



The Bermuda Society

September 2005

Newsletter - Issue 7

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Chairman's Comment

The Society continues to progress towards its goal of becoming a meaningful vehicle to continue the relationship between Bermuda and the United Kingdom. The Society can advance the goodwill that exists and facilitate the exchange of views in a non-political arena.

We greatly value the support of our membership and encourage others to join and support us in this endeavor.

We were privileged to have Alan Thompson, President and CEO of Butterfield Bank as our guest speaker at the Lunch following our Annual General Meeting in Guildhall on May 12th. He gave a most informative and enjoyable talk about the value of Bermuda as an international jurisdiction and why he enjoys living and working in such a setting.

Our Premier spoke at the last Annual Dinner in November 2004 and announced his intention to explore independence for Bermuda. Much has happened since then and we await the publication of the report from the Bermuda Independence Commission which was submitted to Cabinet in July.

There has been a change in Tourism representation in London with the appointment of Thomas MacDonald to represent Bermuda - we offer our congratulations to Mr. MacDonald and thank him for agreeing to become a Member of the Society's Management Committee.

This year, the Society's 19th Annual Dinner will be held at the House of Lords on Wednesday, November 16th and we are delighted that Cheryl Ann Lister, Chairman of the Bermuda Monetary Authority will be our guest speaker.

I encourage as many of you as possible to attend and bring guests to this event, and I look forward to seeing you there.

Dr. James A. C. King, MD, FRCS(C), FACS, JP.

Sir Edwin Leather, KCMG, KCVO, LLD 1919 - 2005

The Bermuda Society learned with sorrow of the death of Sir Edwin Leather on 5 April 2005. With his outgoing, approachable personality he enjoyed a full life of many facets, serving and leading others with courage and dedication.

Ted Leather was born in Canada in 1919 and educated there, graduating from the Canadian Military Academy. He married his childhood sweetheart in 1940, and served from 1940-45 with the Canadian Army (Parachute Battalion), fighting through Belgium, Holland and Germany from soon after D-Day. He stayed on in Britain after the war, working in the City and becoming prominent in British politics, especially as the Conservative Member of Parliament for North Somerset. He was also a well known radio broadcaster and personality. He had a passionate interest in music and the Arts, becoming Chairman of the Bath Festival 1960-65, and establishing a friendship with Yehudi Menuhin.

Although he retired as a Member of Parliament in 1963 for health reasons, he remained very active in the Conservative Party, serving on the National Executive Committee 1963-70 and chairing the Party Conference in 1970. He was also a Lay Reader in the Church of England. He therefore brought

a wealth and breadth of experience in public service, in uniform and in politics and broadcasting, when he was asked to become Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Bermuda in 1973 after the murder of Sir Richard Sharples. He needed and obtained, from the very outset, the support of his wife Sheila.

On arrival in Bermuda he made it clear that, whatever the security advice, he would go anywhere and everywhere to be a Governor for all Bermudians. He immediately increased the Bermudian presence at Government House, notably through his choice, for the first time, of a Bermudian as his aide-de-camp. He also appointed a Bermudian as his Honorary Chaplain. With his experience of the Bath Arts Festival and his friendship with Yehudi Menuhin, he was instrumental in encouraging the formation of the Bermuda Festival (becoming its Patron in 1975) and the Menuhin Foundation of Bermuda. Through golf too, leading as ever from the front, Ted Leather was determined to bridge the racial divide, to work to resolve tensions, and to enrich the island's vibrant cultural, artistic and sporting life.

As an individual his happy domestic life communicated itself to others. Religion was important to him and in his involvement in the community. Ted's easy-going informality and straightforward, open approach enabled him to achieve what his courage and commonsense told him needed to be done. When his term as Governor was over in 1977, he underlined his faith in the island and the success he had achieved in working for harmony, by staying on in Bermuda for the rest of his long and active life. Naturally his funeral was at St Paul's Church in Paget. A man of many parts, who could have lived in many places in the world, was put to rest at home.

J. Thorold Masefield, CMG
Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Bermuda
1997-2001

Overview from the Minister of Tourism & Transport

With the "Beach and Sizzle" season now upon us and the Island celebrating its Quincentennial, this tourism year has already proven a very successful one for Bermuda and the future continues to look bright.

Indeed, the first quarter of 2005 saw total arrivals to our Island up 11.6% over 2004, which is extremely encouraging.

