

**RICHARD ROWE (S 65-74)** writes: As the new Overseas Bag Editor, I give my warmest greetings to all OF's. I just hope that I will be able to keep up the warmth, friendship and high standard of work that James and the former Editors have provided. As a way of introduction, you may have noticed that James has insisted on printing far too much in the last two magazines about my exploits in the BT Global Challenge yacht race. It has been an exciting 18 months away from work; my only regret is not having met up with all the overseas OF's in the various countries on route . Now it is back to reality with my feet firmly back on dry land (well, almost!).

I think I have the distinction of being the first overseas Overseas Bag Editor as I compose this Mag's Bag from Hong Kong. I have provided an address in UK for convenience and continuity while my Hong Kong ventures are still in their infancy. However, you are very welcome to write to me directly in Hong Kong (see Hong Kong letters) and, if I move, I will ensure that all mail is forwarded to my next location. I also have an e-mail address for those that prefer ([richardrowe@compuserve.com](mailto:richardrowe@compuserve.com)). I look forward to much enjoyable correspondence.

## Australia

Tom Saul reported that he had received a letter from his contemporary, **A E BEST (21-24)**, who wrote prior to Christmas. Dicky, as he was known at school, said he had given up driving on account of bad sight. He reckoned he had driven over 300,000 miles in the area close to the Burma border and half this distance in the USA and considerable amounts in New Zealand, Europe, Canada and West Indies.

Toowoomba has just had its annual carnival with floats numbering almost 100. It had been a spectacular display of colour with nearly 100,000 people enjoying the Jacaranda Flame trees and many others.

He had recently undergone an operation and appears to have made a good recovery. He was obviously proud that his grandson had won a good degree in Brisbane and subsequently obtained an excellent job.

Address: 35 Clark Street, Toowoomba, Queensland.

**D J MACBRIDE (40-43)**, who passed on his seasonal good wishes to Tom Saul, said that he had very little news to impart as the only Fram news had been passed on to the Editor earlier in the year. Jim's brother **DAVID (38-42)** had written to him to say that during the year, he had met up with **PETER SIMPSON (K32-40)** who had been staying with **PETER BAILEY (34-36)**.

Jim said that at one time there had been about 14 OF's in Victoria and he thought there would be as many again in New South Wales and Queensland.

He had decided to buy a new car, a Peugeot 306. If it lasts as long as their 504 (15 years), it would see them over their driving days!

They were looking forward to spending their first Christmas in their new apartment.  
Address: 15/319 Macquarie Street, South Hobart 7004, Tasmania.

**LEN EVANS, OBE, (42-48)** wrote in January making amends in that he joined the Society at long last - even the Treasurer thought he was a member! Dollar notes made it across the air and went winging back to Pearl Beach where the Editor had a UK friend spending A\$!

Explaining why he had not contacted OF friends on a visit to the UK heard about

through an Upton-upon-Severn wine merchant, Len continues:

"We did a whirlwind tour of England and Scotland, viz: London, Devon, Cornwall, Oxford, London, Scotland, Manchester, London, Suffolk (not Fram?), Essex, London (?again!) and Berks - all in 8 days. This was a Petaluma promotion. Petaluma is a very high quality producer and is the brain child of Brian Croser, the present Chairman of the Australian Wine Federation. I joined them as Chairman in 1979 and we took the company to 80,000 cases by 1992. Since then, through acquisition, they have climbed to 300,000 cases plus with more to come. I am still involved as Chairman Emeritus or 'Uncle' though I sold out in 1992 to concentrate on Rothbury. We got Rothbury to 650,000 cases before Fosters made their hostile bid in 1996. They have not made it flourish since.

"I am now concentrating on Evans Family Wines (2,500 cases to 7,000 last year of very good stuff) and Evans Wine Company, a negociant exporting mostly to the US, up to 50,000 cases this year. All good fun. Will probably build another winery, maybe two, within the next 3 years. No intention of retiring; I suppose all I really want to do is paint!

"That, the consultancies comprising Petaluma, Qantas, Hamilton Island and Liquorland/Vintage Cellars and the speeches occupy my professional time. Still do lots for the industry, judging, etc and charity. This February again we will raise (with AAP our wire service) a million dollars in a day, making A\$9m (Len puts a second 'm' but this seems to be an error) so far. All to very good causes with no deductions for expenses, etc.

"That's about it, up to date. My eldest daughter, Sally, has had her first, a daughter Emily Rose. Sally is Marketing Manager for McWilliams Wines and her husband Stephen Waterson (another Pom) is Editor of Time (Pacific edition). The other two are not married. Jodie is a restaurateur in the Australian Alps and Toby an antique dealer who is opening a new shop this year in the Hunter with me as a partner.

"Vintage is on at the moment. Great weather this week, 80°-90° all week but violent storms last week and too much rain after months of not enough. A very hot spell pre-Christmas when temps were up to 106° over 4 days damaged both foliage and grape and shot things down for a while. I am leaving all my crop out at the moment looking for another week or two of this weather to fully ripen and build up flavours. Made a very interesting rich, round Pinot Noir last year; it is a very difficult variety but it's a great bonus if one does occasionally fluke it. So I want to risk it again this year. If it looks like rain and it is violent rain at this time of the year, then it will be hell for leather. Wish us well.

"The Sydney Show next week - actually the RAS of NSW. I have been Chairman of Judges since 1977 and involved as a judge since 1964. Janice Robinson, the delightful lady who writes so well and performs so charmingly on TV is our guest judge. An old friend; we'll have fun!"

Address: Loggerheads, Palmers Lane, Pokolbin 2320, NSW.

