



Signals from TARSUS & North Pole News--May 2012

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A View from the Helm

By Robin Marshall, TARSUS Coordinator

Once again, as we look forward from the crosstrees, we see summer appearing on the horizon. Plans are forming for trips and adventures in the coming months. If any of you have some exciting vacations during the summer please to write them up for this journal.

It was with great pleasure I heard that we have Doug Faunt, one of our TARSUS members joining the Trustees of the Society (TARS). Doug, our most adventurous member, is currently aboard the good ship Bounty. Bounty this year is sailing up the east coast. Those members on or near the eastern seaboard: she will probably visit a port near you. Check their website <http://www.tallshipbounty.org/> for places and dates. Contact Doug faunt@panix.com and see if he will be aboard. He would love to meet other TARS members. I am sure Doug will look after our interests and those of the other overseas arms of the Society.

I was looking at some past Society publications and feel that our own Signals from TARSUS and North Pole News is really a credit to the contributors, and of course our editor Elizabeth Jolley, not forgetting Jessika and Hannah Hodgson who take care of the Junior section. It is now a big plus that our Canadian members give us adventures and experiences from the far north. Although we are widely scattered it gives us a sense of being part of the whole group. I am glad to say that most members have now renewed, but there are still some delinquencies. I hope they have just forgotten. So please get that checkbook out and continue being part of the crew!

Please welcome the following new members:

Keaton Feiler of Boulder Utah

Lisa Glade of Tooele Utah

Neal Lavelle of Oakland CA

Nathaniel Schildbach of Leverett MA

Richard Preston and Katharine Torrey of Alstead NH

Welcome aboard to you all!

Robin



Greetings from the North

By Harry Miller, TARSCanada Chair

When Elizabeth's email arrived my first thought was "Oh dear, I haven't got anything else to say". Actually "dear" wasn't the word that popped into my mind.

I then thought of my daughter Sarah who is wearing the sweater admired by Elizabeth in the last issue. Twenty-four years later she is now a United Church minister and has to write and deliver a sermon each week. She does have a place to start however. The lectionary provides a set of biblical readings for each week.

Well we have our own lectionary and with only three issues per year it will take four years to complete a cycle. Also with the subject known in advance I hope to inspire some of our members to contribute articles when their favourite book comes up.

Speaking of favourite books, several years ago a survey on "Tarboard" ([Tarboard](#)) revealed that *Swallows and Amazons* was far down this list, and indeed I voted for *Winter Holiday* at that time, but having just reread the initial story of our canon I must say it means at least as much to me as any of the others. It certainly has my favourite chapter title: "More Island Life". This reflects my preference for a life of routine with each day much like the previous one. I feel at one with the Swallows in wishing they could live there forever.

Reaching the island was exploration, and although the island could only be discovered once, every morning I can discover the one island in the lake where we have a cottage. In 24 years I have never tired of the view you can see on the picture below. As you can see it's about as far removed from spectacular as one can get.



Spectacular isn't the point. That it's always there and always the same is.

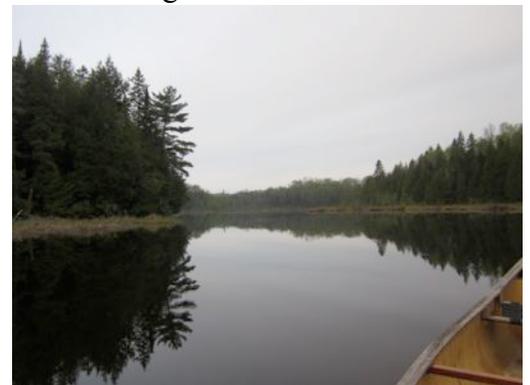
I'm usually on the water about 5:30 am and paddle around the island and then down the river as far as I can. In midsummer the waterlilies (octopuses) fill the channel with a solid mass, making progress difficult to impossible, but as you can see here in May they are just starting to develop their tentacles, and passage is easy to the beaver dam which marks the limit of navigation.

Last Saturday when I took these photos I could

hear several bitterns and got some photos of our resident loons but these come from other books.



Although I am no literary critic, this book does have a different feel to me. It's like it was in the author's mind for a long time just waiting to jump out onto the page with no research necessary. Please inspire yourselves for Swallowdale in September.



I would also like to welcome two new members:

Frederick Warner of Toronto ON

Kenneth Gibson of Thornhill ON

Finally, I will be updating our address list soon.

Cheers,

Harry

Membership Information:

Member Benefits

The descriptions below apply to **TARSUS** and **TARS Canada**** only. Members in other countries receive the publications listed, with the exception of Signals from TARSUS, and pay their local equivalent of the UK prices. Subscription prices quoted below were correct at January 2011, and will apply for this year.

FAMILY Member: \$44.00

Family Members receive the following publications:

Mixed Moss, the yearly Literary Magazine

Signals, the news from UK Regions and headquarters, and some overseas groups, three times per year

Outlaw, the newsletter for Junior members

Signals from TARSUS, the quarterly newsletter of TARSUS & TARS Canada.

With a Family Membership, it is necessary to register the names of all members of the family.

ADULT Member: \$35.00

Adult Members receive Mixed Moss, Signals and Signals from TARSUS.

SENIOR Member: \$26.50

Over 65 years of age you are eligible for Senior Membership & receive the same publications as Adult Members.

STUDENT Member: \$17.50

Student members must be engaged in full-time study. They receive the same publications as Adult Members.

JUNIOR Member: \$9.00

Junior members, under 17 years of age, receive Signals and Signals from TARSUS, plus Outlaw.

To apply for TARSUS membership, please complete the Application Form (next page).

Send it with your remittance to:

Robin Marshall 210 18th St NW Bradenton FL 34205-6845

robin@arthur-ransome.org

or join online at: <http://arthur-ransome.org/join/index>

To apply for TARS Canada membership, contact:

Harry Miller 284 Kingswood Road, Toronto, ONT M4E 3N7

harryandmarymiller@rogers.com

or join online at: <http://arthur-ransome.org/join/index>

THE ARTHUR RANSOME SOCIETY in the USA

-APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP-

Surname (Mr. / Mrs. / Miss / Ms / Dr): _____

First Name(s): _____

Birth date (**Mandatory if applying for Junior Membership**): _____

Names and birth dates of junior Family Members (if you wish to receive birthday cards!):

Postal Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____

E- Mail address: _____

Subscription amounts are current as of January 2011 for US residents and based on an average exchange rate with UK.

