



## SIGNALS FROM T·A·R·S·U·S

January 3, 1995

MEMBERS, AHoy!

How have your Winter Holidays been? I want to welcome aboard all the new members. I hope you've all had a chance to read the article on The English Lake District in the August '94 National Geographic. Bob Barcus, a true member of TARSUS, wrote a letter in response, promoting a most important author who had not been mentioned in the article. His letter was printed in the December '94 National Geographic, and the response has been unbelievable! People began calling him from the east coast EIGHT days before he even got his magazine! Fortunately, there is only one Robert Barcus in Spokane, WA so people were able to find him and express their strong interest in The Arthur Ransome Society. It's been fun hearing from you all over the United States! THREE CHEERS FOR BARCUS!

Thanks to all of you who entered The Dick Callum Cup Competition. Out of the top 12, four were from the U.S.A. Frank Cylke placed 4th, Dorothy Hill 6th, yours truly 7th, and Dave Thewlis 12th. Hope you can be there to represent us at the Final at the A.G.M. this year, Frank.

How are you all doing at finding or ordering the books you want? I was so excited to find a 1932 edition of The Lake Counties by W. G. Collingwood at a second-hand bookstore in Southern California for \$10. For those of you who don't already know EVERYTHING, Collingwood was the real grandfather of the Swallows. Part II of the book has a series of articles by different authors on the "Natural History and Sport in the Lake District." One of the articles is "Motor-Boating" by Oscar T. Gnosspelius (alias "Squashy Hat"). You'll enjoy the article about Collingwood and Ransome in this edition of Mixed Moss. Do write and tell us all about the treasures you have found.

I know many of you would love to visit England and see the places that AR wrote of, and sail, hike, or camp there yourselves. If any of you get to do it, be sure and share your experience with the rest of us by writing to me. I'll put it in the next Newsletter. If you take a video or pictures that you are willing to share, we'd all be glad! Tom Grimes sent me an e-mail from Jeremy Hoyland, a Brit sailor whose posting he read on internet. He stated that he sailed from Pin Mill, so Tom asked him what it was like there now. If you want a copy of his answer, send me an SASE, and I'll mail it to you.

Recently I adapted a little poem for Ransome fans. Here it is:

Paint me a summer  
For memory's sake—  
Cows gravely plodding,  
A boat by the lake.  
Put tents on an island,  
With treasure to seek;  
Throw in some days  
On a high mountain peak.  
Cool me with maples  
That dapple the dawn;  
Stack a stone fence  
Running hither and yon.

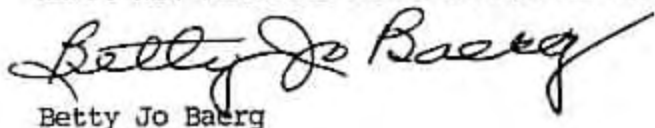
Unfold the fellside  
Where I can dig;  
Douse me some water  
For a little hedgepig.  
Lend me a cabin  
That I can call "Home,"  
A shelter from storm  
After I roam.  
Include some good friends  
With hours to share--  
And when you have finished  
Picture me there!

Am wondering if any of you are artists (as well as poets!). I think our Junior members (and some of us older ones) would like someone to design paper dolls of the characters in the books. And maybe some of you could design cardboard sailing dinghies that we could all make. Anybody interested?

New members may not be aware that there are three videos available on the books: "Swallows and Amazons," "Coot Club," and "Big Six." They were all made in England. Some of us have them on VHS, so if you are interested, let me know.

Am enclosing the answers to the Nautical Skills and Terminology Quiz, prepared by the Linds of Canada, which I sent in the last Newsletter. I recently found a dictionary for landlubbers, old salts, & armchair drifters by Henry Beard & Roy McKie. It's entitled "SAILING, A Sailor's Dictionary." It's been a joy! Here's a sample: "Jibe: Course change which causes the boom to sweep rapidly across the cockpit; also, frequent type of comment made by observers of this maneuver." To understand that completely we need to define "Boom: Laterally mounted pole to which a sail is fastened. Often used during jibing to shift crew members to a fixed horizontal position." Since I have never sailed, I have found this dictionary most helpful!

