

OVERSEAS BAG – 2020

“HERE & THERE” (Overseas Bag)

Overseas Bag Editor: Chris Essex (K69-75), 3 Kingston Avenue, Salford, Bristol, BS31 3LF; Tel: +44 (0)1225 873878; E-mail: overseasbag@oldframlinghamian.com

Once again this edition of the 2020 Yearbook contain a bumper crop of articles from over 250 emails received/sent. Genuinely many thanks for giving me such a huge editing task to do again!

2020 has clearly been an exceptional year and I'm delighted that despite lockdowns around the world you have kept in touch. However, due to setting up and running the Covid-19 Support Hub in our village, I need to apologise that I have not had time to proactively contact you since Christmas. There have also been many fewer OF gatherings around the world, but there have been some and I hope 2021 will allow a renewed effort to organise these and I'm very happy to help. A huge thank you to the organisers who did manage to organise events, usually with the excuse of having David & Ann Copeman come to visit on their ill fated world cruise.

This is now the 15th year I have been editor of the Overseas Bag and I have immensely enjoyed the role and have visited a number of you overseas during that time, especially to mark 150th anniversary. I would delighted if one or more of you would be happy to take this over for the future. It is very rewarding and as a member of the website team I would be happy to support in any way I can eg local reunion lists etc. Please drop me an email if you would be interested. In the meantime happy reading!

AUSTRALIA

Brett Bailey (K58-65) has moved from Canberra to Woonona, New south Wales. His partner Sue tells us that Captain (now Sir) Tom has been a constant happy story on the news. Brett has not painted for quite some time but has fortunately be included in several exhibitions showing previous work. Hopefully he will soon be inspired to pick up a paint brush again. They had just acquired an 8 year old cocker spaniel rescue dog who is a wonderful companion.

Brett goes on to say in May 2020 “*We had planned to be with dad (Peter Bailey (K34-38)) for his 98th birthday on 28 March but with travel restrictions in place that visit has been postponed. We are in regular phone contact with him and with the wonderful staff who care for him. Fortunately he is safe and well.*” He also supplied an updated email address.

Peter Bartlett (K58-65) responded to an enquiry from me to check OF on west coast of Australia had not been badly affected by a bad storm in May 2020. Peter reports “*We did have some substantial wind gusts and torrential rain but it had little affect on Pen and I. However the beaches took a battering. As far as Covid 19 is concerned, being retired that has also had little affect apart from having to queue to enter shops and being unable to 'dine in'. The main change we have noticed is the increase in people using the parks and cycling (whilst maintaining social distancing).*”

Phil Bower (G65-74) reported at the start of the year on the bad fires that had engulfed parts of Australia “*the main (only) road from SA to WA is closed. At present there are around 300+ trucks (from plain old*

semi's to doubles & triples) as well as a heap of tourists stuck around Caiguna with dwindling supplies themselves and, of course, bugger all in the way of aircon. Latest estimates are that the road may stay closed for another week. Therefore, the only real way to get anything into WA is either by boat/ship, by air or via the top end, unless the brave/foolhardy want to risk a dirt track crossing where there is no vehicle fuel or water for a very long way. And there's not much in the way of breakdown rescuers either!

Statistically, at the time of writing, we have around 1500 homes destroyed, countless animal stock, one fire alone destroyed 400k hectares of bush and I believe is still going. One third of Kangaroo Island (Adelaide) has been destroyed. The heat is so intense that it melts cars. Some of these fires have been raging since August last year and there are around 100 fires in NSW/Queensland that are out of control. The human deaths are relatively low (but each is utterly regrettable and sad) less than 20 I believe.

And yet, when walking the dogs one day recently I happened across a pratt in the bush burning plastic off of copper cabling with no water to extinguish the burn and not even a shovel for dirt..... he was about 2 feet away from the bush..... such is the nature of some of our species!!”

I contacted Phil and others about the impending visit of David & Ann Copeman in March during a world cruise. Phil said that Perth was about 4½ hours away – “close enough to be interesting but far enough to be away from the “big city” hustle..... It is bigger than when we first visited 20 years ago..... there are genuine traffic jams now! As cities go, it's heaps better than Sydney, Melb etc.”

Phil had just finished reading **Chris Shaw's** book and his review was “Not bad at all. Worth the effort and the fee.” Phil also sent me links to a load of Youtube videos he had put together and with his music.

I mentioned that his name had come up at the London Supper in January 2020 where the following contemporaries of Phil and I were present - **David Carr (S67-74), Nick Jacob (K67-75), John Waller (S70-75) and Charlie Blackmore (K65-75)**. He recalled all the names and said “I heard that Blackmore went into the military but other than that no knowledge of the paths followed by the others. Carr used to be a really good soccer player, I recall he scored a fantastic goal at Brandeston one day putting the ball past **Paddy Payne (xx)** from close to the halfway line. Everyone was stunned on the day.”

In March Phil wrote to me under the spoof heading of “my dogs went digging”. In reality he had had a 5mtr date palm removed along with a fence & had to lop the big tree for the JCB to gain access. He said “It was fun standing in the JCB bucket & being lifted 5mtr up to chainsaw the tree limbs! It's all smoothed over now & we're into the next phase of terraforming that area. “ We exchanged thoughts on our respective countries handling of Covid-19. 21 March saw



everything shutting down in the UK even the good old British boozier. *“There are similar things going here but not quite the same. I had a conversation with a neighbour who was actually trying to justify hoarding stuff! People are sheep and sheep have no common sense. Food here flies off the shelf as fast as everything else, including toilet paper!! One donkey actually believes that the virus is a US creation spread by a “tourist” in Wuhan going round touching everything & coughing etc etc. It is what it is. If everyone remains sane then the damage will be less. But there will be damage and the fact is we haven’t “peaked” yet. Still it could be worse – all the Earl Grey could’ve gone!!”*

Phil was in touch in April and then again in May after their storms. He reported *“No problems here. Lots of wind damage – fences down etc but no structural issues. Dreadfully sad to see the UK in such a state. Restrictions slowly easing here – closed borders has helped immensely.”*

Phil reported that his older brother **Nigel (G58-68)** hit 70 early next month & had put together a little youtube video. Weather was cold at 22C during the day and 9C overnight *“having to wear jumpers again..... But we had some rain which is always welcome, especially since we re-turfed the lawn recently, all 260 sq/m of it. When we re-turf the other area, some other monkey will get paid to do it! Shortest day has just been & gone so looking forward to sunshine again!”*

Nick Carlton (G63-70) in October 2019 recounted to **Chris Shaw** that he had had a very pleasant stay with **Chris Hall** in HK in August. They exchanged views on the current concerning situation in HK. All was well at the time in Perth, with retirement keeping him busy. He also enjoyed his latest trip to the UK where he went to Felixstowe (where Chris is from) a couple of times which is very nice these days with some good restaurants and a refurbished pier.

In January I let Nick know of the death of June De Whalley who had met a number of times in recent years. Nick’s sister had also let him know that June had died peacefully at home, just a few days after last visiting *“She was a truly lovely friend to have and I will miss visiting her. I am currently in Tokyo... my son is very interested in Japan so we are having a trip together and it has been great. Getting the Bullet Train tomorrow to Kyoto for a few days and then back to Perth. On 14th March I’ll be off again to Penang for a couple of weeks so it’s a pity that I won’t be around for an OF meet up with **David Copeman** and **Peter Hollins**.”*

On 2 March he was in touch to say that he had just seen on Facebook the sad news that **Tony Neubroch (xx)** had died the previous day. He had been back in touch with him last year after his visit to Fram and they chatted a few times; reminiscing about sailing at Orford etc. Tony was living in the US and had had an operation for cancer a few months ago.

He attached a picture of the CCF RAF section visit to RAF Wattisham in the winter term of 1968. Tony is standing behind my left shoulder, 7th from right. Tony's father was Station Commander of RAF Wattisham at the time. See obituary section for more details on Tony’s life.



Nick also found this one from the 1966 school photo where he is behind Rev Singh and **John Maulden (G45-50)** .. and one away from **Chris Hall (G62-69)** and **Mike Beverley (G61-69)**.



On 26 May he gave the following unexpected update that he was in the UK *“I am currently in Ipswich. I was in Penang when the Emergency Order came out in Malaysia, Singapore closed its borders and there were no non-stop flights to Perth ... so decided to get the non-stop from KL to London. Staying in my old house which I sold to my sister and have been enjoying the spring and early summer weather in Suffolk - garden lovely and a short walk into town through Christchurch Park. Will head back to Australia at some point but not relishing the journey or quarantine when I get there and that it will be difficult to travel overseas again so making the most of some time here now.*

My wife and son are fine in Western Australia and no reported major damage from the storm - just a lot of clearing up. She had only recovered from clearing up after a storm a couple of weeks ago. I am sure I will have plenty of jobs waiting for my return though.

Good that we can get out and about here and have been enjoying the Suffolk countryside - even a couple of swims in the North Sea. It has been a good time for some photography - here is a familiar sight from last evening”



In June 2020 he provided the following update to **Bryan Pearson (S45-47)** and his wife Celestine in Hawaii *“I’m still in Ipswich but have flights to Perth booked on 8th July ... I’ll then be slammed into quarantine for 14 days before I can get home ... not looking forward to the ordeal! Then there is no overseas travel for the foreseeable future which is why I haven’t been in a rush to get back. The leftie Premier of Western Australia even has the border closed with the rest of Australia.*

All good here in Suffolk ... has generally been lovely weather and we are set for another good week. Have been out and about with lots of walks and beach time at Thorpeness ... have had a few swims and the water is pleasant ... have that refreshing glow afterwards!

Have been to Pin Mill quite a bit and walked through the woods and down river which is always a great walk especially at high water. Went sailing with a friend last week ... down river from Woolverstone to Harwich Harbour ... the river was pleasant but blowing a bit with wind over tide in the harbour so a bit of cool spray ... a nice broad reach back just as I remember my sailing days there in the 70's.

As you saw the pubs are still closed and the Butt is doing takeaways but I haven't been tempted ... not quite the same.

Coming back from Thorpeness normally drive through the countryside around Fram ... have done quite a bit of photography as the evening light shows up the countryside so well. The school is closed. Stopped at the church at Swilland the other day which has an interesting tower. It is good to be in quiet Suffolk with all the bad news and strife in the world!”

In correspondence with Bryan Pearson I believe Nick may have returned to his home in Australia on 8 July.

Jim Coe (Z80-89) at the turn of the year was safe and well at Eurongilly “Fires are about 50kms to our East - so no threat at this stage. Looking forward to the end of another dry year and hoping for wetter times ahead.

In early January he responded to an invitation from **Colin Lipman (R53-61)** to meet up with **David Copeman (K42-49)** and his wife Ann, when visiting Sydney on 5/6th March. Unfortunately they were unable to make either of those dates.

Robert Craig (K55-59) wrote in January about the visit of **Dave Copeman** to Brisbane “We haven’t got together for a while (since the 150 years anniversary since we had an enjoyable meal at the Belgian Café in the city organised by Chris and Rebecca) and I don’t mind booking at a riverside restaurant for an evening meal, probably Southbank or possibly Regatta/Portside.

Robert Creasy (G55-59) hadn’t been affected by the storms around Perth.

Amy De Selincourt (M17-19) does not live in Western Australia but did find herself there when lockdown came into force in March 2020. She said on 24 March “*I am now stuck in Australia after they have just shut their borders. This is not the most ideal situation as I had a flight home booked for Friday. So the last few days have been very stressful and now it is just the fear of the unknown.*

On Sunday I lost my job because they have shut down due to the virus and then hockey was cancelled completely just hours later. So everything that I had going on has stopped and now I have no income which is my main worry because I know that I won’t be able to support myself for too much longer. I have had to move out of my house in a suburb called Manning so that I can save money on rent so I will be moving to a place called Canning Vale shortly. I am lucky enough to have a car as the club provided me with one when I came over in September. “

A few days later Amy was able to get home.