**DR KENNETH MACKENZIE (45-53)** wrote in December to **DUDLEY HOLLAND (R45-52)** who has kindly given us permission to publish most of the letter as we know there are a few who are keen to hear news of Kenneth. He opens his letter thus:

"It provoked many reminiscences of cold winter afternoons sloshing around in mud pursuing a slippery piece of leather in company of a splendid group of hot, steamy, sweaty youths. Laddie on the touchline offering gentle encouragement to his forwards and Baly rasping out abuse to the Backs lasts long in my mind. And then I turn to summer, after the exams in 1952 when a certain fast bowler is bending over on the Pavilion steps protruding a rounded posterior in penance for dropping catches and catching a tennis ball square on his spectacles as he peers back, anxiously awaiting its impact. He then had to apply to the Rev Rupert K for funds to repair said spectacles. It was Chris Ford who shied that ball and Dudley

H the target. Fortunately the desire to inflict hurt usually affected the accuracy of the throwing but not on this occasion. (Dudley elaborates: This refers to the 'pavi' roof game, when after exams about 10 of us would throw a tennis ball on to the pavilion (cricket, old one) roof near the central apex. One would throw the ball up and call out a number (1-10) and that person would have to guess which side of the apex the ball was coming down (the roof was too high to be able to see). After 3 drops or misses, the penalty was to bend over on the steps and the other 9 would have a throw from 10 yards at your backside. Unfortunately I bent over too far and the ball came between my legs and smashed my glasses).

"I do remember playing against Carl Daniels who bowled very full length for Ipswich School and it swung away from the bat.

"I have met only one OF since coming back here in 1970 - **JOHN STILES (44-50)** appeared out of nowhere on account of one of his children being in the Antipodes. We talked long into the night and he was a most welcome guest.

"Since I last met you (40 odd years ago), I went to Cambridge for three years then to Guys and I do remember Guy Hartfall (Dudley explains he was at Guys with Kenneth and last summer Dudley had to play him in a golf competition at Woodbridge; he is a urological surgeon at Ipswich) and during these years I went to the School and played in various OF matches - mainly cricket - because I packed up Rugged at Cambridge after a knee injury. I went into the RN for three years but met no-one there - one's acquaintances were mainly confined to Shipmates as I spent almost all the time on Ark Royal. I married and had three children and one by one they returned to the UK. I score 4 grandchildren all under four. I married my second wife 18 years ago.

"I practice the same stuff that Dad did (like farming, it runs in the family) and in our spare time from work and gardening, we play golf. I have never been as good as my Father was - I had my first lesson from S G Rush at Woodbridge and knew Les Jones pretty well. I got down to 6 but am now 9 and going out fast. Woodbridge I love and envy you your membership there. We have played a number of courses around Australia and generally find those in Melbourne as the best and those in Queensland as the most artificial and U.S.-like having a lot of wet bunkers. I work in a little South West town called Albany and take my clubs for a ride for there is a delightful Links here with billows and wind and it reminds me of Scotland.

"I do recall my Father mentioning that he had peered into the Holland ear (to diagnose deafness). It is particularly poignant as it was one of the last things he did before he died in 1966.

"If you see Norman Borrett or any Masters of our era please remember me to them.

"I do recall the shoe hitting the light bulb but had forgotten that it had been propelled by a fast bowler I still have a giggle about it (Dudley explains: this refers to the time we were down at Seaford College in the Easter Holidays with the Suffolk Schools hockey team. We were in a large dormitory and it was time for the lights to be put out and, by overwhelming vote, they decided that I, as the furthest away from the switch had to put the light out. So I picked up my bed neighbour's shoe and threw it at the single bulb in the middle of the room (no lampshade) and scored a direct hit. End of story, especially as it was our last night of three there.)

"I do not get much to Suffolk these days. It was fine when my Mother lived there but she passed on some 10 years ago and Ipswich Town then lost me as an active supporter. When next I travel I must make sure that I contact John G or James R for advance intelligence on Suppers and things for I would love to see well known faces again.

"We last met 44 years ago in Southwold for your 21st (Dudley says it should be 46 years!), you were attended by **BRUCE MICKLEWRIGHT'S** sister Valerie and I was plotting how to snatch her away and take her home. I was thwarted but bear no grudge!

"We are going to medical conference instead of skiing which will be in the vicinity of Vail or Aspen in Colorado. However, the skilifts are open at lunchtime and skiing there in February is unequalled by any other resort I have been to in the country. The scenery is better in Switzerland and New Zealand but the snow is nowhere near so good. Canada is just too cold, Scotland too wet, Argentina too dirty."

Address: 43 Richardson Street, West Perth, 6005.

In a letter to James in February, **PETER RISK (R 55-60)** writes:

"I certainly envy you your trip to USA, seems very interesting, the Americans on the east coast do like their boats and there is so much more history in the eastern States than in the west for anyone interested in the early days of European settlement. In a lot of ways it is similar to Australia, over in the West we are considered to be a bit uncultured and brash by those in Melbourne and Sydney. We tend to think they are a bit jealous as we beat them at most things even though our population is only about 10% of Australia. We therefore consider ourselves better!

"Sydney is in the throes of preparation for the 2000 Olympics and seems to be in a bit of a turmoil. I'm sure all will be in order in time but it dominates their lives at present. Real estate prices are reaching heights that put ordinary houses beyond the reach of ordinary people. I'm sure that Sydney will benefit from all the extra effort and money being spent and will present itself most favourably for the Games. What happens when it is all over and back to normal will be the same as in other cities that have had the Olympics or similar - normal will seem quite dull for them.

"The RM Endeavour Bark continues to make the news, for such a slow and cumbersome ship, she has proven as popular or more so than some of the glamour boats. Sail is enjoying a revival with interest covering all age groups, and the younger people are queuing up to sail on any of the 'Tall Ships'. I wonder how we will remember the larger passenger ships that are no longer with us. Having had a few trips back and forth, I can say that there really is nothing to compare to 5 to 6 weeks on board, simply enjoying oneself and calling into different ports around the world. The age of air travel tends to be very functional and rather boring, the inside of a flying aluminium tube for twenty hours or so hardly rates with evenings at sea under the stars on a warm tropical night. However, speed is essential when time is short.