Please clearly mark below the type of membership desired:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> JUNIOR (up to 16 th birthday), \$9.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> SENIOR (Over 65 Years of age), \$26.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT (In full-time education), \$17.50 | <input type="checkbox"/> ADULT, \$35.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY, \$44.00 | |

Signature: _____

Date: ___ / ___ / ___

Do you wish to be included on a membership list that is sent to other members? Circle: **YES** **NO**

Optional details: your age, occupation and a brief profile that we can publish in our newsletter: _____

If you have any qualifications, experience, skills or interests you might like to contribute to TARS, please mention them here:

For renewals please add your membership number: _____ Cheque/Money Order enclosed

When complete, send this form with your remittance to:

Robin Marshall 210 18th St NW Bradenton FL 34205-6845 robin@arthur-ransome.org

-or- You may join online and pay with Pay Pal at <http://arthur-ransome.org/join/index>

TARSUS, TARS Canada & TARS Leadership Information

TARSUS Coordinator: **Robin Marshall** robin@arthur-ransome.org
210 18th Street Bradenton, FL 34205

US Members, please contact Robin Marshall with your questions, concerns or ideas--he will forward your e-mail or letter to the appropriate board member.

TARS Canada Coordinator: **Harry Miller** harryandmarymiller@rogers.com
234 Kingswood Rd. Toronto, ON M4E 3N7

Canada Members, please contact Harry Miller with your questions, concerns or ideas--he will forward your e-mail or letter to the appropriate board member.

Signals from TARSUS Editor: **Elizabeth Jolley** erjolley8@gmail.com
675 NW 114th Ave. Portland, OR 97229

All Members--Please send your articles & ideas for articles for Signals from TARSUS to Elizabeth any time--she will publish articles when there is space.

TARS--The Arthur Ransome Society:

President: Gabriel Woolf
Chairperson: Elizabeth Haworth
Vice Chairperson: Bill Johnson
Company Secretary: Mike Glover
Treasurer: Ted Evans
Trustee: Nick Hancox
Membership Secretary: David Middleton
Asst. Membership Secretary: Philip Ragan
TARS Library: Winifred Wilson
Amazon Publications: Alan Hakim
TARS Stall: Linden Burke
Signals Editor: David Middleton
Mixed Moss Editor: Robert Thompson
Outlaw Editor: Peter Aitchison

Other Overseas Coordinators:

Australia: David Bamford
New Zealand: Dr. Peter Summers
Japan: Mikako Tarashima

All Things Ransome, a website devoted to keeping articles, artwork, and anything related to Ransome, is online at: <http://www.allthingsransome.net>

THE TARS Stall--An online store for TARS members

The Stall website is <http://arthur-ransome.org/tars-stall>. A nice feature it now has is a pull-down menu in the top left hand corner, which allows one to select prices in dollars, and will give you a total of the final cart, including shipping, in dollars.

Please note they no longer ship by surface mail via sea. All purchases go by air. For those of you who do not have the internet, Robin can carry out the transaction for you.

Swallows and Amazons Movie (the 70's):

Sophie Neville, who played Titty in the movie and was involved with the purchase of movie Swallow, now has a blog at <http://sophieneville.net/>. It gives details of the making of the movie and lots of other things regarding her life and interest in Ransome. It is well worth a visit.

Dipping Our Hands--personal relationships with the books

AR's Birthday Celebration

By Jay Scott



We finally joined TARSUS after reading Swallows and Amazons books for many years. Our good friend Margery Sayre would give one to our son each Christmas and Birthday, the very same books she received in the 30's as Christmas and Birthday gifts. She read them each for one last time before passing them on to Finn. I remember feeling sad as she handed over "The Great Northern?". It was to be her last reading of Ransome's work, which had formed such a strong-willed girl who was now a strong-willed woman in her 80's. We, being young, could start reading the series over, and so we did. Margery passed away the night that we finished re-reading "Swallows and Amazons". We all sang "Leave Her Johnny" at her wake.

So partly out of Margery's memory and partly out of our own passion for all things Swallows and Amazons, we joined TARSUS. We received the bundle of publications and spied that there were celebrations planned in England for AR's Birthday. So we invited our fellow Swallows and Amazons friends, Hatcher and Rizley (the Eels)



and their parents, the Missionaries, Jerome and Shanty, to dinner to celebrate. We usually have a dreary winter of rain, but amazingly we had a record snowfall--14 inches! There was no school or work for a whole week. A real Winter Holiday! We were properly iced in. After our guests hiked across town through the deep snow to the North Pole, we welcomed them aboard the Fram. We feasted on pork pie, followed by blackberry and blueberry pie! Chocolate cupcakes also



Well that is the news from the North (west).

Swallows and Amazons Forever!

Swallows and Amazons – their effect on my life

By Dave Elms

My English mother, who is now eighty-five, and her two younger sisters were given Arthur Ransome books for birthday and Christmas presents during the 1940's; these were all first published by Jonathan Cape. Nine of the originals have survived and have been passed down to me; unfortunately the others have gone astray and have had to be replaced with more recently published copies.

My family emigrated from England to Toronto, Canada in 1958, bringing the books with us. When I was about nine years old my mother first read the stories to my younger sister and myself and I loved them. We would make "boats" in the garden out of garden furniture with rugs and old sheets, and sail off on amazing imaginary adventures. I read the books again a couple of years later and yearned for my own boat. Ransome's stories combined with a Sea Scout manual taught me all about how to sail; well, the theory was with me anyway!