The ongoing reinvigoration of our tourism product is tremendous news for everyone concerned and all around Bermuda, you will see evidence of this continued upgrading process. May saw the official opening of our most modern and exciting property, the stylish 9 Beaches Resort, which truly heralds a new dawn for Bermuda. This major addition to our hotel scene is a landmark step for tourism. They are very keen to attract the younger, more casual yet equally discerning traveller. It is this new breed of holidaymaker who seeks out status and luxury in an understated way and to whom its 84 chic cabanas and flip-flop dining policy will certainly appeal.

To give you an indication of 9 Beaches' contemporary style, all guests receive a Bermuda mobile phone on arrival for use during their stay and iPods are also available. The



architectural focus here is very much on light and relaxation, with the interiors the creation of world-renowned designer Lynn Wilson and its ocean-view verandas and plexi-glass floor panels allowing guests to make the most of its stunning location. As well as catering to the young at heart, it is also keen to attract families and boasts an impressive programme of activities to ensure that they are entertained at all times, which will serve to set it apart from many of its longer-established neighbours.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Tourism and Transport continues negotiating new gateway services from the US to ensure that holidaymakers benefit from increasingly competitive fares and that UK travellers can enjoy greater twin-centre opportunities. The American Airlines direct air service from Miami was launched as planned on 2nd March and we are pleased to report that load factors on this flight over the first few months have exceeded 85% - unprecedented performance for a new service. April went on to see Northwest Airlines - the world's 4th largest airline - launch their weekly Detroit service, while in May Lufthansa Airlines introduced their first same-day flight from Frankfurt, connecting directly with its code-share partner's, US Airways, Philadelphia service. This is itself highly significant as it moves Bermuda one step closer to our ultimate goal - a nonstop service from Germany. Added to this, we continue to benefit further in the summer period with British Airways' fifth weekly flight (June - October) and US Airways' second daily Philadelphia flight (May - October).

The continued impressive load factors reported by our airline partners indicate that the variety of choice in airlines servicing Bermuda is resonating with residents and visitors alike. Bermuda International Airport, in fact, now has nine airlines serving our Island; an incredible 50% increase in the past three years.

As for our cruising customers, next year will see even greater ocean opportunities with Royal Caribbean's Empress of the Seas - a glorious 2,020 passenger ship - having recently announced that it will be returning to Bermuda in 2006 with 26 seven-day sailings from Philadelphia. Added to this, Norwegian Cruise Lines' Norwegian Crown will make nine visits in 2006, while Carnival Cruise Lines is set to operate a six day Bermuda cruise in both 2006 and 2007 aboard the 88,500 ton Carnival Legend. Altogether these new additions could mean local shops see an influx of over US\$1million in terms of tourist-spend, which is extremely positive.

The media spotlight will certainly be on Bermuda this year as it celebrates the 500th anniversary of the Island's discovery by Spanish ship captain, Juan de Bermudez. With a fabulous Festival Season already lined up and the weather at its best, there's no better way to rejoice than to head over this Autumn to join in the fun. October's "Pop and Sizzle" will spring to life with glittering performances by a star-studded cast of artists from 5 - 9 October at this year's 10th Annual Bermuda Music Festival. This year we are proud to have secured a tremendous coup in enticing the UK's very own teenage soul diva, Joss Stone, to our shores where she will join legendary vocalists Al Green, double Grammy winning singer Patti La Belle and the classical instrumentalist Chris Botti in taking to the Royal Naval Dockyard's enchanting ocean-top stage.

The festivities will then continue late into the month as connoisseurs of fine wine and decadent dining enjoy the company of world renowned gourmet chefs at the Bermuda Culinary Arts Festival from 21 - 23 October, while the World Rugby Classic will once again be attracting some of the world's top former international players - including Jason Leonard and Kenny Logan - to the field from 6-13 November for what has come to prove one of the most popular events in the global sporting calendar.

Meanwhile, 21 and 22 October will also see the Bermuda Regiment celebrate 40 years of committed service to the Island as they welcome a host of internationally recognized performing units for the 2005 Bermuda Tattoo. Each of their evening events are certain to deliver a stunning combination of world class music, international dance and military precision for spectators. And with the performances set against the historical backdrop of the Keep Yard at the Royal Naval Dockyard, autumn is undoubtedly the ideal time to come back and visit.

The atmosphere on Island as well as the interest amongst UK travellers remains buzzing, a reflection of all the partners and islanders working together for the success of Bermuda over the past months. We took the decision at the beginning of the year to evolve our product and to encourage our greatest asset - the Bermudian people - to take an even greater interest in promoting the destination to those who visit, which has already proved a highly successful venture. To this end we have introduced a series of initiatives since January to highlight how together we can ensure Bermuda remains on our visitors' holiday radar. This includes our popular "Wake-up Bermuda" radio programme, created to engage Bermudians in tourism dialogue, and an educational scheme which involves tourism partners donating their time to go into schools and inspire our ambassadors of tomorrow to embrace the increasing number of visitors to our shores.