HAPPY NEW YEAR AND THREE CHEERS FOR TARSUS!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betty Jo Baerg". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Betty Jo Baerg

Here are the answers to the Nautical Skills and Terminology Quiz, prepared by the Linds of Canada, which I sent in the last Newsletter.

TARS NAUTI-QUIZ ANSWERS

1. He drove it along with a single paddle like a Canadian canoe.
2. 40 fathoms = 240 feet.
3. As close to square as possible.
4. Clove hitch.
5. The rudder is swung on two pintles which drop into gudgeons.
6. 20 fathom of anchor rhode in 5 fathom of water = 4:1 scope.
7. Shell.
8. The one sailing close-hauled.
9. The stern warp.
10. Red Buoys and conical buoys.
11. They put an eye-splice in one end of the rope and a sail-makers whipping on the other.
12. Amazon has a centreboard whereas Swallow has a keel.
13. Individual port (red) and starboard (green) lamps were taken forward and fixed in their place on the shrouds.
14. Because the mast was designed with a lead counter-weight at the bottom.
15. He should have been able to "heave-to" to allow the Dutch pilot to board.
16. Up channel against unfavourable easterly winds.
17. The one nearest the mast, followed by the one at the boom, followed by the reef points.
18. Change in the scope, the chain that had held Goblin at low tide was too short to hold her at high tide.
19. Bawlina, Fishermen's & Carrick Benda Rolling, Blackwall, Timber & Handspike Hitches Cat's Paw & Sheep Shanks Eye Splices and Long Splices Grommets and a Salvage Strop.

20. Mizzen Sail.
21. Three blasts in succession at two minute intervals.
22. Never let go of the anchor without making sure that the end of the anchor rope was made fast.
23. Roller furling (rolling jib).
24. The overtaking boat has to keep out of the way of the overtaken.
25. The crew of the Margoletta neglects to allow for the tidal current.
26. Showing a port light at night gives right of way.
27. Peggy neglected to make a proper clove hitch. As well, the current swept Amazon away.
28. Fingers! Fingers!
29. A range marked by lights.
30. 1. He leans over the transom to see that water is coming out of the exhaust as it should.  
2. He hauls in the Imp's painter, for fear it should get wound in the Propeller.

Part Two:

- |                 |                    |                      |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| A(8) Hawse-hole | B(16) Port Tack    | C(13) Kedge          |
| D(1) Brail      | E(15) Fid          | F(5) Gunwale         |
| G(6) Jibe       | H(19) Close-hauled | I(4) Goosewinged     |
| J(20) Halyard   | K(7) Parrel        | L(10) Gudgeon        |
| M(17) Bulwarks  | N(18) Samson Post  | O(11) Starboard Tack |
| P(12) Fiddles   | Q(14) Mouse, to:   | R(3) Bollards        |
| S(9) Girt, to:  | T(2) Binnacle      |                      |

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Annual TARS event. So I'm very much looking forward to that. What I haven't been able to do, unfortunately, is find a copy of that BBC movie. Apparently it's never been sold on video, and though there may be a few "pirate" copies running around the U.K., it isn't available.

So there's a not-so-brief bio, and a Ransome story largely of looking for things before I knew how to find them!

Su Stauffer, Lafayette, CA (Spring, 1994)

I am so glad for all the good things from the ARS which really helped to keep my spirits up during last summer's bone-marrow transplant (I have cancer). I read all AR's stories in the hospital again which helped pass 7 weeks. What glorious stories they are too and form a core in my life since I was seven. Have read them every 2 or 3 years since, and, of course, to my children and have started 6 other children onto them just recently.

I haven't sailed much since leaving the East Coast where we had a small sailboat--a 12½' Werrishoff which we raced in Marblehead Harbor, Mass. and cruised in Maine near Mt. Desert--but we love the Sierra both for hiking and skiing.

I picked up 3 sets of AR's books for my children in Harrod's in London in March, 1992 and found that the Society was up and running--they seem to have a wonderful time, but I must say I would be reluctant to see the actual places--they couldn't be better than my imagination of this dear world which AR created. It is fun to find out about him. I am amazed at how conservation minded he was in the 1930's and love his emphasis on children creating their own adventures!

We went on two cruises along the Turkish coast in 1985 and 1987 (I also love Greek ruins) and loved the sailing in that beautiful place!

