



# Furthest South



Volume 24 Number 1

Newsletter of the Arthur Ransome Society in Australia and New Zealand

## Autumn in Ballarat

Autumn colours were developing, and the season had certainly shifted from the hoped-for balmy late summer temperatures that we recently enjoyed to something rather cooler and blowier when eight VicTARS met by Lake Wendouree on April 2nd. Our plans for picnicking on the lawn beside the water were quickly altered and we located a picnic shelter near the Botanic Gardens to use as TARS HQ instead. There we encamped, suitably rugged up, and Jan's activities soon had us heads down and pencils in hand, until a final semaphore message sent by the Roger in our midst (who shall remain nameless) called for a lunch break and we stopped for refreshments.

All that wind had to be good for something so out came the Allen kites and it wasn't long before several were up and soaring, brightening the dull day. When we felt all our cobwebs had been more than sufficiently blown away in the bracing airs, we wound in the kites and returned to our shelter to undertake a Jan-devised form of scavenger hunt. A search for unique stones turned up some of geological interest but didn't find any Ballarat gold. However, the hunt showed TARS' initiative at its best in finding objects or information to fulfil, or rather, bend the hunt criteria.

Afternoon tea thawed us out before it was time to pack up



David and Stephen prepare their kites



Jan, Hedley and Gill keep their feet on the ground (just!)

and head for home. Stephen, Dawn, Gill, David, Elizabeth, Stuart and Jan peeled off their clothing layers, ready to jump into warm cars, while Hedley added more, ready for his local ride home on his vintage motorcycle. We all had an excellent day out!

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Also in this issue, you will find a few limericks scattered among the pages. This was an idea put forward at the virtual Birthday Party. We hope they raise a smile (or a groan).

### Stop press!

Zoom session coming up soon—a notice will be in your email shortly.

# VicTARS visit to Woodlands

David Stamp

The Woodlands area, very close to the north edge of Melbourne’s Tullamarine airport, was settled by European farmers in the 1840s, and the main homestead building, like many others Victoria at that time, was erected from a set of pre-cut components imported from England. The farmhouse is still in use, and its builder incorporated an elaborate system of drains for the collection and storage of rainwater for use around the immediate area. The storage made use of two large tanks, adjacent to each other, and each provided with a pitched roof. One tank remains, with its roof, and our group, having arrived at Woodlands in soaking rain, gathered under the roof where the other tank had been. The rain continued for much of our time at Woodlands, so that our exploring was limited to our meeting place and the path to the window of the homestead where Devonshire teas could be bought. Parks Victoria manages the site, and its website provides plenty of information about history, nature walks and so on.

The venturesome travellers were Dawn, Gill, Nancy, Larry, Jan, Stuart, Elizabeth and David. Once under the shelter of the roof, Jan led us through various activities, such as judging books by their covers, in this case the books being Puffin paperback editions of the Twelve with their minimally coloured covers using illustrations from inside the books. We were intrigued to see how people’s preferences for the books chosen by cover illustrations differed from their judging by written content. As an aside, the content of our Puffin edition of *Coot Club* is variable; the glue binding has come unstuck, and if any part of the story isn’t as you wish, shuffling the pages is sure to make it right.

There was a word game that tested our vocabularies, and at times our imaginations, and the usual interesting time spent catching up on what everyone else had been doing. The sheltered location allowed us to look out, without getting wet, across a valley to where birds of prey were frolicking in the trees and on the ground.

It was good to be with some of our members again after too many hesitant plans and postponements; maybe we can look forward with some confidence to returning to something more like our usual programs.

Three million of the usual when we do!

*A party of Hullaballoos  
Would always canoodle and schmooze  
Till on Breydon Water  
They did what they not oughta  
And that was the end of their cruise.  
Ralph Secombe*



The tank shelter



In the tank shelter

*There once was a young man from Leeds  
Who had done some extraordinary deeds  
He sat down to type  
Took a toke from his pipe  
And came up with some jolly good reads  
Alison Spiers*



## Cheryl Paget

As many TARS will already know, Cheryl died on 17 January after a period of illness during which she continued to participate in TARS matters almost until the end. Cheryl was loved and respected by TARS in New Zealand, Australia and the UK. Following are a few of the many tributes read at her funeral or posted on Facebook.