The Simpson-Sears Shopping Catalog in the early sixties advertised a "Pram Boat Kit" for \$49.00; now that was a lot of money in those days, especially to an eleven-year old boy. I got a paper route to deliver Globe and Mail Newspapers and saved and saved. Once I had reached halfway my parents pitched in the other half and the order was placed (incidentally, sales tax in Ontario didn't exist until September 1st 1961 and even then it was only 3%).

Well, much to my surprise and my parents' chagrin, the delivered box contained a lot of rough wood and a few instructions – way beyond the carpentry skills of an eleven year old (and even that of my father!). With practice, patience, perseverance, a little advice and time, combined with a lot of frustration, I alone built that boat – in the basement of my parents' house. Of course, the question of "how do we now get it out?" was then asked. The removal of a lower floor bedroom window helped with that solution. The painting and conversion from a rowing pram into a possible sailing boat was completed in the back garden.

The boat was christened "AMALLOW"; you can guess where I got that name. As a rowboat, she was moved on roof racks on top of my mother's car to various rivers and lakes. Within a year, being rather fed up with ferrying me around, my parents purchased a small cottage on a nearby lake for permanent boating.

AMALLOW's mast was a steel pole TV antenna (in retrospect, far too heavy), mounted through the front thwart and the sail was custom made for me by a Toronto tent maker. She didn't tack very well with the very small keel of the rowing pram. I tried several modifications including side rigger daggers and a hinged extended keel but she still preferred to run with the wind rather than sail close-hauled. I learnt how to sail, thanks to AMALLOW and Arthur Ransome.

My parents actually met, shortly after the war, while on holiday on the Norfolk Broads; the map in my copy of Coot Club is marked with the sailing route that they took and a hand written insertion states: "Had best holiday ever on Broads 1946". We have taken my mother

back to take a cruise down the River Bure, walked across the bridge in Potter Heigham, examined the expanse of Breydon Water and walked along the shops of Beccles (father unfortunately having passed away many years ago).



I have re-read the stories many times to myself and also to my three children. My love for those very much real-to-me characters have stayed with me for over half a century now. I've walked along the "Wade" near Walton-on-Sea and visited the Lake District several times, holidayed at a cottage in "Rio", explored the various islands of Windermere, was thrilled at finding the "Dog's Home" and hiked some of the possible sites of Swallowdale off the shores of Coniston. I was quite fortunate to have met and continue to communicate with Ransome expert Robert Thompson.

It is amazing the power and influence that stories can have upon an individual's life; thank you Mr. Ransome.

Synchronicities--a letter from TARSUS member John Kolars

Dear Elizabeth and Helen (Jolley),

20 Feb 2012

May I address you by your first names? Mine is John, and I feel that we have some things curiously in common. I don't believe in coincidences but I do believe in *synchronicities*, where seemingly unrelated actions coincide in defiance of absolutely astronomical chances that they cannot, could not. I have, in my 82nd year, just joined TARSUS, and I have become involved in another synchronicity, an incident that shows me how right my joining is.

I was born in Walla Walla, and grew up there – recorded in my memoir *Growing Up Walla Walla* – until I was kicked out of high school for endless pranks born out of boredom. (I was neither criminal nor vandal, just a pain in the glutious maximus.) At the age of 17 I enlisted in the army in 1945. When I returned from the army, I sought summer employment before heading to the UW. At that time, 1948, there were two mature ladies living in Walla Walla, who owned and ran a children's camp on Willapa Bay on the Bay side.

They gave me a job as a counselor there, and I had a wonderful time hiking, camping, canoeing and interacting with the boys and girls. Life took me elsewhere and that was my only time as a counselor at that camp. I learned that eventually the director retired but I imagine that the camp and lodge you mention must be the same one.

Editor's Note: I edited John's wonderful long e-mail for clarity, but the fun bit is that this summer camp where John was counselor (summer 1948) is the same summer camp where Helen was rescued from the sailboat with a broken part (summer 2011)! We have enjoyed several more e-mails back & forth, talking about the camp as it is now--privately owned & used as a camp reunion site--and as it was back then. It is & was a wonderful place for youngsters to play & grow each summer!

Here is a page from a history of the camp, published in "The Sou'wester", Volume XLIV, Number 2, Summer 2008 and Volume XLIV, Number 3, Fall, 2008:

Page 50 *The Sou'wester* Summer/Fall, 2008



Campers live in age-group units, in plains-style Indian tipis, Adirondack lean-to's, and sky-lighted A-frame cabins, with two to three in a dwelling. Each unit has its counselor lodging, as well, and the group maintains close ties at unit campfires and on cook's morning off when breakfast is campfire style. Scattered by personal interest by the day's activities, there is much to share at bedtime.

From the Sherwood Forest "We Believe..."



During the school year, Alan was busy with his teaching career while Barbie "did Camp." She did the PR, hired staff, signed up campers, planned menus, arranged for laundry services and on and on – all the myriad details of running a camp program for the summer. When summer finally came, Alan's big Camp role began. He planned the trips and was the overseer, the "father figure – the buck-stops-here guy." For us kids, Camp represented freedom. As soon as we were old enough to truly be "campers" and not live in the Ark with our parents, we disappeared into Camp life. We hardly saw Alan and Barbie all summer long.

Susie Greiner (Andrews)

Native Post--items of interest to our members

Swallow, star of the 1974 film 'Swallows and Amazons'

By Magnus Smith and Rob Boden

NEWS: It is just over two years since our group won the auction and began to work on Swallow. It is just over one year since she was first launched and began her nationwide tour. The 2012 season stretches before us, with at least 48 chances to sail at the weekend, plus the weekdays for anyone holidaying in the Lake District, where Swallow is to stay for (nearly) all the year.

We apologise to those who cannot make it to Cumbria easily; we felt it right to stay in the spiritual homeland of the S&A after last year's hectic nationwide tour. This gives us a chance to catch the 'trippers' and turn them into sailors! If you are within reach of East Anglia, why not grab a chance to sail the Nancy Blackett instead. See <http://nancyblackett.org> for details of how you can sail and sleep aboard Arthur Ransome's own yacht. Those of you without a boat need to keep an eye out for opportunities to sail (modern craft) on July 21st, when an Olympic-related campaign is being run by nearly all the sailing clubs in the country.

