



SIGNALS FROM T·A·R·S·U·S

February 2000

Winter Greetings!

This newsletter accompanies the *Despatches* providing information about the upcoming Spring 2000 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of TARS at Lakeside, Windermere. In addition to *Despatches* itself an extra copy of the booking form is provide. **U.S. TARS PLEASE NOTE:** We have a special arrangement with the AGM sponsors to handle U.S. dollars for all TARSUS. If you are going to attend the AGM (and I hope many of us will), you may pay the booking fees in total in U.S. Dollars directly to me. Fill out the booking form and send it directly to the AGM BOOKINGS address in the U.K. Send a copy (**not** the original!) plus a check for the total in U.S. Dollars (convert as £1.00 = \$1.65) to me at the address at the end of this newsletter. **WARNING:** spaces for this AGM are going to fill up very fast so act quickly, especially because of the limited accommodation available at the Lakeside YMCA.

Membership Renewal for 2000

Most of you have sent in your renewal for your TARS membership but some of you haven't. If you haven't, then your address label on the envelope has a big red "R" on it and your newsletter has a renewal sticker at the top!! If you got the Red R (not quite yet the Black Spot), please send your renewal in today. Membership was really due on the first of January.

The membership database will be purged just before the next TARS mailing which will be *Signals* in April. If you don't renew you will get a final "Farewell and Adieu!" card instead of *Signals* (and *The Outlaw* if you're a Family or Junior). I'm doing this early because some folks have been waiting until August and then renewing after the *Mixed Moss* mailing – and being unhappy when there aren't enough *Mixed Moss*. This way we can get it all straight before the summer.

Welcome

Welcome to new members: Mathew Bickley, Kimberly Becker, Daniel Bickley and Katie Bickley; Doug, Cheryl, Brittany, Cedric, Desmond and Rhodri Bond; James Hunter Budd; Marcia Fischer; Sandra Garber & Jim Satterfield; Katie McCoy; and Jaime Preston.

Resumes

We have two additions to the Résumés file: Steve McRoberts, and Sandra Garber & Jim Satterfield. Steve is British but living in the California Bay Area; Sandra and Jim live in Georgia. And (roll of trumpets) Steve in the Bay Area, and Sandra and Jim in Georgia, are all working towards TARS events later this year, as is Debra Alderman and her crew up in Seattle – more about this later in the newsletter.

“An Awfully Big Adventure”

I announced in the last newsletter than I could obtain NTSC (North American format) videos of the BBC “An Awfully Big Adventure” for TARSUS who were interested, and wound up having eight copies made and distributed (including one in original PAL format for a TARS in Australia). I am still willing to do more if anyone else is interested but will delay until the end of March in order to get as many as possible (as we get a discount on multiple copies). So if you are interested let me know by March 31st. Cost will be about \$25 depending on how many requests we get.

Amazon Publications

The Amazon Publications offering for this year will be “A Ransome Bookshelf”. The cost to TARSUS is \$25 (sent air post) and you must subscribe and send in your money in advance. Subscriptions can be sent directly to me along with your check – but you must subscribe quickly if you are interested. Once the book is available, it can be purchased from the Society Bookstall, but the cost will be a bit higher.

Nancy Blackett Trust

Those of you who wish to contribute to the Nancy Blackett Trust for the care and maintenance of “The best little ship I ever had” can send your contributions or membership fees to me in U.S. dollars. Membership is on the order of \$20 and you get *Jibbooms and Bobstays!* twice yearly, a chance to get all sorts of neat NB memorabilia, and the knowledge that you’re helping to keep Nancy Blackett on the water, and available to all who love her.

For those of you who don’t know, Nancy was caught in gales on her mooring at Woolverstone last fall and then had her engine seize up, so the Trust is

facing some unbudgeted expenses, and contributions will be gratefully received.

Articles of Interest

Periodically TARS members send me copies of articles about Ransome or Ransome areas of the U.K. If they appear to be of general interest I offer to make copies and send them to TARSUS members for the cost of postage and copying.

Dennis Boese sent me two articles from *Cruising World*. “Exploring the English Broads” appeared in the January 1981 issue, and makes no reference to AR’s writings, but is still an interesting read. “A Day on the Broads” appeared in August 1986 and has references to AR, Swallows & Amazons, and the Coot Club. If you are interested in either article send me \$1.00 to cover postage and copying and I’ll send you a copy.

TARS Event In Georgia – June 21-24 2000

New TARS member James Satterfield has forwarded the following (and posted it to his own website):

A Georgia TARSUS Event

Ahoy! All fans of Arthur Ransome's wonderful books!
Ahoy!