What about getting in touch with sailing camps and marinas? The 12 and 13-year-olds really need AR's stories to keep them out of the malls!

Janet, Peter, and Molly O'Neill, Redding, CA (Autumn, 1994)

I'm Janet O'Neill, the designated family biographer. This story really involves all of us equally, so the fact I'm writing it in no way suggests my role is in any way bigger than that of the others!

I'm a journalist by profession, currently working a bit less than full time for Redding's only daily newspaper. For years I worked as a reporter, editor, features writer and photographer depending on where I was, until in late 1993 I decided it was time to slow down, spend more time with Molly and fiddle around with fiction writing. Molly has fared better than the fiction writing, but I've loved finally having time to get to know her better. I've worked part time for the past year, but am temporarily back at the paper almost full time while one of our features writers is on maternity leave.

Peter teaches middle school, specifically seventh-grade English, reading and social studies. He's been at it about six years, having gone back to school after being self-employed as a general contractor in the summer and fishing guide in the winter. His specialty is carpentry, and one year he built an 8-foot sailing dinghy. We were deep into "Wind in the Willows" at the time, so it was christened the "Minnow". Peter has enjoyed a lifelong interest in sailing, and in the mid-1970's crewed on a 38-foot ketch-rigged trimaran from Hawaii to California.

Molly is a 10-year-old fifth-grader active on the swim team. She's just finished her first soccer season and plans to start basketball in January. She's also a voracious reader and spends much of her life in the company of a book.

As it turns out, Molly was our link to Arthur Ransome. Last Christmas my uncle, in his 60's and recently retired from a career in the astronomy department at UC Berkeley, gave her a copy of "Swallows and Amazons". We'd never heard of it, but he had fond recollections of reading the series as a child. His daughter, Cynthia, has also read the series, and the books mean a great deal to her too.

What followed was remarkable. Soon Peter and I were involved, and we ended up in the Lake District in August at the Red Lion pub in Lowick Bridge with several TARS members from Britain and Japan. Included in the group was Dick Kelsall, which was especially meaningful

as Dick had been Uncle David's favorite character in the books. Everyone was exceedingly kind to us and generous with their time. The next day we scaled Kanchenjunga and saw the plaque honoring AR that's since been removed to Holly Howe. Also, we visited the "Amazon" in Bowness, the Ransome room in Abbot Hall in Kendal, and Ransome's grave in Rusland.

We'd had considerable difficulty obtaining the books prior to our trip, so filled out our set in England. Molly has completed the series, and Peter isn't far behind. I'm in third place. So far I like Titty best.



February 29, 1996


AHOY, TARSUS!

Here we are, a whole month and a half earlier than our Spring Newsletter last year. It will be at least four years before I can write one on this date again, so this is very special! I don't suppose it's very Spring-y yet for some of you, but WE have daffodils and irises and cala lilies in bloom. In spite of that, the water in the birdbath was covered with ice the other morning.

There are three new interesting articles available. One is entitled "Sailing the Amazon" from Cumbria magazine and is all about the boat immortalised by AR. Did you know that her original name was "Mavis" and that she was always painted rather than varnished? I guess Ransome was entitled to a little poetic license. Imagine the book entitled "Swallows and Mavis"! This article is 2 pages, so send a SASE and 20¢ if you want it. The second article is "Japanese Beach Cruiser." It was originally published in a boating magazine in which a designer (Phillip C. Bolger) received letters in which readers asked him to design a boat for them to fit a particular purpose. He would do a preliminary design and write one up for each issue. A year or two ago, he put a whole lot of designs together, this one included, and published them in a book. It was designed to accompany the boats mentioned in AR's books, at the request of Teruaki Imanaga in Japan. There are 6 pages to this article, so send a SASE with extra stamp and 60¢ if you would like it. The third article is out of Messing About in Boats, a small boat magazine published twice a month on the east coast. It is entitled, "Building a Second Swallow" by Stuart Kirkland Wier from Boulder, CO. It is 2 pages, so send 20¢ with the SASE. We are grateful to Tom Grimes for these last two articles.