However, one of the new initiatives which we would encourage all Bermudians and friends of Bermuda to get involved in is our "Bermuda Points of Light" programme. There is no greater joy in life than spreading love - the simple act of letting others share in something special and finding their own happiness. The Bermuda Department of Tourism has therefore designed this new "performance-related" opportunity which invites our key supporters - Bermudians and friends of Bermuda - to share their love for the Island with others and benefit from attractive financial rewards in return. Through this groundbreaking initiative our "Points of Light" supporters will register on-line and once they have delivered a total of 25 people or more to Bermuda will automatically receive a well-deserved commission of \$25 per visiting person for their efforts. Simply visit www.bermudapointsoflight.com to sign up.

We are confident that every Bermudian will play their part in ensuring the success of tourism to our beautiful Island in the months ahead, providing that extra-special touch that one only encounters in Bermuda.

We invite you to share this feeling with those who have not yet experienced our delightful charms and "feel the love".

Dr. The Hon Ewart F. Brown, JP, MP
Deputy Premier and Minister of Tourism & Transport

Bermuda SLOOP Foundation

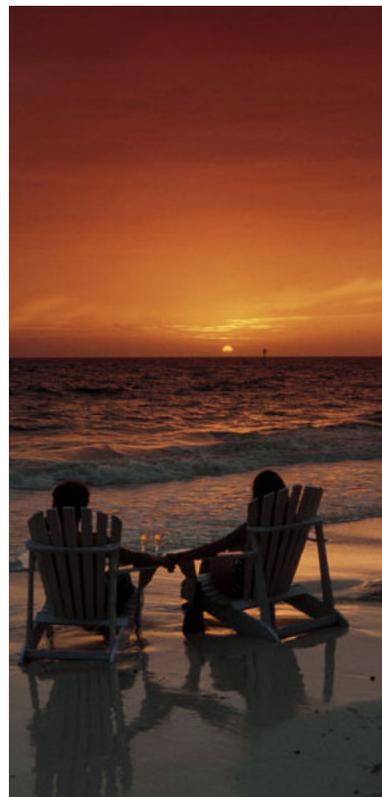
The 'Bermudian' is a sail training vessel based on civilian Bermudian-type schooners built 1810-1840 and is currently under construction at Rockport Marine, Rockport, Maine. Her formal home port will be at Dockyard in front of the Clock Tower. Starting September 2006, BSF will offer world class extracurricular and school programmes using ocean sail training to develop character/team building and to excite formal learning, both academic and technical. Email: bermudasloop@logic.bm
Website: www.bermudasloop.org

BERMUDA Nine Parishes

'Beautifully photographed and insightfully written with wit and humour by Bermudian, Ann Spurling. With over 400 pages and 569 colour plates of Bermuda, its homes, inhabitants and way of life.' The Bermudian Email: nrsnapper@ibl.bm or whitsec@aol.com

Island Thyme Cookbook

'This exemplary collection of recipes, menus, and table settings will tempt any reader to experiment in the kitchen as well as provide a fuller understanding of the rich cultural history that makes Bermuda the unique island that it is.' Lady Vereker, Government House
Email: islandthyme@northrock.bm
Website: www.bjssl.bm
Telephone: +441 292 4060





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Extract from the Benfield Bermuda Quarterly Report -1Q 2005

Gross premiums written during the first quarter by the 16 Bermuda re/insurers in the Benfield Bermuda Quarterly:

(The numbers are compared to the first quarter of 2004 and show the percentage change year on year)

ACE saw its gross premiums written grow to \$4,485 million from \$4,363 million a year ago - a 3% increase.

XL saw its gross premiums written drop by 1% to \$3,524 million from \$3,572 million.

PartnerRe saw its gross premiums written drop by 7% to \$1,439 million from \$1,553 million.

White Mountains saw its gross premiums written grow to \$1,254 million from \$1,109 million - a 13% increase.

Axis saw its gross premiums written grow to \$1,199 million from \$1,044 million - a 15% increase.

Arch saw its gross premiums written drop by 3% to \$980 million from \$1,010 million.

Aspen saw its gross premiums written grow to \$804 million from \$640 million - a 26% increase.

Endurance saw its gross premiums written drop by 3% to \$702 million from \$721 million.

RenaissanceRe saw its gross premiums written drop by 11% to \$694 million from \$780 million.