Cheryl transformed the New Zealand branch of The Arthur Ransome Society. She became our Coordinator and encouraged us to meet one another, and introduced the annual Arthur Ransome holiday weekend, when many of us got together each January in memory of Ransome's birthday. Cheryl loved fun and competitions, and gave a great deal of time and energy to the Society, thinking up activities that we would enjoy as a group. Hers was always a friendly face. She was also a keen researcher, writer and lecturer. Wellington members of the Society listened to the informative talks that she gave to the Friends of the Dorothy Neal White Collection. It is incredibly sad that she died at such a young age. Cheryl's passing makes it even more clear how important it is to grab every opportunity given to us in life, and make the most of it, because we never know what the future holds. (With thanks to Susan Price for the words.)



I met Cheryl when she and the boys moved to New Zealand, and before I begin my reading I would like to share my tribute to Cheryl.

Firstly, I would like to thank and acknowledge Sam and Jake for their grace, strength and humour. Over the last year and a bit you and your mum have lived in a way which celebrates and embraces your lives together. As a family, you have been present and spent your time focusing on enjoying each other, and making a lifetime of memories.

Cheryl did not fear death, and because of this she was able to enjoy every moment and be present without anxiety or fear. This is an attribute of Cheryl's that has always been there.

Cheryl, as a friend, accepts you as you are in each moment. She is always present. She observed things, and was thoughtful, but offered no commanding advice, she simply cradled me in her kindness, humour and with the knowledge that whatever happened, she would always be there. Despite this calm, she was also incredibly stubborn when knew her own mind and how she would handle certain things. Her tenacity and strength in moving to New Zealand gave you all a new and expanded community and family.

Sam and Jake, our hearts and homes will always be open to you in the same way. Whether that's tomorrow, next week or

in twenty years, you will always be welcome and loved. One of my first reactions when Cheryl told me she was sick went to my daughter. I had imagined when my daughter is the boys' age now, she would be able to talk to Aunty Cheryl when I annoyed her, let her down, or if she needed someone other than me to support her. It will remain one of my greatest sadnesses that they will not be able to enjoy each other.

However, Cheryl, as a passionate literary person, has provided us with a lifetime of memories in the books she carefully selected and curated for my daughter. Despite her passion for traditional literature, Cheryl has not provided any classics for my daughter. Early on in her life, Cheryl and I discussed the lack of diversity represented in children's literature, and how my daughter needed to see herself in the books she read. From that point on, Cheryl carefully selected and ordered some of the most incredible books. And, because she was so reliable, and present, we also have a mad amount of postcards and cards which I have placed in various books, so they drop out as we read, and we can share a memory of Cheryl.

I will miss her terribly, and I will remember her, not always every day, but in the right moments and with the ability to celebrate her memory.

*Nina Siers*

I wrote a long tribute to Cheryl, it was ever so good and quite cathartic for me. But today isn't about me!

I'd like to share some words that in my experience embody Cheryl and will bring back memories of our friendship every time I encounter them. Maybe they are words that will mean something to you too.

<i>Practical</i>	<i>Academic</i>	<i>Staunch</i>	<i>Organised</i>	<i>Reading</i>
<i>Fun</i>	<i>Bossy</i>	<i>Red wine</i>	<i>Politics</i>	<i>Book shops</i>
<i>Committed</i>	<i>Spread-sheets</i>	<i>Enquiring</i>	<i>Afternoon tea</i>	<i>Fierce</i>
<i>Beautiful</i>	<i>Public servant</i>	<i>Swallows and Amazons</i>	<i>Books</i>	<i>Gin</i>
<i>Libraries</i>	<i>Project managing</i>	<i>Second hand book shops</i>	<i>Faith</i>	<i>Debates</i>
<i>Sunday lunch</i>	<i>Warrior mum</i>	<i>Arthur Ransome</i>	<i>Book club</i>	<i>Enthusiastic</i>
<i>Laura Ingalls Wilder</i>	<i>Book sales</i>	<i>Football</i>	<i>Passionate</i>	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>

Thank you for being my friend, Cheryl, you were most definitely not a duffer.

*Diana Rickman*

I have known Cheryl since we all lived on Walmer Road in Lowestoft and the children went to school and cubs/scouts together.

I shall raise several glasses in her honour after managing to find some Hawke's Bay wine here in Emerald, Qld. Not red I'm afraid, but I'm sure Cheryl wouldn't mind.

Cheryl will be greatly missed but much remembered in our hearts.

*Earl Robinson*

I worked with Cheryl for a number of years at MSD and we have kept in touch over the mixed fortunes of our soccer teams, together with another ex MSD colleague, David Caldwell . we were always gracious in defeat and humble with success. I will toast Cheryl but more importantly, whenever I see the Canaries results will think of her.

