Aires followed by a boat trip from Zárate to Tigre, down the Paraná River.

The 39th AGM in 2009 remained in the Southern Hemisphere with Brian Carey hosting the meeting at Zimbali near Durban. Sadly the attendance was down from the usual numbers due to the financial collapse that had occurred at the end of 2008. First time attendees were John Christian Schandy from Montevideo and Johan Röstin representing Copenhagen Malmö Ports. It was announced that during the Presidential year three former Presidents had retired. They were Norman Stark from Glocal Container Terminals, Lars Karlsson from CMP and Frans van Hoorn from Royal Dirkzwager.

The business programme included presentations by Michael Jackson – not the singer – on South African Economic Development, the impact that the forthcoming Soccer World cup might have on South Africa and a startling one by Lars Säfverström on the upsurge in worldwide ship piracy.



Durban AGM 2009

There was much discussion about the impact of the financial crisis on world trade and also the developments in South African trade and ports. During the Presidential year there had been the usual Section meetings and the 12th General management course. The New York meeting, again at the New York Yacht Club, was very well attended and took place immediately after the financial collapse in October 2008. The lunchtime speaker, Craig Fuehrer from Deutcher Bank, had a slide representing the future growth in the traffic through ports which was close to that of a takeoff by Concorde, the supersonic aircraft! It was felt that he might not want to come and speak again the following year when the Concorde's 'droop snoop' landing would have probably more appropriate!

The concluding dinner was held at the Durban aquarium.

Brian Carey remembers his year:

"Having attended the brilliant AGM meeting in Buenos Aires Argentina in 2008 where the baton was passed to me to be the next president in this prestigious organisation for the year 2009.

I was privileged to be able to show a preview of our beautiful South Africa which certainly set the scene. Our choice of the venue was the wonderful resort of Zimbali Kwa Zulu Natal 47 km outside Durban. Zulu drums and tails of colonial wars opened our meeting.

So many wonderful friends and associates contributed to informing us of the forward thinking of doing business in the 21st century.

The section meetings that I attended in London at the prestigious Oriental club further endorsed this coming together to keep updated, providing the ability to network cementing and the cross pollination of universal ideas. I personally benefited from this sharing of experiences and will always be grateful to having not only benefitted from meeting great businessmen but making and meeting of friends.

Bidfreight port operations South Africa was able to benefit enormously having sent some 17 graduates on the GSC management courses over the years. These graduates have not only personally benefitted but have gone into other industries with this invaluable experience. All this is critical for an emerging market country.

Having retired some 11 years ago neither bowls nor golf dim my memories of belonging to this great organisation.

LONG LIVE THE GENERAL STEVEDORING COUNCIL!"