Platinum saw its gross premiums written grow to \$513 million from \$491 million - a 4% increase.

AWAC saw its gross premiums written grow to \$505 million from \$500 million - a 1% increase.

Max Re saw its gross premiums written grow to \$456 million from \$440 million - a 4% increase.

Montpelier saw its gross premiums written drop 8% to \$306 million from \$333 million.

IPC saw its gross premiums written drop 2% to \$206 million from \$210 million.

Quanta saw its gross premiums written grow to \$173 million from \$119 million - 45% increase.

PXRE saw its gross premiums written grow to \$125 million from \$107 million - a 16% increase.

Total GPW of \$17.4bn for 1Q 2005 was up 2% on 1Q 2004.

The distribution of GPW is as follows:

ACE	26%
XL	20%
PartnerRe	8%

White Mountains	7%
Axis	7%
Arch	6%
Aspen	5%
Endurance	4%
RenaissanceRe	4%
Platinum	3%
AWAC	3%
Max Re	3%
Montpelier	2%
IPC	1%
Quanta	1%
PXRE	1%

Source: Benfield Group

Society Events

Lecture Meetings/Seminars

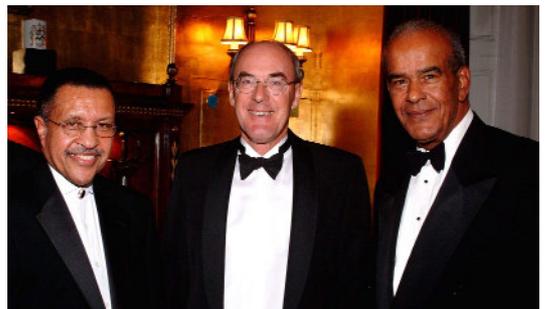
The programme for Lecture Meetings/Seminars for 2005 has included and anticipates the following:

- ❖ 22nd June 2005 at Guildhall, City of London - Mr. Richard Fox, MBE, Chairman of the Lyme Regis-St. George's Bermuda Twinning Association.
- ❖ The Hon. Paula A. Cox, JP, MP, Minister of Finance.
- ❖ Sir Callum McCarthy, Chairman of the FSA.
- ❖ The Hon. Gerald D. E. Simons, OBE, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Argus Group.

AGM and Annual Lunch

The Society's Annual General Meeting for the year 2005 and Annual Lunch was held on 12th May at Guildhall, City of London. Mr. Alan R. Thompson, President and Chief Executive Officer of Butterfield Bank was guest speaker at the Lunch.

Annual Dinner for Members and Guests 2004



The photo caption reads (left to right)

The Hon. W. Alexander Scott, JP, MP, Premier of Bermuda
H.E. Sir John Vereker, KCB, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Bermuda
Dr. James A. C. King, FRCS(C), FACS, JP, Chairman, The Bermuda Society

The Premier of Bermuda, The Hon. W. Alexander Scott, JP, MP was the Society's principal guest speaker at last year's Annual Dinner held at the Armourers' Hall in the City of London. He was accompanied by The Hon Paula Cox, JP, MP, Minister of Finance and The Hon. Michael Scott, JP, MP, Minister of Telecommunications and E-Commerce.

'Thoroughly with Enthusiasm'
The Life of Sir Peter Gadsden
Founder Chairman
The Bermuda Society
Email: info@ellinghampress.co.uk



In his speech, the Premier graciously acknowledged the Society's work in support of Bermuda to further strengthen the links between Bermuda, the United Kingdom and the Continent of Europe thus ensuring that Bermuda remains in the forefront of the minds of those who have distinguished themselves in the world of business; and he invited the Society to partner with Government as they guide Bermuda into a new era. He highlighted his Government's Social Agenda designed to ensure Bermuda's economic well-being while at the same time addressing the needs of all Bermuda's people. He stressed his Government's commitment to educate, inform and debate the issue of Independence and confirmed that the work to establish the background research from which to inform the public had already begun and, in January 2005, the Bermuda Independence Committee (BIC) will begin to generate and encourage the widest possible discussion on Independence with national dialogue and debate via the media and public forums/meetings which will include representatives from unions, business organizations, politicians and the broader Bermuda community.

In addition to the Society's Chairman, Dr. James King - the other speakers were H.E. Sir John Vereker who gave the Toast to Bermuda and Mr. John Dale who responded on behalf of the Guests.

The members and guests present included key figures and policy makers from the international business sector, banking and financial services, insurance, air transportation, tourism, management consulting, media and public relations, and the law and accounting professions.