I'm in Brisbane so can't make the service, I understand some of our former colleagues will be attending.

*Brian Wilson*

I first met Cheryl when she was PR to Mr Lawrence Yule when he was mayor of Hastings and I was invited to open the council session with prayer. As soon as she spoke I detected a Suffolk accent. She came from Lowestoft, pronounced Lowstuff, where four of my five children were born and where they learn English as a second language!! On our first evening in the town we bought fish and chips and needed help to understand Mr Capps the proprietor. 'Now Boy, what you want, Skate, cod, had-dock, whitin', what?' repeated twice at breakneck speed. 'Fish and chips please.' was all I could muster.

Cheryl came to faith in the parish church known as Christ Church in Lowestoft, and she and I often exchanged Suffolkisms and photographs of the town and also shared joys, sorrows and a confidence that whatever happens,

God is never taken by surprise and is always in control. I cherish the thought that when Cheryl arrived in heaven the angels said, 'Har do come thet lill old mawther from Lowstuff.' and she replied, 'Bootiful.' We didn't meet often but we'll miss her and know that the boys will miss her dearly.

Our best wishes to them and all the family. May you know the comfort that only the Lord Jesus can give. No-one understands like Jesus! We are grateful to have known Cheryl and to have shared just a tiny part of her life with you. God bless you and be sure of our love and prayers.

*Duncan and Sirinthip Leighton*

I remember Cheryl as a welcoming and very friendly person. I first met her at an Arthur Ransome meeting in Melbourne. She was such a beautiful person whose interest in everyone shone through. She came several other times but it was very special to see her again at a weekend held in 'Lower Hutt'. She came forward to greet me. Her smiling face stood out among the others whom I had not met. It was exciting to meet the group but it was thanks to Cheryl that I 'fitted in' so well and so quickly. Her actions made it easier to meet others whom I knew by name. Thank you Cheryl.

*Pamela Copley*



One of Cheryl's many interests was the Arthur Ransome Society, based in the UK and with branches in New Zealand and Australia, among others. Cheryl was the coordinator and, I think we may say, the leading light of the New Zealand Branch, known as TARSNZ. We in Australia (AusTARS) got to know her through her contributions to our magazine, *Furthest South*, and through her active participation in events during her visits to Australia.

She became a valued friend to many of us. Her broad interests and scholarly approach are evident in the articles she wrote for us on a variety of Ransome-related subjects, which were informed by her research, her interest in children's literature, and her wide network of contacts. Her thoughts were always interesting and sometimes shed an unexpected light on her subjects. She shared with AusTARS a vision to bring together TARSNZ and AusTARS so that our members could interact

and feel less isolated as TARS 'at the bottom of the world'. She was a lively and stimulating force in the trans-Tasman Zoom sessions which brought us virtually together while Covid prevented us from actually meeting. Even while ill, she continued to participate enthusiastically.

None of this conveys a sense of Cheryl as a person. Even at a distance she had a quality that made one join in her enthusiasm. She was a wonderful ambassador for TARS and she will be hugely missed as a voice and a driving force for all of us down under. AusTARS will continue to foster our bonds with TARSNZ and we extend our sympathy to her family and to our friends in New Zealand.

*The AusTARS Committee*



*International diplomacy — AusTARS and TARSNZ Coordinators exchange gifts*

# Great Southern?

John Parsloe

‘Look! There’s one – a great southern!’

We were approaching Amsterdam Island in the southern Indian Ocean, roughly 500 km north of the Antarctic convergence. It had felt like a long passage. And an uncomfortable one. Since leaving Fremantle twelve days before, after the America’s Cup festivities in early 1987, we had headed out into a continuous westerly wind and swell on the ship’s bow that quickly reminded us we were really back at sea in the real world.

Amsterdam Island is one of the remotest volcanic islands on the planet – 3,450 km from Australia and 4,300 km from Africa. We were looking for one of the world’s rarest seabirds, the elusive Amsterdam Island albatross. A birdwatcher from Melbourne and a seaweed scientist from Townsville had joined us in Fremantle to visit that French island on our way to Cape Town for the ship’s next official engagement.

