

Overseas Bag

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Another fascinating “Bag” with more new correspondents – many are new correspondents and several have only just re-discovered the SOF through the website, having been out of contact for many years. Please do take a few minutes to send me your news whether you have a particular story to tell or just news on “life since Fram” or other OFs that you have or would like to meet. I continue to get positive feedback from those who have appeared in the Bag of the contacts that they have re-kindled with lost friends. Enjoy the Bag.

RMR

Australia

Ann Hogarth (V85-87) sent an e-mail to RMR in June:

“My husband, Campbell, and I have been kept busy with our new son (Heath William Smyth) who arrived as a resounding 9lb's on the 6th March 2004. He is a great little chap - though 'little' is not really a word I would associate with him as he is already in 6 month old clothes - and just turned three months last weekend (picture attached dated 2 June 2004). We are very lucky that he is a very calm baby and does not cry much at all which is a blessing to our ears! Anyway we got him sleeping through the night by 8 weeks that was great, as I do not feel half so frazzled now!

“Anyway hope all is going well with you. Your business trip through all those countries sounds great - I love Burma - I used to do a lot of work out there for Total and love the people and the place to bits.”

Address: 165 Beattie Street, Balmain, Sydney, NSW 2041, Australia; E-mail: ahogarth@cornerstoneadvisors.com.au



While on the subject of babies, **Katherine Loescher (nee Annan V87-91)** sent message from UK of several OF births:

“In 2003, three school friends and I all had babies. In February in London, Neil and I had Daisy, and **Katie Kerven (nee Lamb - V86-89)** and Dan had Joseph. In March in Paris, **Catherine Simonnet (nee Erith - V87 - 91)** and Olivier had Emily. In May in Melbourne, **Alexandra Tomov (nee Freer V86-91)** and Neven had Lucy. All the new parents and babies are doing well.”

Address: ?? (RMR – I have listed this message under Australia in the hope that someone can supply a contact address for **Alexandra Freer** so that we may get her back on the mailing list).

(RMR – also, from the Services Section, there is news that **Major John Heap (R80-84)** left the British Army in 2003 and has transferred to the Australian Army. If anyone knows how to find a contact address for him, we would be grateful so that we might get him back on the mailing list)

John Bennett (34-42) sent a kind message when he registered on the SOF website in

March:

“Many thanks for your speedy response to my request for registration. With the help of my wife Dorothy, (in charge of IT) I have now gained access to the college register. Over the years I have found the old printed registers of 1949 and 1968 a valuable source of information and the re-kindling of old memories. I am looking forward to utilizing the new register and exploring the information on the web site. It must have been a big job setting it all up – and now keeping it up-to-date. Congratulations to all those who contributed to the work.

“You ask for information about my nephew, **Andrew Philip Bennett (58-60)**, my late brother, Philip’s (G31-35), son. Andrew was at BH from ‘58 to ’60 but did not go on to the College. He spent the whole of his career as a commercial pilot and has just recently retired. His address is : 157 Hemblington Hall Road, Hemblington Norwich Norfolk NR13 4PT. I regret I have no email address for him.

“Warm congratulations and thanks to James Ruddock for his great service to the SOF during his years as editor of the magazine – and to yourself and all those who shared in the work. It is now 50 years since I emigrated to Australia and the magazines have been a great help in keeping me in touch with the school and with old friends. It’s good that the new magazine will include news both of the school and of old boys. I am sure it will continue to be much appreciated and I look forward to receiving the first edition.”

Address: 6 Doolette Place, Kambah, ACT 2902, Australia; dj_bennett@netspeed.com.au

John Gates (S44-48) sent a brief message in July soon after his return from several months cruise and other travels:

“My wife and I had a wonderful holiday. The Cruise was very good. Thoroughly enjoyed Male, the Seychelles, Capetown, etc .

“Cornwall was slightly cold at the end of April but fantastic walks. Then on to Suffolk for a few days. Met up with **Robert Taylor (S43-48)**; he used to sit next to me in form at Fram.

“We then went to our 2nd cottage at Paxford in the Cotswolds - very near to Chipping Camden - Moreton On The Marsh. Had glorious weather that was great for walks especially at about 5.30am. We spent the last week in UK at Wimborne in Dorset and we sat outside in shorts at 28C.

