



Gerald Neville Strangward 'Nev' 16 Dec. 1929 - 30 Sept. 2008

Nev was born in Cambridge one of eight children, he was always keen to work and earn money to help the family along spending a few years doing a 'Milk Run' which gave him a broad education a good market base of regular customers for when the American GI's invaded the county and he upgraded to trading cigarettes obtained from the friendly soldiers. What he traded for the cigarettes isn't know, perhaps it was his local knowledge of all things local.

Like a lot of lads at that time eager to do something he joined the MN and stepped aboard the Vindi in early 1946 aged sixteen.

Not a one company man he took what was going on the London pool, among his many ships there were a few Blue Star ships and in 1950 he joined the brand new Cargo/passenger liner 'Magdalena' which followed the 'Titanic' to become the third Harland & Wolff not to return from it's maiden voyage, the ship struck rocks near Rio de Janeiro fortunately everyone got safely off as the ship broke it's back, some, of the lifeboats landed on the famous Copacabana beach.

Two years ago Nev attended a 'Magdalena' reunion in Belfast and met up with shipmates from 56 years ago, interviewed by the BBC Nev as practical as ever said "No-one felt particularly heroic at the time.

None of us wanted to get the VC, all we wanted to do was get off".

After eleven years at sea he met the love of his life Bobbie at the 'Empress' pub in Cambridge that his future mother-in-law was landlady of.

His seagoing days almost over they married in 1956.

Following a family tradition Nev & Bobbie also went into the hotel business for a few years by running the 'Bell Inn' in Bottisham a village halfway between Cambridge & Newmarket

In 1966 they decided to try a new life in Australia and became 10 pound Pom's in 1966, at first living with friends in then

settling in the Sutherland shire area of Sydney.

Nev went to work for TAA, following the demise of TAA (Trans Australia Airline) he became a traveling Rep in the Grocery trade, a job he loved as he liked to travel and to meet and make friends out all his customers.

Made redundant from this company in 1985 they 'retired' to Lennox Hd. on the NSW North coast, retirement didn't quite suit just then so they both found work, Nev going into the grocery trade then in the Self Storage business, until retirement finally crept up on them.

Nev not a willing gardener took up Lawn Bowls and stayed out of the way while Bobbie blessed with green thumbs created a lovely garden in their Lennox head home.

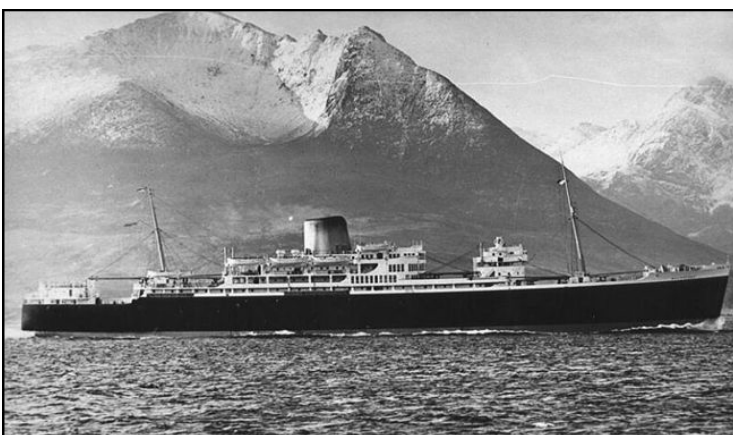
Life dealt them a cruel blow when Bobbie was diagnosed with cancer and had to have several major operations over a few years during her brave fight against it but finally succumbing and passing away in 2004.

Neville later made some trips back to the UK his last trip was in May 2008, when he left he wasn't feeling too good but it was

thought to be the effects of a fall he had had recently but on his return in August it was found that he was suffering from a cancer in his liver.

Neville was only able to spend just two weeks in the care of his son Ken at his home in Caringbah before being admitted to the Calvary hospital where he passed away on the 30th. of September

Our deepest condolences to Ken and his family.



The 'Magdalena' that Nev sailed on in 1950 passing some impressive scenery.