The Amsterdam Albatross, *Diomedea amsterdamensis*, is one of the three great southern albatrosses. It breeds only on Amsterdam Island – in brown, rather than the more usual white plumage of the Royal or Wandering Albatrosses. The bird weighs in at 4.8–8 kg, and is 107–122 cm long with a wingspan of 280–340 cm. Its discovery was very recent, only first described four years earlier in 1983 after a French scientific party had wintered over for the first time. Some researchers thought it could be a sub-species of the Wandering Albatross. It is listed as critically endangered. When the population was first discovered there were just 5 breeding pairs. With conservation over the years this has now increased to 18 to 25 breeding pairs, with a total of about 130 birds.

We had decided on *Sir Walter Raleigh*’s course to Cape Town by the lure of a prize! This was to be awarded to the first vessel ever to see this huge Amsterdam Island albatross at sea. The prize had not yet been claimed. So we had hoped to be that



*Sir Walter Raleigh at anchor off Amsterdam Island (photo: Dr Dorle Pauli).*

first vessel, plus get the useful publicity that would go with it for our charitable organisation, Operation Raleigh. ‘Sea’ had been defined as being greater than 100 nautical miles from the island where these large seabirds breed during the winter months. Hence our reason for having an approved Australian



*Approaching Amsterdam Island (photo: Dr Dorle Pauli).*

birdwatcher on board to ensure any claim we made for the reward would be accepted.

Our expert Australian albatross man had dictated the route we took towards the islands. He had selected the most likely course a returning albatross would take to head back to its nesting island for the breeding season. When we finally approached Saint Paul and Amsterdam Islands our bird watcher had suddenly become quite animated when, for the first time, he saw some of these great seabirds flying by. But unfortunately they were all close in around Amsterdam Island and not beyond the required 100-mile zone.

However, we were very successful with another of the science projects – collecting a number of unknown seaweeds from Amsterdam Island. This ensured the visit remained a memorable one as the Amsterdam Island diversion proved to be an intriguing charade with the French authorities on the island.

The French were very suspicious of our real motives for wanting to visit their two islands, especially with a New Zealander as the Officer-in-Charge on board this British vessel! Although our London office had cleared the visit with the appropriate French government department in Paris, they had not been advised that, for security reasons, they would also need permission from the naval officer whose region the islands were situated in. Thus, permission was required from both Paris and the regional Admiral to be able to visit these islands. This had not occurred.

During the voyage towards the two islands we became aware our Paris permit would not be enough for the local French administration to allow us to land. So we had to come up with a quick solution!

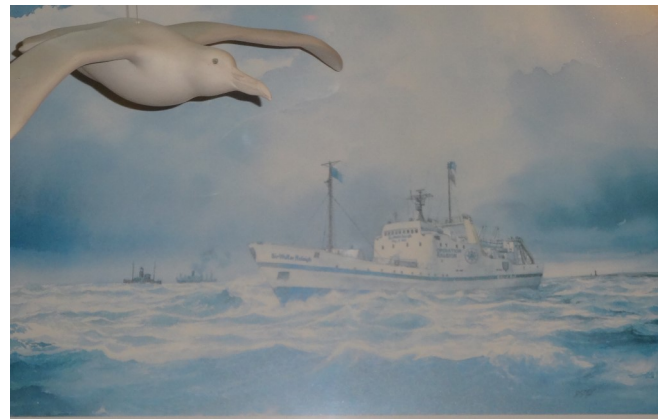


When we were challenged by radio as we approached the islands we explained that an ‘engine problem’ had occurred – we required sheltered waters from the weather to anchor our vessel in safely to carry out the necessary repairs!