Annual Dinner for Members and Guests 2005

The Society's 19th Annual Dinner for Members and Guests has been arranged to take place in the Cholmondeley Room and Terrace at the House of Lords on the evening of 16th November 2005. Cheryl Ann Lister, Chairman of the Bermuda Monetary Authority will be guest speaker.

Meetings and Receptions

A reception for Bermudian students and Bermudians living and working in the UK is scheduled to take place during the fourth quarter 2005.

Discussions/Meetings/Receptions to be held for Ministers, prominent business people and others visiting London.

Members will be advised just as soon as firm dates are known.

Extract from Alan R. Thompson's address to the Bermuda Society's Annual Lunch at Guildhall on 12th May 2005

Alan Thompson is President and Chief Executive Officer of Butterfield Bank. He is an international banker of longstanding, having held increasingly senior positions in the United States, Singapore and the Middle East. He assumed his current position at Butterfield Bank in January 2002.

Mr. Thompson explained that he would be giving his perspective on how Bermuda is developing and meeting its challenges.

He went on to say that although Bermuda is not without its challenges, she remains a thriving place to do business. Bermuda faces external scrutiny, especially in the US, but also from international bodies such as the IMF. Bermuda's size means that she also has unique internal issues, most notably sustainable development, recruitment limitations and spiraling house prices. However, Bermuda's economic strength remains in its ability to adjust and compete even in today's ever-changing global market. Bermuda is continuing to thrive.

Perspective of economy

- Economy continues to perform well - employment levels in 2004 returned to the pre-recession level of over 38,000 jobs and balance of payments signaling a return to a surplus position on current account.
- International business sector has been performing strongly.
- Very good relationship between business and the Bermuda Monetary Authority.
- Thriving fund business on the Island.
- Bermuda continues to attract healthy levels of business - recent legislation has made it a more attractive jurisdiction for hedge funds.
- Tourism also promising, with an active Minister looking to drive up figures, new flights into Bermuda and new hotels being built.
- There is discussion around the issue of Independence, but it is still in the early stages of research and discussion.
- Recent Moody's report contained positive analysis and comment on Bermuda's economic fundamentals - 'Bermuda's government finance indicators were vastly better than those of its peers in the Broad Aaa-A3 rating' (peers include Cayman). Moody's felt that the continuation of Government's economic policy was more significant in maintaining the success of Bermuda's thriving international business than the unresolved issue of independence.

Regulation remains strong - The IMF Report

- Bermuda's regulatory structure is an important part of its attraction to business.
- Bermuda has managed to balance regulation with maintaining the flexibility and efficiency of doing business in the jurisdiction.
- Government of Bermuda invited the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to carry out an assessment of financial regulation and supervision in Bermuda in March 2003 - mainly positive outcome, especially on the banking and securities industries - supervisory and regulatory framework found to be complying well with Basel Core Principals - regulatory framework and practice in the securities sector largely sound - Bermuda's legal framework and infrastructure to combat money laundering and financing of terrorism seen as adequate, which is absolutely critical in today's environment.
- There were suggestions for some improvements - as would be expected in such a detailed report - improvements were recommended in the regulation of the reinsurance sector - however, Bermuda was seen as having a solid foundation and is already progressing in areas the IMF

Bermuda Business

Information on international business in Bermuda may be found at:
www.biba.org
www.bma.com
Berbiz - a weekly electronic newsletter on Bermudian business affairs - can be obtained free by email request to Bill Storie (William R. Storie & Co. Ltd.) at wrs1@ibl.bm

Bermuda Insurance Industry

Bermuda Insurance Update - the official journal of the Bermuda Insurance industry - is available online at
www.bermuda-insurance.org





thought could be improved. This positions Bermuda well for continuing to attract business to the Island and maintaining the reputation as a premier location in which to do business.

Economic drivers of economy in good shape

- Banking - increasingly competitive banking market - the HSBC acquisition of Bank of Bermuda brings global competition to all financial business lines in Bermuda - Bermuda is attracting quality, global competitors to the Island, maintaining the quality and integrity of the banking industry - many opportunities in the local banking market - Butterfield Bank continues to compete and win business.