I am planning a TARSUS (The Arthur Ransome Society U.S.) event at Sweetwater Campground, Lake Allatoona, Georgia from June 21 through June 24, 2000. My grandchildren should be old enough to learn to sail our canoe, row the dingy, and sail the semi-dory by that time. We'll be camping in Campsite 44.

We should have many good adventures similar to those the characters in Ransome's books experienced. While I have found the Great South West Pole and posted an ARS flag, we should go back and verify that the flag is still there. Of course, it will be necessary to take along proper provisions for the expedition.. The Great North West Pole remains to be discovered as well as exploring the rest of the section of the Lake where we will be sailing. A few of the landmarks have been named, but most have not.

Semaphore flags will be used for signaling experience, there are fish to catch, and then there are

the knots of sailing and many other things to have fun learning as sailing and rowing skills develop. We'll probably race a bit too. Who knows what may develop?

We will watch videos of movies that have been made from three of Ransome's books. Around the campfire in the evenings we'll read some of Ransome's books aloud, roast marshmallows, sing the songs of sailing, and listen to stories some may wish to tell.

If you have children or friends that you wish to teach to sail, have a sailboat, or wish to just share adventures, come along and join us for this informal event. We'll be at Campsite 44, so go to

www.ReserveUSA.com/nrrs/ga/swee/swee4.html

and make reservations for a campsite in the same general area if you can join us for this auspicious, and perhaps "annual", event.

Please note that this is not an official ARS "sanctioned" event. I'm simply getting together with my grandchildren for four days of playing in the water and pretending to be Arthur Ransome characters. If you come to join us, please be prepared to be responsible for your own safety and for those who come with you.

Since I am also posting this outside the ARS news circles, some who read this may know nothing of The Arthur Ransome Society. In that case go to the web site www.arthur-ransome.org/ar/ and get acquainted with TARS and this particularly wonderful series of children's books...which old folks can enjoy too!

I look forward to hearing from any of you who wish to share in the fun my grandchildren and I will be having. You can send me email at: jsatt@gsu.edu

Cordially yours,
Jim Satterfield aka Captain G. Flint

TARS Local Chapter Forming In Seattle

On a rare starry night in February, a gathering of a few dedicated Ransome devotees gathered in Seattle to brainstorm directions for a Seattle/Pacific NW chapter of TARS. Dave Thewlis, visiting from out of town, was joined by several of the locals for coffee and a surprising amount of concrete developments came out of this brief meeting.

Here are a few highlights:

Gayle Richardson, children's librarian at Seattle's Northeast branch, has committed to doing three Ransome-related reading/ project events for elementary aged kids as part of her summer programming (one per month over the summer). She's also got plans to use the display case at the library's entrance to promote the books and the programs.

Debra Alderman (who attended the meeting) and another library patron have both committed \$200 donations to the Seattle Public Library (which likely will be matched dollar for dollar by Paul Allen Foundation funds) to establish an Arthur Ransome Collection at the Northeast branch—which will be available through the SPL library system to all of Seattle's residents. The \$800 will be give Gayle a nice budget to acquire more of the books and materials available about AR and the series. Once there is a beefed up collection (or would that be pemmican?) Gayle's got ideas for getting a cool display case to house them.

Debra reported to the group that over the winter she has been contacting a number of the TARS in Washington State and B.C. in hopes of raising interest in a local chapter of TARS which would put on family-oriented activities including boating, hiking, wildlife watching, etc. The basis for the programming would be activities found in the books, but will follow interests of the folks who get involved. The response has been good, and at the meeting we discussed various options. One idea would be to co-sponsor events with more established organizations like the Audubon Society, Center for Wooden Boats, The Audubon Society, local orienteering groups, etc. This would have the double advantage of getting more folks involved as well as getting liability coverage through a more official organization's insurance. If you are in the area and are interested in participating in these types of activities (or could help lead some of them), Debra would like to hear from you. (See end of these notes for contact info).