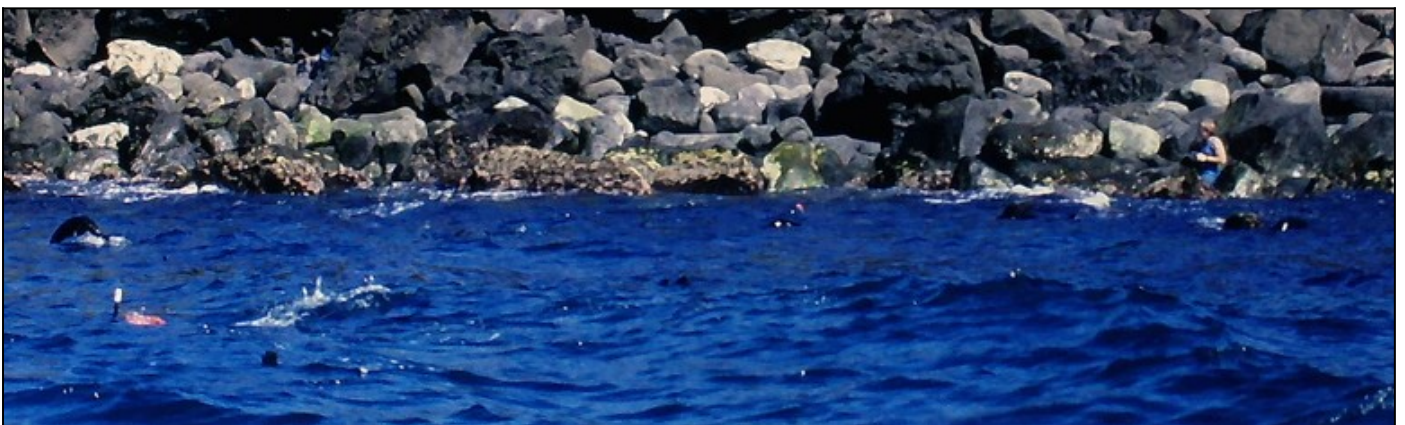
Amsterdam Island was the logical choice as the French base was there on the NE point (Base Martins de Viviers), and had a sheltered anchorage. Saint Paul Island was about 50 miles further to the south. This would also allow our Australian scientist and her women team to go seaweed collecting, as approved in the Paris permit.

But there was a further problem – no women were allowed ashore by the local military administration. Only men! This challenge was overcome by having our women diving team standing off in their rubber inflatable while their diver swam around in the kelp beds collecting her samples. For the French, no women’s footprints were put ashore! Meanwhile the Base Commander invited a small group of blokes from the ship to come ashore and visit his Base. This was after a small French team had been sent out to the ship to ‘inspect and assist’ with the engine repairs! We had ensured that there would be something conveniently being dismantled and then ‘replaced’ when the French party came on board. They seemed to be convinced and took our small group of blokes back ashore for lunch with their Base Commander, a military man. Few of the French could speak English, and few of us could speak French – only some of the students. It was a male-only establishment of mainly young men avoiding compulsory military training back home in France and, instead, posted to these isolated places for a year. As well as the military Base Commander, there was also one Gendarme. When we left, he unpinned his policeman’s badge and gave it to me as a memento of the visit!

Our respite from the weather was over. The ‘repairs’ had been completed; it was now time to raise the anchor and head back out into the prevailing westerly wind and seas, as we resumed our onward voyage towards Cape Town and the new set of challenges that would await us there.



*The gendarme and the OIC (photo: Dr Fiona Scott)*



*Seaweed gathering (photo: Dr Fiona Scott).*

# Book review: Ransome Centre Stage – Selected Dramatic Works

Nancy M. Endersby-Harshman

Amazon Publications' book for 2021 is a compilation of scripts and lyrics devised mostly by members of TARS about the life and work of Arthur Ransome. Comprising six sections, the book presents selections by UK TARS Brian Hopton, Kirstie Taylor, Robin Anderson, Kirsty Nichol Findlay and Duncan Hall, as well as our own AusTAR, Jan Allen and a guest appearance from Evgenia Ransome.

Readers will enjoy skits with the young Arthur trying to write poetry in front of the Collingwoods, the Sparkinson interviews (guests on the show include James Turner, Lt Col Jolys DSO, Miss Maria Turner and international guest, Miss Lee, from somewhere off the coast of China), a friendly chat between Evgenia and AR from a room in the Smolny Institute in Petrograd, a night in Bohemia with the Ananee spider woman and Alan Hakim in Japanese traditional dress, a full dramatisation of *Winter Holiday*, radio plays as performed by AusTARS and a finale from Evgenia Ransome as she attempts to force the BBC back on track towards AR's original writings for their 1962 production of *Swallows and Amazons*.

*Ransome Centre Stage* will be a trip down memory lane for those TARS who were involved in the original performances and a great historical record for those who came later. As an AusTAR, the book certainly took me back to the many gatherings when we were encouraged into song and acting by Jan's entertaining and innovative musical plays. The book is illustrated with selected photographs (those from AusTARS are particularly entertaining). There are also some theatrical posters and theatre programs included, but the print on these is very small and reading glasses will be required.

The book production is everything we have come to expect from Amazon Publications. I failed to subscribe this year (more fool me), but those who did were obviously very generous to the extent that the book could be bound in hardcover. The generosity may perhaps be attributed to several new subscribers noted in the list, namely Mr H. Bangate, Mrs Barrable and Lt Co Jolys DSO, amongst others! The Arthur Ransome

Society in Australia is also a subscriber, meaning that this interesting volume is available to us all to borrow from our Library and enjoy.