- Insurance - the industry has become a significant part of the Bermuda economy - the industry has had much attention in recent months with Eliot Spitzer's investigation into the industry - the investigation is being seen as a positive development that will result in a more transparent industry going forward; a process the global banking industry has already gone through - Bermuda was put under the spotlight in the wake of this investigation and there was concern about the impact on Bermuda's insurance market. Bermuda's market is robust and the outlook remains positive: it is well-established, it is regulated by the BMA and it comprises mainly companies established offshore, rather than US subsidiaries. Bermuda is the third largest insurance and reinsurance center (behind New York and London) - 1,600 insurance and reinsurance companies with \$172 billion in assets and writing \$48 billion in annual gross premiums - also the leading center for captives with 940 active companies (more than double the number registered in the next largest jurisdiction - the Cayman Islands) - there is a slowing trend in the captive market with many choosing to relocate onshore (for example, in Vermont) but new captives are still being attracted to Bermuda. Increasingly, Bermuda's attraction is not just tax - Bermuda has great depth of capacity; a concentration of insurance skills and specialization; and flexibility and timeliness of incorporation.

- Tourism - beginning to recover following 9/11 and Hurricane Fabian - it is a changing and evolving business and figures are promising. Hurricane Fabian especially put tourism on the back foot with many of the major hotels shut down, lack of beds reduced capacity and visitor numbers dropped. Promising activities are well underway - air arrivals are approaching pre-Fabian levels - cruise ship arrivals down but still strong - visitors getting older and wealthier.

Internal challenges need solutions

- There are challenges to which Bermuda is looking for solutions; essentially cost-driven issues - sustainable development - cost of real estate - retail business.

Summary

- Bermuda is in good shape, even though there are issues which need to be addressed - the regulatory environment and infrastructure continues to attract healthy levels of business - there are still opportunities in the market - Bermuda is still a great place to do business and live.

Alan R. Thompson
President and Chief Executive
Butterfield Bank

Extract from an address by Richard Fox, MBE to a Bermuda Society lunchtime meeting at Guildhall on 22nd June 2005

Richard Fox, MBE is the Chairman of the Lyme Regis/St. George's Bermuda Twinning Association. He gave a most interesting talk entitled 'The History of Admiral Sir George Somers'. The Meeting was chaired by Lord Waddington.

On arrival in St. George's, Bermuda, travelers cannot miss the town gate proudly proclaiming the twinning of St. George's and Lyme Regis, Dorset, England. Similarly, on the approaches to Lyme Regis, notices draw attention to a unique union between two seaports. It is fitting for both towns to celebrate the memory of Admiral Sir George Somers. In St. George's in April, he is remembered as part of the annual Peppercorn Ceremony. In his home town Lyme Regis, the Admiral Sir George Somers' Commemoration Parade takes place on the nearest Wednesday to the 28th July each year.

Synopsis

24th April 1554 - George Somers was born in Lyme Regis; the fourth of five sons to John and Alice Somers.

In Lyme Regis, the fortunes of John Somers and his family were improving, and the families association with the Williams family of Colway Manor introduced George Somers to Walter Raleigh - the two became close friends thus opening introductions to the great mariners operating from Plymouth.

1579 - At the age of 25, George Somers had proved himself a competent seaman.

1582 - George Somers married Joane Heywood.

1587 - George Somers' financial base was well established; he now ranked among the landed gentry. Somers is often quoted as acquiring his wealth through privateering but the official naval records between 1570-1580 make no mention of him serving aboard any privateering vessels.

1583-1587 George Somers' association with Walter Raleigh (who was knighted in 1584) and Sir Francis Walsingham (Queen Elizabeth's spymaster) led to Somers' involvement in the preparations for the expected Spanish invasion.

1588 - 132 ships of the Spanish Armada entered the English Channel. Somers had three ships already prepared at Lyme Regis and engaged with the Spaniards. The English fleet forced the Spanish Armada round the coast of Britain - only 60 of the original 132 ships returned to Spain.

1589 - Somers emerged as a highly successful Elizabethan adventurer.

1589 - George Somers' father, John Somers died in Lyme Regis.

1590 - George Somers' brother, Nicholas Somers died in Lyme Regis, leaving two sons and a widow in the care of George and Joane Somers.

1590 - George Somers' mother, Alice died in Lyme Regis.

George Somers' responsibilities now rested firmly in Lyme Regis and for the next five years, he involved himself in

Bermuda Stock Exchange

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local politics, the merchants' guild and the town council.

1595 - Somers was persuaded to join a privateering expedition under a licence granted by Queen Elizabeth I. The voyage took in the Canary Isles, the West Indies and Dominica, then on to Granada and the Testigo Islands and eventually The Margaritas; then on to Cumana and La Guayra, Venezuela. The English ships then set sail northwards to the Bay of Laguna Hispaniola then on to Jamaica, the Cayman Islands and then on to Cape St. Anthony, Western Cuba. They then set sail for home, finally docking at Milford Haven in South Wales some six months after they had left Plymouth.

