



Signals from TARSUS

MAY 2010

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Ship's Papers--Important Information for the crew

A View From the Helm,

By Robin Marshall, TARSUS Coordinator



A View From the Helm

Spring is here and we are moving into summer with all the promise that happens at this time of the year. In some parts of the country winter has been hard this year so it is all the more welcome.

Things have however been happening with TARS and TARSUS, some of which you may be aware of:

Sadly in February we lost a longtime and dedicated member. Captain Ike Stephenson III passed away on February 1st at his home beside Green Bay. Capt Ike was a great promoter of Arthur Ransome and TARS and gave away many of his books, a tradition I am pleased to say being carried on by his Son Ike IV. This is in the form of a challenge to our Juniors to write an essay on Capt Ike's wish to friends of "warm sunny sailing weather" and how this relates to one of the Swallows and Amazons books. Any junior who accepts this challenge will receive a full set of the stories. This sounds like a challenge worth taking. The best essays will be published in the Society journals as well. For more information contact Ike at ike.stephenson@gmail.com.

I felt, possibly without foundation, that maybe TARSUS members would like to communicate with each other, as we are so scattered around this vast country, so I set up a Google TARSUS group with the hope that members would participate. About a third have signed onto it but there is a somewhat limited amount of activity so far. You can go there at <http://groups.google.com/group/athurransome-us>. The only proviso is you must set up a Google account; the reason for this being to safeguard the group from spam.

In the UK an exciting boat came up for auction, namely "Swallow", as used in the 1974 movie. A group was formed by Magnus Smith to solicit donations to purchase her with help from 83 donors, some from TARSUS, and considerable help from the Nancy Blackett Trust. The bid was successful and Swallow is at the boat builders for some restoration work. See more details at <http://sites.google.com/site/swallowbid/>. I know they are still looking for donors to cover repairs, etc. I know some TARSUS members feel this is more a UK thing, but several of us are able to visit on occasion and we would be able to sail in Swallow.

I have suggested in the past that maybe a group of TARSUS members go over to the UK and see the places for ourselves and the newly-refinished "Swallow" could be a good excuse to do this. Any suggestions on how to arrange this would be welcome.

Please welcome the following new members:

Julia Bishop of Crumpler, NC

Aaron and Nathan Mortenson of New York, NY
Alice Evans Tsen of Cambridge, MA
Michaela Jones of North Andover, MA
Nancy Falls of San Leandro, CA
Jane Quinton of Tallahassee, FL

Again welcome aboard!

So if I may quote Capt Ike, may this summer be full of warm sunny weather sailing for all of you. Swallows and Amazons forever!

Robin

TARSUS & TARS Leadership Information

TARSUS--The Arthur Ransome Society in the United States:

TARSUS Coordinator: Robin Marshall robin@arthur-ransome.org
210-8th 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.

Signals from TARSUS Elizabeth Jolley erjolley@mail.com
editor: 675 NW 114th Ave. Portland, OR 97229

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--Board:

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Canada:	Harry Miller
Japan:	Tamami Nakayama

Kanchenjunga's Cairn--Places We've Been & Our Adventures

I Did Mean to Go to Sea Chapter 5

by Pete O'Neill

After leaving the Chevron tanker, we resumed our tacking program: 24 hours to the south, tack, and 24 hours to the north. Back at 42 degrees north, we discovered a high-pressure system building into the area had chased the fog away and left us with a calm sea and no wind. So we fired up the little diesel and motored due east for two days and nights.

The third morning found us blessed with a light but fair breeze. Sometimes it was northwest, sometimes westerly, sometimes southwest, or even south. As long as it wasn't on the nose, we were happy. Even the flukiness of it didn't bother us.

The spinnaker went up, spinnaker down, sails out, sails in. We were kept busy working the boat like it was a race -- in some ways maybe it was. We even had to turn the motor on at times. This went on for a day and a half before the westerlies filled in behind us at last.

With 14 to 16 knots over the transom, we put the spinnaker up and raced off at 7 to 8 knots, the big trimaran kicking up her heels. We even kept the chute up at night, something the skipper never used to do. We brought it down in the morning to check the halyard for chafe, and sure enough we were minutes and a good puff or two from finding the big sail in the water, running over it and probably damaging it.