“On 15th June, we flew to Dubai. We had a contact there, an auditor for Deloitte, who very kindly gave us a Grand Tour of the huge development going on in the region. Unless you actually see it, it was so great that it would be hard to believe. We also visited the Dubai Museum that was fantastic and well worth a visit. And then on to the Gold Souk, though now expensive.

“We arrived back home on the 19th June at 10C - so in one week from 28C to 44C to 10C - quite a contrast. Since returning, I have had another Blood test and all is going well, so my cancer treatment seems to be working.

“We met up with **Peter Bailey (K34-38)** last weekend for lunch. Peter is fit and well but his wife, Joy, is not quite so good.”

Address: PO Box 476, Maroochydore, Queensland 4558, Australia; tel: 0754 796778; E-mail: johngates@aceconnect.com.au

Harry Peck (S38-43) discovered the SOF website in March having lost contact with the SOF when he moved to Australia in 1965:

“I live in small fishing town of Hastings on Westernport Bay on the coast of Victoria,

with a population of about 6000. We are not entirely without industry as there is a very big steel mill and oil refinery within about twenty minutes along the coast that employs most of the available labour from the town. I have lived here for about nineteen years, moving here after I retired.

“After I left school I enlisted in the army as a regular because I wanted to get in the regiment of my choice, the Royal Signals. I was on the reserve for 12 months when I joined the Home Guard and was also a member of the Cadets. I was called to the colours on 1 May 1944. I served for a period of 8 years serving in UK, Egypt, North Africa, Greece, Palestine and Saudi Arabia with the Military Mission. I was engaged as an operator in Codes and Ciphers. On return to England I became a Sgt Instructor at 3 Intelligence School and later at Catterick and later at as a supervisor at War office in London. By this time I was married and had a daughter. I met my wife when I was at Signals Depot Kirkburton in Yorkshire before I went overseas and got married while I was on leave from Greece. A Marriage that lasted for 57 years until my wife died in September 2003.

“After I left the service I returned to Framlingham to manage my fathers farm due to his ill health. After about 8 years, due to further ill health, the farm was sold and I obtained a position as the East Anglian agent for a firm of Pedigree Seed and Grain, farm supply merchants, during which time I started a seed and grain corn chandlers business in Framlingham. I also bought into a mixed retail business that my wife ran. One evening when I was enjoying a quiet pint in my local pub with **Kenneth Howard (25-30)** he informed me that he was proposing to emigrate to Australia. This got me thinking that if he could do something like that in his fifties, why couldn't I do the same. There was not much of a future for my children in Framlingham and there might be better prospects in Australia. By this time I also had a son, **David Peck (62-64)**, who was at Brandeston. It took a lot of heart searching to make a decision to take a big chance to start all over again from scratch at the age of 39. But it proved in the long run to have been the right decision.

“On arriving in Australia I was fortunate to obtain a position a civilian training officer with the Australian Navy at the Naval Base at HMAS Cerberus near Hastings where I stayed for 12 years, eventually becoming head of my section. At the end of this time I applied for and obtained a position as a Senior Training Officer with Supply Branch, Telecom Australia, Victoria. I served with Telecom for about 8 years and was appointed Administration Manager to the Supply Branch. After a very serious illness I took early retirement and have been retired for about 20 years and have never regretted it. My wife and I and the children have traveled extensively during our time here. In the early years we would camp; and later by camper trailer, caravan and finally by motorised campervan. We have seen a lot of the country but only a small portion of it. It is a vast country.

“ I am blessed with a very close family. Besides having just the two children a boy and a girl, I have 5 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. I see them all on a regular basis as they all live within 25 minutes drive of me. They are a great support for me since I lost my wife. All in all I have a pretty good life. I live each day to the full. I am member of a few organisations especially the Anglican Church that takes up quite a bit of my time. In my time I have been a Lay Preacher, a Church Warden for a number of years and a member of the Vestry Council.

“Today I am not as active as I was due to a heart problem. However I really enjoy my life here and have become a Naturalised Citizen. I am fairly new at this computer game coming back to it after about 20 years so I hope all this gets to you OK.