Congratulations to all who contributed works to this volume and to the editor, Alan Hakim, who is taking this book as his swan song from Amazon Publications after sixteen years of service.

*Ransome Centre Stage – Selected Dramatic Works*, edited by Alan Hakim, Amazon Publications, 2021

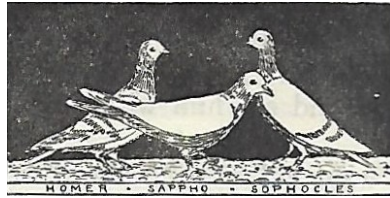


## AR's birthday party quiz


1. WH Who were the seals?
2. From which book is this (slightly incomplete) quote? 'Never in all their lives had ..... and ..... seen so many boats.'
3. GN How much money was Dick offered by Jemmerling for information concerning the divers?
4. ML From whom did Missee Lee buy Captain Flint?
5. PP What is the first sea shanty the prospectors sing to help them get the handcart and dromedaries up the last hill on the trek to Tyson's?
6. SD The War Canoe is better known as what?
7. What was Arthur's Aunt Edith?
8. WD How many reefs did John take down when *Goblin* was sailing in the storm?
9. WH What was a polar bear?
10. WD What was the country of origin of the steamer that had been taking Captain Walker back to England?
11. SD What was the name of Mary Swainson's young man?
12. PP To where was the line of white spots painted by Squashy Hat pointing?
13. SD What was Captain Flint's welcome contribution to the post-shipwreck dinner (lunch) at Horseshoe Cove?
14. What is the name of a NSW grazing property with a link to AR?

(Answers on page 17)








## The Pigeons' Posts

 Who watched the Simon Reeve three-part program on the Lake District which ended recently on ABCTV? Simon's 'investigative tourism' series of programs from different world areas always tackles some of the difficult social and environmental issues as well as showing viewers beautiful and interesting parts of the countries he visits. This latest program is worth seeing, so find it on iView.


Thanks, **David Batho**, WaraTAR, for alerting us to it. James Rebanks, Lakeland Herdwick sheep farmer (like Beatrix Potter) is interviewed in the third episode and presents both older and modern perspectives on the life of the hill farmer. Look for his bestselling book, *The Shepherd's Life*, and other titles, for further interesting reading on the Lake District.

 Our *FS* editor, VicTAR **Phoebe Palmieri**, took part in an episode of ABC TV's *Compass* program on Easter Sunday. It was about the work of Sister Brigid Arthur, founder of the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project in Melbourne, with which Phoebe is involved. The program can be watched again on ABC iView.

 VicTARS **David and Elizabeth Stamp** took their Hartley 16 sailing around the Gippsland Lakes for two weeks recently, exploring and staying on the boat in some favourite haunts (see story on page 15).

 WaraTAR **Laurie Allen** did some similar voyaging with friends in his trailer-sailer on Lake Macquarie, fortunately well before the big rain event. He's sent us some photos from his trip (see next page).

We hope that TARS living in or near areas afflicted by the recent floods have remained safe and their homes undamaged, and that their family members have not been affected.

 **Larry Harshman** and **Nancy Endersby-Harshman** recently explored parts of the new walking trail running through the Grampians (Gariwerd) in Victoria and Nancy sent us some photos from their trip

*A young woman by name Dorothea  
In Scarab was learning to steer  
She did what she oughter  
As Knight's book had taught 'er  
And her ruler-straight wake raised a cheer.*

Phoebe

*There was a young sailor from Horning  
Who always slept under the awning  
With one of the daught-  
ers, Starboard or Port,  
And always felt good in the morning.*

Ralph Seccombe



Laurie Allen and his boat on  
Lake Macquarie

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Nancy and Larry's trip to the  
Grampians

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## AusTARS Committee News

The Committee thanks all members for their very prompt subscription renewals for 2022. This process ran smoothly and members' generosity in making additional donations is appreciated and will assist our Member Participation Program to continue this year. At the end of this year, it is anticipated that all members will be attending to their subscription renewals individually, via the TARS website, now that this process has been established for overseas members. But we will give you reminders!