We took to checking it morning and evening over the following two days, and each time we had to cut off a badly worn end and retie it, until finally the wind turned more northerly and we were beam-reaching and going just as fast.

Unfortunately, we now had a steep beam sea, which made the motion wild enough to make a blue-footed booby crazy. No one was complaining; we were closing the coast, but sleep was all but impossible in my wing bunk: at first you experience weightlessness as the boat leaps off the wave tops and you lose contact with the mattress only to meet it again on the way back up. Then there's the side-to-side motion, which would be enough to roll you over, but you've got your arms and legs spread to prevent that. Possibly the most unnerving motion is when the boat plunges into a trough between waves; it's like sliding down a water slide headfirst, only to decelerate as the bows plunge into the wave ahead.

Because the skipper had planned to make landfall in Long Beach, not San Francisco, he had no detailed charts of the area. A call to a friend and local sailor brought the suggestion that we head straight for the Point Reyes light, flashing every six seconds, and close to a mile offshore, turn right and head for San Francisco.

The weather forecast was for patchy dense fog. We had to cross the northbound and southbound shipping lanes. The skipper was uneasy about being so close to an unknown coast in the dark, and suggested we stay out two miles, something I agreed with completely.

At 5:30 a.m. dawn showed the Marin County foothills -- we were getting close, and the fog never materialized, but the wind dropped to about 5 knots, so we turned the

motor on. We could now see many ships entering and leaving the bay. As we approached the Golden Gate Bridge, we almost were sucked into a giant whirlpool formed just outside the south tower of the bridge by the strong flow of the ebb tide. I alerted the skipper to this fact, and he gunned the motor and bore off to safety. Nothing was easy about this trip.

We finally passed under the Golden Gate, and I gave a sigh of relief. We rounded a small breakwater east of the bridge and entered the St. Francis Yacht Club marina where a space had been arranged for us. As we eased up to the dock and passed lines to people waiting to help us, my heart leapt with joy, and I silently gave thanks; I was home from the sea.

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

From member Molly McGinnis:

I just got a Kindle, the new 9.7" screen DX, and found that Old Peter's Russian Tales and the Russian Journals are available in several editions (from free to a few dollars) in Kindle format. No S&A yet.

I love the Kindle, with a stand it's great for reading in bed and at the table, or for the chauffeur to take to ballet and soccer. The reflective (not LCD, no flicker and uses room or outdoor light) screen is very easy on the eyes and you can adjust the type size.

More or less the same Ransomes plus a bit more are also available on Gutenberg, which now has a Kindle format for almost everything as well as text and HTML.

On the Amazon site, there's a place to click with most books that aren't in Kindle format, to say you want to read it in Kindle.

Friendly Natives—short bios of members

Kristin White, TARSUS member

I grew up in Maryland and my parents gave me the Swallows and Amazons series to read when I was a kid. I studied art at Syracuse University and now I am a sailmaker at a small loft in Annapolis and also an artist.

I've started a blog to show my artwork. It's called Paintings and Illustrations. The address is <http://kaswhite.blogspot.com> Take a look at it if you get the chance.

Editor's Note: I clicked the link and found a number of Kristin's paintings of cats & dogs, all very nicely done, and at the top of her page, this wonderful watercolor of a crofter's cabin on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland. This painting really made me think of Ransome for two reasons: 1) Kristin's hills are drawn much the way Ransome's hills around The Lake were, wavy lines showing the worn tops of the beautiful mountains, and 2) The Isle of Lewis is one possibility for the placement of Scrubber's Cove and all the action in the Scottish deerpark AR described in "Great Northern?!" Take a look at this gorgeous watercolor, and check out Kristin's site, too! Elizabeth