“Unfortunately I have lost contact with **Kenneth Howard**, so I don't know if he is still

alive. He would be in his 90's now. As best as I can remember, Kenneth came to Australia about 1963 and lived at Elizabeth near Adelaide in South Australia. Kenneth was a very skilled tradesman being a Saddler and Harness maker. He made quite an impression in that he was on television here as the maker of the saddles for the Australian Show Jumping Team for the Olympic Team – though I am not sure what year that was.

“I also have a brother, **Geoffrey (S39-44)**, who is still in UK. He is a member of the OF Masonic Lodge of which he is a Past Master. At the moment he is in hospital in intensive care after a serious heart operation. I am in regular contact with his wife Jean.”

(RMR – I look forward to many more messages. Thank you for Geoffrey's contact details so that we can get him back on the mailing list. If anyone has information on Kenneth Howard, I would be pleased to receive it – all I know is that he had 3 brothers and they used to live at Fore St, Fram many years ago!).

Address: PO Box 250, Hastings, Victoria 3915, Australia; E-mail: hpeck@nex.com.au

John Masson (M74-79) made contact in May to gain publicity for his sponsored bike ride in September 2004 (See SOF website News for full details):

“I am a gastroenterologist who has worked at the Townsville Hospital in Queensland for the last 7 years, and will be cycling from Sydney to North Queensland (2,100km, about 1,300 miles) in September 2004. My ride is in aid of Bowel Cancer Awareness and Research. If anyone might be able to assist with corporate or other sponsorship or just a small donation, please contact me at the address below.

“Such an endeavour deserves a reason and I have chosen Bowel Cancer, a condition I see most days at work. Unfortunately, this condition affects 1 in 20 people and is the 2nd commonest cause of cancer related deaths in Australia. Studies have shown that the number of deaths can be reduced through proper screening. I am hoping to attract sponsorship towards Bowel cancer research and equipment for detecting bowel cancer. A research fellow investigating bowel cancer for 1 year and two colonoscopes requires funding of \$110,000. Fundraising is supported by Townsville Hospital Foundation. The trip will also provide an opportunity to raise public awareness about the risk of bowel cancer and screening options. I plan to organise evening public information and discussion meetings both in Townsville and in the rural centres I will be cycling through.”

Address: 348 Stanley Street, Townsville, Queensland 4810; Tel: 0417 191540;
jmasson@austarnet.com.au

Balleares Islands

Nick Cook (S82-87) runs his own Estate Agency in Menorca. He sent message in January 2004 of his trip with Tim Church (R82-87) to Sydney in November 2003 to see the Rugby World Cup Final:

“Having now been back in Menorca for five years I decided it was time to branch out on my own and so set up a new Estate Agency Business. This we did starting in September 2003, marketing predominantly through the internet. Our web site, which is to be found at www.homemenorca.com, has seen a massive increase in activity since the New Year. I would be delighted to help any OFs thinking about buying in Spain on the mainland or in the Balears.

‘Despite the pressure of the new business, I managed to get to Sydney on the 22nd of November 2003, quite an important date to those, who like myself, are rugby fanatics!!!

“This all came about on the Sunday morning after we had beaten the fancied French in the semi final to go through to the final the following Saturday. I rang **Tim Church (R82-87)** to see if he fancied coming with me. I had checked with his wife Louise first!! He obviously jumped at the chance of a boys' trip down under. I don't think he really took me seriously until I phoned on the Tuesday to say that I had secured flights (not all that easy) and tickets to the final (almost impossible)! We took off from Barcelona on Thursday afternoon. Tim having flown down that morning from Stansted and me from Menorca, in time to make it to an Irish pub in the centre of Barcelona to watch the third place play off between New Zealand and France (the same pub, incidentally, that I had bumped into **Al Pattinson (R81-86)** two weeks earlier when England were playing Samoa).

“We arrived in Sydney via Frankfurt & Singapore on the morning of the final after having traveled for about 30 hours. We went straight out to lunch in Woolloomooloo and then to the stadium. The atmosphere was incredible, as most of you who watched the match from home would have experienced as well. Swing low has never sounded so sweet! No need to tell you all how we felt after the game, needless to say we didn't come back down to earth till the Tuesday morning and that was only because we had to go diving, having made it up to the Great Barrier reef! We flew back that Friday after a very entertaining evening out on the Thursday at Café Sydney (well worth the visit) with an old Felstedian which was apt as they were always our biggest rugby rivals when I was playing for Framlingham.”

