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*Ostend, 18 February 2007*

*Mrs Heather Gorts - Kirby*  
*Zeelaan 108/4*  
*8660 DE PANNE*

*Dear Madam Heather Gorts – Kirby,*

*Allow me to express to you my sympathy as your husband, Commander Marc Gorts, passed through the horizon towards Eternity as stated in his in memoriam.*

*In the sixties I sailed with him in the Belgian Coastal Minesweepers and I remember him as an extremely capable seaman and captain with whom it was save to confront the dangers of the elements at sea in too small and too crowded wooden ships.*

*Later, in the seventies, we were together in the Mine Warfare School of Ostend where he was, as Corps Commander, instrumental in the acquisition for the School of all that was needed to evolve towards the Centre of Excellence in Naval Mine Warfare it has become.*

*Also I will always remember his capacity to reason and to discuss at the highest political and strategic level, the clarity of his arguments and the positive convincing posture, physically and mentally, he could take on those occasions.*

*I will always be thankful for having had him as a teacher early in my career and for the friendship we were allowed to share for so many, be it never enough, years.*

*Willy Herteleer*  
*Admiral (e.r.)*  
*Honorary Aid to the King*  
*Honorary Chief of Defense of the Belgian Armed Forces.*