Julian Ellis (M72-76) and his wife Charmain live near Sydney and reported during the fires that apart from horrendous smoke some days and concern about the destruction of life (human and animal) and property, they were unaffected.

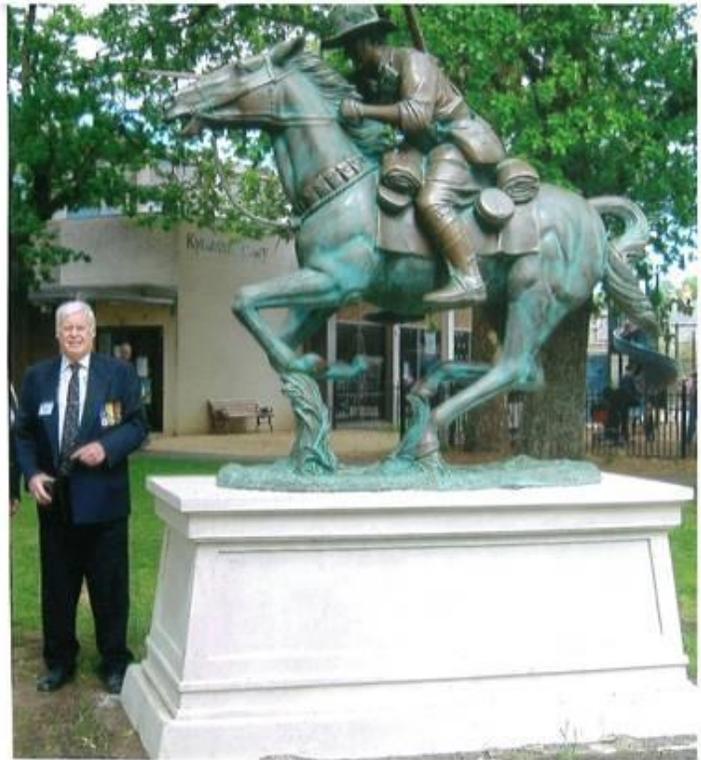
Bob Fox (R66-71) wished the SOF President “Kung Hei Fat Choi!” and stated a preference for the online version of the magazine in future. I expressed concern about the forest fires. Bob says “*As I live in Sydney, next to the sea, I’m in a relatively safe spot ... for the time being! We do get ash clouds that dump burnt wood everywhere, so we are very aware of the situation and are very concerned for those (and animals) who live in the countryside. I’m afraid I’ll not be in town to join Colin Lipman and other OFs in March, but hope I’ll be around in any forthcoming events.*”

Mike Garnett (R53-55) at Christmas sent a brief note to wish us a very Happy Christmas and 2020. He said “*The landscape is not looking too good in many places due to a ruinous drought that has probably sent hundreds of families into poverty and/or despair. I reckon we will see an increase in the price of meat, dairy and fruit products as a result of limited production.*

I see that the RAF Club is the venue for the Annual Dinner in March. I wonder whether you might arrange for the Light Horse Statue moved to London so that it can sit as a centre-piece for the Dinner?

I hope the Brexit dramas are coming to a satisfactory conclusion and as a result, that trade with us and New Zealand are put on a firm footing. When the UK entered the European Union it decimated the fruit and dairy industries in Tasmania and New Zealand.”

The President arranged for the statue to be present at the annual dinner and Mike attached a picture of the full size Statue at Kyneton unveiled about the time of the 150th big OF Dinner in the Hunter Valley, hence the connection. Sadly the dinner was cancelled.



At the New Year Mike reported that the fires this year were the worst that he could recall. He said *“I cannot understand how we rely on volunteer fire-fighters, surely they should be paid. And for Sydney to go ahead with their New Years fireworks is madness – apart from anything else, it is not a good look!! Last week I put my name down for two hours of tennis this morning which in hindsight, was probably a bit unwise because it will hit 43C by the time I get on court!”*

Mike also supported going to an online version of the magazine.

John Gates (S44-48) and his wife Ruth spent Christmas with their youngest daughter Sarah and grandchildren in Woolworth near Brisbane. John and Ruth are regular Bridge players and still enjoy a workout at the gym *“Afterwards I feel so much better & refreshed”*.

They spent a quiet New Year at home at Maroochydore. They would have liked to have met up with David & Ann Copeman when they visit Brisbane in March but they don’t feel comfortable driving into Brisbane any more, plus they will leaving a couple of days later on a cruise circumnavigating Australia for 4 weeks. During this cruise they were hoping to meet up with **Bryan Pearson (S45-47)** and his wife Celestine in Hawaii and they were regularly in touch beforehand..

In early April John wrote the following message to **Bryan Pearson** and myself *“Hopefully you are OK health wise and have not been affected by this Virus which is causing havoc worldwide, but mainly through Europe and the USA and of course the UK.*

Your cruise organized for mid April will now be a "NO NO", and no doubt you are Self Isolating, or if not officially then to safeguard yourselves.

We went on our 8th of March cruise to go right around Australia & Tasmania, but on the 4th day whilst on the sea to Tasmania and at 5.a.m, the Captain announced on the Tanoy system that our cruise was being terminated. We continued on to Tasmania (before the virus got there) and then returned to Sydney. The Captain said all arrangements would be made to get all passengers back to their homes safely, in fact the cruise line (Princess Cruises) did absolutely nothing, a very stressful time. Ruth managed to contact our Travel agent who in turn Booked us a Flight from Sydney to Maroochydore on the 18th, and we got home safely. Because we had not left Australian Waters we were informed that we did NOT have to self isolate, however our doctor has advised us to stay at home if possible due to our ages, just going out for Post etc, no more than once a week early morning so rarely run into anybody.

In fact the days pass quiet quickly, what with exercise, walking, playing games, reading, computer etc, communicating with friends mainly overseas etc.

Nobody knows how long this situation is going to last, but my guess is at least until the end of this year, our trouble Bryan is that we are getting older by the day, time is not on our side. Quite apart from that the financial markets are not helping, with interest rates at 0.25%, just have to wait for the eventual recovery."

Also in early April, John reported that he had spoken to **Peter.Bailey (K34-38)**, but of course cannot go and see him. He is quite cheerful & said he had a very good 98th birthday on the 28th March. It is great a number of OFs near to Peter's care home keep in touch with him.

Ann Hogarth (V85-87) provided an update from Perth in May "Things here are relaxing a lot re C19 and the schools and all the associated kids sport is back on with a vengeance (not to mention elective procedures - like wisdom teeth extractions - which my 16 year old had this weekend - being allowed again!!) now so we have been in a bit of a whirlwind! Unfortunately my cousin has also just passed away in the UK (not from C19 but from a huge stroke) so that has all been a bit frenetic too!

We are now allowed I think it is 100 people in non-essential gatherings in WA so I am sure we can have an OF Dinner now!! I am not sure how many OF's there are in Perth though!! [over a dozen]

I don't think we have really had our first wave of C19 yet we had very few cases - but I think that is probably more due to population density than anything else ... people forget that the whole of WA has about the same population as LA I think it is - so it is bound to spread like wildfire there in comparison to here!

The storms actually turned out to be a bit of a wet squib - actually another example of the media lathering everyone up into a state of panic! I think it hit a few places harder than our area ... but really it was just about as bad as a good howling UK storm!!

Anyway all going well here as I hope all is with you and all other OF's! Very Best wishes and let's hope the lovely English summer UV light will kill off a good deal of this bug!!"

Ann was back in touch again and mentioned that she keeps in touch with **Howard Robinson** (Biology). He came over to stay with them in Perth a couple of years ago. When Ann and her family were back in the UK in January 2020 they managed to catch up in Obersley where he and his wife Louise now live, for lunch at “The Kings Arms”. Ann says this is apparently where Charles I was supposed to have stopped on the way to some tree he hid in.

A good time was had by all and this is a lovely picture of Ann with Howard.



Peter Hollins (K70-76) and his wife Sally very kindly offered to meet up with **David and Ann Copeman** when their world cruise visited Perth on 17 March.

They gave them a comprehensive tour of both the city and local vineyards, combined with a visit to their home. You can read David’s full report below.



Peter was back in touch late May to say “All good here, the media beat up was a lot worse than the storm! Lockdown continues but should be easing further soon. I know what you mean re no visits – my Mum who lives in Kent has had only one visitor in 6 weeks – and that was a cleaner!

Colin Lipman (R53-61) on reading the Framlinghamian magazine in January was pleasantly pleased and surprised to find a "Lipman" being Head Boy at Framlingham. *“Academia was not one of my bright spots, however we hope we all improve with age! To find a Lipman, not knowing if he is related, being Head Boy without warning comes as a shock. We have had success on the Rugby field + other sports, but not one who achieved scholarships! I must find out more about this Lipman family - Chris do you have an email address / contact number? Thank you for the Magazine - good reading as usual.* [turned out that he was not related in any way and **Joe Lipman (R12-19)** as one of the 2019 Moreau Scholars]

Fortunately Lexie and I have not suffered from the fires, but we know many that have.

So far we have 8 OF's who will welcome David and Ann Copeman to our shores in March - hopefully more will attend. “

The meeting with **David Copeman** and Ann did go ahead on 6 March in Sydney but with just (from left to right) Ann, Lexie, Colin and David attending due to the crisis. See another picture at the end.



Neville Marsh (S53-61) was in touch days before Christmas to say that the Great Dividing Range near them was currently shrouded in smoke from the bushfires out west but fortunately they have had some respite from the recent high temperatures. These had touched 50C in parts of Queensland earlier in the week. Although they were spared bush fires for the present, they knew friends and loved ones in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia who are doing it tough with lives lost and many homes destroyed so far. *“We pray for rain which should arrive on Christmas Day – it would be a wonderful present indeed.”*

Neville and Alison spent a week at Christmas at Coolumb by the sea and they did get some much needed rain *“Not very Christmasy but we desperately need it. We are happy to sit outside with our roast dinner and watch the spectacle!”*. He had spoken to **Peter Bailey** regularly but he is becoming very frail and his memory is fading.

After Christmas Neville then started organising an OF lunch to meet up with **David and Ann Copeman**. The Queen Mary 2 docked at Fisherman’s Island in Brisbane. As that was way out of town, they arranged to meet near to ANZAC Square.

The lunch took place at the Phat Elephant Restaurant. Below is a photo from their convivial with David and Ann Copeman :



Standing are **Neville Marsh (S53-61)**, **Robert Craig (K55-59)**, **David Copeman (K42-49)**
Seated Alison Marsh, Carolyn Craig, Bev Rutter and Ann Copeman. It was good that Bev Rutter could join so soon after Nick’s untimely death last June.

After meeting up Neville sent the following report *“David and Ann were fairly stoic about missing a greater part of the Asian sector but they were happy to be on dry land once more and looking forward to meeting the Sydney and Fremantle old boys. They are a lovely couple and seemed so pleased that we had made the effort to organise a lunch.”*

David and Ann continued on to Sydney with lunch with Colin & Lexie Lipman and then to Fremantle for a meeting with Peter & Sally Hollins. It’s a pity that the entire Asia leg of the cruise had to be cancelled.