Address: S'Arravaleta 21-30, 07701 Mahon, Menorca, Spain; Tel: (+34) 971 35 70 70;
nickcook@homemenorca.com

Ian Foster (K46-53) sent a Christmas 2003 message to JGR:

“Another busy year. Last year was very cold to be followed by the hottest summer on record – averaging 36C. We took full advantage of our yacht, Marinella, including visiting friends in Menorca. Unfortunately I had to enter hospital for a while for a painful lumber disc operation.

“We will have 15 family for Christmas which will keep Tessa busy. The Mallorca resident family is still active in Estate Agency and Diving; and the Brits continue to support the island that keeps us busy.

“We should be in UK after Christmas for the London Boat show which this year is at the old Royal Victoria Docks, so that will be a new experience for all. We are then off to South Africa for a few weeks to visit Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth, game parks and wine lands”.

Address: Casa Oceana, Alcanada 50, 07410-Pto. Alcudia, Mallorca, Spain; Tel: (+34) 670 235 369; ianandtess@wanadoo.es

Canada

Patrick Vincent (R47-51) sent news of his winter visit in March to his daughter and grandchildren in the Yukon:

“My daughter, Jane, has lived in the Yukon for about 15 years now and now has two little children of five and nearly three. They built their own house on an 18-acre plot from local logs that are finished on two sides and have the natural curve of the tree on the other sides. Their

property is wooded which provides fuel for heat and cooking. Their house is on a hill with a fine view over a broad valley, with the mountains in the distance. There are other families living in the area, but the houses are so far apart that they rarely see their neighbours. They are 75 km from Whitehorse, the capital city of the Yukon, and about 150 km from the eastern border of Alaska.

“I chose to visit in early March when the days are getting longer and the weather is not so cold. It turned out to be good timing as we had mostly sunny weather with the daytime temperature just below freezing. They have about 15 dogs that they use to pull dog sleds for trips out into the remote country. I had a couple of day trips with them. I was given a sled with four dogs, which were quite fast enough for me! I was told the commands used to tell the dogs to change direction, but I do think they took much notice of me; they just followed the sled in front. On one trip, Jane let Pelly, my 5-year-old grandson, drive the sled and she became the passenger and he does a good job of balancing on the sled runners and controlling the dogs. As winter lasts at least six months, it is good that they enjoy activities on the snow and are not intimidated by the cold temperatures earlier in the season. The children live a healthy life, with lots of time outside and helping with projects to improve the home and property.”

Addresses: 1915 Delaney Drive, Mississauga, Ontario, L5J 3L2; e-mail: patrick.vincent@sympatico.ca

Brian Mayhew (R46-52) sent a message in June:

“I was pleased to make contact again through the magazine last Christmas with **Michael Stevens (G42-48)**. While he and I overlapped for two years at Fram, I did not know him there. However we both did engineering apprenticeships at the same place, Reavells, in Ipswich and became good friends there. We both moved to Canada, he to Vancouver and I to Toronto. He returned to the UK in 1960 and that is when I lost touch with him so I was very pleased to make contact again.

“My wife and I also visited France for the first time last autumn with my daughter and son-in-law and our two grandchildren. Had a week on the Riviera then drove up to Annecy in the Alps near Geneva. After 4 days there we took the TGV to Paris for 4 days. If we had known about **Dan Williams (Z91-96)** we could have visited his two pubs. My son-in-law is a brewing manager with Sleemans brewery here in Guelph so they could have talked shop all evening. We enjoyed France and I must say I have a lot of respect for French engineers, architects and contractors when I see the conditions they have to cope with in some areas when constructing roads and buildings.”

Address: 3987 Sideroad 25 South, RR2, Puslinch, Ontario, N0B 2J0, Canada; e-mail: brian@mayhew.net

France

Brian Scrivener (K48-54) sent a Christmas message to JGR plus a brief email in March when registering on the SOF website:

“2003 has been a funny old year. Instead of having the family for the summer, we went to Dorset to visit them. The following week, I was hospitalized for the removal of my gall bladder. Then, having recovered from that, we were off to Minneapolis to see our son and grandson. We were back by mid-October for a 4-choir concert that I had organized in Lauzun Church to celebrate our Chorale’s 20th anniversary. Then, on 2 November, I was back in hospital for a knee

replacement operation. I am now up to my ears in daily physio, anti-coagulant injections and blood tests. Luckily my wife, Valmai, is "en bonne forme" and able to keep me up to scratch.