EVENTS: We have already had four requests for families to visit Wildcat Island (Peel Island on Coniston Water). Get in touch if you want to book a private sailing day, and let us know if you can sail well or need a skipper. Alternatively, keep an eye on www.sailransome.org/events for public events you can turn up to. We do ask for a donation when you sail, unless you have already supported the project.

Having said Swallow will be based in the Lakes, we still might make two or three trips by road if a volunteer with a towbar seems very keen. Telford Sailing Club were desperate to have us back, and another keen chap might help Swallow get to Scotland at some stage!

VOLUNTEERING: Hopefully it has been months and months since we had to beg for help with this project. We prefer to pester you to sail with us, than ask you for help, but we do need a little assistance please. Can you...

- 1) Loan us a space on a driveway near Coniston?
- 2) Take novices sailing in the Lake District?
- 3) Help organise events, via phone/email, between now and September?
- 4) Visit Swallow in Kendal to perform minor repairs or varnishing?

The role of event organiser is an important one, if we are to focus on our goal of getting as many people sailing as possible. Organising last year's tour was a little too much for Sail Ransome founder Magnus Smith; he cites 3 daughters and a day job as his main issues, but really it was poor time management! Co-founder Rob Boden wishes to focus his spare time on saving 'The Dog's Home', a building featured in The Picts and the Martyrs which is in danger of falling into disrepair. So ideally we'd love a new person to join the committee and arrange when/where Swallow can be sailed, contact skippers, find someone to tow... It is simple work really, and just requires lots of emails and phone calls, and one big piece of paper!

If you are an experienced sailor, able to get to the Lake District and volunteer as a skipper for Swallow, we'd love to hear from you too.

FILM AND MUSICAL: The Swallows and Amazons musical is now touring the country at various theatres, and we hope this brings Ransome's tale to a wider audience. If this sparks an interest in sailing then all the better. Next year we expect to see a new S&A film in the cinemas too, which will further the cause. Harbour Pictures are working on this as we speak, casting actors and looking to film in late summer if all goes to plan. We don't yet have any gossip on who has been chosen, or even which boats...but our Swallow will be considered.

Thank you for your support,

'Sail Ransome' - Magnus Smith & Rob Boden

www.sailransome.org

www.facebook.com/#!/TheSwallowFromTheFilm

Swallows and Amazons – The Musical

By Donald Tunnicliff Rice

I had a great treat in April that I'm sorry to say isn't – and may never will be – available to most folks in TARSUS. At the newly built Marlow Theatre in Canterbury I saw the musical version of *Amazons and Swallows*. I'd timed my visit to coincide with the production and took my son and his family, none of whom had ever read the book. They loved it. I'll admit to some misgivings, even though I'd been assured by some native TARS that it was great. They were right, of course. Here are just a few selected lines from reviews in the British press:

"Inventive Swallow is a sailing sensation" -- The Guardian

"A terrific production - warm hearted, affectionate and fun" --

Daily Telegraph

"Perfect - a brilliant feat of nerve and humour" -- Daily Mail

"Classic Ransome's a cracker" -- Daily Express

The show, which is a production of The National Theatre in association with the Children's Touring Partnership, has been on tour for some months. It's been drawing good audiences, but I can't imagine it will ever cross the water to satisfy the handful of S&A fans in this country. And unless you're able to get to the UK before the run ends in Cardiff on May 19, that may very well be that. It won't be an easy show for amateur groups to produce, so there's little chance of that opportunity; however, I can imagine a London revival in a few years.

So why am I telling you about it if you're not going to see it? Well, there's always hope, isn't there? If you go to this site you can at least get a taste of what the show was like:

<http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/?lid=67162>

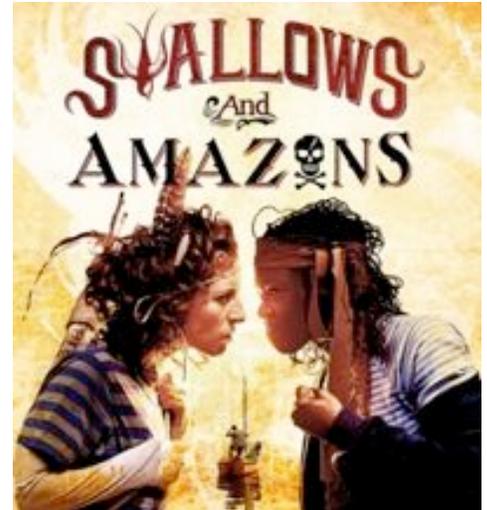
Puddleduck Boats--complete with Amazon pirates!

By Gerard Middlestaedt



See more at this link....

<http://puddleduckworlds2012.wordpress.com/>



Captain Flint's Trunk—news from abroad

Inaugural TARSNZ AR Birthday weekend

13-16 January 2012, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand

The region of Hawke's Bay is situated on the eastern coast of the North island of New Zealand, and as nine plucky TARSNZ members from all over the country congregated on Friday 13th of January in Havelock North, we discovered that we had inadvertently met at probably the only place in New Zealand with a genuine Ransome connection. Dick Kelsall, who as a child lived across the valley from Low Ludderburn, and whose father had developed the signalling system with Ransome that found its way into Winter Holiday, had



apparently immigrated to New Zealand in later life and had lived in Havelock North until his death. This piece of news, shared immediately upon arrival was a complete surprise to most of us – how lucky could that possibly be?! It could only mean that the weekend could only be a success, which it indeed was. The weekend kicked off with a presentation on Friday evening at the Hastings library, attended by around 50 members of the public, enticed by a wonderful article in the local paper. Entitled “Arthur Ransome, story-teller, journalist, sailor, fisherman and suspected spy” the presentation gave an overview of Ransome, his importance in the genre of children's literature, a brief biography and the was-he-wasn't-he argument about whether he was a double agent. The library staff had enthusiastically supported TARSNZ making the presentation, and had allowed a fantastic display in the library. In fact the publicity for the event was so good that when the librarians went to put Ransome's books in the display, they could only find a few

– all the others were out on loan! TARSNZ members went for a great meal and a long parley at a local restaurant after the presentation, where we sat drinking Hawke's Bay pinot gris (grog) looking out over Te Mata Peak (which looks like a man lying down) that we planned to walk during the course of our activities.