Bob Munro (R56-60) in late November was in touch with **Norman Porter (K50-57)** about the sad death of this brother **Murray (R58-65)**. He said *“It all seems a bit surreal, even though we knew he was in a lot of pain, but I guess we were just not ready to face the inevitable [see obituaries]*

For us, summer starts (officially) on December 1st, but we have already had some very hot days. Coupled with an extremely dry Winter and Spring, the soil around us for many many miles is devoid of moisture, (and we are not called the 'Flatlands' for nothing - see attached photo) so as soon as we do have some wind, that soil becomes a dust storm! And the dust covers everything, and gets in everywhere. Breathing



for some folks becomes, literally, a case of life or death.

And then there are the bushfires, which are horrendous - so far Victoria has been spared any bad ones, but as I said, summer hasn't really started yet. Australia is a very harsh country. Despite that, I love it!”

He gave further details to me at Christmas *“For us in Mildura it looks as though it is going to be very hot on Christmas Day and for a few days afterwards (38C on Wednesday increasing daily to 44C on*

Saturday (100F to 111F). Fortunately we have plenty of life-giving fluids in the 'special' 'fridge in the shed!! I look forward to reading about the activities of fellow OF.'s in the full versions of the OF News etc."

In early January he sent an update on the fires "Another (unwelcome) statistic:- I have just heard on the 10am news broadcast (7/1/'20), that if the total of all the fire fronts currently burning were joined together, then the front would stretch from New South Wales to Afghanistan! How can man control that? And to put things into a slightly different, (but also unwelcome) perspective, this little personal snippet may be of interest: Some friends of ours have a son and daughter-in-law who live on Kangaroo Island, about 200 kms SSW of Adelaide, and 20 kms off the coast. Kangaroo Island is also experiencing a very bad fire, approx. 1/3rd of the Island is under threat. We are likely to have another 6-8 weeks at least of this current trauma."

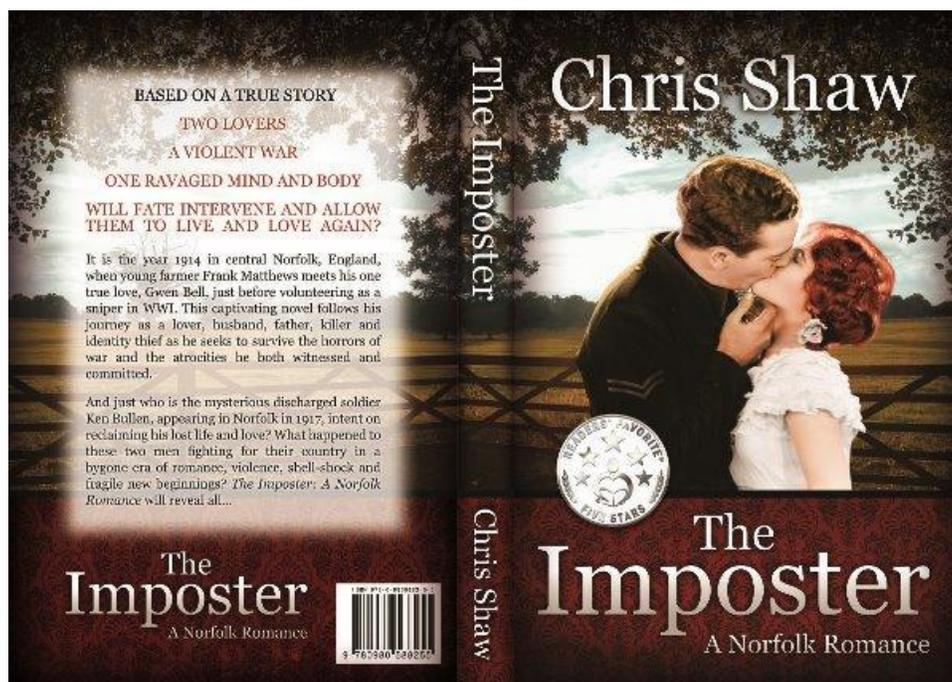
The headline news in the UK at the time was the estimates of 500m and more animals killed in the fires in Australia. The size/scale is amazing when compared to the UK.

Andy Ripley (xx) surprised us by turning up in Queensland rather than his previous home of Singapore. He provided a new address and said that he had left Earth Hour back in 2014 and started a new marine conservation organisation called Citizens of the Reef .

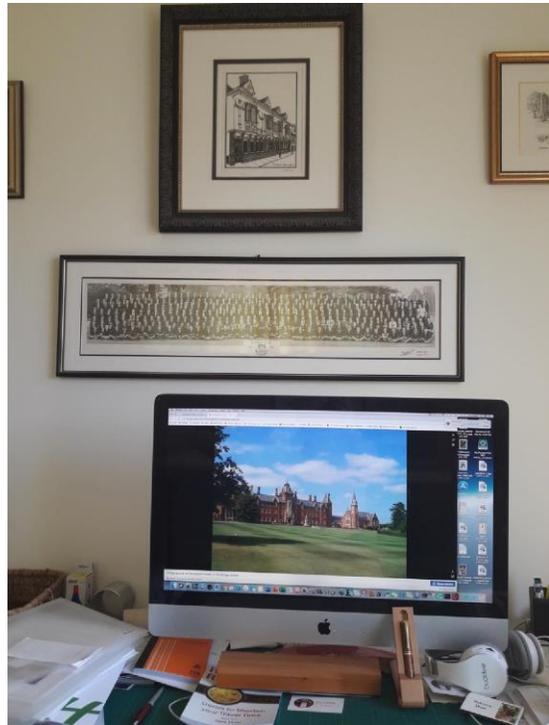
Chris Shaw (K50-56) as always has been extremely good at keeping in touch both with me and with OFs throughout Australia/NZ and other parts of the world like Hong Kong. A huge thanks for his time doing this.

At the end of October 2019 I congratulated him on his book *The Imposter*, which I had just finished reading. I noticed a reference to a Captain John Rankin and Chris confirmed this was in deference to our own **Dr John Rankin (K47-56)**, who was head of Kerrison in his time, great table tennis player, and all around good guy. Chris reported that he was 60,000 words into a follow-up, that was liberally sprinkled with OF names, which, since the action takes place in East Anglia in WW2 is not beyond the bounds of possibility.

In early December Chris hadn't heard any word about OFs in distress in NSW or Queensland to fire threat. On Christmas Day, Chris & Rebecca had my kind of meal consisting of prawns, crab, lobster, scallops and lots of cold bubbles.



Chris's sister sent him a 1956 school photo to him that his parents had been keeping. He had it framed and hung above his desk. He sent a photo of his study with a small touch of East Anglia in the tropics of North Queensland! The picture above the school photos is The Ancient House in the Buttermarket in Ipswich.



On Boxing Day he sent Christmas greetings to our family and said that he had just received the SOF News digest, and for whatever reason have been going through the Obituaries “*I guess it's an age thing. I came across Brian Aldiss's entry. His name is not unknown to me or Rebecca since he was a science fiction writer, and she a reader of same. The spelling of “renowned” is “renouned”, and for an author that may rankle a tad, even from beyond the grave! Maybe you could rehash the entry so he may rest a little easier? [I did immediately]. I've just been doing the last? edit of The Enforcer, the sequel to The Imposter, so my spelling-senses are on high alert.*

I had a bout of pneumonia over the Christmas period, which wasn't a whole heap of fun. Much better now; just need to get the energy levels back and things will be fine again.

*Have had a fine long letter from **John Ling (S49-56)** about his Norfolk Supper appearance, his round the world trip, his Sydney dinner, and his stay in Cairns, about which he was very complementary.*

PS My daughter presented me with my Christmas present on Boxing Day. It was one of those beautiful, long paper bags with a string handle. Yet another bottle of wine, thought I; a Golden Thread theme throughout my life. Turns out it was a large bottle of homemade Worcestershire sauce! Still capable of being surprised!”

Just before New Year, Chris was in touch again with some fascinating stats on the recent fire in Australia “so far, 4.6 million hectares have burnt out in Oz, with 3.6mH in NSW alone. On the farm in Norfolk, we didn't know about Hectares, we dealt in acres, so a rough translation goes something like this:

$$4.6mH = 4.6 \times 2.5 = 11.5 \text{ million acres} = 17,700 \text{ square miles}$$

This compares with East Anglia comprising approx. 5000 square miles.

That's just for perspective. The fact is also that all the wildlife had been killed in this area is a horror of different proportions. That's Koalas, Kangaroos, Wallabies, snakes, spiders, and all the bio-diversity (flora and fauna) that comes from being an isolated continent from 150 million years ago. Sad, sad, sad.

For several years after I arrived here, I didn't understand the importance, the huge areas or the ferocity of bushfires. Then I got to see some footage of fire travelling in excess of 100mph through the crowns of

Eucalypts, driven by storm winds, sometimes of their own making, but travelling much faster than a car with a family can go on country roads. That's when the reality of what bushfires are all about hit me. They are to be mightily respected, as are the volunteer firies who go out to battle them. Aerial water-bombers from mostly helicopters have improved fire-fighter considerably, but with dry, windy conditions, fires that are mostly lit by lightning from dry storms take off in wilderness areas and just keep going."

He finished off by pointing out that the Aussies had won the Boxing Day test match against the Kiwis, and the Sydney to Hobart yacht race went off without a hitch. "All our OFs are safe so far, so 2020 bodes well, even though Mike Garnett has to sleep in 40C temps!" Little did we know what was to come.

After being in touch with a number of OFs around New Year he had the following to report on those who could have been in danger from the fires.

Mike Garnett (R53-55) said he was fine and safe, but was keeping a weather-eye on the Macedon Range, which is not that far from him. We took a walk with him when we stayed and found the Hanging Rock Winery, which supplied us with samples of it wares. But for now, Mike's safe.

Bob and Maria Munro (R54-60) in Mildura, which Bob points out is a hell of a long way from anywhere, have had temperatures in the high 40'sC, which is a very serious situation. However, not only are they safe from fire threats at the moment, but Bob is thinking of putting a sweater on this morning as the temps have dropped to the mid-teens! That's desert living; huge changes in temperature and humidity. He hates the humidity, I love it, but they are safe and well.

Phil and Dee Bower (G65-74) in WA have had equable temps but have a potential cyclone bearing down on them. At worst it's a Category two, and will have devolved into a rain depression by the time it gets to them, so if he puts the plugs in his boat, it will fill with water and not blow away - that's my advice anyway, but they too, are safe as well.

In Cairns we have 30C, 80% humidity, sunshine with the occasional showers at night, and the scenery is almost Irish green. A month from now, the frightening bushfires should be out and we may be in the news with a Cat 5 cyclone coming down our throats. Welcome to Australia!

Everyone in Oz is keeping up with the news surrounding the bushfire situation, and how our volunteer fire fighters are standing up. Usually, they are needed for a couple of days in restricted areas, but this year things have really got out of hand. Being in the middle of a long drought has not helped the situation, nor has the prohibition of fuel reduction or not maintaining fire breaks in National Parks, but that's another story.

I'll phone **Colin Lipman (R53-61)** in Sydney tomorrow. I have only his business number. By the way, Penrith, just west of Sydney City, has a temp of 49.7C yesterday! Railways buckle, and roads melt, and an Aussie put a pork roast in his car in a tray, shut the door, and he and his family ate roast port after eight hours! Only in Australia!"