We had a wonderful AR birthday party here at my home on January 14. (His actual birthday is January 18, but that was not a good day for the party.) The O'Neills and Kiesters came. They brought ginger beer (really gingery!), seed cake, and chocolate bars, and I made a big pot of chicken noodle stew with homemade bread, butter and marmalade. Also had a big bowl of fruit and hot drinks (including tea, of course). The piece de resistance was the birthday cake: a carrot cake with blue-green frosting and Wild Cat Island (made from the top of a loaf of my round bread) with a little branch from one of my bushes stuck through it and my husband's keychain lantern hanging from it, and two walnut-shell boats, one with a white sail and the other with a brown. We looked at each other's scrapbooks, visited, and watched several of the videos. It was a delightful time. My husband made a souvenir bookmark on his computer, and I've saved a bottle of ginger beer to go with my bottle of Conistan Lake Water. Hope these pictures will inspire you to go and do likewise!

THREE CHEERS FOR TARSUS!

  
Betty Jo Baerg







\* Peter, Janet, and Molly O'Neill, Your Truly, Sally and Edwin Kiester



\* Molly O'Neill



\* Sally and Edwin Kiester



## SIGNALS FROM T·A·R·S·U·S

April 18, 1995

Spring Greetings!

As Winter is losing her grip, I trust you are all outdoors, enjoying nature's awakening. We have mockingbirds, linnets, yellow-billed magpies, meadowlarks, and killdeer in our yard or singing from the rooftops. Are there any birdwatchers among you--what do you see in YOUR area? We have a lot of rivers and water meadows around us. This spring they have become more noticeable. In my excellent dictionary on SAILING, I notice that FLOOD is defined as "A sudden rising of water during which 'landlubbers' are introduced to the pleasures of boating." We did not quite come to that, but we were glad we had a canoe to fall back on!

One of our Michigan members, Captain I. W. Stephenson, was here in California for the America's Cup Trials, which he covered for the local media. San Diego is rather far from Sacramento, so I was not able to meet him personally, but perhaps some of you heard him.

For those of you who are hunting for books by Arthur Ransome, here are two sources. David Godine has purchased the rights to produce and sell the paperbacks in the U.S. He has been doing them as fast as financially possible, about one new title a year. Currently available are: Swallows & Amazons, Swallowdale, Coot Club, Peter Duck, Pigeon Post, Winter Holiday, and We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea. Secret Water will probably be available early next year. The books are \$11.95 each. Postage and handling is \$4.50, whether you order one book or all seven (or more). Visa cards are accepted. Address: David R. Godine, Publisher, P.O. Box 9103, Lincoln, MA 01773-9103. Phone: 1-800-344-4771. Fax: 1-800-226-0934.

The Red Fox paperbacks may be obtained from Canada, along with whatever hardcovers are still available. They also accept Visa cards. Postage and Handling is \$5. The paperbacks are \$6 and the hardcovers about \$20 (Canadian). Address: The Children's Book Store, 2532 Yonge St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4P 2H7. Phone: 416-480-0233. Their 800 number is good only in Canada.

Arthur Ransome on Fishing, by Jeremy Swift, is a new release by Jonathan Cape. It has 280 pages and costs 14.99 pounds. Most of the book is devoted to Ransome's previously uncollected "Guardian" pieces, plus an extract from the unfinished novel, a thrilling passage from one of the "Swallows and Amazons" series, and also a longish biographical sketch by Swift. The book is well-illustrated. Anyone who wants copies of the promotional material on this book from "The Times Literary Supplement" and "The Spectator" (2 pages) send 10¢ a page, and I will make you a copy. They're really interesting.

For new members who may not be aware of it, some of us have videos of "Swallows & Amazons," "Coot Club," and "Big Six" on VHS. If you are interested, let me know. If YOU happen to have a nice clear copy of the last two, also let me know!

Don't forget to share your adventures with the rest of us--especially trips to the U.K. or the AGM (Annual General Meeting of TARS). This Newsletter depends on YOU! If any of you want to start a Junior Newsletter, I have a good example from England I'll be glad to send you.

THREE CHEERS FOR TARSUS!

(Mrs.) Betty Jo Baerg

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## SIGNALS FROM T·A·R·S·U·S

August 10, 1995

Summer Salutations!