"I believe Jim Blythe was the first pupil to enter Brandeston when it opened in '48 and that John Silver and I were second equal in the "race", our fathers having shared a taxi from the station to the Hall. I also had the rather dubious distinction of winning the Reg. Day Cup for boxing at under 6st7lbs during my first year up at Fram!"

Address: "Saint Martin", 47410 LAUZUN, France; Tel: (+33) 553 94 29 67; e-mail: bavas@easynet.

Rebecca Buard (nee Thorogood) (V91-93) sent news from Brittany:

"I attended Fram from 1991-1993 in Victoria and would very much like to find how to contact all my old friends from school.

"I realise that the best way to do this is via the OFs web site / mag. I think that my old e-mail address is posted on the site as several of my old college mates have been in touch; but since our move to France last year the thierbecc@hotmail.com address is no longer in service and we now use thierbecc@yahoo.fr

"I have moved around rather a lot since my departure from Fram. It has been 5 years since our marriage and we now run a Sports Bar in Brittany, France. I would very much like to find out what all my friends are up to."

Address: Bar des Sports, 17 rue de la Mairie, 22100 St Samson sur Rance, France; Tel: (+33) 2 96 39 37 30; e-mail: thierbecc@yahoo.fr

Tanzania

A "returned" OF Mag addressed to **Karen Cooper (P84-94)** eventually arrived back from deepest Tanzania and we were able to track Karen down to darkest Suffolk:

"I worked in Tanzania for a year managing a Community development programme, but came back the UK at the end of 2002 to get married. I married Matt just over a year ago, and now live in Martlesham (so full circle back to Suffolk!).

"My sister, **Lisa (P87-98)**, lives and works in Germany as a musician in an Orchestra in Munster."

Address: Karen Lawson, 98 Manor Road, Martlesham Heath, Ipswich, Suffolk IP5 3SY.

United Arab Emirates

Mark Tooley (M68-77) sent message in July when registering on the website:

"I studied Geology at Cardiff and graduated in 1980. Worked as geologist till 1988 then joined ReedHycalog, a drill bit company in the oil industry. Went to Oman in 1989 and then Dubai in 1991, relocated back to UK in 1997 to look after Europe/Africa/Russia. The company was taken over by Schlumberger in 1998 and they moved me to Russia in 2000 to look after their directional drilling company. Schlumberger then sold ReedHycalog at the end of 2002 and I decided to return to the drill bit business and was given the Middle East to Manage. We look after 18 countries from Dubai, Libya over to Bangladesh and up to Azerbaijan. Off to Canada on Saturday and then back to Dubai on Wednesday, then to Egypt. It's a good job as I enjoy

traveling!!

“My wife, Tina, and my two youngest children, Yasmin and Banaeshia, live with me in Dubai and the elder two offspring look after themselves at the family house in the UK, Leila weekly boards and Dominic has just finished college, though they both come over to Dubai on a regular basis. We have been married for 23 years now and only 1 year and 2 weeks till the 25th!!

“I don't get to play golf so much these days, but the upside is the whole family ride horses on a regular basis these days, so much so that we decided to finally buy one for ourselves which we keep in Dubai.”

Address: P.O.Box 54461, Dubai, UAE.; Cell: (+971) 50 5597157;
Mark.Tooley@ReedHycalog.com

USA

Bill Sellers (G47-51) re-joined the SOF in February after several years out of contact in the hope of catching up with some news from other OF of his time at Fram:

“After leaving Fram I went to college in Writtle Essex and became an agricultural engineer, did my draft for Nat Service, worked for a while at the National Institute of Agricultural Engineering in Bedfordshire UK from there I found myself in Alberta doing a course at the Edmonton campus, University of Alberta. Since 1969, I have lived in Boise, Idaho, USA. Boise is a delightful small town lying under the Rocky Mountains (excellent snow skiing is just 30 minutes from my back door).

