

Burgess Gillingham 'Woolly' Roughton joined Conway in April 1964. His father was a hotelier in South Africa and Zambia.

"Burgess and I joined Conway together in 1964, him from South Africa and me from East Africa. We became good friends and trained together for three years before he left to go to sea and I stayed on to do A level exams. He was a cheerful man but had some demons"

"Woolly was in my term, a nice lad who always seemed happy".

He had been a sea scout before Conway and so joined her Snowdon Scout Group becoming a Queen Scout in 1966. His parents were in South Africa so in the holidays he stayed with an aunt in Harrow where his family had its roots. In 1966 he joined 2nd Harrow Sea Scouts on their camps to Decoy Broad, Norfolk and to Gmunden, Austria.



"Like many of us he took dancing classes and we practiced our dancing steps with local girls. There were several romances and I am still in touch with Woolly's ex."

He had an accomplished academic and nautical record winning a number of prizes including one for Management of Boats. He was awarded boxing colours, represented the ship in sailing and cross country, and was noted as a *"fine helmsman"*.

He left Conway in 1967 with a First Class Passing Out Certificate and joined Elder Dempster Line as a trainee Purser. *"Burgess married a girl who was, I think the hairdresser on one of the ships that he sailed in"*

"I sailed with Burgess on the ED passenger vessel Apapa in the summer of 1968, I was a supernumerary Cadet working the four week trip as a summer job. Woolly was an assistant purser and at the end of the trip, I never saw or heard from him again."



*1967 Summer
Cross Country Team*

"I used to meet up with Woolly whenever I was in S Africa. First Cape Town then Durban. He did go to sea with ED, married a red head from Liverpool. This didn't last and he remarried, I think a SA girl."

Later *“He then came ashore in Durban and was given a job in King and Sons ships agency by the late Barry Fletcher (OC). The South African national service caught up with him and he joined the navy and, as far as I can make out spent the majority of his time as barman in the officers' wardroom at Salisbury Island (he was a very charming and lucky young man). After the navy he re-joined King and Sons who kept his job open for him and then moved on to a diving company where he became manager and then as manager of JFM Sturrocks agency where I worked with him. All this at a very young age. He was popular, seemingly happily married with two children, but restless because he moved on again. When I left the sea I used to cover the S African trade route for Pan-ocean Anco and we meet a few more times. Sadly I was led to believe he took his own life.”*

“During the time of the closure of the Suez Canal circa 1970, I used to visit Burgess and his family on the occasion of my bunker visits en route to and from the Far East. On one occasion I spent four days in their gracious company while awaiting the arrival of the mv Achilles.”

“Out of the blue we heard that he had been found one morning on the beach north of Durban and it would seem that he had swallowed caustic soda. A very sad and inexplicable ending.”



*1966 Conway Cadet
Roughton*