Again in early January Chris was saddened to learn of the passing of **John Edwards (K45-55)**. He was a contemporary of his in Kerrison, "A bon vivant, and all-round good egg. I gather he did some sterling

service for the college. Coming out from under a three-week bout of pneumonia myself, I have to say, 'there, but for the grace of God, go I.' I'm sure John will be sadly missed, and I send condolences to his family and friends. I remember him telling the story in the dorm one night, about a holiday he spent in Europe. He tried to get a lift by hitch-hiking but it appeared that no one wanted to pick him up. Finally, he shouted to one driver, 'Be a sport!' The car screamed to a standstill and a couple invited him to join them. They were Australians, and thought he was too, for using the word, 'Sport!' I emailed that story to him several years ago and replied in awe that it had taken place in the early 1950's, and how the hell did I remember that so much later? I have the sort of mind that remembers odd stuff, but does not recall what I had for breakfast this morning!"

Chris's wife Rebecca is a big expert on Henry VIII and is a dab hand at needle work. Chris sent a photo of her largest work which she had just completed. It shows Catherine of Aragon pleading with King Henry VIII not to divorce her. It's taken from a life-sized portrait in Westminster Palace that Rebecca got permission to reproduce, for her own use only, by the current Curator.

Some stats, for what they're worth: Frame 3 feet 5 inches square. Sewing area 2 feet 6 inches square, containing 239,000 stitches and took 18 months to complete. If you look back to previous picture of the other five wives, the second, (Jane Seymour), has a frame of 2 feet 7 inches x 1 foot 9.5 inches, and a sewn area of 1 foot 8.5 inches x 1 foot, at around 80,000 stitches. See next page for photo.

In March Chris reported that his book, *The Imposter*, has been accepted by the Australian War Memorial shop for sale there. His argument was that it helps to explain some of the origins of PTSD, albeit in WW1 context, and also explores many facets of that four letter word, 'Love,' as it applies to life within marriage.

We are all familiar in the UK with the shortage loo paper at the start of the pandemic. It seems to also be a problem in Australia as Chris writes *"You may catch up with the story of panic-buying of loo paper because of the Coronavirus in Oz! Why this should be no one seems to know because of all the problems surrounding that virus, gastro-intestinal problems are not among them. However, most Australian supermarkets have run out of stock."*



At this point his story seems the same as in the UK, but in Australia they have a unique solution *"The Northern Territory Times newspaper, however, has left eight pages unprinted to act as emergency loo*

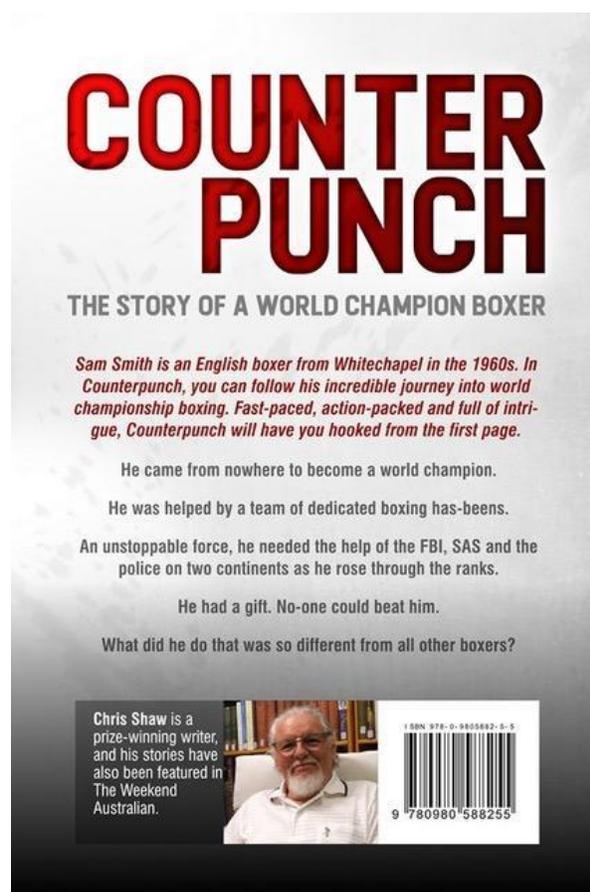
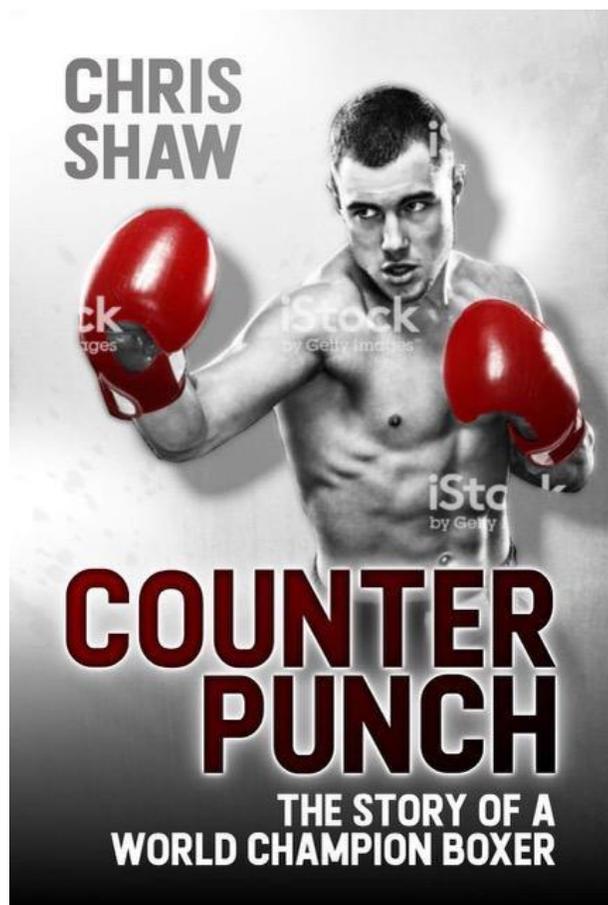
paper, should the need arise! I thought that was very entrepreneurial, and got a hearty round of applause from the rest of Australia.”

“Stood in a long queue at the supermarket which was taking forever to move. I coughed and said to my wife, ‘I’m sure this cough has got worse since we came back from China!’ Instantly, no queue!”

During lockdown in April Chris was back in touch with news of his latest book on boxing and that his editor was looking to completely re-write the sequel to *The Imposter*.

He sent hearty congratulations to **Simon Dougherty (G60-67)** too, for his being awarded an MBE.

He described their retirement village as *“Well, we have a bit of a ghost town in the village, with all the social distancing we need, but we are a very vulnerable group with people not only in their 80’s and 90’s, but most of us have co-morbidities too. As a complete opposite to that scenario, the couple two units down from us were halfway through a bike ride from Adelaide to Perth, which is just shy of 3000km (1200 miles in my grade 10 brain). He’s 78, and 62kg and has been cycling since 1977, having just clocked up his 500,000km! This in itself a feat, but then, as I did, you realise that not only is there the natural worlds that he passes through, but the politics, the economics, the cultural differences as well. Imagine cycling from Alaska to Patagonia, or from London to Sydney, through Iran, Pakistan, Tibet and China. What a challenge! And here I sit pecking away at my keyboard, lost in my vivid dreams that I write down!”*



In early May he gives an incite into his next book *“I had written a story of a Whitechapel lad who was doing some boxing on Saturday nights, and through a series of happenings (this was in 1964-66) became the Welterweight Champion of the World. Just a nice little story of 100K words. She had me re-visit it and give separate voices to the characters. The main character, Sam Smith, became Denis Waterman (Terry from Minder, or Jerry from New Tricks), and his Manager became a Jewish character I had known in my time as a medical rep in N W London, Golders Green, who couldn't pronounce his 'w's, “vith which ve all 'ad a little trouble vhen ve all vent to the States, my boy!” So, that was a chore, but she has taken it on board and instead of calling it 'Hammer and Tongs,' it's been re-named as “Counterpunch.” I wrote it for my Dad who had done some boxing in his youth, as had his Dad I believe.*

While she is editing the boxing story, I'm re-writing The Enforcer, as a follow on from The Imposter. Since she gave me 26 pages of notes about how The Enforcer could be improved, I have knuckled down and made a start. I do have the time.

So, we are well and busy. I will be doing Billy Connolly hair impressions by the time this is over! At the moment it's a rough equivalent of Buffalo Bill Cody. The Management of the village set up a special Facebook page just for us, and I have been contributing jokes every day under the pseudonym of Mr. Giggle-juice, as I do the bartending at the Happy Hour, which has nor happened since the beginning of the year. I also put on my short story called, Gallipoli Boy, for ANZAC Day.

We've had little contact with the other villagers, but as soon as the restrictions are lifted, we shall all be out there on camping chairs with our sundowners discussing the daily vicissitudes of family and friends, sitting on our verandas. We will have to get rugged up a bit as winter is coming. We haven't had a day under 30C since last September, which is fine by me, but Memsahib produces her winter heat all year round so summer is not her friend.”

After some more exchanges on Covid and his book publishing he was “very sad to see ‘MAGS’ Michael Spencer and John Edwards have passed on - two stalwarts of the College. MAGS was always kind and equable, had humour and was one of the best soccer players I've ever seen - @ Brandeston. Many great sportspeople go on to play golf in their later years. I know Gary Sobers did in Barbados. We had strangely parallel paths: he married an Australian and moved to Australia, divorced and moved back to Barbados. I married a West Indian, moved to Australia, divorced, married an Australian and stayed here. Also sorry to see Mr Pemberton died.”

Chris also wrote to OFs in Hong Kong saying how he has seen HK starting to be ripped apart, and have noted the positive response from UK, USA, and Australia. To this end he connected with his local Federal Parliamentarian, Warren Entsch, about putting in a ‘good word’ if the occasion arises, for any SOF members wanting to come to Australia and in need of a local reference. He add *“One of the reasons for Rebecca and I coming to HK for your dinner was to establish lines of communication should this sort of thing ever become a reality. I will leave you to disseminate this information as needed to other OF's in HK. “*

Finally in July 2020 he asked all of us who had bought and enjoyed his book The Imposter to give him a good review on Amazon. *“There is a nutritional message here in that the more books I sell, the better*

Rebecca and I eat, drink and be merry. PS Look out for my next book, COUNTERPUNCH coming soon."

Aubrey Whitear (G58-65) responded to me sending the piece that **Robert Bowman Clarke (R59-64)** had written mentioning him. He had kept in touch with Robert since they left the College all those years ago *"I have had the pleasure of reading his successive volumes of memoirs. It's hard to escape the conclusion that he has led a life that would be too exciting for most of us."*

He was very sorry to hear of the passing of **Jerry Lee (K59-64)** and recalled that the last time he saw him must have been on the occasion of an OF weekend at Framlingham shortly after they had both left. He recalled *"We were both driving back to Fram from Aldeburgh where we had benefited from a certain amount of refreshment. He had just failed to brake in time to avoid running into the back of my mother's car with which I had been entrusted for the weekend. I had some explaining to do when I got home. These things happen when you are young."*

Aubrey said that in Melbourne they were currently "enjoying" our second Covid-19 lockdown with about six weeks still to go *"Fortunately, my wife and I are living at Flinders, a quite rural spot on the coast an hour and a quarter's drive from the city so life for us is pretty easy. We had been booked to visit our grandchildren in England and do a bit of walking in France around Easter time but that had to be cancelled as did their return trip to Australia in July. So no travel to tell you about this year. As for next year, only time will tell."*

Below follows and an extract from his annual letter written last Christmas.