Saturday 14th was a typical of a Hawke's Bay summer – hot, bright and clear. We started off in Napier, aptly dubbed the Art Deco Capital of the World. Hawke's Bay suffered a devastating

earthquake on 3rd February 1931, with the main settlements of Napier, Hastings and Havelock North utterly destroyed. Napier was rebuilt in the modern architectural style of the day – Art Deco, with neighbouring Hastings developing a mix of Art Deco and Spanish Mission styles. The result in Napier is the biggest concentration of Art Deco style buildings definitely in

the southern hemisphere, if not in the world, and a huge tourist industry developed from the result of an 80 year old tragedy. The TARSNZ went on an hour long guided Art Deco tour of Napier, peering through letterboxes and doors to view the sumptuous interiors of office buildings and banks, and gazing up at the ziggurats, sunbursts and speed lines gracing so many of the buildings. Where better than Napier to find out about life in the 1930's – the time of the Swallows and Amazons?

We went our separate ways for lunch (long lunches are very much a feature of Hawke's Bay life) and re-congregated on the coast at Clifton, where we embarked on a tractor tour along the beach to Cape Kidnappers – exotically named by Captain Cook after his Tahitian interpreter was kidnapped by local Maori here in 1769.



The tour was perfect for the Dick Callums among us, with geological information along the way, our tractor-driving guide pointing out fault lines clearly visible in the cliff face, and the different layers of rock. At the end of the beach, we had to embark, and after a short walk to the top of the cliff came upon the largest mainland Gannet colony in the world. It was nesting time, with adult birds caring for their fluffy chicks – many of whom were actually bigger than the parents and taking up the entire nest! As the mother of two teenage boys, I know exactly how those gannets felt. As you can only access

the Cape at low tide, we felt like we really had crossed the Red Sea. After a speedy ride back along the beach, we were all tired out with the fresh air and exercise of the day, so we all went our separate ways for an evening meal and a good long sleep.

Sunday 15th was again a gorgeous day – perfect for a visit to the Hawke’s Bay Farmer’s Market – the oldest Farmer’s Market in New Zealand and the largest, perfect for the Rogers and the Susans. Hastings used to be dubbed the Fruitbowl of New Zealand as it is the largest pipfruit producing region in the country. 60% of New Zealand’s apples are grown here, so if you ever eat a New Zealand apple there’s a very good chance it comes from Hastings. There are a great many stalls at the market, selling artisan breads, ice cream, cheese and cakes and locally produced jams, chutneys, olive oil, wine, beef, venison and pork, fruit and vegetables, and topped off with a musician playing his guitar and singing. We did wonder if he would do sea shanties!



When we could finally tear ourselves away from the gastronomic delights of the market, we headed to the Osmanthus Garden in Cornwall Park, Hastings.



This Chinese garden was created to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Sister City relationship between Hastings and Guilin, a relationship developed due to the agricultural similarities between the two cities, a relationship which actually led directly to the development of the gold kiwifruit, and the pacific rose apple variety. 2011 saw the 30th anniversary celebrated – the first and thus oldest New Zealand-China Sister City relationship. The garden is a fusion of Chinese and New Zealand native plants and traditional design, and includes a large pond and pavilions, and is designed as a giant Chinese puzzle. We almost expected to see Misse Lee walk around the corner of this tranquil garden.

However, our day had barely begun - we next headed off to Kanchenjunga (Te Mata Peak), which we intended to climb. We met two new TARSNZ recruits in the car park – one had attended the presentation in the library and wanted to join our activities, and he brought along his nephew. Both were called Alasdair and both were incredibly knowledgeable about all things Swallows and Amazons, so they



were promptly nicknamed Old Billy and Young Billy, despite Old Billy’s protestations that he wasn’t anywhere near old enough even to be young Billy! We set off at a pace up the track, noting of course that to be truly authentic we should: a) rope ourselves together and b) stay off the official track, but we tacitly agreed that given our average age we should not attempt anything quite so risky! By this time, it was midday and the temperature was 28 degrees centigrade with no wind. Luckily, Te Mata Peak rises fairly steeply to 399m above the Heretaunga Plains which is virtually at sea level, so as we climbed the temperature dropped to a very pleasant level. Four of our group took the rattletrap option to the summit, and met us there with a

boot full of picnic – much of the grub purchased at the farmers market that morning. The walkers were jolly pleased to meet the rattletrappers at the top, where we all tucked into our lunch, admiring the amazing view. Sadly, it was too hazy to see Mount Ruapehu, an active volcano in the Tongariro National Park around 150km away as the crow flies. We followed the goat track down from the summit, where Old Billy proved to be a very friendly native by leading the way. A quick spruce up at our various accommodations preceded another fine meal at a local pub, where we wet our whistles with a glass or two of the local grog and prepared for the TARSNZ fiendishly hard quiz –held at St Luke’s church hall in Havelock North. This fine timber church was consecrated in 1874, which makes it rather an ancient building in terms of New Zealand’s pakeha (or European) history. Much scratching of heads took place over the quiz, where TARSNZ members and the Billies were lulled into a false sense of security with an easy first round where all teams scored 10 out of 10 – by the middle of the quiz one team (who will remain nameless, but you know who you are) were too embarrassed to call out their score as it was, on more than one occasion, a big fat zero! By the end everyone was groaning, and most were stumped by the “Life and times of Arthur Ransome” round. In fact some members were heard to bemoan the lack of time in the pub to get grogged up enough to liberate a few more grey cells! Many of the questions were supplied by the AUSTARS, so the quizmaster takes no credit for the fiendishness of the questions! The winning team – Dolly the Cragfast Sheep – were rewarded with a couple of bars of William’s chocolate.