In specific response to the Creasey cuttings from UK press, Peter continues:

"Your second letter referring to the cuttings from the newspapers seeking clarification. Basically the articles are correct, the tenement in question is in addition to the Bronzwing mine which Mark disposed of some time ago, this second tenement had been dormant for a while and the lease lapsed. Due to its proximity to Bronzwing, it created quite a bit of interest but has as yet to be proven. I would imagine it should be a profitable mine, but bearing in mind the price of gold has fallen and the mining costs are unknown, all that can be said for certain is that it's a very good prospect and the figures of a hundred million pounds may prove to be misleading.

"This summer the New Zealand cricket team came and played three tests. They played a lot better in the one day series and produced some very exciting finishes. They just weren't quite good enough. South Africa showed the lead in the three team competition, but in the finals Australia finished up the best team. The third test against South Africa is in its fourth day with a good chance that South Africa can get a win. What a strange game cricket is with the first test in the West Indies being cancelled due to the condition of the pitch. We always thought that cricket epitomised the fairness of sport. When you really think about it, it's the most unfair ball game of all, who wins the toss, who bowls first on a green wicket

etc.etc.!

“This year summer has for us been a good one. One or two really hot days but no long spells of searing heat. So far we have been spared any fires in the near proximity, but there has been some devastating fires in New South Wales early in the season. Until one is confronted by wildfire one can't realise just how frightening it can be. I hope we never have to face that situation. It is not all heat and fire - somewhere is bound to be flooded!

“The big news in Australia revolves around the Republic debate. The Convention gets underway in Canberra today. Some of the points and arguments being put forward are on a par with the debate dealing with 'daylight saving'! For such an important issue, there are some very amusing comments. It seems that the 'Mother Country', England, is not very interested; probably most people here are not that bothered yet. The big issue seems to be to make the event coincide with the Olympics in 2000, then we can all have a huge party. There's logic for you! And on that note I will wish you all well and sign off.”

And in a May letter, **PETER RISK (R 55-60)** continues:

“The movement towards a Republic has quietened down but I think that it will be fairly prominent in the not too distant future. It is inevitable that we shall become completely independent at some stage. If we can allow all the camps that want to “hang on at all costs” and those that want to “change whatever the cost” to have their shouting match and then get them out of the way, we stand a good chance of drawing up a fairly sound constitution to see us through the next hundred years or so. It had been hoped that the change to a republic would occur at the same time as the Olympic Games, thereby making sure of one huge party. A change of government slowed that down, so now all is focused on the games. In the west, we really don't play any significant part in the preparations for the games. I expect that we contribute financially. I get the feeling that the lead up to the Games for some of those managing to get contracts has proven most beneficial. Anyway, we shall look forward to the year 2000 in many ways.

“Autumn has been very pleasant so far this year. At long last we should be getting some significant rain. Normally we would get a summer storm or two but not this year. The days are still mild, low 20°C, very good for working outside with a lot of sunshine. Having had a few years with lower than normal winter rains and the population growing, we shall either have to change our habits or ration the water. A few years ago, water wastage was terrible. We are a lot more careful now. Reading overseas news, one gets the impression that the whole world is in need of a change regarding the climate, water usage, waste disposal, etc. I must say we are still very lucky with our conditions here and are gradually trying to rectify some of the mistakes of years gone by.

“I shall be joined this year at Christmas and New Year by my brother **DAVID**, his first trip to Australia. He has a week in Sydney and then comes to Perth by train – about 3 days' trip! A most enjoyable trip – we have done it 3 times. It is very leisurely and one gets to see the country. I'm not exactly sure of the years David was at Framlingham. He went to Brandeston Hall shortly after it opened and left Framlingham, I think in '55 – the year I started at Brandeston. In '55, my brother **JOHN** went from Brandeston to Framlingham.

“I did like the photos of past masters, centre of magazine; and I must say it was really good to see so many I recognised and seemingly in good health. It certainly brought back a few memories – all good.

“Must sign off now. All the best to you and all OF's.

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**IAN COTTINGHAM (1961-66)** sent a letter to James Ruddock in December 1997 which just missed the last Overseas Bag:

“As promised in my brief letter that I wrote while I was in England recently, enclosed is the press cutting on **LEN EVANS**. I suspect that the news in the press cutting is now 'old hat' because I have just received the latest edition of the OF magazine and notice that other correspondents from Australia have covered the matter. Nevertheless, well done Len.

“I have also seen that **ANTHONY ROSEN** has been writing a regular (monthly I think) column on EU farming matters in some of our rural newspapers. I hadn't realised he was an OF until just recently.

“It was nice to see the English countryside again after a 12 year absence - it is still as green as ever, although of course more of the countryside has now been covered under the urban sprawl in some areas.

“It is quite a contrast to us here as we are in for another drought from El Nino this summer - already the country is very parched. In fact there were some nasty bushfires around Sydney recently, sadly with two fire fighters losing their lives and several houses being lost too, plus many thousands of hectares of bush being destroyed. We hope there is not worse to come later in the summer.

“The same week I returned to Canberra from the UK I participated in the 6th Australian Masters Games which were held here in the national capital. Nearly 10,000 people competed in 32 sports. Masters Games are for competitors who are above a qualifying minimum age which varies from sport to sport - some entrants take the competition seriously, others enter just for the fun. The Masters Games concept has really taken off in popularity here in recent years and new events are added to the calendar each year. It is a great way for (dare I say it) the 'senior' generation to be more active through sport and have fun and friendship at the same time.

“I competed in the badminton event (teams and individuals) at the Masters Games with some 300 other competitors divided into three age groups and three divisions. It was very enjoyable and our team did well, finishing with a silver medal. I also did better than I expected in the individuals - I got past the first round!!