Eleven members members attended the 2022 AusTARS Annual General Meeting, held via Zoom on February 19th. Two members sent apologies. At the meeting the 2021 Annual Report and 2021 Financial Statement and Budget for 2022 were presented and accepted. Consumer Affairs Victoria, with whom AusTARS is incorporated, require us to hold this meeting and present these reports. The Annual Report is also sent to the TARS Board. Expenditure for 2021 remained within the budgeted amount, with a small surplus and the financial position is healthy. Despite the limitations imposed by the pandemic, AusTARS managed a satisfactory program of Zoom and other activity sessions to engage members.

At the end of the AGM, a minute's silence was observed, in memory of former TARSNZ Coordinator Cheryl Paget and her lasting contribution to TARS.

AusTARS Committee positions are held for one year. Results of the Election of Office Bearers for 2022 at the AGM were as follows:

Chairman/Coordinator: Dawn Ciechomski  
(email dp1949@live.com.au)  
Vice-Chairman/Vice-President: Phoebe Palmieri  
Secretary: Gill Metz (email gm\_squared@hotmail.com)  
Treasurer: Stuart Allen  
Ordinary Committee Members: Jan Allen, Martin Spiers

Thanks to all committee members who served in 2021 and welcome to our 2022 office bearers! Phoebe Palmieri will continue as Editor of *Furthest South* and Zoom Convenor in 2022. David Stamp continues to look after our AusTARS Library (see Library List sent to all members earlier this year for details of borrowing).

Send your contributions to *Furthest South* to our Secretary, Gill Metz, and any queries on matters TARS to our Coordinator, Dawn Ciechomski.

AusTARS has developed and implemented a Health and Safety - COVID-19 Policy, which was adopted at the February, 2022 Committee Meeting. It applies to all physical gatherings of members and appears below.

Enjoy your TARS year!

### *The Arthur Ransome Society in Australia, Inc.*

#### *Health and Safety Policy for COVID-19 Pandemic, February 4th, 2022*

In line with general guidelines in place in Australian states which relate to health and safety regarding the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the following procedures have been adopted by the Society:

Gatherings of members for events and activities will only take place in line with applicable State or Federal health advice and requirements. Events will be cancelled, postponed or held by video link if current pandemic conditions are likely to render member gatherings unsafe.

All measures as prescribed by relevant government authorities for the preclusion of infection transmission will be adopted for all physical gatherings of members at events and activities.

Members participating in events organized by the Society must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as required by government directives.

This policy may be amended by the committee of the Society in future, should government directives alter.

NOTE: Vaccinations must be current and up to date and members may be asked to show proof of vaccination to attend events.

## Coming events for VicTARS

Saturday, June 4th Visit to Bendigo, by train or car, with *Missee Lee* and *Pigeon Post* themes.

For further details, contact the Secretary.

## Honours for TARS

### Eileen Gunther OAM and Barb Grove

Eileen and Barb, VicTARS who are very active workers for Girl Guides Australia, have both been awarded The Grey Kangaroo, the third highest award in Australian Guiding, for service at state and national level. Congratulations, Eileen and Barb! They join fellow Guide and VicTAR, **Joan Noke**, as holders of this award. Appropriately, the State Commissioner delivered this news to them at Guiding's Britannia Park, near Yarra Junction, which has a resident mob of grey kangaroos and where the trio do much of their volunteer work.

### Gill Metz

VicTAR Gill Metz (who is also AusTARS' new Secretary) was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal in this year's Australia Day honours.

We are honoured to have two worthy recipients of the award amongst our ranks as Gill now joins Stephen Walls in holding this honour.

Here is the citation for Gill's award:

*Ms Gill Metz has provided 21 years of exemplary service to the Country Fire Authority (CFA) of Victoria, since joining as a volunteer in February 2000. She has responded to 1,255 incidents to date. She has held the elected roles of 3rd and 4th Lieutenant and Training Coordinator within the brigade and is currently the brigade Secretary and Group delegate.*

*Operationally, Ms Metz has led Strike Teams, and has actively participated in deployments to the Sydney Christmas Day fires in 2001, the Northeast campaign fires in 2003, the Black Saturday fires in 2009 and the 2019 / 2020 Black Summer fires. Her commitment to ensuring that volunteer response capabilities are holistically recognised, measured and integrated into future planning and her meaningful advocacy, mentoring and leadership of staff and volunteers across the sector has resulted in her occupying a variety of roles as diverse as the communities she has served.*

*Strategically weaving her experiences as a volunteer firefighter into many other positions across the fire services sector, Ms Metz has questioned the validity of traditional practices and influenced change, challenged bias, and called out inappropriate behaviour. She was the first woman to hold the senior position of Regional Manager in the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and she was a trailblazer, promoted to the positions of Assistant Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Fire Officer (Acting) for*