We took a mid-quiz break to tuck into a specially decorated birthday cake, expertly cut by our very own Captain John, and at the end everyone received a certificate of participation, with a twist – members were awarded certificates for “looking the most like Captain Flint,” “having the squashtiest hat,” “being the most like Nancy and Peggy” “Having the most fun crossing the Red Sea” and “the Amazon award for escaping” to name a few.



Monday 16th was another fine day, where we visited Te Mata winery, one of the oldest wineries in Hawke’s Bay, and enjoyed a guided tour. We saw cellars and barrels that would gladden the hearts of the hardest pirates, despite the fact that the picking season hasn’t yet started, so the cellars only contained the

ageing wines – the 2012 crop is still growing on the vine. We were also given a wine tasting - as true pirates, of course you can’t throw good grog away, and despite the sun being a long way off the yardarm we managed to knock back quite a few different varieties between us! For the afternoon we headed over to the Silky Oak Chocolate Factory, where we had a talk about the chocolate making process used there, and tasted a few cunning samples. We had lunch at the cafe (more chocolate!), before heading off in our Rattletraps to our various homes, all thrilled at how well the weekend went. Considering that on Friday we were virtually all complete strangers, by Sunday we were fast friends, vowing to make AR’s birthday weekend an annual event. In 2013 we plan to go Away to Rio – Wellington – which has a rich literary history, an observatory, an island wildlife sanctuary in the harbour, a fascinating history and an international airport – just perfect for TARS to fly in from other parts of the world to join us!

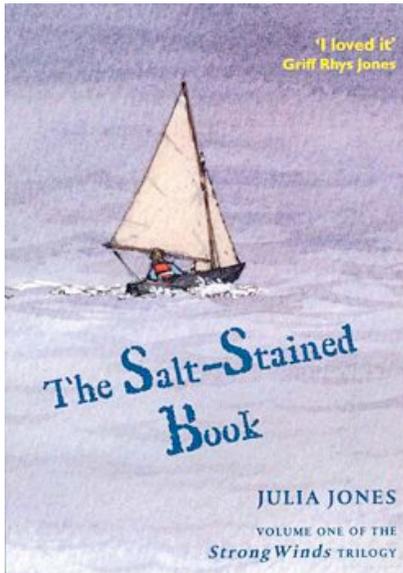


TARSNZ left to right: Bob, Cheryl, Michael, Neil, Barbara, Fran, Jan, Captain John and Sylvia

Ship's Library—books we've read and want to share

A Salt-Stained Book, by Julia Jones

Review by Todd Klein



One of my favorite series of adventure stories growing up were the books of Arthur Ransome, beginning with “Swallows and Amazons,” and going on through eleven more family adventures, most involving sailing on lakes, rivers, and the ocean. Ransome wrote really well, but beyond that, his characters were real, yet had the kinds of adventures every kid would be thrilled by, enhanced by their imaginations in a way that made it all the more fun. There are other family adventure series I liked, but none could match Ransome’s. Julia Jones grew up immersed in the Ransome stories, and more than that, her parents owned one of Ransome’s boats, the one featured in the book “Peter Duck.” With this book she’s embarked on a series of her own about kids having adventures, that owes a lot to Ransome but is in no way a pastiche or copy of what he did. Instead she’s written a very modern story of kids in crisis that many today could enjoy, one filled with Ransome-like elements for those who know those earlier stories. Not that you need to have read Ransome’s books to enjoy this one.

Donny, age 14, and his deaf mother, Skye, are on their own after Donny’s grandmother died, with no real home but the van they’re traveling in. They’re supposed to be meeting Donny’s Great Aunt on the eastern coast of England near the town of Shotley, but Aunt Ellen’s telegraph was cryptic. She’s been living in China for decades, but could now be the only hope of a proper home and guardian for Donny and Skye. Things get worse when Skye has an accident with the van, and the two are taken into custody. Skye is put into a mental institution and Donny into foster care in a vicar’s home with a group of other foster children. To make matters worse, a bullying policeman seems to have it in for Donny, and the social worker is firmly on that man’s side, not Donny’s. The foster home is a miserable place, but Donny is sent to school and finds some allies there who agree to try to help him meet up with his mysterious Aunt. Anna, another child in the home, also comes round to Donny’s side, and proves very resourceful. Despite harassment from the authorities who should be helping him, Donny makes his plans, which include learning to sail so he can slip away down the river to meet his Aunt on the day appointed. Along the way he gathers more allies but faces heavy odds against him as well. When Donny finally makes his escape and finds himself alone on the river in the middle of the night, the story gathers all the many characters together for a smashingly great finale, and many things become clearer for Donny when the new day dawns.

I loved this book. I can’t say I’d put it quite up there with Ransome, but it’s close. I’m looking forward to the next one. Highly recommended!

Friendly Natives—short bios of members

Todd Klein (Copied from his website blog with permission)

After discovering in high school that I had no particular interest in other careers, I spent two years in art school at the School of Visual Arts in New York City and the Kansas City Art Institute (1969-71), before running out of tuition money. I then worked at several boring jobs, including putting together instruction manuals for air conditioners. In my spare time, I began submitting art, and occasionally

board too far forward -- and my Dad and I added a bowsprit and a home-made jib, so I had a tiny sloop. In keeping with naming boats after birds, she was named "Hawk" I sailed it along with a friend and my younger sister in Woodlawn Lake in a city park in San Antonio, Texas. We also sailed on Medina Lake a much larger lake some miles NW of San Antonio.

I sought out and read most of Arthur Ransome's sailing books as a child... and in later years read most of his works, and the various biographies about him. He was a truly fascinating person who lived a very full life.

Over the years I have sailed, and sometimes built, a number of small boats. The various adventures of the Swallows, Amazons, the D's etc. are often in my thoughts as I enjoy "messaging about in boats."

Note: McAllen, Texas is on the Rio Grande, the border with Mexico. I live about 7 miles from the river... It is much to hazardous to boat on that river these days. I do what sailing I do these days in the Laguna Madre, and to some extent in the Gulf of Mexico. South Padre Island, and Port Isabel, TX are about 140 KM east of where I live.

McAllen is 300 miles (555 KM) south of Austin, TX

McAllen is 500 miles (925 KM) south of Dallas, TX

Most of the time it is hot and dry here.