“I really enjoy badminton and play at least twice a week, plus our local competitions, to keep fit. There are several of us who also make up a team which travels to events in Victoria and NSW each year - it is usually a good weekend of competition each time, not to mention the company and meeting up with familiar faces again across the court. Our team has plans to go to the 7th Australian Masters Games in Adelaide in 1999 provided we are still capable of playing then!

“I think that badminton was available at Framlingham in the early 1960's -it was held in the old drill hall along the bottom road to the town (I've forgotten its name) but I don't remember actually playing there.

“On arrival back at work I was plunged straight back into the task of restructuring the Australian Wheat Board which seems to have been going on for ever. However, in the last few weeks we have made some significant progress towards the target of privatisation by July 1999 as Parliament finally passed the first piece of wheat marketing legislation which I had worked on in the first part of the year. The second piece of legislation is to be developed in the New Year and hopefully will be through Parliament by the third quarter of next year.

“That timetable may get disrupted if we have an early election next year because the Government, which was only elected about 20 months ago after 13 years in opposition, is in all sorts of trouble. It seems to have lost its way on some key issues and is way behind in the opinion polls even though the economy is not in bad shape.

“We are having a holiday in Queensland this Christmas. It is the first time we have been away from home for Christmas Day and we are all very much looking forward to it. I

wish you a very happy Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous 1998.  
Address: 13 Sampson Close Melba, ACT 2615, Australia

And another Christmas letter from December 1997 that just missed the last Mag.  
**PETER HOLLINS (70-75)** writes:

“Welcome to our Christmas letter. This year has been a year of construction for us in a number of ways. Firstly, the first six months was spent on the building and finishing off our new house. The roof was put on around last Christmas and we had thought that we would be moving-in in time for Easter. Little did we know! Everything took twice as long as planned; the tiler was here for six weeks, not three; the painters two weeks, not one; the plasterers two, not one. The finish to the house is excellent and we are very pleased. We had a little crisis trying to get the right paint colour - we had more sample pots than the colours in Emma's paint palette (and that's a lot!)

“We eventually moved-in in early July - I think Lyn (Sal's dad) was sorry to see us go after 16 months of tenancy - we just about cleaned out his wine cellar. It was fun to get all our possessions out of storage - like an early Christmas. The first two weeks after moving in were Perth's coldest weeks on record with night time temperatures of zero° - without any curtains or blinds in the house we thought we would freeze, but the gas fire we had built in worked brilliantly - we didn't move far from it. Since then, we have been adding to the furniture and furnishings and the house is now very comfortable. We love our main room – “zonal living” which combines our kitchen, dining area, lounge and sunken bar (the whisky miniatures fit in perfectly under the bar top).

“As Spring arrived it was time to tackle the garden. The lawns, garden bed soil and reticulation had already been laid. We used a landscaper, who in an hour or so sketched our garden and recommended a whole series of plants, shrubs, and trees in our preferred colour combination of yellow, white and dark blue (Claremont and Eagles colours!) One Saturday morning, we borrowed a truck from work and three hours later we had filled it with about 150 plants - which then took two weekends to put in. The garden is starting to look good, but we have a very alkaline soil which needs steady treatment - oh, for a gardening life!

“Emma continues to grow and flourish and we are now starting to have conversations with her. Being in the “terrible twos” we certainly have our moments with her and she keeps Debbie, her nanny, on her toes. Emma's hugely into “Bananas in Pyjamas”, “The Wiggles”, “Postman Pat” and a huge variety of other characters - the videos go on by 6.30 am for breakfast and now Sal and I can recite all the songs. We had the Moscow Circus in town in October and it was a huge hit. Emma is in a good routine and is looking forward to seeking Uncle “Dommi” at Christmas (and the presents he might bring!)

“Talking about growing, Sally and I are, hopefully, expecting the arrival of an occupant for the spare bedroom upstairs in June.

“Further in the construction stakes, I had my jaw re-constructed in November to correct my bite. My jaw was cut, spliced and extended (it is a recommended way to lose weight, 9 kgs, as one feeds with a syringe). As I write, my mouth is full of wires and plastic and my chin, lower lip, and tongue are still fairly numb due to bruising of the nerves. I am growing an impressive looking beard which almost (!) everybody says suits me.

“Work is going well. Omegatrend opened in Malaysia in October which has kept Sal very busy for several months. At AMCAP we had a very good year and are analysing a brand new automated warehouse for 1998. Exciting times.

“We, that's Sal, Emma, Sal's Dad and I, had a great holiday this year with a fortnight at Laguna Quays in far North Queensland. This is a new resort with a spectacular golf course, great accommodation, it's own beach, and various pools. Emma loved her plane flights and

now wants to fly somewhere every weekend. She actually won a nationally based competition and now has a free trip to South Australia. So when she's really bad...!

“The horse racing year wasn't the best. Anderida started the year with a spectacular last to first win on a damper track. We had planned to race her then in the winter for the softer tracks, but unfortunately she tore a tendon and will never race again. We sold her (gave her away) at auction. The same syndicate bought a yearling (now 2 years old) -she's now in training and we await the feedback from the trainers as to her potential. Hooves and fingers crossed.

“Sal, Emma and I are eagerly awaiting Dominic and Mandy's arrival to spend the Christmas fortnight with us. Emma is very concerned that the presents arrive safely! We are taking time off and look forward to having another member of the Hollins family in Perth to celebrate Christmas and the New Year.

“We wish you all a great Christmas and a very happy 1998.