1597 - It was reported that the Spanish were preparing another armada for a further assault on England; Sir George Somers and Sir Walter Raleigh were included in the English fleet which sailed to seek out and destroy the Spaniards. Sailing from Plymouth, they reached the Bay of Biscay in June and were taken by a severe storm. Somers did not return and was posted missing, presumed lost at sea. However, he was not lost but his ship was badly damaged and in need of repair - Somers finally returned to Lyme Regis in October.

1598 - Somers granted freedom of Lyme Regis.

1600 - Somers' seafaring activities became more hectic; for ten weeks he roamed the shipping lanes off the Azores, seeking Spanish merchant ships returning from the West Indies and Africa.

1601 - The Spanish dispatched an armada to support the Irish rebellion at Kinsale, south of Cork. Somers again proved himself a skilful sailor and escorted the defeated Spanish fleet back to Coruna.

1602 - Somers joined another expedition to the Azores which proved very successful and, upon his return, Somers' economic base had considerably increased.

1603 - Following the death of Elizabeth I, James VI of Scotland, James I of England was crowned on 25th July. During the reign of Elizabeth I, a wealthy and powerful trading community had emerged. James realized considerable financial support could be found from those involved in this community; he therefore embarked on a Royal progress and bestowed knighthoods on 1053 leading citizens and traders. On 23rd July 1603, George Somers was dubbed Sir George.

1604 - The keel of Somers' new 300-ton trading ship the 'Sea Venture' was laid.

1604 - Somers was elected one of the two Members of Parliament for Lyme Regis and also elected Mayor.

1604 - Lady Somers' father, Philip Heywood died.

1604 - Somers was present at the signing of the Treaty of London which gave peace between England and Spain.

1606 - King James I appointed his Council of Virginia; Sir George Somers being one of the founder members of the Virginia Company.

1609 - Somers decided to lead the fleet to Virginia in his new 'Sea Venture'. Nine ships set sail with 600 settlers on 2nd June. Disaster struck in the form of a hurricane some 1,000 miles west of the Azores on 24th July. The 'Sea Venture' was badly damaged. On 28th July, Bermuda was

sighted on the port bow. The 'Sea Venture' with 150 passengers and crew on board was blown through the safe passage into the relatively calm water inside the reefs. One mile from the shore, the vessel struck a rock and stuck fast - those aboard were ferried safely to the beach but, within a few days, the ship slipped beneath the waves. Fortunately for the castaways, the Spanish had visited the islands in 1515 and had left some pigs behind; they had thrived and developed into large herds - these became a valuable source of food for the castaways.

Shipbuilders worked tirelessly for 10 months and completed the 80-ton 'Deliverance' and the 30-ton 'Patience'. Preparations could now be made for the group's departure.

1610 - Land was sighted at daybreak on 21st May off Cape Henry. The settlement at Jamestown was in total distress - only 60 of the original settlers remained alive. It was decided that the settlement should be abandoned and the entire group should return to England. However, they encountered a relief fleet of three ships with a further 150 settlers on board and returned to Jamestown; re-landing on 10th June.

Provisions were short and Somers offered to return to Bermuda for more supplies. On 19th July, two vessels set sail - the 'Discovery' and the 'Patience'. They encountered yet another severe storm which blew them northwards towards Cape Cod. Somers was again reported lost at sea but within the month Somers' brilliant seamanship enabled him to land safely on Bermuda.

Admiral Sir George Somers became ill and died on 9th November 1610.

Somers' nephew and heir, Matthew decided to return his uncle's body to England - he removed Somers' heart and entrails and buried them in Bermuda; the rest of the body was pickled in a barrel and shipped to England in the 'Patience'.

The 'Patience' reached Cobb harbour, Lyme Regis on 1st June 1611. With a volley of musket shot and a report of a single cannon, Admiral Sir George Somers was brought ashore. His burial took place at the Church of St. Candida and the Holy Cross at Whitchurch Canonicorum on 4th June 1611.

In 1611, as a final tribute to one of England's greatest seafarers, his friend William Shakespeare based his final play 'The Tempest' on the shipwreck of Somers' ship the 'Sea Venture'.

Richard Fox, MBE

Sir George Somers' Commemorative Parade

Wednesday 27th July 2005 was the 25th anniversary of the Admiral Sir George Somers' Commemorative Parade held in Lyme Regis, Dorset, where Sir George Somers, the Founder of Bermuda, was born on 24th April 1554.

This event was organised with great skill and vigour by the Chairman of the Lyme Regis/St. George's Bermuda Twinning Association, Mr Richard Fox, MBE and his wife Marilyn, with the other officers of the association. Richard happens to be an ex-Town Crier of Lyme Regis and a very involved citizen of the Town who is well known in Bermuda from previous visits.