“I have been a sailor most of my life and now enjoy that sport on Idaho lakes and in the San Juan Islands of British Columbia where I sail a 38 foot out of Sydney British Columbia. My next race is the Van Isle around Vancouver about 850 miles some open ocean starting April 11th. My two sons and a friend are my crew on that trip. I will let you know how we place when it is all over!

“I am kind of semi retired as I am majority shareholder and Chairman of the Board for Applied Electronics Company (www.aec-remote.com) which basically manufactures electronic and radio controls for industry.

“I am often in UK and last summer visited Fram for the first time since I left all those years ago. What a change! All those girls! Unfortunately I was not able to stay over and attend the SOF annual meeting but had a very enjoyable tour of the entire school which made me very proud to have been an OF and triggered my desire to re-join the SOF.”

Address: 8053 Hill Road, Boise, Idaho, 83714, USA; e-mail: billysellers2@hotmail.com

Brian Ivory (S45-47) sent a Christmas 2003 message to JGR:

“No doubt you enjoyed the World Cup rugby as much as we did. Many thanks for a great Autumn OF mag with lots of photos of lads from our era. I found a copy of the big 1952 school photo – very interesting to see everyone – and you looked a lot younger then! (*RMR – it would be great to get a scanned copy for the website*)

“I had a card from **David Pitcher (R44-51)** – I will definitely send off right away for a copy of his railway book. I gather that he has been acting as College Chaplin this term. I have also heard from **Mike Brown (S48-53)** and **Barry Wilson (G48-52)**.

“We now have both sons home from Iraq. Hopefully we can spend time with them over the holidays. The grandchildren seem to have an inexhaustible supply of energy.

“Hopefully we will get over to see you in UK in Autumn 2004.”

Address: 3529 Lake Shore Drive, Shallotte, North Carolina, 28470, USA; tel: (+1) 910 754 5692

Bryan Pearson (S45-47) provides the last installment of his life story:

“My first experience of Tahiti was in 1966 when I took my wife to the newly opened Club Mediterranee for a three week vacation and we both fell in love with French Polynesia and determined to return to love there if possible. We returned to Los Angeles and its frenetic pace, there was very little film work, my real estate business was dying and there were race riots etc., so I started looking for a suitable boat and, in the meantime worked for a yacht broker whom I convinced to finance a sailing school which I ran, with the aid of Jack Knights' book "Small Boat Sailing". It worked out very well as I had use of any of the boats from a 20 foot day sailer to a 45 foot cruising sloop and, once a person had learned to sail a boat, they often got the urge to have one of their own and I passed them along to the sales department!

“In 1967 I bought a beautiful Mower design 45 foot ketch, perfect I thought for a cruiser and live aboard once we got to Tahiti, she was a bit old but I had a survey done and was told that she was perfect for what I had in mind so I arranged for the broker who sold me the boat (called My Yen) to sail her up from San Diego since I wasn't familiar with the coast. This lady and her husband assured me that they had delivered dozens of boats and I should come along for the ride, which I did and very nearly lost my life as she ran the boat on a huge rock just in front of the Malibu Colony, where many stars live, at about 8 knots in the pitch dark and tore the bottom completely out of her. We were rescued by helicopter and checked out by the medics, the woman had some bad cuts and scratches but nothing was broken (except my heart!) and the next day the hull was towed to a shipyard just next to where I was working at Marina del Rey.

“As soon as I could, I went to the yard to survey the wreckage and see if anything was salvageable and immediately noticed that the ship's wheel had been removed so I asked the foreman where it was and he said he had no idea. I then told him that I would leave and return in one hour and, if the wheel was still missing, a police report would be filed for the theft. Needless to say, the wheel was waiting for me and it is the only vestige of my boat that remained, I still have it in my living room in Hawaii. This accident, terrible as it was, could have been much worse. While at the shipyard a man called me over and asked what I had planned to do with the boat so I told him and he took me over the hull, reached inside and broke off a piece of a sister frame about a foot long which he handed to me, it was completely rotten. Had my wife and I and the two small children been aboard and run into any heavy seas, the pounding would undoubtedly have cracked the hull and we would have perished!