"Here in Australia it's been the case of the good and the bad. In March we had the delightful sight of the very smug leader of our Labor (sic – they can't even spell) Party losing the unlosable election. Well, that's what happens when your key policy is to steal other people's money. In sport, which is the only thing of real importance in this country, we retained the Ashes (I appreciate this will mean nothing to my North American readers) but the real downer on the year was the predicable demise of the Wallabies against England in the Rugby World Cup. Some say our woeful performance was brought about by the absence of our star player Israel Folau who in a great display of wokeness was cast out into the wilderness because on social media he had little encouraging to say about the prospects of homosexuals and various others in the afterlife. In reality, it was thanks largely to our abysmal coach. I'm sure he had a Plan A but whatever it was it was not cunning enough to stand up to any kind of scrutiny. As Mike Tyson so eloquently put it, everyone has a plan until they are punched in the mouth. When we reached for Plan B we found it was no more than Plan A with an element of panic. In the end we were left to rely on our little brothers across the ditch to rescue us from the Slough of Despond by knocking the wheels off England's Sweet Chariot and leaving it upturned alongside Boris in a ditch. Alas they couldn't even do that. But the rest you already know!

On the domestic front, it's been another good year for the fox. In the pre-dawn of a winters' morning we heard a disturbance in the chook yard. Rushing out, we were in time to see Mr Fox disappearing over the fence having already despatched two of our hens. The one remaining chook thereafter refused to lay or if she did she ate the eggs herself, so we sent her off to join a neighbour's flock where she can live happily ever after. So ended our career as chook keepers. From now on we are getting our eggs at the market. It's cheaper!

Another surprising event this year has been the emergence of our two sons as Athletes. Tristan has at least temporarily given up his bike riding - courtesy of a nasty crash and broken wrist. Instead he has taken to the road and has run not one but two marathons, each one in almost exactly three hours. Roland's achievement has been all the more surprising in light of a conversation I remember having with him one day when he came home from school:

Me: what did you do today?

He: played soccer.

Me: what position do you like to play?

He: goalie.

Me: why?

He: because you don't have to run around.

Anyhow, this October he ran and came tenth in a muddy cross-country ultra-marathon in the north of England – 55km with over 900 metres of vertical gain and loss. At one point he had to jump a fence to avoid what he thought was a bull. It makes me tired just to think about it.

Our travels this year began in February with a trip together with some American friends for the Three Capes Lodge walk on the Tasman Peninsula on Tasmania's south coast. Maybe it was the company, maybe it was the weather or maybe it was the scenery but this was as nice a walk as we have done anywhere in the world. An added benefit is that henceforth when the yachts in the Sydney to Hobart boat race are rounding Tasman island I will be able to envisage exactly where they are. After that, in April we headed to Europe to see our grandchildren and their owners who live in the North of England. For two weeks the weather was cool but unexpectedly the sun shone almost continuously other than at night. We had a great time with them consuming ice-cream and tripping about, one day as far as the excellent National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. From England we decided to go to Italy in search of warmth. We arrived in Como, it was raining. We took the boat to Bellagio, it was raining. We took the bus to Lenno to walk on the Lake Como Greenway, it was raining so hard that within minutes of getting off the bus we were as wet as water rats. We walked on stoically beneath umbrellas. The only satisfactory shelter was in an enoteca where they were playing the Rolling Stones' Beggars Banquet on rotation. By the time we left, I was half man, half Sangiovese. So we headed south to Amalfi and Capri where the sun always shines. But it wasn't. It was raining. Amalfi would still have been disappointing in sunshine. Even in April it was mobbed by tourists disgorged from cruise boats where they had only recently gorged themselves on their buffet breakfasts. They were intent on doing Amalfi in record time so they could return aboard to gorge on the buffet lunch. Meanwhile the roads were clogged with buses bringing still more tourists to make the whole experience akin to being in a crowd disgorged from a football stadium. Fortunately the rain eased for our six day walk on the Amalfi Coast between Ravello and Positano. The going was hard. "Amalfi", we rapidly concluded, had to be Italian for "too many steps". If we were not going up, we were going down knowing that shortly we would be going up again. Not good for elderly knees!

In August we were back in Europe again. This time the weather was marvellous. First a few days in the little Swiss village of Weggis for some hiking in the mountains which never disappoints – it's somehow reassuring now that we are no longer at our perihelion to find after a year's absence we can still ignore the cable car and walk up the Rigi all the way from the lake. The only drawback of Weggis is the church

clock which strikes its bell every fifteen minutes day and night. If you can't achieve a deep sleep in fourteen minutes and fifty-nine seconds, you'll be awake all night. After Weggis we had a few days back in the North of England before spending ten lovely days with our UK family on the beach in Portugal. At Faro airport the immigration officer greeted Di and me warmly and asked us where we came from before adding "I can see from your faces you are not from England". Make of that what you will. After Portugal Di and I headed to Lyon in France to begin a week's cycling holiday in the Rhone valley between Lyon and Orange. Old Lyon is lovely although the ghost of Klaus Barbie lingers still. We enjoyed the history of the old town and enjoyed the restaurants even more. In particular the Atelier des Augustines should not be missed. My only regret was that we did not have time to take the vaporetto where according to the brochure "the crew consists of hostess members who are willingly at your service". From Lyon the cycling was easy, the car drivers courteous and the scenery pleasant if lacking in a panorama splendide, as they like to say in the brochures. Once again there were cruise boats but mostly we avoided their occupants. The highlights were Roman ruins particularly the Temple of Augustus in Vienne and the Roman Theatre antique d'Orange which would have been worth making a major detour to visit.

When not travelling we have seen a lot more than usual of our local grandchildren, Fleur and Patrick together with their parents, Tristan and Sophie. Whereas in the past our duties were mainly limited to Monday pick up from day care and ad hoc babysitting, this year it has extended to full board and lodging. This state of affairs has come about because T&S decided to sell their house to buy a bigger one. Selling the old house was no problem, buying a new one is proving difficult and unlike in the Billie Holliday lyric cannot be done right now. As much as we love our grandchildren and enjoy their company, I have concluded that the septuagenarian body is not well adapted to the rigours of keeping up with the demands of a three and a five-year-old for twelve hours a day.

Finally, what of us? I am pleased to report that both Di and I feel as healthy as anyone could reasonably hope to be at our age. Di rides her bike weekly and goes to the gym almost daily. I continue to play golf although I am disappointed that golf ball manufacturers no longer seem able to make balls that travel an impressive distance when hit. Apart from that I take the simple pleasure afforded by acquiring knowledge that has no commercial use.....and promptly forgetting it!

Love and Peace and good coffee to all. Di and I hope you have a wonderful Christmas with your family and that 2020 will bring you good health and great joy. For the benefit of any of you who are thinking of giving the traditional gifts this year, here is a last-minute shoppers' bulletin: frankincense is available on eBay for about \$80/kilo, myrrh is roughly twice as expensive while gold is going for about US\$1,500/oz. I have no idea what you do with the first two but with interest rates hovering around 1% you could do a lot worse if you just leave your money in the bank."

CANADA

Richard Green (M71-78) was briefly in touch from Ontario to say that he was happy to receive digital version of magazine in future. He said "I note that there was no Canada event last year - I guess distance and weather doesn't help and last year was a tough one for us, so we wouldn't have been available. My wife is recovering from a serious illness and so we pretty much focused on hospitals and home. Fortunately things are good now so looking forward to more mobility after winter goes away."

CYPRUS

Robert Bowman Clarke (R59-64) responded to my Christmas message to all overseas OF and became possibly my first OF to write from Cyprus. He started off by saying how very impressed he was with the glossy Framlinghamian Magazine and would hope to receive this every year, which he always keeps.

*“Just a quick update of my activities - since working as an International lawyer in the City of London, Hong Kong, Athens with the Greek Ship owners, Monte Carlo and the last 18 years running my own Commercial Consultancy in Dubai for 18 years I have recently semi-retired to my offshore base in sunny Cyprus - near to the Clients in the Gulf but still keeping them at arm's length. As **Richard Sayer (S56-61)** can no doubt testify we Solicitors advising internationally never actually 'retire' as such whether to deepest Hampshire or to sunnier Cyprus! Despite being semi-retired I have still travelled the world for Clients and sorted out little 'local' difficulties for them - Dubai, Hong Kong and Monaco have not fundamentally changed over the years they just need 'patience' and 'nuance' to unravel the enigmas. Being a Fellow of Rotary International I recently travelled through the States and gave 8 speeches to Rotary Clubs from Coast to Coast on 'The Ways of the World' and had a wonderful reception from the members. It was interesting to compare the attitudes in New York and Philadelphia to, say, San Antonio and New Orleans and Los Angeles...a fascinating country.*

In between enjoying my sailing on the Eastern Med and walking up in the foothills of the glorious Troodos Mountains here on the island I have taken time to continue writing my books - to date I have published 3 volumes of Memoirs - 'Wicked To Fly', 'Ticket To Ride' and the latest 'Stick It To Survive' which came out in time for the Christmas market - all are on Amazon and at Barnes and Noble etc. I write them under my pen name of 'Robert Bowman' so as to keep them separate from my professional name. I have also written a fiction thriller called 'Nemesis' and an Inside Guide to Greece which should help a few lost souls find the right island or taverna/place for them to stay! So five books to date and counting.....

*As the years go by we have lost some good friends from Fram - **Keith Treadaway (R60-65)**, **Richard Vaughan-Griffiths (K60-64)** and **John Birt (S59-63)** amongst them and recently in New York **Angus McDowell (R60-63)** but we must all still celebrate being alive and I give a shout out to **Ant Cowan (R55-64)** over there in Seattle, **Pete Lockwood (R57-64)** on his Magical History Tours in Surrey, **Jerry Lee (K59-64)** behind his drums and, not least, **Aubrey Whitear (G58-65)** down there in Melbourne hopefully not threatened by those wild fires!*

*I was recently at the College in the summer of 2018 (on my Birthday!) when the College kindly laid on a marquee for me and a few hundred others for the 60s Reunion gig and I was happy to meet **Kate Jackson (P84-93)** who was definitely doing sterling work behind the scenes for the OFs! I took my son along for the nostalgic ride and he was most impressed with the Students' accommodation telling me it was far superior to that he 'enjoyed' during his time at the LSE in London!”*

I responded saying it was great to hear from an OF in Cyprus and that I had added his books to the Distinguished section of OF website. There are 2 other OFs in Cyprus in Limassol and Larnaca. I said that we had no contact details for Angus McDowell and were therefore not aware he had died and asked for more details.

He responded “Yes, it was very sad about **Angus McDowell**. We met at Fram whilst I think his uncle Peter Clarke was our housemaster at Rendlesham and kept in touch over the years as he pursued his international career in Accountancy and I in Law....we used to meet up in New York and in UK and Monaco, we met each others wives and witnessed divorcing each others wives over the years but it was all dynamic fun but then came September 2001 and he sent me vivid photos of the World Trade Center Towers burning in New York - a few blocks from his apartment on Second Avenue (was he the ONLY OF to witness that historic,traumatic event?) I last saw Angus on my latest trip to the States during the summer of 2015 and we shared a last meal together in our favourite Spanish restaurant on Second Avenue.....I knew he was dying because he was being treated for Stage 4 Cancer and we said our goodbyes.....New York friends told me 2 months later he had passed away a month after I last saw him.....he was a brave soul in the end...I write about him in my latest Book but obviously changed the name.....it was ironic because I am sure he incurred his Cancer thru 9/11 and that ghastly noxious cloud of asbestos/computer parts etc that billowed over the City for days. It is not generally reported, Chris, but a lot of the Police and Firefighters that day have since all succumbed to Cancerous infections of one kind or another and our brave OF Angus was also I think 'collateral damage' of that terrorist attack - albeit 14 years later, although of course no one will admit to it. R.I.P Angus.