Captain Ike Stephenson always closes his letters by telling me to "think warm, sunny sailing weather." I think it and THINK it, and it gets warm enough, but I've never been sailing yet! Isn't that a shame? But we just came home from camping for a week by Lake Tahoe. And I'm sure many of you have been having exciting vacations. If any of you had an Arthur-Ransome-type vacation, we'd all love to hear about it.

Dave Thewlis wrote a terrific letter all about the TARS AGM (Annual General Meeting) in Chichester, England. His complete report is 3 pages long, and if you would like to read it all, just send 30¢ and a SASE. He felt that three things were of special interest to TARSUS. The first was the request for help from Roger Wardale to find SELINA KING, one of AR's boats that was bought by an American in Bermuda and taken away from that island. Dave is willing to coordinate the search for her, so if you have any information or suggestions, contact him. He is on the membership list, and his phone number is 1-707-442-9342. I'd give you his e-mail address, but I can't seem to reach him. The second item he mentioned was the need for sufficient subscribers for the U.S. format of Brigit's video "The Ransomes Remembered." I also heard from Brigit in regard to this. She says they need a dozen or so orders in order to break even, and thus far they have 2 orders. The cost is 20 pounds, plus postage, and you can order through our treasurer, Ellen Tillinghast. The third item in Dave's report was the relationship of TARSUS to TARS in the light of a possible future incorporation of TARS, probably as their equivalent of a nonprofit corporation, and just how we would be structured. This can become important when and if we begin having national Events and need insurance. Anyone who has thoughts on these items, please share them with me. Dave had a great time exploring Horseshoe Cove, Swallowdale #1, and Holly Howe.

Edwin Kiester has shared a New York Times travel article on the waterways of eastern England. If you would like a copy, send 40¢ and a SASE.

You will be sorry to hear that member Su Stauffer finally lost her battle with cancer and has passed away. She introduced many children to AR's books even the last year of her life. Our sympathy goes out to her family.

You will find an up-dated membership list and another "Resume" to add to your collection. There are many new members who have not told us about yourselves--we hope you will.

Sunday, September 10, all the TARSUS members in Northern California (and Oregon or anywhere else) are invited to my home for a picnic-potluck. We will share our memories, scrapbooks, tripbooks, etc. from 10 a.m. till you feel like going home! If anyone wants to see the videos, I'll show them. I have lots of toys, so feel free to bring your children. I'd really appreciate a card from you, letting me know you're coming and how many of you there'll be. Try and bring food mentioned in the books, though I'm sure they ate lots of food that wasn't specifically mentioned. I once went to a barbeque on Wild Cat Island and drank ginger beer and ate seed cake. I had everyone autograph my paper cup, and I still have a piece of dehydrated cake!

Wherever you are, I encourage you to get together and then be sure and tell us all about it. . .

THREE CHEERS FOR TARSUS!

Annual TARS event. So I'm very much looking forward to that. What I haven't been able to do, unfortunately, is find a copy of that BBC movie. Apparently it's never been sold on video, and though there may be a few "pirate" copies running around the U.K., it isn't available.

So there's a not-so-brief bio, and a Ransome story largely of looking for things before I knew how to find them!

Janet, Peter, and Molly O'Neill, Redding, CA (Autumn, 1994)

I'm Janet O'Neill, the designated family biographer. This story really involves all of us equally, so the fact I'm writing it in no way suggests my role is in any way bigger than that of the others!

I'm a journalist by profession, currently working a bit less than full time for Redding's only daily newspaper. For years I worked as a reporter, editor, features writer and photographer depending on where I was, until in late 1993 I decided it was time to slow down, spend more time with Molly and fiddle around with fiction writing. Molly has fared better than the fiction writing, but I've loved finally having time to get to know her better. I've worked part time for the past year, but am temporarily back at the paper almost full time while one of our features writers is on maternity leave.

Peter teaches middle school, specifically seventh-grade English, reading and social studies. He's been at it about six years, having gone back to school after being self-employed as a general contractor in the summer and fishing guide in the winter. His specialty is carpentry, and one year he built an 8-foot sailing dinghy. We were deep into "Wind in the Willows" at the time, so it was christened the "Minnow". Peter has enjoyed a lifelong interest in sailing, and in the mid-1970's crewed on a 38-foot ketch-rigged trimaran from Hawaii to California.