Crofter's Cabin Lewis 2001

Watercolor by Kristin White

I took the year of 2000-2001 off from college and spent six weeks that spring backpacking around England, Ireland, and Scotland. After traveling around England and Ireland, I took a train up to Inverness. I remember listening to Rush on my portable CD player. It was late April and it was so cold, the first thing I had to do when I got off the train was buy a wool sweater! There were not many tourists that year because of the Hoof and Mouth scare, and I had the youth hostels in northern Scotland practically to myself. I took a ferry from Ullapool to Stornoway and stayed in a crofter's hut on the very west coast of Lewis where I painted this watercolor. There were only two other people there. One was an elderly German gentleman who said he used to spend his

vacations kayaking around the British Isles. He said that now that he was older, he backpacked instead. The other was an American in his forties who smoked a lot. The German guy and I didn't like him very much and he didn't stay very long. We thought that he ran out without paying his bill. The land was rough, but beautiful, and the light was the most amazing that I have ever seen. Sunrises and sunsets stretched out for hours because it was so far north. The cold Atlantic crashed against the rocky beach. It was weird seeing the Atlantic to the west. There were more sheep than people. The bus only came to the crofter's hut once a day, and not at all on Sunday, but I managed to see the Callanish Standing Stones in the rain. There were two other people there-- a British couple in a rented car. I also managed to get into Stornoway often enough to keep stocked up on Cadbury Creme Eggs. Annapolis is home, parts of Italy and the Caribbean are lovely, but Lewis is the most beautiful place that I've ever been to.

Dipping our Hands—personal relationships with the books

Leonard "Mac" Passano
Crew Member No. 2397

Would you pass on to all your readers information about the existence of the entire S&A canon from a reputable traditional publisher in the United States?

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<http://www.godine.com>
1-800-344-4771

has been publishing the entire set for many years. They are available, all 12 of them, at \$14.59 each. Godine accepts credit cards and shipping charges are very modest. I have been buying books from this firm for many years with great satisfaction.

The books themselves are a very high-class product. They appear all to be reprints of the standard Jonathan Cape green cloth-bound hard-cover books from the 60's, with a few slight changes. Each volume has a color cover illustration taken from one of Ransome's full-page black & white illustrations. In place of the original dedication, the "Author's Note" dated 1958 is found in each volume. The map is printed on an inserted page rather than as an endpaper. The covers are coated heavy paper and the binding is strong. The print job is excellent. In every respect, these American editions are superior to the British Puffin Books edition of paperbacks.

You can see the publisher's listing for yourself by consulting their website and entering "Ransome" into the search box.

These books make excellent gifts to children, libraries and assorted natives. And we should support GODINE in their program to keep them available in these perilous times for independent book publishers.

A quote from Godine's catalog:

"For anyone who loves sailing and adventure, the Arthur Ransome classics stand alone. *Swallows and Amazons*, the book that started it all in 1930, introduces the Walker family, the camp on Wild Cat Island, the able-bodied catboat 'Swallow', and two intrepid Amazons, the plucky Nancy and Peggy Blackett....Adventures abound! Parents disappear! Children prevail! This is real writing, by a real writer--making *Swallows and Amazons* one of the most beloved and successful series of books we have ever published."

Sea Bear's Galley--Puddings, Biscuits and more

Cheese Scones

Good for afternoon teas and pack well into knapsacks!



Stir together:

- 2 ½ cups plain flour
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

Using a fork, mash in:

- 6 tablespoons softened butter

Stir in:

- 1 cup grated cheese (sharp cheddar is good, but almost any hard cheese will work)

Then add:

- About 2/3 cup sour milk or buttermilk (you can use milk mixed with plain yogurt)

Mix quickly to keep dough as light as possible. Turn dough out onto lightly floured board and pat gently into a round flattened shape about ¾ inch thick. Cut gently into squares or wedges. Gently place these on a greased baking sheet and bake in a 415 F oven about 10-20 minutes (depending on size and thickness) until golden brown around edges.

Submitted by the Blacketts' Cook

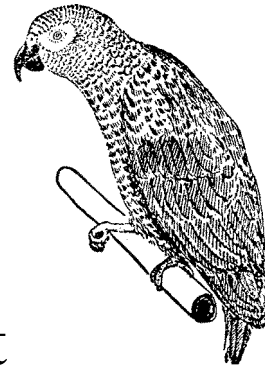
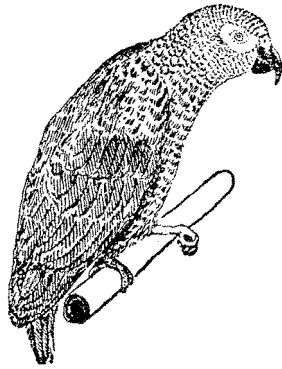
All the Foods They Ate:

By Ed Kiser, Kentucky

I have been collecting a list of items our childhood friends have EATEN in any of these books. Can't say it is a COMPLETE list, as I may have missed something. Some items area served them by the natives, such as at a Dutch Restaurant (pancakes).