Unfortunately, talking about Cancer - as the great Kate Jackson knows from our exchanges of emails leading up to the 60s Reunion on June 30th 2018 at Fram, I too had just recovered from 4 gruelling Ops from October 2017 to March 2018 over here in Nicosia for ridding my complaining body of my new friend Mel Anoma....or, more particularly, his evil half brother Malignant Mel Anoma. I won that extremely close quarter battle in the end (but only just survived a traumatic gushing haemorrhage in the middle of the night and was only 'saved' by a Scottish Staff Nurse who was on night duty and knew what to do!)That's why my 3rd volume of Memoirs is called 'Stick It To Survive' because they are all true stories of Survival and the last Chapter 'Met by Mel Anoma' relates what happened to me over 4 months in the sunny Eastern Med. I was so relieved to come out the other side I contacted The National Trust in the UK and arranged to donate to them a lovely wooden bench in a very historic spot on my favourite Tennyson Down on the south coast of the Isle of Wight. The Bench was made by local craftsmen and is inscribed:

*'Pause here and rest your weary limbs for a while.....
And Remember the History...and,maybe, your Life with a smile.....'*



The Bench overlooks Freshwater Bay and is in a very historic spot..... in the skies above in the hot summer of 1940 the Battle of Britain was fought by The Few.....only 40 miles away across the Channel are the beaches of Normandy of 1944.....and also the same Channel waters saw the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588...whilst just down the coast at Hastings William landed from Normandy in 1066 and defeated Harald in a battle that changed England forever.

I and my heirs will be responsible for the upkeep of the Bench forever but The National Trust, knowing the true story behind the donation of the Bench, were only too willing to advise and liaise with me on its placement and construction. They tell me it has proved very popular with all the visitors and walkers who pass by on these historic white cliffs, a lot of them from abroad. It just seemed a nice way to give something back after my close shave with Malignant Mel Anoma and my son and I unveiled it in a little local ceremony in June 2018. I guess you could say the OFs now have a permanent place they could call 'home' in one of the most beautiful places on the south coast of the UK.

Incidentally, even though my Books are selling well over the years on Amazon etc, I have always thought about proper Literary representation in the UK. I know it is not an OF strong suit normally but do you know of any OFs presently active as Literary Agents or in main stream Publishing in the UK (or abroad for that matter) who I might contact and discuss my literary output?

You seem to have a wrong address for me. My address here in Cyprus is it is therefore not surprising you could not find me on the map! For the record, Aya Napa in the west of the island is for teenagers and discos (think Ibiza!), Larnaca is like Cannes very nice, Limassol is very Russian and full of dubious Putin-inspired shipping companies and here in Paphos and Coral Bay in the west, like the West Coasts all over the world - even in Newquay and Bristol - we have the nicest sunsets, villas and climate and there is quite a large local population of Brits (both retired or semi-retired like me)and we have active UK3PA Clubs etc. I spend a lot of time sailing, writing and sipping wine and still advising my Dubai, Monaco and Gulf Clients. I run a monthly Current Affairs Group whose members range from retired/semi-retired professionals like me and Company Directors from the Gulf and Africa.....think Lonhro, Cecil Rhodes and Lawrence. All interesting company and myriad world views!"

*In a follow up email to Rob I mentioned that **Peter Lockwood** had organised a trip to Pickard's grave near Amiens and that if he had had more notice he would have liked to have gone on that. "I am a bit of an 'expert' on Operation Jericho to blow the walls of Amiens Prison down in February 1944, having got several books on the subject and also flown in a Mosquito Simulator enacting the Raid itself with the actual film shot on the Raid , which was quite an experience! (low over the Channel then steep climb over the coast then level out and run down the straight road towards the Prison.....they couldn't miss it because it was a dark forbidding block standing out ahead against the snow) If you are interested in Pick I would refer you to the movie 'Target For Tonight' shot in 1941 by the Crown Film Unit in which Pickard stars as the Pilot of a Wellington crew 'F' for Freddie.....no actors were used in the production in showing a typical Bomber Command operation.....it's now a Classic and available on DVD, I have it in my extensive Film Library. It's fascinating to see this famous OF (and his pipe!) enacting a typical Bomber raid. The film won an Honorary Academy Award in 1942 and was voted 'Best Documentary' in 1941. Sad to think within 2 years he had been killed, like so many others, in the fields of Northern France."*

FRANCE

Thomas Otho-Briggs (R56-60) was trying to contact **Deryk H Cox**, his ex Music Master at the College. He had seen the Hon OF citation that had been done for Deryk. Unfortunately we don't have an email address for Deryk so I couldn't simply forward on, but did copy to **Doug Thomson (K53-61)** who lives near him in Sedbergh Cumbria and sees him occasionally in a normal world.

As for his life in France he reports *"Things here in France are going well, but then we do not have buses nor trains and the M25 is not bumper to bumper, and one has to remember we have roughly the same population as GB but twice the land mass."*

Brian Rosen (S40-46) was sorry to report in April 2020 that his elder brother, **Michael Rosen (S40-46)** (known as *Michael Anthony*) died peacefully in his sleep on March 18th aged 91. He said *"Here in France we have been 'locked down' for over a fortnight and of course the situation is different in various regions. For those of us retired and living in the countryside, we appreciate how fortunate we are and there is always plenty to do in the garden. Our local roads are free of traffic, and just as it was, around Framlingham 75 to 80 years ago, we find ourselves cycling or walking in the middle of the road. The town of Vienne, 2 km away, is deserted, free parking everywhere, but the supermarkets and food shops are open and well stocked. Sarah (BH89-93), our daughter is living and working from her flat in Lyon, as an epidemiologist, is of course working long hours."*

It was also great to see Brian at the SOF Council Zoom meeting in July 2020.

GERMANY

Kim Dickel (M97-98) was sad that she didn't manage to organise a Germany OF reunion in the last year but is determined to reignite the fire as soon as possible. She was promoted to Head of Finance this year within her company and had no capacity for anything else apart from work. She says that she didn't even find the time to celebrate her birthday!

Berenike Karrasch (P11-13) was in touch with Ruth Noble at the College after receiving the News Digest in April 2020. She provided the following update *"Yet another year nearly has passed since I last wrote to you. I hope you are doing fine and Corona has not reached Framlingham yet. The numbers in the UK are very worrying. I hope you all are doing fine!! The college is probably closed as well?"*

On Monday my new Semester (8th) starts. I am very interested how it will all work "online". With livestreams of lectures and audio-lectures. This semester I have lots of subjects I am not keen in like Surgery-lectures, Urology, Dermatology and Paediatrics. I am becoming more and more interested in Oncology.

I also found myself a doctor thesis. It is about dystonia patients that develop Parkinson symptoms after receiving Deep-Brain-Stimulation. I have lots of videos of about 100 Patients that I have to score. Part 2 of the thesis is, finding the "sweet spot" of the electrodes that causes these symptoms.

Currently I am helping working in the hospital here in Würzburg on the Corona-Station. Luckily we do not have too many patients in Würzburg. There are 20 patients on the station I am working on and 15 in the ICU. But currently the numbers are going back in Germany so that soon maybe some regulations can be lifted. I hope you and the entire staff will stay healthy! Wishing you all the Best!!! There are interesting times ahead. “

Nicholas Kuhn (K09-10) let us know that his e-mail address has changed. As this was just before the deadline I have not heard back on any news from him.

HOLLAND

Peter Barker (K65-68) had enjoyed reading The Framlinghamian for the last few years, but wrote to the President saying that he understood how much it costs to produce and send. As not an active member he said he can therefore easily just read the on-line version.

I asked him for an updated from Holland “Life goes on as normal. Like most families, we are enjoying our “children” and friends staying here over the Christmas period. We have just survived the annual New Year’s blitz, when the normally socially responsible Dutch replicate all-out war with fireworks. Many go completely mad and spend a fortune, some on illegally importing very large fireworks/bombs. I am sure that the pros and cons for these types of celebrations are voiced in a similar manner in many other countries.

A couple of weekends ago, my wife, Ida, and I spent a few days in Paris. When we booked the trip, we didn’t know that there would be a general strike. The journey to and from Paris on the Thalys was excellent (up to 290 kph), but in Paris itself, the Metro hardly worked and the traffic was always at a standstill so we walked everywhere, every day, a free fitness work-out in the rain. Despite that, we had a very nice time visiting some of the places that we already knew, but also several new ones. Just the Leonardo da Vinci exhibition at the Louvre made it worthwhile. After this exhausting journey, I said to my wife, “well, we will always have Paris”, which she didn’t appreciate.”

HONG KONG

William Cheung (R96-02) received an invite to join Principal, Louise North and Martin Myers-Allen for drinks when they were planning to visit HK in February 2020. Sadly this trip had to be cancelled.

Jonathan Hancock (S77-86) on 12 February contacted me with the sad news that his distinguished father Andrew had died. I copied the news to the **President, Norman Porter and Richard Sayer**. Richard responded saying that Andrew was his house captain at Fram “*and was one of those who could exercise quiet authority whilst also being inspirational.*”

Jonathan said “*Currently we are planning a very small family cremation and then a larger Memorial Service in June, we are looking at the 19th (his birthday) but yet to confirm. I will certainly keep you all informed once we have confirmed the date and venue.*”

Chris Hall (G62-69) sent through his traditional Christmas letter and said that he met **John Mathias (G65-69)** who was at Fram with him. He reported *“Fortunately Hong Kong got quieter in December. I went to see an exhibition of my Chinese ladies’ robes and accessories in the Liang Yi Museum today with some friends. They had planned to invite me to lunch but cancelled it for fear of a demonstration in the central business district. As things turned out there was no demonstration so after the museum visit they suggested lunch again. However, I had to decline as a young friend, a student at Oxford, had had to go into hospital and I had promised to visit him. Unfortunately he will still be in hospital on Christmas Day tomorrow so I will visit him again. This is bad luck as he came to Hong Kong to spend Christmas with his family and spent half of his holiday in a hospital bed. “*

Chris was unfortunately not able to meet up with the planned visit of the Principal on February 18 and 19 as he was working both days and already had commitments for both evenings including a visit by **Tim Kestin (G60-69)**.

Ian Howard (S58-62) has as usual spent the year moving around the world. He spent Christmas in Meghalaya (India) before returning to HK till March. He therefore got involved with trying organise OF events to mark both the visit of the school Principal and the visit of the David & Ann Copeman, both of which sadly didn’t happen. The last I heard was that he and **John Ting (G05-09)** were considering a pre-Christmas gathering.

At the end of May in an email to Chris Shaw he said *“I should be in South of France at this time of the year but the virus has intervened and fingers now crossed for October and a deferred departure! Nobody quite understands why but, as you probably know, HK has (so far) escaped lightly from the ravages of COVID. However, these have been more than compensated by the energy of our rioters as they move into the next (final?) stage of HK's autonomous existence.”*

Jenkin Leung (K79-84) was in touch in late 2019 with Martin Myers-Allen in preparation for his planned trip to HK and that of David Copeman, both of which were subsequently cancelled. Jenkin is married to **Jane (Kersley P82-84)**.

John Ting (G05-09) sent out an email in February inviting HK OFs to meet at the Hong Kong Club on 18 March. My thanks to him for all his work on this which came to nothing in the end.

Eddie Wong (G97-02) heard about the visit of the Principal and Martin Myers-Allen and looked forward to meeting them in February. It was also an opportunity to add Eddie’s email to the Directory.

Robert Wong (xx) was in touch with Chris Shaw at the end of July 2020. “Thank you for thinking of us during this critical time. After I left Framlingham College, I moved to Canada in the 80’s for University, and worked in Canada till 1996. I moved back to Hong Kong and joined Swire Group in Dec 1996. Time flies, I have been back to HKG 24 years.”