Address: 32 Camborne Avenue, CITY BEACH WA 6015, Australia. Tel: (61) 089 2850002; Fax: 089 285 0006; E-mail: pholl@amcap.com.au

## **France**

**BRIAN ROSEN (40-46)** sent a short note to James Ruddock in January:

“Thanks for the cutting from the FT – Yes, the photo is of RSM Brittain. I wonder when he died – I assume he has. He was a great character, greatly feared on the parade ground, even by the Sgt. Major Instructors. His voice was easy to hear even when 500 of us were on parade. He lived on the camps (Mons O.C.S. Aldershot) and outside “office hours” was quite friendly – that was 49 years ago, so you can see that he made an impression. He took part in the film “They were not divided” (?) about a Guards Regt. In action – or did I tell you that already? Hope to be at BH on 30 May 1998.

Address: Chemin des Murieux, 38200 VIENNE. Tel: (33) 04 74 85 49 95.

**BRIAN SCRIVENER (K 48-54)** wrote in June:

“It was kind of you to invite Valmai to represent me, during my absences abroad, at the West Midland suppers that you organised. You, Jim Blythe and Peter Rowland made her feel so welcome that when she reads the Mag. she almost feels an Hon. OF!

“I honestly cannot remember the last time that I wrote to the Bag but believe that it was just after my stint in Saudi Arabia. There we spent 7½ years on the construction of the Saudi Air Force HQ building and the King Khaled International Airport in Riyadh and then various security buildings in the Eastern Province which were put to good use during the Gulf War.

“This was followed by a couple of years in Geneva and 4½ years in Algeria (I've worked for the last 15 years for the Overseas Dept. of a Swiss company). My job was specifying the equipment, analysing quotations and programmes and then carrying out the installation of three pumping stations (3 cu.m/sec each), three treatment stations and 100 km. of 2m. diameter pipeline to feed the city of Oran with drinking water. The source was the Basse Tafna, a heavily polluted river that only receives rain on odd days during three months of the winter, but the levels in it can rise by 8m in four hours as the flash flood waters arrive from the mountains. We had to take advantage of their arrival when we could and, in order to stock the water for the summer months, we used an extinct volcano crater as a reservoir for 13 million cu. m of water.

“So far, it's a "one-off" in the world because, whilst other reservoirs have been lined



with concrete or plastic, "our" Djebel Dziuou, an oval basin 1 km long by 800m. wide, was made watertight with a deep thickness of local clay, covered by layers of compacted "tuf calcaire" against cracking in the sun as the water level fell, and then protected from wave erosion by a huge rock bedding because of the winds that blow across the mountain.

"I spoke earlier of the Gulf War. The Algerians were very much "pro" Saddam Hussein and I was threatened a couple of times for being British. Then came the cancellation of the elections by the FLN when it seemed that the Islamic Fundamentalists would win and, of course, the escalation of their terrorism. Being responsible for the installations, I had remained behind during the guarantee period to solve any technical problems and to instruct the local personnel in the operation and maintenance of the equipment. I was then the only Expatriate in a community of some 380 Algerians, most of whom were good friends whilst a minority was somewhat hostile. Through the Ministry of Hydraulics and Forestry I was offered a bodyguard if I would stay on to carry out further installations. Since it was his own bodyguard who killed President Boudiaff (a former hero of the Algerian war of resistance against the French, a gentleman politician and a real hope for the saving of democracy in the country) I was rather sceptical. After the ultimatum for Expats to leave, announced at the release of the hostage French diplomats, I must say that discretion overcame valour and I left. I have since been back for a couple of short visits but confess that I kept a pretty low profile.

"I must say that it's very sad to see a country that, under French colonial rule, was the most prosperous of the African Mediterranean countries. With its exports of citrus fruits, cork, wine, etc. has now become the poorest of those countries in spite of its oil and gas resources. An Algerian friend said that the worst thing that de Gaulle did was to withdraw the French. At least, under the "colons", the Algerians had a "living" whereas now there is something like 60% unemployment!

"After that saga I thought that I could settle down to early retirement and concentrate on preparing our French holiday home that we have had for almost eleven years - a farmhouse and barn that we restored - for permanent occupation. However, a year later, I was asked to go to Lebanon to prepare a site for a new cement factory as part of the reconstruction programme after 17 years of civil war. This involved earthmoving, the construction of large under-ground service tunnels and the relocation of high-tension cables, clay slurry, oil and water pipes. During my eighteen months' involvement with this project I was privileged to see a large part of a beautiful country that I had previously visited some twenty years before (in fact just at the start of the troubles there). Our site was at Chekka, in the Christian northern part and removed from the Hezbollah/Israeli problems in the South. The region was policed by the Syrian army which is still there as an ostensibly neutral Arab peace-keeping force but which is now regarded by the Lebanese as more of an occupation force.

"I fitted in visits to Byblos and the gigantic, awe-inspiring grottos of Jeita outside Beirut. Also to Bcharre, the birthplace and museum of Khalil Gibran, author of "The Prophet"; to Bacharria with its forest of cedars of Lebanon; across to Baalbek with its fabulous temples of Jupiter and Bacchus "inter alia" and way down into the Bechaa valley, heart of Hezbollah country, to Beit-Eddine, one-time palace of the Jemayel family but now the Palace of the People. I found the Lebanese extremely hospitable - I was invited to Catholic, Orthodox and Muslim weddings but a highlight was to be an honorary member of our local fishing fleet with whom I would go out on the Med. whenever I could get a free weekend. When we returned it was a real feast of mezzes, houmus, tabouleh, fish, crabs - you name it!

"After this very hectic but exciting period I did manage to get back down to France whilst Valmai prepared for the sale of our house in Warwickshire. This latter was achieved in October '97 since when we've been here more or less permanently, apart from visits to the family in UK at New Year and Easter. Valmai goes to lessons to increase the vocabulary to

her very good French and to Line Dancing to decrease the expanding waistline brought on by the gourmet food and wine of this delightful region.