Molly is a 10-year-old fifth-grader active on the swim team. She's just finished her first soccer season and plans to start basketball in January. She's also a voracious reader and spends much of her life in the company of a book.

As it turns out, Molly was our link to Arthur Ransome. Last Christmas my uncle, in his 60's and recently retired from a career in the astronomy department at UC Berkeley, gave her a copy of "Swallows and Amazons". We'd never heard of it, but he had fond recollections of reading the series as a child. His daughter, Cynthia, has also read the series, and the books mean a great deal to her too.

What followed was remarkable. Soon Peter and I were involved, and we ended up in the Lake District in August at the Red Lion pub in Lowick Bridge with several TARS members from Britain and Japan. Included in the group was Dick Kelsall, which was especially meaningful as Dick had been Uncle David's favorite character in the books. Everyone was exceedingly kind to us and generous with their time. The next day we scaled Kanchenjunga and saw the plaque honoring AR that's since been removed to Holly Howe. Also, we visited the "Amazon" in Bowness, the Ransome room in Abbot Hall in Kendal, and Ransome's grave in Rusland.

We'd had considerable difficulty obtaining the books prior to our trip, so filled out our set in England. Molly has completed the series, and Peter isn't far behind. I'm in third place. So far I like Titty best.

Jane Laninga, Kailua, HI (Spring, 1995)

I really cannot recall how I first met Arthur Ransome's delightful characters. Since I do not own a copy of S&A I suspect I read it first as a library book. I do recall, like Ellen Tillinghast, that at first glance I presumed the book to be about birds in South Am. How glad I am that I was interested enough in birds in S.A. to pick up S&A! Thereafter I was hooked. I read and re-read the other books as they were issued in paperback in the early 70's by Penguin Books. All my books are in England; how I wish I had them with me now! Three cheers for Robert Barcus and his letter to National Geographic, because that is how I first heard of TARS. Up until then I had never met another person who recognized the name Arthur Ransome and to whom the books meant so much. Pleased to meet you all!

Let me tell you something about myself. I was born in Australia but went to school in County Durham, England, just over the Pennines from the Lake District, from the age of 10.

I met my husband, who is an artillery officer in the U.S. Marine Corps, six years ago when he was working at the American Embassy in Amman, Jordan and I was working at the British Embassy there. We are on a 3-year posting to the Marine Corps Base Hawaii at Kaneohe Bay on the Windward side of Oahu, about 15 miles from Honolulu, and loving every minute of it. We have one year left--if any members are passing through, please feel free to get in touch. I think we are pretty good at being tour guides. At the moment I am a senior, majoring in accounting at the U. of Hawaii. My graduation is projected for May of '96, and shortly afterwards we will be transferred to another post, we know not where. Then I shall be looking for a job in the tax side of accounting. Military life is never dull, if one enjoys traveling and seeing new places and if one is prepared to take the good along with the bad. By the time we leave Hawaii my husband will have been away from home for half of the three years we spend here.

So back to AR. My mother, who was left alone with myself and a younger brother to care for, often would load up the car with camping gear, and off we would go over the Pennines to camp in farmers' fields in the Lake District. I distinctly remember the first time we went driving down the winding road which approaches Ullswater and wondering how she knew the way. Later I realized that she didn't know the way; she was exploring! Over the years our camping gear became more sophisticated and our knowledge of the Lakes more comprehensive. I recall always taking a home-made fruitcake with us. "Yuk!" the Americans will say. "Ah, but this was English fruitcake," I say, "and quite different to that stuff everyone makes jokes about in America." Jolly convenient stuff it is too; keeps for ages in England's climate, travels well without crumbling, and can be cut into chunks to be eaten out of your hand with a large mug of hot tea. (Recipe upon request.)

My acquaintance with the Swallows and Amazons began after I had visited the Lakes several times. I was delighted to meet such a charming group whose adventures took place in the very same Lakes I visited. I wanted to be a Swallow and have adventures like theirs. In this day of violence and viciousness, the Swallows and Amazons are genuinely nice and decent people who have some exciting adventures without swearing, vandalism or mugging anybody. How novel! I was always very impressed with the relationships of the Walkers to each other as well as the Blacketts to each other. My brother and I were brought up to be caring and civil to each other like they were. For a long time I thought we were the only siblings in the world who didn't constantly bicker and fight.