Thoughts & Web Links

By I.W. Stephenson

This past winter the original tiller from 'Nancy Blackett' was auctioned. Price was 1,000 euros/1,301 dollars. See: <http://www.bonhams.com/auctions/19619/lot/360/>

In September we moved to a tidal cove in Maine. Being near the Bay of Fundy, tides can measure up to 20 feet. We don't just have less water at low tide, sometimes virtually no water. So low tide has taken the name of mud tide.

Reviewing my diary I see it is a year since I first kayaked. Two outings during a vacation on Ocracoke Island; purchase of boat soon after. Lake and river paddling in the heat of a NC summer. Now exploring Maine!

Now that I kayak I suppose the most similar AR boat is Tom Dudgeon's punt. I don't believe AR references kayaks?

After a kayaking session last fall I landed near our house. It was extremely muddy. My boots became stuck! I yelled to my wife for rescue. Later I realized I needed splachers! No Mastadon in sight, though.

Recently came across an interview with biographer Roland Chambers. In it he calls AR, "...one of the safest pairs of hands in literature". Shipwrecks, night sailing and North Sea crossings don't seem so safe. Complete piece at: <http://m.thebrowser.com/interviews/roland-chambers-on-revolutionary-russia>

Had a thought the other day. Passing up opportunities is like waiting for time to expire. Strikes me as an AR approved saying. What do you think?

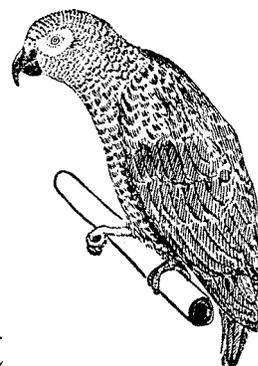
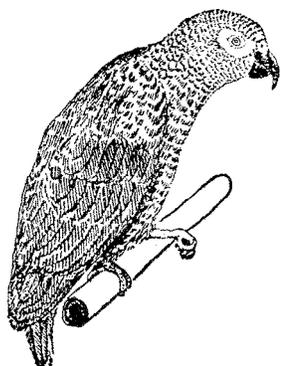
From the Guardian newspaper, historical material on AR and Russia:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/gnmeducationcentre/archive-educational-resource-may-2012?newsfeed=true>

Our 13-foot lapstrake dinghy 'Amazon' is for sale. Contact me if interested.

My summer plans? To kayak the bays, between the necks and in the coves of Maine.

Editor's Note: If you are interested in Ike's lapstrake dinghy, contact me at: erjolley8@gmail.com and I will let Ike know to contact you.



Pieces of Eight

The Junior Pages

Edited by Jessika Hodgson and Hannah Hodgson

From the Beckfoot Kitchen: Peanut Butter Balls

Peanut Butter Balls are easy and a lot of fun to make. They store well, so I imagine that if the Swallows and Amazons had had them, they would have packed them into a biscuit tin and been ready to go trekking or sailing. Besides being full of healthy, high-energy ingredients (so they make great hiking snacks), they're really, really good. I could eat them all day long. I do, sometimes.

Ingredients:

1/3 cup peanut butter
1/2 cup dry milk powder
2 tablespoons wheat germ
1 tablespoon honey
Raw sesame seeds to roll in

Mix ingredients (by hand or with a mixer) together in the listed order, except for the sesame seeds. You want the mixture even and a bit crumbly. Take spoonful of the mixture and make it into a ball (you can do it by hand or use an ice cream scoop; just make sure the balls are nice and compact). After making a ball, roll it in the sesame seeds. Repeat until the mixture is gone.

You can experiment with the ingredient measurements a bit if you want it crunchier or sweeter. Also you could try it with different kinds of nut butters, as long as they aren't too runny. They can be eaten at room temperature but I think they are best if they are cold from sitting in the fridge for a little while. ☺

The Nightfire Pirates

A Continuous Story

By Hannah Hodgson

Jeremiah McDougal pushed his way through the busy streets toward the docks. He breathed in deeply the scent of salty water and sweaty sailors. On account of his small size, he could move through the crowd with only little effort and a bit of crawling under legs. It was immediately less crowded when he got to the docks. Maybe it was that other people disliked the smell of saltwater and fish and therefore stayed away. Or maybe they wanted to stay out of the way of the sailors constantly loading and unloading their ships in preparation for journeys. But to Jeremiah, the docks were fascinating.

His older brother was a sailor. He had become one at Jeremiah's age—seven. That was years ago and now his older brother was a strong sailor with a deep voice who came to tell stories. Jeremiah relished those stories. He, himself, would probably never go to sea. Too small, said his father, a retired sailor himself. Jeremiah sighed and watched burly sailors walk down the gangplank with heavy boxes.

Jeremiah became engrossed in watching a certain sailor. He was younger, probably in his twenties. He had sandy brown hair that peeked out from under a sailor's cap and a pipe was stuck in the corner of his mouth. He was carrying a big bag over his shoulder—probably full of his belongings. He walked toward Jeremiah.

“Ello young man,” he said around his pipe to Jeremiah when he got close. “Waitin’ for someone?”

Jeremiah shook his head.

“Aye, watchin’ the boats. I used to do that when I was younger. How old are you?”

“Seven last Wednesday,” Jeremiah said, pulling himself to his full height—which wasn't too impressive.

The sailor laughed, not unkindly. It was a burly laugh, straight from the chest. Jeremiah scratched his ear.

“Won't ever be going to sea myself. My Pa says I'm too small.”

The sailor looked at him seriously. “I reckon not. But there are plenty a jobs around the land that need taking. You in school?”

Jeremiah shook his head. “Costs too much. I wish I could sail.”

The sailor just smiled.

“Which boat are you sailing on?” Jeremiah asked, gesturing towards the line of ships in the harbor.

The sailor paused for a moment. “The *Lady Marie*,” he finally said, pointing towards a large navy vessel. Jeremiah whistled appreciatively. “Would you like to have a look around it?” asked the sailor. “We couldn't go on—too much bustle, but we could have a peek at her sides if you like.”