“Some four years ago I took and passed the exam to become a "chasseur" and now go shooting with my farmer neighbours. It's the opposite to England here - anyone can buy a shotgun but you have to pass a day's practical safe gun handling and a written exam (based upon conservation) before you are allowed to shoot game. Then the limit is three "pieces" in a day and only two days a week! I've also just taken a course in trapping: there's no hunting of foxes here and they, coypu and musk-rats do a great deal of damage in our Departement. I don't know what the official feeling at Fram. is these days but I can remember putting on my rugby boots to follow the local beagles.

“On the cultural side we go to local theatre productions and I am a member of the Lauzun Choral Society. We have a pretty full programme until the end of June with rehearsals and concerts each week. This weekend we performed in Miramont church with the Mevagissy Male Choir from Cornwall!

“Apart from that, our explorations, our one acre garden and the swimming pool keep us fairly busy. Which reminds me that while I was keeping an eye on the construction of a new terrace to the pool of a friend who lives about five miles from us, he had some Australian friends staying at his house. They came from Cheltenham, Sydney and when he mentioned that he was in the wine business, I asked him if he knew **LEN EVANS (42-48)**. "Know him? He's the best wine expert in Oz. I heard him speaking at the last Sydney Wine Festival and he was bloody brilliant!"

“We would love to see any OF who is in the area - we are 25km due South of Bergerac - and crack a bottle of the local wine with them.

Address: 'St. Martin', 47410 LAUZUN, France. Tel: (33) 553 94 29 67; Fax: 553 94 27 06

## **Hong Kong**

**RICHARD ROWE (S65-74)** writes:

I arrived back in Hong Kong in March 1998 after an incredible 19 months away. Eleven months of it was sailing around the world on the BT Global Challenge while the rest of the time has been involved in chasing up some work and doing some more travelling while I still had the opportunity. My previous company wanted me to rejoin them in London; but since I had managed to obtain a work permit for Hong Kong, I have decided to try stepping out in my own business in Project Management in partnership with one of my former colleagues. Although the Far East recession has caused some decline in the industry, generally there is work around and optimism for the future with the HK Government committed to spending about HK\$300 billion on infrastructure over the next 8-10 years. My biggest problem to obtaining work is the various rules that act as barriers to entry for new companies – but we are gradually making in roads.

Last December, I was lucky enough to be invited down to the Antarctic by a company called Adventure Network International (ANI). This is the same company that took Michael Palin to the south pole in one of his recent TV travel programmes. ANI's camp manager on the ice at Patriot Hills (80°S 80°W – 600 miles from the nearest coast and 600 miles to the south pole) is a friend of mine, Steve Pinfield, from 12 years ago when we were both based in Sabah, East Malaysia. Steve had somehow arranged with ANI to give me a free trip to the Antarctic (a trip that might normally have cost US\$12,000) as long as I got myself to Punta Arenas in southern Chile by 12 December. If I was going to travel all that way to southern Chile then I might as well take a bit more time to look around. And so another adventure started that was to last a total of 2 months and take me the full length of Chile by bus, ferry

and plane through the Atacama desert, Santiago, the Lakes and the Fiords and the beautiful Torres del Paine national park; 2 weeks in the Antarctic; a week in Easter Island; and a few days to unwind with some friends in Brazil.

The Antarctic was a trip of a lifetime. The 6 hour flight was uneventful except that it was my first flight on a Hercules. We had airline seats but it was bumpy and basic; and the landing on the ice runway was even bumpier. As we flew south, the sky had gradually lightened; and since we were landing at 5 a.m., it was easy to think it was dawn. My first impression of stepping outside the aircraft was the dazzling brilliance of the light; almost painful to the eyes. It was clear, fresh, crisp, bright and cool (about -10°C) and no wind. The sun was high in the sky and there it stayed all day every day rotating around us giving 24 hour daylight. I was dressed up in thermals and fleeces and searching for my sun cream! And then this awesome sense of total vulnerability begins to set. Here I was in the middle of nowhere in this vast barren and potentially aggressive environment and the plane was about to leave. It was like standing in the middle of the stationary eye of a typhoon - totally quiet, bright blue sky and yet I felt very very vulnerable to some unseen, unfelt violent forces.

Most people either come here to climb (particularly Mt Vinson – the highest peak in the Antarctic) or to fly to the South pole; a few come to do long expeditions across the ice. My adventures were limited to mostly day trips around the camp – hiking into the local hills, cross country skiing (my technique improved but was still only half the speed of the climbing instructor with an artificial leg!), ski-doo trips to the crashed DC4 from an earlier expedition; or even a game of football followed by a barbecue. Even the routine of camp life had a marvelous fascination. From the cook tent where they produce 3 piping hot meals a day for the 20 staff and up to 40 guests. The radio tent was always buzzing with regular schedules with the base in Chile or any of the camp's 3 light aircraft or monitoring yet another expedition crossing the Antarctic. The met. tent filled with computers, radios and instrumentation essential for making the right decisions about commencing expensive flying operations as well as for the safety of the camp and the expeditions. The charming lady doctor who confessed to being under-utilised and itching to wield her scalpel. Even the loos were different - a bit like a "portaloo" but made out of ice blocks with shelves carved into the walls for the supply of paper; nothing got wet as it was too cold for the ice to melt. A bit like sitting inside a huge deep-freeze - but at least they had wooden seats for a bit of comfort! All the accommodation was in tents but if they were to get destroyed in a major storm, then the camp had a small underground network of tunnels and caves stocked with safety equipment and enough dehydrated food to last 50 people for at least 2 months.

I did one overnight camping trip away from the main camp. The idea was for 5 of us to take two skidoos for 25 kms over to the other side of the mountain range and then walk up one of the glaciers. Except that was the night the storms set in. I would estimate the wind at about 40 knots - enough to cause a white out which blotted out the sun and kept us inside our sleeping bags inside the tents for 24 hours, sometimes leaning against the side of the tent to stop it buckling under the pressure of the wind. Without the sun, the temperature in the shelter of the entrance to the tent dropped to -35°C. At the height of the storm, our snow wall collapsed (I will have to take lessons from a brickie before I go again), thus increasing the wind on the tents. In a brief lull, we scrambled around outside with spades and saws in half visibility to cut and pile up large chunks of snow into a rough mound to give some protection. After 24 hours sheltering from the storm, the whiteout cleared enough for our guide to lead us slowly back to camp on the ski-doods.