My brother and I longed for a sailing dingy so we too could camp on an island, and eventually we got a Wayfarer which is now stored in Mum's garage in England since my brother is living in Australia. I'm sure one of us will one day get it out again and trundle it over the mountains to launch it on one of those beautiful lakes. Such a lot of our childhood was spent there and such a lot of our good memories are bound to the Lakes. My brother says he gets homesick for the Lakes, not for the small market town where our mother lives (James Herriot country for all you Anglophiles). I remember how humiliated we were the time our tent blew down one windy day. I remember Bobby, our Bearded Collie, who died earlier this year at the grand old age of 17, never thought much of the camping lark. He preferred to sleep in the car, but he adored boats of all shapes and sizes, and was always the first one to get his feet wet in the icy water of the Lakes. I remember climbing the Old Man of Coniston for the first time. Mum was petrified of heights, but she never told us. I can picture her now as she came face to face with a Border Collie stepping surefootedly down the mountain, while, with her hands on the ground, she clambered up those last few steep feet to the top. So you see TARSUS is a nostalgia trip for me, and next time I go home to England I shall be bringing my AR books back with me. Perhaps if I put them in our living room bookcase someone will ask a question about them, and I can tell them all about TARSUS. Thank you, Arthur Ransome, for so many good memories and such good yarns. Swallows and Amazons forever!

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## SIGNALS FROM T·A·R·S·U·S

December, 1995

### Holiday Greetings!

Time for Winter Holidays, and some of you live a little closer to the North Pole than the rest of us! We haven't even had a frost yet. Santa has just sent me word that Janson Associates, Inc. have released "Coot Club" and "The Big Six" on home video. They are advertized at \$24.95, but TARSUS members get a special price of \$19.95 if they mention the twins—"Port and Starboard." Shipping and handling are \$4.00 for first cassette, \$2.00 each additional cassette. You'll find a postcard enclosed with address and phone number for ordering. I have personally seen these videos, and they are beautiful! For those of us who have never seen the Norfolk Broads and maybe never will, they give us a wonderful glimpse. Let us hope that this company will also get the rights to produce "Swallows & Amazons." They are trying.

C. E. (Ted) Alexander has written from England to say that he is now officially handling all TARS publications, Amazon Publications, back copies of these, and current editions of AR books. He says that all the books are available in hardback again, except "Old Peter" and "The Birds & The Beasts." If you wish to order anything from him (his address is on p. 64 of "Mixed Moss"), first write for stock prices and postage costs, always stating Surface or Air Mail. You can then order them through Ellen Tillinghast and pay in U.S. dollars, thus saving the conversion charges for a dollars-to-pounds check.

The September issue of "Cumbria Magazine" has an interesting article entitled "Where Fact and Fiction Meet. . ." about a family discovering the sites in AR's books. If you'd like to read it, send 20¢ and a SASE. The "Redding Record Searchlight" newspaper has an excellent article entitled "Pilgrimage to 'Ransome Country'—an adventure equal to his books" by TARSUS member Janet O'Neill. For a copy of this, send 30¢ and a SASE.

Am enclosing an updated Membership List. As you can see, we are about to hit 100! We want to welcome all the new members—we even have one in Puerto Rico now. I will mention again that Dave Thewlis is coordinating the search for SELINA KING, one of AR's boats that was bought by an American in Bermuda. If you have any information or suggestions you can contact Dave by phone, U.S. mail, or e-Mail. All are listed on the Membership List.

Am wondering if there is a family with children among you who plans to attend the AGM next spring. If you are, I'd appreciate your letting me know as there is a magazine interested in doing an article on TARSUS from the viewpoint of Junior members as well as adults.

Hope more of you will write and tell us about yourself and how you became acquainted with AR books. We're scattered across such a large country, this is about the only way we can get in touch with each other. As you know, Arthur Ransome's birthday is January 18. That is a Thursday in 1996. I'd like to invite all members in my part of the country (and any of you that happen to be out our way) to my house for an indoor potluck lunch or supper on that date or on the Sunday before or after—January 14 or 21. Please contact me and let me know which date would be best for you. Hope the rest of you will do something also, then tell us about it!

Karabadangbaraka!

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