

16-1-71

HOWARD DAVIS.

# HOW THE GENERAL BOTHYA YACHT ENTERED RIO RACE

*GENERAL BOTHYA YACHT for the RIO RACE*

EVER since I paid that first visit some four years ago, to the "General Botha" Navy Academy when there was an "At Home" to relatives and friends, my interest has never slackened in that establishment. That same evening, as an educationist, I felt compelled to write quite half-a-dozen letters to school Headmasters whom I knew and newspaper editors as far afield as Kimberley, Bloemfontein and Vryburg, informing them of this amazing way in which their matriculants could continue their education.

Some time afterwards I thought it advisable and posted the copies of those six letters to the Captain Superintendent of the "General Botha" for his information. Needless to say, that since that time I have learnt more and more of that Naval Academy and its Captain Superintendent as it has been along that route to the Dock Gates that I have been training for the "Big Walk".

So, as time went by I learned of the philanthropy of the late T. B. Davis who made it possible for our Republic to be the proud possessor of a flourishing

merchant navy which has its training base at Granger Bay.

However, about the middle of last year, I felt most alarmed when told that their yacht, the Howard Davis, would not be competing in the Rio Race. I asked no questions. I felt that might be far too involved for my degree of intelligence. I quietly went away home and at once wrote the Prime Minister telling him what I knew and what I thought possible. An answer soon came and with interest he had passed on my letter to the Minister of Tourism. There, in that office I had no success and so I promptly took my correspondence copies to the office of the Minister of National Education, Senator Van der Spuy whom I have found to be a real live spark. He was immediately interested.



During this time Parliament was in session and every day I walked along the Granger Bay route and after a few weeks I saw the surprising sight of the yacht, the Howard Davis, no longer lying in her berth. She

was secure in the Dry Dock with several men busy about her.

Now, imagine my excitement. I could then see my efforts might not have been in vain and so I decided patiently to await an official announcement as Parliament was still in session. A few weeks elapsed, then I read in the newspaper "HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY: The Minister of National Education, Senator Van der Spuy, announced yesterday that the South African Merchant Navy Academy at Granger Bay would enter its own ketch the HOWARD DAVIS for the Cape Town-to-Rio yacht race in January."

The Minister then said the yacht would be commanded by Capt. P. Nankin, the Captain-Superintendent and be manned by a crew of predominantly Botha old boys. Furthermore, our own academy with its own yacht, Howard Davis, would be a worthy carrier of the South African flag across the ocean.

The Minister before concluding wished Capt. Nankin and his crew every success with their necessary preparations. I, too, wish them a very excellent voyage!

Molly Grobbelaar.