Jeremiah grinned. “Let's.”

The sailor led him toward the towering *Lady Marie*, whose white sails were tucked up but Jeremiah could imagine her beauty when they were unfurled, catching a gust of wind. The name was painted in bright white paint on the side and the American flag flew at the top. Sailors were unloading empty boxes and loading back up with new ones. They were in crisp uniforms but carried no arms.

“That's a fine ship,” said Jeremiah after a moment of gaping.

“Aye. Finest ship in the whole navy, I'd say. She's a beauty, isn't she?” said the sailor.

Jeremiah nodded fiercely.

“Williams!” came a rough shout from one of the sailors. The sailor by Jeremiah looked down at Jeremiah and motioned for him to wait, then he let down his bag and jogged out of sight behind some cargo boxes. Jeremiah waited.

The sailor did not come back. Jeremiah hopped on one foot, then the other. Then his legs began to get tired and he found a box to sit on. It wasn't too far off from where Williams had left him, but he dragged the sailor's bag with him, just in case someone tried to pinch it. He whistled a short tune, but was growing impatient. His mother would expect him home soon, but he couldn't leave Williams' bag to get stolen. He kicked his legs.

Williams didn't show up. Soon, a group of Williams' fellow sailors from the Lady Marie asked him politely to move from his perch. He did. Dragging Williams' bag behind him, he moved toward another, farther crate that wasn't stamped with Lady Marie. He heaved up onto it, focusing on the bag behind him. What he didn't realize was that this crate didn't have a lid. He found that out soon enough when he tumbled backward into it with Williams' bag on top of him. The fall shocked him, but didn't hurt him much. The real trouble came when he was trying to get out. First he had to heave the bag off of his chest, then, when he finally sat up, he tried to grasp at the edge, but couldn't quite reach. He was about to stand when the lid slid over him and he was plunged in darkness. Jeremiah caught in his breath, his heart beating fast. Then he felt the crate being jerked upward. He realized his predicament too late, for when he began to yell and kick at the sides, no one was listening. The men were using a loud pulley to get the crate onto a boat. Jeremiah yelled until he was out of breath, then he laid back, wondering what would happen to him. His mother would be awful worried.

Jeremiah woke up. He hadn't meant to be sleeping at all, but the dark of the crate had calmed him and put him to sleep. He wasn't moving any more. He wondered how long he had been sleeping. What if the sailors had put a crate on top of his and he wouldn't be able to get out? Jeremiah thrashed out and immediately began kicking and yelling at the top of his lungs.

It seemed like hours that he continued this, yelling for a while, then pausing for breath, then kicking and yelling some more. Finally, there was the sound of someone taking a crowbar to the crate and Jeremiah relaxed. He just hoped he would get home in time for some dinner. The crate was removed to show a starlit night sky and three faces. Two were weathered sailor faces and one was a young boy. They stared at Jeremiah in disbelief.

"Stowaway?" grunted one.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to. I fell in the crate, and no one heard me and—" Jeremiah was cut off as the older sailors grabbed him under the armpits and lugged him out. Jeremiah wobbled a bit, but soon found his sea legs. Jeremiah gaped as he looked over the side. They were at sea. He was at sea.

"Bring 'im to the captain, I say," said one of the old sailors. The other grunted in reply and grabbed Jeremiah's arm firmly, pulling him toward a cabin. He rapped on the door.

"What is it?" said a grumpy voice from inside.

"Sorry, Captain, sir...a matter that needs your attention, sir."

"Come in."

They opened the door and led Jeremiah in.

The captain was a tall man, even sitting down. He had shaggy brown hair and an unshaven face. He looked at Jeremiah with piercing, blue eyes.

"What is this?"

"My name is Jeremiah and I didn't mean to stow away or anything. I fell in a crate," said Jeremiah quickly.

The captain looked him up and down. "How old are you?"

"Seven, sir."

"Don't look it. Doesn't matter. Bunk him with the boy. Guess we'll have two cabin boys on this voyage," said the captain, looking at Jeremiah meaningfully, "And you better be able to handle it. Take him now." The captain motioned toward the door and went back to his charting.

The youngster who had been one of the faces looking down on him in the crate grabbed Jeremiah's arm and tugged him down below decks.

"That's Captain Steel," he whispered, "But don't worry about him. I'm glad you came. My name's Willy."

Jeremiah smiled, but he couldn't help thinking about home. He wasn't supposed to sail. He never was. Too small.

To be continued...

Two Different Sorts of Messages

This kind of puzzle is called a “Fallen Phrase.” A message is written, with a separate white box for each letter and a black box separating each word. Fill in the white boxes with the letters provided underneath. The letters are arranged in columns, and they stay in the same columns when you are filling the boxes in. For example, in Puzzle 1, the D, W, and N in the first column of letters remain in the same column of white squares above them, but they can change the row. I filled in some letters for you in the 11th column so that you can see what I mean. Puzzle 1 should be pretty simple; Puzzle 2 is more difficult. See if you can work them out.

Puzzle 1

D D
 O N F T R F T H A
 D D T F E E F S E R A
 W O U W N U D E O I N
 N R O B T E T R R W S N

Puzzle 2

O U Y G
 C A D H L T E W A L N E
 Y N C E H E D Q O O L I L B E Y O B T T N O
 L O A L E A M J J O T E E L O O U S A E O A T
 O E U V L I S Y T U I K S N E N L T U H L H T E R

Editor's Note: Juniors, you might recall that I offered to publish photos of any "Sock Gibbers" that you created from January's instructions. Here are two photos from Neal Lavelle, age 7 (with a little help from Mom!):



Congratulations on a fine job, Neal!

Final Note-- "Farewell and adieu to you fair Spanish ladies" --until next issue!

Well, after this long & lovely issue, I don't have much to say, except **three million cheers** once again to all of you who sent in an article or photos! It is always a pleasure to receive your interesting stories. I hope everyone has a wonderful summer, and if it happens to be filled with adventure of any sort, please write up your interesting story and send it in anytime!

Happy Ransomeing! Elizabeth :-)