APPLE	BACON
BANANA	BEANS
BEEF-ROLL	BEEF
BEER	BISCUITS
BRANDY	BREAD
BUNLOAF	BUTTER
CAKE	CARROT
CAULIFLOWER	CHEESE
CHICKEN	CHOCOLATE
CHOPS	COCOA
COFFEE	CORNED BEEF
CORNFLAKES	CREAM BUNS
DUCK EGG	EELS
EGGS	FORCE CEREAL
FRIED CANNON BALLS	GINGER BEER
GINGER NUTS	GINGER WINE (Christening Scarab)
GROG	HAM
ICES	JAM
KIDNEY	LEMONADE
LETTUCE	LOGANBERRIES
MARMELADE	MEAT PIE
MILK	MUSHROOMS
MUTTON	NUTS
ONION	ORANGE
OXTAIL	PANCAKES
PEACHES	PEARS
PEAS	PEMMICAN
PERCH	PIE
PORRIDGE	POTATO
POTTED MEAT	PRESERVES
PRUNES	PUDDING
QUAKER OATS	RABBIT
ROCK BUNS	RUM
SALAD	SALT
SARDINES	SHARK STEAKS (really PIKE)
SOUP	SQUASHED FLY BISCUITS
STEAK	SUGAR
SYRUP	TEA
TOFFEE	TOMATO
TONGUE	TROUT

Ed. Note: Can you think of some fun way to use this list? A puzzle? Trying to taste everything on it yourself? Looking up historic recipes? If you think of something others would enjoy, e-mail me and I will include your story in our next issue!



Pieces of Eight

The Junior Pages

Edited by Jessika Hodgson, Hannah Hodgson, and Mikaela Springsteen

Hannah Hodgson, new Co-Editor

[Note: Mackenzie moved and thus can't keep co-editing with me, which is unfortunate (she had some lovely ideas); but now my sister offered to "replace" her, which is fortunate ☺. Here's Hannah's intro—Jessika]

My name is Hannah. I don't go by anything else except the occasional "Di" or "Didi". I am the sister of the editor Jessika, if you didn't notice by the last name. I learned about the Swallows and Amazons through my sister. I didn't really have any choice. She forced me into knowing, and I hated with a passion the series until I started reading them. I still haven't read the whole series, but thus far my favorite is *Winter Holiday*. I am probably a mix between the characters Peggy and Dick, though I'm not afraid of thunder and I don't keep a notebook of scientific figures (though I might soon if I keep up thinking of things such as p53 genes and DNA replication—that kind of stuff is fascinating!). I'd like to go and "dig up remains" like Professor Callum when I grow up. I like to think of myself as an author, and I am in the process of writing a book (maybe I have a little Dot in me too). I also like to think of myself as an artist, but I'm not really that good at drawing/painting. I play the violin. Hiking is my specialty, but I'd really like to go boating sometime. I'm a major C.S. Lewis fan, and of course I like Arthur Ransome too. Swallows and Amazons forever!

*Ed. Note: Thanks to Hannah for stepping in to help with Pieces of Eight!
I enjoy the articles and puzzles our Junior editors put together every month
and hope you do, too!*

Signals from Mars--From Hannah's Pocketbook

Here is a code that I devised:

The first step is picking a phrase that is twenty-six characters (including spaces and punctuation) long. I will use 'Nancy'd be jolly pleased!!', but you can choose whatever you want. Note that some of the characters in the phrase can be the same. Now graph the phrase with the alphabet under/over it, like this (I am using a table):

N	A	N	C	Y	'	D		B	E		J	O	L	L	Y		P	L	E	A	S	E	D	!	!
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

That is the key.

The way you format a letter in this code is this:

NANCY'D BE JOLLY PLEASD!!

/L/E/N/J/J/L/E/L/ /N/L/C/ /N/O/N!/L/L/L/ /'/L/P/Y/S/Y/P/

with the phrase in the right hand corner, slashes before and after every letter-symbol, and more than one space (or just a big one) between the words (that helps so that if you have a letter (i.e. H) that codes for a space, no one will get confused.