And now back to the reality of Hong Kong. I have lost contact with our group of OF's in the Far East. I know **Richard Williams (S66-71)** is back in UK; rumour suggests that **Kevin Horrocks (65-73)** has moved to Singapore; and I believe that **Rupert Chenevix-Trench (S71-75)** has left his restaurant, Bentleys – our former meeting place. I

will have to phone around to find out who is left; but I will be pleased to hear from all of them!

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## New Zealand

Tom Saul says it is always good to hear from any of his contemporaries (sadly, there does not seem to be many of them left these days) and was therefore pleased to have two letters from **CUTHBERT TEBB (16-25)**. He had first written at the end of 1997 following receipt of his magazine which he thought was a massive production in which the Editor had given him a nice write up. He was now in his 90's. He did not recognise many of the names in the magazine apart from **ARTHUR BEST (21-24)** who was in Blue house with him. He considered the whole magazine and the machinations that go on were quite beyond him. "Apparently a Mrs. Gwen Randall is Headmaster"! It was wonderful that **V N BROMAGE** was the Hon. Secretary and who would be the son of the Bromage who was at school with him and later became Hon. Sec.?!

He kept well and was still able to do some walking although he had some arthralgic problems. He was well looked after by friends he had in the Salvation Army. He still kept in touch with Lincoln University (formerly Canterbury Agricultural College).

In Cuthbert's second letter to Tom, he said he had just received his Spring 1998 magazine. Firstly Cuthbert agreed with Tom's comments on former master **F J SHIRLEY** and was able to confirm most of the names in the published photographs on page 37. He was quite certain, as Tom is, that the photograph published as "Rendlesham House 1924" is nothing to do with that House. It is definitely of school officials for Summer Term 1924, Tom's last term.

Cuthbert goes on to confirm that the new names for the four houses took place almost the time that he left in 1925. He considered there was a lot of interesting reading in the magazine. He obviously enjoys hearing news of his old school.

Address: Masonic Rest Home, 15 Devonshire Place, Taradale, Napier.

**Lloyd Kenyon (26-29)** wrote two letters to Tom Saul. In the first, in early December 1997, saying that it was three months since he last wrote during which they had visited the North Island to attend the highly successful wedding of their grand-daughter. During their stay in the north, they had had a view of the volcano that had erupted recently. The highlight of their visit was being taken to a beautiful private garden followed by a trip to Wellington to see the recently restored Parliament buildings. From there it was a ferry trip back to the South Island where, after one night in Christchurch, it was back home and a matter of catching up with the gardening.

Since then they had had a great one day trip which was in the nature of a bit of a mystery outing. They were taken by an indirect route up to Lake Tekapo followed by a flight round Mount Cook which he said was marvelous and thoroughly recommended.

Lloyd said that he had few problems regarding the present state of his health but he thought it was time he gave up his job of looking after the Museum garden. Weatherwise, they were all that time in the midst of an El Nino pattern which meant a lot of wind and no rain which was not good for crops.

He thought that their cricketers were showing some sign of life, the All Blacks were great while the netballers were starting well.

The second letter was in February 1998, Lloyd, on the subject of weather, was concerned about the lack of rain which, combined with driving winds, and very high temperatures (February '98 being the hottest since readings began), the country was in a mess. Farmers were in a very bad way being forced to sell breeding stock. Yet, down south, they had too much rain! The lack of rain meant poor quality feed causing milk to be of poor quality, the river water was too warm to cool the generators, apples had been sunburnt and wheat crops in general were only fit for silage. Grapes, however, had revelled in it and an excellent vintage was expected. Lloyd's own garden had been affected and his crops had been a wash out.

They had recently been to Dunedin visiting their daughter for a week as well as to relatives in Central Otago. They were shortly off on one of their bus trips to the same area; and over Anzac week-end, they would be in Christchurch for their grandson's graduation. And after that he thought they might go into hibernation!

Sports-wise, they had been pleased with their cricketers' efforts against Zimbabwe. He added that his own health, aided by a selection of pills, was good and that he was finding that walking was proving to be a lot easier.

**LLOYD KENYON (26-29)** wrote to James in May:

"This letter must be well overdue so I will at least make a start with it this evening. My correspondence has got well behind hand, partly through going away from home. However we went away again lately (for our grandson's capping - B.Com., Hort. - and I had the sense to take the necessities with me in case we got bad weather, which we did, and I caught up quite well.

"One of our trips was with the touring group that we go with now and again. We went down to Dunedin and Central Otago, an area which is celebrating 150 years since the first arrival of an organised group of immigrants. The night that we got down there we were able to enjoy a magnificent fireworks display that had had to be postponed a couple of nights because of bad weather. In that area we visited a penguin area where the birds come ashore each evening. But the highlight of the ten days was when we went to see the end of this year's Cavalcade at Cromwell. Each November for the past few years, groups of walkers, riders and wagons, etc. have set out from different places. This year it was postponed so as to fit in with the 150 year celebrations. They travel as much as possible by old roads, packhorse tracks (now often converted to 4WD tracks) or even over open country. This year they ended at Cromwell where a whole lot of stalls and celebration events were assembled at the racecourse and the Cavalcade came round the track. They were led by the walkers followed by wagons drawn by six or four draught horses and also a stagecoach, and then came the riders, 800 of them. It really was a great sight -at least to country people, maybe not to "townies".