INDIA

Maaz Dehlvi (17-19) was in contact with Martin Myers-Allen and wanted some advice about obtaining a 'TIER 2' general work visa in the UK. Martin referred him on to Catherine Cranmer at the College. He also provided an updated email address. He told Martin that he would love to see him in India and show him around.

He provided an update just after the deadline which we have just managed to include “*As you have asked for an update on what I have been doing after finishing the college, I was playing cricket in Birmingham Premier League in Birmingham and on the other hand I was looking for a job in Birmingham and in other cities as well but unfortunately I didn't get any job and my visa expired so I had to come back to India. I did get a job in Finborough School as a Sports Assistant but they couldn't offer me the visa because of some reason. So I had to leave that as well and had to come back to India. I am still looking for a job in UK thorough 'Indeed' and some other websites but can't find one. If you know someone who can help me in this can you please let me know, I would be very grateful to you.*”

*I have been in touch with most of my batch mates after school and some of them came to India in their gap year and I met them and went with them to some places which was a very good experience for me and I hope for them as well & there is one OF called **Conal Judge (K17-18)** he also came to India with his Family and I met all of them and gave them a good tour of my city Delhi. Now, I am waiting for Mr. Myers Allen and other OF's to come to India. “*

NEW ZEALAND

Richard Bearne (K59-62) posted the following message on OF Overseas Facebook page : *Hi to any OFs in New Zealand, I am meeting up with **Mike Green (K 59-63)** when he gets to Auckland on 10th February unfortunately he will be leaving on 12th. However if there is any other OF who would like to meet up please respond.*

I sent an email to all OFs on North Island, although some a fair way from Auckland, asking whether they were up for joining them. Mike lives fairly close to me in Devizes, Wiltshire.

I'm delighted to say that Richard, Mike and **Katherine Jackson (P86-91)** did manage to meet up and Richard sent the following note/photo the day after “*We eventually got to meet up in Auckland! Mike Green's brother was unable to come as he had to return to the UK, however there was much laughter telling tales of our time at Fram! Lovely to meet Katherine, who had much in common with my wife both being teachers. Katherine is in favour of having a proper OF meeting later in the year, perhaps in Rotorua or Taupo. Hopefully the pictures will be suitable for the magazine with left to right Katherine, me, Mike, my wife Sarah.*”



Katherine Jackson (P86-91) gave a brief update saying she is an Associate Principal of a local primary school and thus will be working in the daytime but would be happy to meet up in the evening after work.

David Newson (S54-63) in January 2020 was in the UK catching up with family and friends including OFs. He said *“We have caught up with several OFs of my generation including my older brother **John Newson (S52-60)**, **John Odell (S58-63)**, **Chris Aps (S59-63)**, and **Mike McGuire (K54-63)**. John and Kathy Odell came to Nutfield, Surrey for lunch - we had a good catch up on our musical past at Fram. I am meeting Michael McGuire for lunch later this week at Peterborough. Frances and I are flying back to NZ on Sunday.”*

Whilst he would be back home in Taranaki by February he felt the five hour drive to Auckland was a bit too much to catch up with Mike and Chris. He did suggest an OF North Island dinner, mentioning that one had been held 40 years ago in Taupo.

He subsequently sent the following selfie of him and Mike in Peterborough



On his return, David was back in touch with an obituary for **David Juby (K46-54)** a fellow colleague who had recently passed away. He had met up a few years ago with David and Roy Farman when he was still practising. You can read the obituary elsewhere in the magazine.

Let me know if you need any more information.

Colin Tremlett (R47-55) responded my email about meeting up with **Richard Bearne and Mike Green** “*Many thanks for your email re Richard Bearne meeting Mike Green in Auckland 10th - 12th February and Richard's invitation to join them. They are near-contemporaries to my years at Fram (R47-55) but I'm approaching 84 and have mobility problems which would make the 3 hour drive to Auckland difficult so I will regretfully decline their kind invitation.*

I have recently received the latest superb edition of The Framlinghamian and would like to echo Ian Foster's appreciation for all your hard work and long hours spent keeping OFs in touch with yourself and one another.”

SINGAPORE

This was another potential stopping off point for **David Copeman (K42-49)** and his wife Ann during their world cruise. They would have been visiting Singapore on 12/13 February. I therefore contacted a number of OF in Singapore. As it turned out the cruise never visited Singapore.

Marcus Davies (G85-89) was away travelling at this time.

Sophie von Oertzen (M00-02) was also away at this time.

SOUTH AFRICA

Mike Bullock (R55-59) sent his usual excellent Christmas message filled with news about him and his family. Here is an edited version *“Well: that just about sums up our situation as I write this edition of Bullock Moos. As both Wray and I have been recovering from knee operations this year we have done very little “been there, done that and got the tee shirt”.*

However we are well after our operations.

I had a knee revision in January which has taken a good eight months from which to completely recover, although I was sufficiently mobile for the caring role that I was about to fulfil. I gave up bowls for 6 weeks.

Wray had her knee replacement at the end of October and is about halfway through her convalescence. She can manage most things but cannot drive yet as she has insufficient bend in the knee. In the early days of recovery I found out what housework and caring was all about, not forgetting looking after the garden as well. What I soon discovered is that housework is never done.

So from the knee operations we have had we have “been there, done that” and we think we qualify for the tee shirt!

*In between the hospital interventions we were able to get away to Whiskey Creek. Now those who have been there know that Stephen organizes some entertainment for one evening and this trip was no exception. It was arranged to celebrate Allan’s 50th and coincided with a visit from Canada by Eric (Mike’s sister’s son) and his partner Jackie, and called the **BIG 50th ‘oppie skopie’** (feeling thankful) music theme fancy dress.*



Pictured from the left are Jackie, Eric, Fiona, Daniel, Claire, Catharine, Haanh, Allan, Wray, Stephen and Mike.



For Christmas which will be held at Allan and Catharine's in addition to the families there will Gordon and Jenny Geddes from Zimbabwe (Fiona's parents), Catherine's sis-ter Liz, husband Matt and family from Ireland, Fiona's sister Alison from Oz, daughter Tyler from America plus Matt's parents from Natal. Wow that's a big family Christmas.

*For 2020 nothing is planned...yet. Let's get better first.
Love to all, Mike and Wray.*

At the beginning of January 2020 I contacted Mike about the impending visit of **David Copeman (K42-49)** and his wife on their world cruise, which was planned to be visiting Cape Town on 31 March/1 April. Mike immediately wrote out to all OFs in South Africa and took the trouble to post invites to a few who were not on email contact. Sadly no one was available to meet them for various reasons which you can read later.

In February he was back in touch again to say that 2020 had not started too well on the health front. Last week when lifting a hot kettle he felt something go in his shoulder which has been giving him trouble in the past, not serious enough for doctors attention. He saw him late last week and said that he should go for an x-ray and a sonar which he did. *"Unsurprisingly really he pronounced that it was "buggered" so I will now see a specialist on Feb 24th. I had arthritis in my hips and knees so it is comes with the territory that its up in my shoulder too. I am ambidextrous fortunately but I did notice that I was favouring my left hand on general things. I normally play bowls with my left hand, but did change to using my right when my left hip and knee were replaced with no change to my game but about 3 months ago I tried playing with my right hand with disastrous results."*

On 17 March David Copeman advised Mike that the rest of their cruise had sadly been cancelled and that they were currently in the Indian Ocean en route from Fremantle to Southampton. On 31 March Mike heard the news that the Queen Mary II has docked in Durban to take on supplies.

Jack Clayton (G2017), Simeon Smit (R2017) and Sarah Grinyer (M2017) were OFs who Mike managed to track down via old fashioned letter and for whom we now have an email address.

Gareth Obery (G2013) said how pleased he was to hear from Mike *“I actually matriculated from Hilton College but spent time on exchange at Framlingham. You are more than welcome to update my details as I thoroughly enjoyed my time there and remain in contact with my exchange partner. I am currently at the University of Cape Town in my final year of medical school with plans to enrol in a surgical program once I have finished my community service years. I still regularly chat with **Charlie Bullen (G09-14)**, who was my exchange partner. Thanks for reaching out!”*

Adam Phillips (G78-83) apologised that he couldn't help Mike organise a lunch for David's visit. *“Unfortunately, I cannot assist with organising a lunch for David. Although I am based in Cape Town, I have taken on a beef project in Harrismith (Free State) and will out of town a great deal. As those dates fall on a Tuesday and Wednesday, I don't think I am the right person to assist. It might be that I am around, so please keep in touch. I have cc in **Kat Maine (K84-89)**, as he is also working on the same project, although he is Joburg based. “*

SPAIN

Ian Foster (K46-53) sent a nice note just before Christmas and unfortunately we have not met up in England this year due to the pandemic cancelling all our meetings

THAILAND

Michael Regan (M77-79) was briefly in touch at the turn of the year when we discussed the situation in HK and the visit by the Principal. Michael had been in touch with one OF in Thailand but he was busy renovating condominiums.

USA

Jules Arthur (K75-84) has been active on Facebook throughout the year travelling all over the world.

Michael Blake (K72-76) was an absolute star in coming across to the UK for the memorial service for contemporary **Richard Jenkinson (K69-76)**. He flew in attended and saw his way home to Washington DC, in a matter of 60 hours. He reported *“**Charlie Blackmore (K65-75)** was in attendance and he kindly invited me to lunch and what resulted in a stay over at his country house. The man has and is continuing to lead an adventure filled life, having written two books of his exploits and I am sure there will be another in the making. I was thinking he would make a fascinating lecture guest at Fram, with a*

question and answer follow up for the boys and girls. “ [He has given an after dinner talk before in London]

Rosie Bullen (M06-11) graduated from the Manhattan School of Music and sent the following update “*I am writing to thank you and the OF Society for your incredible support over the past two years during my studies and to let you know that I have now completed my Masters degree at the Manhattan School of Music with Latin honours summa cum laude. This has been a life changing experience, full of highs and lows (right to the very end!) and something I would not have been able to achieve without the support of the OF Society.*

I returned to the UK in the middle of March because of the Corona Virus outbreak where I subsequently completed the remainder of the course online: this was not how I hoped to finish. However I am intending to return in the fall where I hope to have a belated in person graduation ceremony as well as a celebratory recital.

My next step is to return to New York on a three-year artists visa, which I am in the process of applying for and, if approved, I hope to be moving back during the autumn if conditions allow. Before the virus I was building up a series of gigs and connections across the city having performed at The 55 Bar in Greenwich Village as well as Dizzy’s Jazz Club at the Lincoln Centre. Jazz is at the heart of everything that happens in New York and I have been so inspired by the people I’ve met from all across the world who have helped make this exciting city my new base.

Though New York is going to be my new home I am still very much planning to be a prominent presence in the UK Jazz scene. I recently released an EP with my vocal trio Threebop in March 2020 and we have had some great reviews from UK jazz critics. Most excitingly I have just been nominated for Newcomer of the Year from the UK Parliamentary Jazz Awards 2020; although I have no idea what form the awards ceremony will take this year!!

My next endeavour is to record an album of my own original music, which I have been working on with my band in New York with the support of my incredible mentors Theo Bleckmann and Jo Lawry. I’m really excited about this and I hope I will be able to get back to live gigs as soon as possible. If there is any opportunities that the school might like me to come and sing at please let me know and I would also be very happy to hold some musical workshops when the term begins again and things get back to normal.”