The way to decode the message takes evaluation. The first letter, L, could be N, O, or S, so you have to guess. If it doesn't make sense, you have to go back and try another letter. The fastest way to decode it is to find all the letters/symbols that can have only one letter as its meaning. For this one they are: J (which is L), C (which is D), O (which is M), ' (which is F), P (which is R), and S (which is V). So you replace the coded letters with the real ones to get (the decoded ones are in bold)

NANCY'D BE JOLLY PLEASD!!

/L/E/N/**L**/L/E/L/ /N/L/**D**/ /N/**M**/N!/L/L/L/ /**F**/L/**R**/Y/V/Y/P/

Then, you guess the other letters until they make sense, therefore the coded message says: 'Swallows and Amazons forever'

Here's one for you to decode on your own:

THREE LANTERNS, NO MORSE!?

/M/A/E/ /R/T/R/R/O/N/ / /N/S/ /M/A/E/ /,/H/ /E/O/R/T/M/,/O!/

Have fun!

[Note: if you wanted, you could use a phrase that has more or less than 26 characters for your code. If it has more, simply write as much of the phrase as there are letters under the alphabet. If it has less, simply repeat the phrase as many times as you need. However, it is easier (less letters with the same symbol) if you find a phrase with 26 characters.]

How to Write Eelish

How to write Eelish: You may remember how in past issues of the Outlaw, Rob explained how to type and print it. But have you ever tried just plain old writing it? I did, and I then I kept accidentally writing backwards. So here is a way to write it without feeling like you need to write from right to left all the time. Your APs may not approve, though, so you should probably ask first. You will need some dry erase markers, or just regular white board ones. If you can't reach your windows, you might want a ladder. Unless of course you live in a house like Beckfoot, and can climb up your trellis to write on your windows! I just leaned the ladder up against the wall.

Step One: Decide if you want the message in Eelish to be read from indoors or out.

Indoors (where the message is read) Step Two: Set up the ladder outside, just below the window where you plan to have the message. Write your message normally in a light colored pen.

Indoors Step Three: Go back inside (careful not to stomp here--I think my mom, a friendly sort of native, got a bit annoyed) and trace your message in a dark pen. You may have to squint a bit in order to get everything straight. I made rather a pirate face with this.

Indoors Step Four: Go back out and erase the light writing. Also move the ladder. And voila!!

Outdoors (where the message is read) Step Two: Just write the message normally inside. But careful, it's forward to anybody looking out your window. I don't recommend this for those of you who have nosy APs or GAs.

I wrote our message traced on the outside, so you could read it. My brother is posing. He's standing on the ladder outside, so you can have an idea for how to go about it.

If you leave for message up for an extended period of time (think about a few weeks), you might want to try using a bit of glass cleaner on it. Otherwise, you should just wipe it off with a paper towel.

You could play a game with your friend, draw, a picture, or play a prank with window-writing. I drew a spider on my brother's window! I haven't tried tic tac toe, but you could have your friend go outside, and write at the same time. You could write or draw something, and your friend could trace it as fast as you're writing it.

I'm a junior member, from northern California, and I'm thirteen. My brother, though not a member of TARS/US, is seven. You can see my page on the TARS website, or vote in my polls. Just type in Deirdre Iams-McGuire in the search bar at the top. Or you can send me a message once you've got to my page.

-Deirdre (and Kieran) Iams-McGuire





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Nobody else in my family thought this was as funny as I did. Maybe it's just an AR fan thing. –Jessika

Answers to the Winter Holiday Word Scrambles

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1) IGLOO | 6) MUMPS |
| 2) FRAM | 7) SIGNAL |
| 3) ICE YACHT | 8) WINTER |
| 4) SKATING | 9) MARS |
| 5) NORTH POLE | 10) ASTRONOMY |

A Final Note--from your editor

I hope everyone has a great summer--camping, sailing, hiking, backpacking--I can't wait!!! Remember our September issue is a great place to share stories of your summer adventures--just write me a letter telling me what you did. You don't need to be a great writer to share your fun with all of us!

Elizabeth Jolley, editor erjolley@mail.com
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