Bermuda Tourism

Telephone 020 8410 8188 for a free information pack or visit www.bermudatourism.com www.ba.com

Prestige Holidays offer special discounts to Bermuda Society members visiting the Island from the UK whether on business or pleasure - Telephone: John Dixon on 01425 480403





The day began with coffee at the Alexandra Hotel, where many old friends from Britain and Bermuda had the opportunity to meet the Mayor of Lyme Regis, Councillor Mrs Barbara Austin, the Lord Mayor of Plymouth, whence sailed the Sea Venture in 1609, Councillor Patrick Nicholson and his Lady Mayoress Mrs Sally Nicholson, The Mayor of St. George's, Mr E. Michael Jones and His Town Crier, Mr David Frith and the Mayor of Hamilton, Bermuda, Mr. Lawson Mapp and his Town Crier, Mr. Ed Christopher, as well as the MP for the local constituency of West Dorset and UK government shadow environment secretary, Mr Oliver Letwin.

Thereafter, having been put in order by Mr. Philip Street, the Town Crier of Lyme Regis, everyone paraded through the Town accompanied by the excellent Lyme Regis Junior band, round the harbour and onto The Cobb, the great and ancient stone jetty to which Sir George Somers' body was brought back from Bermuda by his nephew on 1st June 1611.

As the parade assembled on The Cobb, beside the very steps up which Sir George's body had been carried home almost 400 years ago, the Town Criers in turn related the story of Sir George and the Lyme Regis/Bermuda connection. The Mayor of Lyme Regis greeted the assembled visitors, which included ex-Governor Lord Waddington and Lady Waddington, ex-Governor Mr. Thorold Masefield and Mrs. Masefield, and Bermuda Society Founder Chairman and ex-Lord Mayor of the City of London Sir Peter Gadsden and Lady Gadsden. The parade, led by the band, walked back to the Town; were dismissed by the Mayor and reassembled at the Pilot Boat Inn for an excellent lunch, with toasts given to the memory of Sir George Somers, the Towns of Lyme Regis and St. George's, and to Bermuda.

After lunch, by then in pouring rain, many members went on to visit Berne Manor Farm near Lyme Regis - site of Admiral Sir George Somers' house, Berne Manor; led by Pipe Major David Frith from Bermuda, the party was cheerfully met with full wet-weather gear by farmer Mr. Richard Legg and thence on to a charming commemorative service at the Church of St. Candida and the Holy Cross at Whitchurch Canonicorum, where Sir George Somers' body is buried. Ms. Jacqui Piper the soprano sang a solo of 'Love Conquers Everything' and posies were laid on the Somers Plaque. The Annual Cry was then made at the Village Cross at Whitchurch Canonicorum by Mr. David Frith, Town Crier of St. George's, together with a Goodwill Cry by Mr. Ed Christopher, Town Crier of Hamilton, Bermuda.

The group went on to visit the Bermuda Exhibition at the Lyme Regis Guildhall, which had been kindly set up by Mr. Peter Wilkinson, a leading philatelist specialising in Bermuda stamps.

Sadly, a flying display by the RAF fighter jet display team, the Red Arrows, had to be cancelled because of bad weather and low cloud, but the day ended with many people getting together for supper. Undoubtedly this was a day when relations between Lyme Regis and St. George's, and Britain and Bermuda were thoroughly enhanced!

Charles Vaughan-Johnson, FCIB
Immediate Past Chairman
The Bermuda Society

The Bermuda Society

The Bermuda Society was formed in 1987 with a view to forging close links between Bermuda and Britain in the areas of finance, commerce and economics. The Society has strong ties with both Houses of the British Parliament and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, with figures in the City of London, in tourism, air transportation, the professions, insurance, reinsurance and banking as well as other opinion formers who have Bermuda's interests and good name at heart.

The Society has become a focal point for those interested in Bermuda. Lunchtime and dinner meetings addressed by interesting guest speakers take place throughout the year.

For more information on the Society and details of application for membership please contact:

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Minimum Annual Fees

[Corporate Membership](#)

£250 / \$390

[Private Joint Membership \(couples\)](#)

£35 / \$55

[Private Individual Membership](#)

£25 / \$40

Sponsored Membership

This category of membership enables existing members of the Society to give a year's membership to a recommended client or contact. Details can be obtained from the Secretary or by visiting the Society's website at www.bermudasociety.com

Bermuda's Who's Who Directory is available online at www.whoiswho.bm