"It is now two days since I started this and yesterday my copy of the Spring Mag. arrived. I have only managed to glance through it so the only comment that I will make is that the Overseas Bag seems to be smaller than usual. I hope that I am wrong.

"We are still suffering from the El Nino drought that seems to have messed up the weather worldwide. We have had some rain but only enough to wet the topsoil. In any case it is now too late in the season to get much growth even if we got a soaking. On top of that we are suffering from the Asian financial downturn. Exports have dwindled, especially the export of logs, and so has the flow of tourists. For the past few years all tourist places have been swamped with Asians but, although there are still many, the numbers have dropped drastically.

"Politically we are almost in a state of confusion. You may know that while Prime Minister Jim Bolger, was out of the country late last year, a well planned plot resulted in his

being replaced soon after his return. To compensate for that he was appointed Ambassador to U.S.A. The resulting by-election for his replacement was held last Saturday and National's majority was slashed, Labour slipped to third place while National's coalition partner finished near the bottom of the also rans, out of twenty odd (some very odd!) candidates. As it is the coalition has a majority of only one seat. Some commentators expect an election before the end of the year, instead of next year, but I can't see how National (your Conservative) can risk that.

Address: 15 Oxford Street, Waimate, New Zealand

## **South Africa**

**ALAN B RICHARDSON (34-40)** wrote to Tom Saul at Christmas and again in May '98. In his first letter, he sent his seasonal greetings and apologised for the delay since his last letter. For some time he had been looking after **TOM ADNAMS** home while the latter had been to the UK to sort out his late wife's affairs. **OLIVER BRIDGES** had visited him prior to Alan's Golden Wedding (for which we congratulate them and hope they had some memorable celebrations). Alan said he had received his magazine which he had found most interesting. They had been experiencing some terrible weather with heavy rain most of the time. They also had been experiencing a lot of mail bag thefts and the PO had dismissed 180 staff. The valuables are pinched and the letters thrown away!

In his second letter, he said they had had their son from Ipswich visiting in February. He was a landscape gardener and took the opportunity of seeing the Kinstenbosch Gardens while he was with them. Alan said he himself had recently visited the Drakenberg Mountains among other trips.

He complained the Magazine appeared to have gone astray but he hoped to see **TOM ADNAMS** ( ) and borrow his copy. Alan had heard from his friend **OLIVER BRIDGES** ( ) who said he was going to the UK in June. Alan, an Arsenal supporter, had been listening to the Cup Final, the result of which had obviously pleased him no end!

Address: 5 Alexandra Drive, Winston Park, Gillitts 3610, Natal.

**Adam Phillips (78-83)** sent a brief e-mail in June:

"I have sent you a letter today with a photograph of John Watterson and myself. It was taken at the time I received my Spring 98 magazine. He is the teacher missing from the photos of former staff (Spring 98 pages 38 & 39) as he was in the "Fairest Cape" at the time. South African post is slow, but I hope it arrives before the cut off day. Perhaps you can leave some space for the photo?"

Adam's letter arrived later in June. He continues: "It was great to see John and to hear about Hugh Kennon and many others. John came for tea at 4p.m. and left at 1a.m.! Needless to say, John has been converted to South African beer and wine. Unfortunately, it will be a few years before our small vineyard produces any wine. We are also in the process of selling our restaurant – "The Country Elephant".

My company has been taken over by The Board of Executors, which is SA's 3<sup>rd</sup> largest banking group. I am still a foreign exchange dealer. The pressure level is still high but nothing like what it is like in the "City" in London.

I stay in touch with **Tim Smart (75-82)** who is the "News Attaché" for I-Net Bridge in Jo'burg. I supply him with financial information and he gives me rugby tickets! I

understand that **Simon Ferguson (74-94)** lives in Cape Town. Does anyone have any contact numbers?

Otherwise, we watch the cricket and hope that Hansie Cronje's team can produce the results. Yes, I am a traitor! After the Super 12, we are all looking forward to the Tri-Nations in July / August. I still write for SA Rugby Magazine and was lucky enough to interview the former SA Springbok Captain, Tiaan Strauss, who plays for New South Wales and probably Australia next year."

Address: The Country Elephant, Simondium Village (at the T-junction on the R45), PO Box 132, Simondium 7670, South Africa; tel: 021 874 1355; e-mail: aphillip@boland.co.za

## USA

**BRYAN IVORY (K 48-52)** wrote in April to James Ruddock thanking him for photographs of the 'Framingham Incident' in Massachusetts which is still talked about in conversations with the Louise Woodward case reverberating on. Bryan continues:

"The Mag. and your account of our encounter with the 'Correctional Dept' was great. I still do not believe they made all the fuss over our visit what with all the press and cameras that followed in our footsteps.

"You mention whether there might be some interest in a Fram/Fram exchange for the SOF Centenary/Fram 300 Anniversary. If you could give me an idea of what you had in mind I could follow it through but when I retire later in the year I will be moving to N Carolina.

"I hope you can rattle up a response from **KEN MACKENZIE (45-53)** - you also mention **NEVILLE CARTER (K 45-53)** who used to be in Kerrison. He was a pretty good rifle shot I recall. From what I hear you have had some exciting rugby matches over there this winter. It is one thing I really miss seeing on this side of the pond.

"Since the New Year my health has not been the greatest. Last week they did a job on my prostate and this week I have to go in again to have them relieve a 'frozen' left shoulder. The poor old body is starting to fall apart! I will be glad to have all the repairs taken care of.

"The winter has been reasonably kind to us this year and the bulbs and spring shrubs are now coming to life and hopefully we have seen the last of the cold weather.

"We are off to N Carolina in May to see both our sons, daughter-in-law and 1 year-old granddaughter and I am starting to box up items for the move including my model railroad. Business is still hectic and we are looking to take on a few people.

"Give my best wishes to all OFs especially those 48-52."

Address: 219 Orchard Street, Millis, Mass 02054.