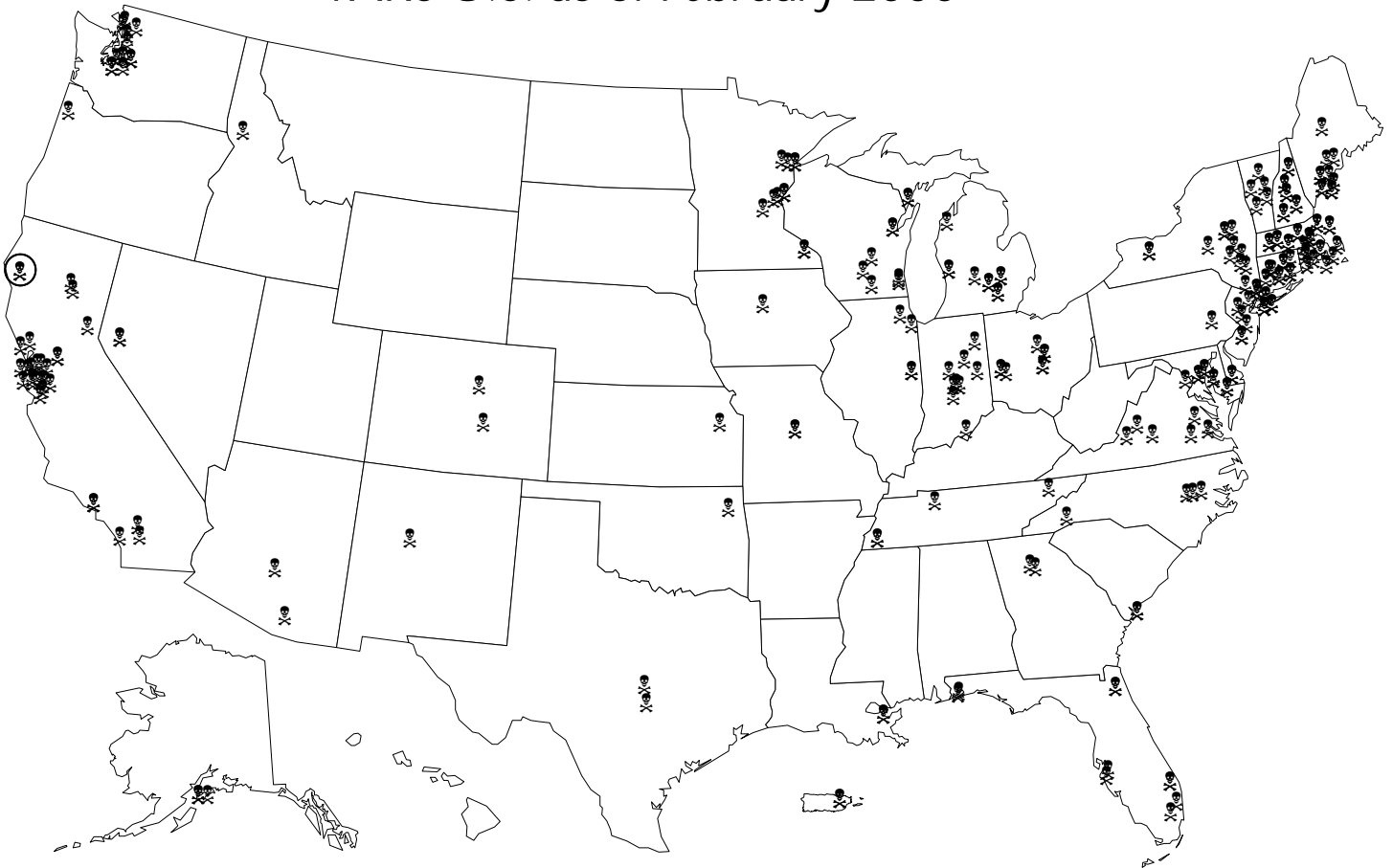
Another attendee at the meeting was Sophia Hindley, a third grade teacher in a small private school, who is hoping to have her students read the S&A books in her and use them as a springboard to many other educational class activities. Dave offered to help her get in touch via TARBOARD, etc. with teachers internationally who have done this and may have valuable suggestions.

Here in the northwest, we are hoping that this exciting spirit of commitment to promoting the AR books, and bringing together their fans will be infectious and that others around the country will also initiate some programming in their areas. For those who live in the area, now's a great time to get involved!

Contact Debra Alderman
3851 N.E. 89th ST.
Seattle, WA 98115
debra@cyberscribe.com
(206) 524-1934

AND remember to contact Steve McRoberts about sailing on San Francisco Bay (see last SFT!!)

TARS U.S. as of February 2000



TARSUS has 141 households distributed as shown including Alaska and Puerto Rico.

It looks as though TARSUS are starting reach a sort of critical mass because we're beginning to see small TARS events being planned and actually happening in several places. Now it's your turn to have an AR event or adventure – and then tell us about it! And I hope to see you in May on Lake Windermere!

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