“I won't go into the tedious details but my wife and I, plus the two small children we had by this time, went back to Tahiti. I had the dream job of teaching sailing in a gorgeous bay every day at the Club Med. but my wife could not find work and eventually found another man to take up her time so I decided to return to Los Angeles with her and the children and hope that our marriage could be saved, but to no avail. She filed for divorce and I, mostly to face my demons in Tahiti, returned there, eventually becoming an hotel manager on Moorea where I met a very different kind of young lady, 17 years my junior, and married her.

“The hotel life suited me very well; we had two children over the years and, in 1976, moved up to Hawaii where we bought a home in 1978 that we still occupy. My children from the first marriage still live in California and are both married, they have visited us and we have seen them at their weddings, and my son recently presented me with a grandson to add to the two grandchildren that were born in Tahiti.

“My first job in Hawaii was in sales with a chemical manufacturer, which kept the wolf from the door until I secured a position as VP of Sales for a small cargo airline and then worked for a series airlines including Hawai'ian Air and Continental Airlines which enabled me to travel all over the world, several times to Japan, Australia, New Zealand, England etc. Unfortunately, this came to a halt in 1996 when I left the airlines during a time of drastic cutbacks in the industry and I switched to a sales position with a large credit card processing company that I still represent. We not only do the actual processing of cards, but also provide the electronic terminals and ATMs and it has been a reasonably lucrative career for the past 8 years.

“We currently have four TV series being shot in Hawaii and there have been several major films shot recently but, although I am still a member of Screen Actors Guild in good standing, I really have no interest in acting any more. When I was running the hotels on Moorea I met a lot of celebrities, actors, and writers including Michael Crichton and James Mitchener, and I have lived that life, drove a Bentley Continental convertible when I lived in Hollywood etc. I suppose it's a case of "been there, done that " and now I am content to enjoy my mini estate in Hawaii and go on as many ocean cruises as I can afford, starting with the QE 2 in October 2000, January 2001 and January 2003, plus 5 cruises on various Princess ships. Next January we on the QE2 again, doing the same itinerary as the last two, Honolulu to Auckland via Tahiti. If there are any OFs in Auckland that would care to get together, we arrive there on February 2nd 2005.

“Hopefully my diatribes have proven of some interest, particularly to my contemporaries, such as Anthony Rosen (S40-48) and Len Evans (G42-48); the last time I saw the latter was in Lilywhites sports department in 1951 when I was appearing at the Saville Theatre in "Charley's Aunt".”

Address: 45-501 Apiki Street, Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744-1919, USA; BPear26848@aol.com

Zimbabwe

Michael Thomson (K52-59) sent more news in June:

“I am currently working on the island of Coll in the Inner Hebrides as a locum. Hardly classes as overseas but it does serve to remind me that I haven't sent to you my thoughts on a locum I did for 1 month in Zimbabwe in April 2004.

“In April I returned to the mission hospital in Zimbabwe where I had worked previously, to do a locum. It was interesting to compare the country with my last visit 1 year ago.

“The shops were better stocked but mainly because the Government had stopped price control which meant that manufacturers could make a profit again. Sadly the prices were still beyond many people. However the advent of a new governor for the Reserve Bank has brought some stability to prices and therefore inflation. It is now possible to change foreign currency at the bank at rates approximate to the black market.

“Although we (my fiancée came with me) were not threatened or troubled by anyone tensions are rising as the next parliamentary election looms early next year. Pressure continues on the remaining white farmers and soon after I left, the private schools, even though nearly half of their pupils are black.

“The ruling party is looking for a majority in the parliament so that the country's constitution can be changed to ensure that the party remains in power even after the death of the President. As I mentioned in my last newsletter insidious insertion of cadres of party trained members into all levels of society continues with the aim of curbing all opposition. It all adds up

to the exercising of power politics in a well-established Marxist manner. Only the people of Zimbabwe can do anything about that and mostly they are too frightened to act being mindful of previous conflicts at the time of independence 24 years ago.

“The country seems set for a long period of economic stagnation with the quality of life deteriorating for the majority whilst an influential minority flourish. The contrast between the rural dwellers and the well dressed on the city streets with mobile phones is striking. Meanwhile the AIDS pandemic continues. However there are encouraging signs with antiretroviral therapy becoming available albeit provided by foreign donors. Whether this is sustainable remains to be seen as the numbers of infected people are large and growing at an alarming rate. What the future holds only time will tell.”

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