Niall Foster (G73-75) posted this lovely piece on his Facebook page back in January 2020 “*Well I finally had my 15 minutes of fame and fortune! Last night at 10.15 an EF 0 Tornado blowing at 80 mph went through our back yard. I was watching TV and heard the noise. I opened our back curtain to see our back fence waving like a flag and my Barbecue with its cover like a sail take off from the back porch and soar through the air onto the driveway.*

I walked around the yard in the darkness with my flashlight trying to assess the damage. I went to bed at I am thinking about all the work I had to do the next morning. We lost quite a few roof shingles, parts of the porch railing on the two of the upstairs porches were in my vegetable gardens, six of our fence sections in the back were down, the barbecue became airborne and flew from the porch to the driveway, quite a few of the downspouts on the gutters are damaged, two of our chimney caps and the back chimney

is damaged, the tree between our house and the neighbors came down and took out part of their roof, and one of our arborvitae trees was toppled, other than that everybody is unhurt.

We awoke this morning to the sound of chainsaws, an even more depressing sound!

Then a miracle happened.

At 8.30 the parents of Fiona's best friend at high school (6 years ago) were at our back door with two chain saws, people from the neighborhood joined us and by 11 am our debris was cleared. Then it got better as our peeps moved on to clear another 6 of our neighbor's yards finishing around 3 pm. We moved from Armageddon to neat piles on the road side. Tomorrow we will deal with the insurance companies (we took over 50 photos) but I realized that we do not need any politicians promising to make America great, we are already great because we have peeps. People who identified by their first names and the neighborhood street they came from, teachers who work with my wife and people who we have not seen for several years who decided we needed help, then when they fixed us up, moved on to neighbors who they did not know.

The local TV stations all had shots of our peeps helping Peeps tonight, I even saw myself hauling limbs and trunks of trees.

An awful depressing situation became a joyous celebration of people helping people simply because they could. Thank you to them all, we are humbled and grateful for your gift.”

Edgar McKean (G65-66) was briefly in touch from New Hampshire.

Bryan Pearson (S45-47) regularly keeps in touch as our representative in the wonderful islands of Hawaii. In December 2019 he and Celestine were just back from Tahiti after a 13 night cruise from Honolulu to Nuku Hiva in the Marqueses, Moorea, Bora Bora and Papeete, on Norwegian Jewel. The next possible cruise was in April, 15 nights from Fort Lauderdale to Southampton, to spend a few days with the family at Mildenhall AFB, then flying back. This cruise was cancelled.

In April he reported that they were doing OK in Hawaii “*having younger folks available to do the grocery shopping, although we do venture out occasionally to buy odds and ends. We have now been advised to wear masks when we do leave the house and, of course, adhere to the social distancing and hand washing regime, also sanitising door knobs, toilet handles etc. They are being very strict on Kauai, setting up road blocks, and actually arrested a tourist the other day for not staying in isolation, but things are fairly loose here.*”

In June Bryan had been in touch with **Nick Carlton (G63-70)** who had been “*marooned in Ipswich*”. In Hawaii they were “*just hunkered down waiting for the virus to go away. Masks are mandatory, to enter stores or offices, but apart from that we can travel freely, except overseas. The restriction on flying to the outer islands was lifted yesterday, but there is a long form that has to be completed for each leg i.e. leaving Honolulu and again at the other end when returning. Our Governor (Ige) keeps making ridiculous rules, and sits in his office throwing darts at a calendar to determine what restrictions can be lifted and when !*”

Steve Pinney (K56-59) was in touch at Christmas to say how much he enjoyed reading the Overseas Bag. A couple of days before Christmas they had a little snow on the ground and lovely sunny days (a bit different from the floods in England).

He wasn't in contact with any OF's in America, but was in touch with **Pat Rogers (R56-60)** who lives in France. He said "*we were going to see if we, including **Stewart Birt (S56-61)** and **Wilfred Rolfe (S53-59)** (who we could not track down) could attend the 2018 lunch at the college for members of our vintage - but unfortunately Stewart died and also my brother **Alastair (K63-67)** was not in England at that time so we did not make it - my cousin **David Pinney (G57-64)** attended and much enjoyed the event especially the tour of the college.*

I have now been retired for five years after running my own shipbroker business, a very cyclical market with ship owners hardened to boom or bust freight rates necessitating deep pockets or forgiving banks and eternal optimism!

We spend the summers in Connecticut and winters at our house in Venice Florida, miss skiing but make up for it with golfing, kayaking and sailing both racing and cruising; have sailed most of the Eastern seaboard from Nova Scotia to Key West including Bermuda and the Bahamas."

He sent this great photo of him with my idea of heaven - lobster and chilled white wine.

He subsequently added "*Wilfred Rolfe was at Fram, 56 - 59 or 60, he was a farmers son and their farm was Squirrels Hall, Walsham Le Willows, near Bury Saint Edmunds, Suffolk, he myself, Stewart Birt, Pat Rogers, and Dicky Newman were all school buddies. Dicky died when quite young of asthma related illness, he used to have asthma attacks at school - did not stop us from smoking!*

Having not been in touch with Stewart since being best man at his wedding, I contacted him again after his brother John died (John and I used to meet up in Hong Kong when he was in the Gurkhas and I was in the Merchant Navy) I was shocked to hear of his death. I have to thank the O.F. Society and their web site listing O.F.'s for enabling me to get in touch with both Pat and Stewart again enabling us to inform each other what we had been up to during the forty five years since we had last been in contact!"

Richard Rowe (S65-74) usually spends a fair amount of his time travelling the world advising companies but the pandemic has stopped that for the moment. In April he said "*We are all doing our best to work from home, including our boys who are all home from school and college. Needless to say, all my international travel has been postponed. Hope you are all staying safe and well. My eldest has set-up a "9-hole" pitch and putt (though not much putting with the state of our grass!) So keeping us amused in some off moments.*



The weather is great; but the authorities have completely shut down Fort Myers Beach and chased all the vacationers away. We are not allowed any new vacationers until end of June.”

In May eagle eyed Richard spotted that India were mourning a hero <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-52787972> and that this was apparently the guy that beat **Norman Borrett (S31-36)** in the Olympic Finals in 1948. He also reported that the weather is starting to warm up and get more humid. He was surprised they had got so late into May without really needing to rely on air-conditioning *“Just great to open up the house in the morning to a cool breeze (cool in Florida means less than 75F)”*

David Copeman (K42-49) World Cruise

At the end of 2019 David let me know that he and Ann were booked on the Queen Mary “for another and possibly last world cruise leaving Southampton on 10 January 2020. The itinerary was due to be as follows :

Lisbon	13 Jan
Messina	16
Haifa	19/20
Muscat	01 Feb
Colombo	05
Penang	10
Port Kelan, Malaysia	11
Singapore	12/13
Hong Kong	18/19
Darwin	26
Whitsunday I.	01 Mar
Brisbane	03
Sydney	05/06
Melbourne	08
Adelaide	10
Busselton	13
Perth	14
Mauritius	22
Reunion	23
Durban	27
Port Elizabeth	29
Cape Town	31/01 Apr
Namibia	04
Tenerife	13
Funchal	14

& thereafter Southampton disembark on 18 Apr.

I agreed to get in contact with OFs in the following ports of call :

Penang
Singapore
Hong Kong
Brisbane
Sydney
Melbourne
Perth
Cape Town

As a result, OFs were lined up to meet David & Ann in Hong Kong, Brisbane, Sydney and Perth with apologies received from numerous OFs in other cities.

Of course in reality the pandemic struck and the ship never even visited the far east and therefore the meeting in Hong Kong had to be cancelled. As you will have read earlier OFs were able to greet them in Brisbane, Sydney and Perth as the virus seemed to follow them around the world. A huge thanks to those who did meet up with them and all those who attempted to.

The following are few of the updates I received from David along the way :

1 February - as you are probably already aware the dreaded virus struck again, this time with Cunard deciding, in line with other cruise lines and FCO advice, to give Hong Kong a miss. Very disappointing all round but particularly for the residents and the local economy.

2 February - currently just exiting Muscat. A good trip so far. Especially the previous stop, Dubai, where met by an old friend and very well looked after. But to OF matters. Most regrettably HK, thanks to corona virus is a no no as far as most cruise lines, including Cunard, are heeding FCO advice. Ian Howard is aware. Bob Holland in Penang is waiting for an eye op. so have decided not to give him an additional concern by having to entertain us. Must now attend to your Aussie intros which will hopefully be virus free!

6 February – Have just left Colombo, next stop Phuket.

16 February - sorry not to have kept you fully posted. Coronavirus responsible for cancellation of the entire Far East programme and we've been continuously on board since leaving Colombo weeks ago! Happily will be meeting up with the Brisbane and Perth OFs and Colin in Sydney. Currently in Indian Ocean south of Java and north of Australia.

6 March – wrote to Neville Marsh - Thanks to you all for a most enjoyable and memorable, if fleeting, visit. Too bad an afternoon ships departure ensured there was no time to sightsee though ANZAC Square was an impressive introduction to Brisbane's attractions.



Left to right are **Robert Craig (K55-59)**, **Neville Marsh (S53-61)**, Bev Rutter, Carolyn Craig, Alison Marsh, Ann and **David Copeman (K42-49)**

7 March – wrote to Colin Lipman - Your and Lexie's splendid company more than made up for - despite every effort - those absences. Never mind the sun shone and Ann joins me in thanking you both and for even escorting us back to the ship or very nearly so - it was only a few yards beyond the terminal entrance – see picture below with Queen Mary 2 in the background.



17 March - while still on world cruise and sent this message to Peter Hollins - Firstly Peter our thanks for what was a truly memorable and comprehensive tour of both city and vineyards not forgetting that wonderful view of the Swan River from Kings Park. Visiting your spacious residence was the icing on the cake. The weather was also kind to us. The heavens opened in Fremantle later on so hope your golf course also got a good soaking.

Further dampening news of a different kind after you kindly returned us to QM2. Bright and early on Sunday morning the captain announced the rest of the cruise had been cancelled and apart from refuelling in Mauritius with no one allowed ashore next stop Southampton. The rest of Sunday spent organising onward flights/hotels etc for those persuaded to leave the ship and leaving around 350 of us who refused but were obliged to sign waiver forms. A further day's stay in port was negotiated to complete the repatriations.

You must have wondered about our non-appearance from Fremantle harbour! Not exactly on iron rations. Catering still first class but venues reduced to the main restaurant, no pub, no entertainment other than the TV etc. and shopping outlets closed. Still have our cabin steward who looks after us well. Considering so few passengers and restrictions on those crew etc. allowed to disembark the ship appears overstaffed - but not in the right places! Don't suppose Cunard prepared to shell out for Suez C transit so

what looks like a rather tortuous routing via the Cape will only be saving about 5 days on our original schedule.

Must take a positive attitude but not before once again thanking you for such a memorable day. Hope the first lesson was delivered without hesitation or repetition!

17 March – to Mike Bullock in South Africa - Your suspicion confirmed. Rest of cruise cancelled. Now in Indian Ocean en route from Fremantle to Southampton. Saw Robert Craig/Neville Marsh in Brisbane, Colin Lipman in Sydney and Peter Hollins in Perth; all plus wives so more than thankful for the Australian OF introduction via Chris E. All most enjoyable.

16 April – The finally arrive back safely in Southampton and disembark!

As post script in early August David writes “Apart from keeping the car battery up by a weekly local drive we’ve stayed very much at home with plenty still to do in the garden even if I have to labour in short bursts these days. We are classed as shielded with me further classified as extremely vulnerable; presumably on account of the pacemaker. Whilst one should never say never, the QM2 adventure will probably represent our last cruise which is a shame but at 88 and Ann not too far behind maybe the odd week-end away in, say, Norfolk would be the inevitable but hopefully pleasurable option not to mention seeing you again either in Fram or at the annual dinner whenever that may be.”