*the Department of Environment, Land, Water, and Planning (DELWP).*

*Ms Metz has championed increased diversity in CFA and the fire services, contributing to stronger brigades that better represent the communities they serve. She has forged partnerships, inspired organisations to think differently, implemented innovative diversity projects and mentored young men and women to fulfil their potential within the fire services. These skills and attributes have been most obvious in the support and development of members of Riddells Creek Fire Brigade and the Mt Macedon Group of Brigades.*

*Ms Metz has made an outstanding contribution to CFA, to the fire services sector and to the community.*

A big week for Gill, with her 60th birthday *and* winning the Quiz shield!





## AR's virtual Birthday Party via Zoom

Every January, AR's birthday is celebrated by VicTARS, who have developed some now traditional activities for this occasion. Alas, it was inadvisable to gather in person this year, so we looked for another way to mark the day. Why not Zoom it? Then members from far and wide could join in. And we could still have some of the usual activities.

So seventeen members from four states 'came to the party' and celebrated with cake, costumes, chocolate, quiz questions and a 'treasure hunt'. Members were invited to contribute questions for the Dick Calum Quiz, always a hotly contested event. This year the shield was carried off by the knowledgeable and unbeatable team of Dawn and



Cactus cake (Nancy Endersby-Harshman and Larry Harshman)

Gill, our new Coordinator and Secretary, with runners-up Ralph and Nancy also performing solidly.

There were some fine efforts, too, in the Birthday Cake field, with some impressively individual creations, ranging from a sailing sledge to a flaming pudding. Various costumed members, identifying as well-known characters, added to the party atmosphere. The treasure hunt could be attempted at home before the event and Gwyn, David and Elizabeth performed very well in solving the clues and finding the treasure.

TARS displayed their originality and literary (?) ability in the Limerick Recitations. You can judge these for yourself as they are reproduced elsewhere in *FS*. They were good entertainment!

We heard some interesting recommendations for chocolate to try, as members offered their favourite choices. Gluten-free, with stevia, or a marzipan chocolate, anyone? Our inner Rogers had a field day, looking, lusting and consuming. We devoured our birthday cakes for afternoon tea before the party wound up, with some 'prizes' for effort to look forward to in the post.



Mud weights cake (mud cake, obviously!) (David and Elizabeth Stamp)



Rough seas cake (Gwyn Johnson)





Jolly Roger brownie (Gill Metz and Dawn Ciechomski)

The lass who's inspired this ditty  
Once spotted a poor drowning kitty  
Seeming doomed to his fate  
He was plucked from a crate  
And called Sinbad by sharp-eyed young Titty  
Jan



Missee Lee cake (Ralph Seccombe)



The Gulch cake (with Squashy's white spots) (Phoebe Palmieri)

When Squashy, as cool as you please,  
Painted sinister spots on the screens  
The Gulch was protected  
By a sign they erected  
With a message that made his blood freeze.  
Phoebe (with a bit of poetic licence)



# The AR birthday party virtual treasure hunt

Participants in the birthday Zoom party tackled this quiz. Here it is for those who weren't at the party.

You will need: pen, paper and your copy of *Peter Duck*, which chronicles a search for treasure! Perhaps Wikipedia may also be useful. Page numbers refer to Jonathan Cape green hardback editions. Other help given for paperback editions.

The solving of each clue will provide you with a letter of the alphabet, or sometimes more. The clues can be done in any order.

There are two parts to the hunt. The solving of the first part should gain you thirteen letters, which you will be able to re-arrange into a well-known (to TARS) three-word phrase (noun). If you need it, an extra clue for solving this is at the end of the quiz. The second part of your hunt should provide you with another batch of letters to shuffle together to reach your solution and find treasure.

## Part One

Clue One: A verse appears at the start of Chapter One of *PD*. What is the first name of the poet? Take the first letter of his name.

Clue Two: On page 31, Cape hardback edition, or a couple of pages before the end of the chapter 'Quayside', Nancy sticks up for her feminist principles - 'rather fiercely'. You need the first letter of the first word of her three-word question.

Clue Three: Page 235, in chapter XIX, 'Island Morning', five words shouted save Captain Flint. Who was his saviour? Two letters for you here, as initials - keep the first one for the last task of the hunt and use the second letter you've found for this part.

Clue Four: What is the name of the first island they pass on the voyage and on which they make landfall? (4,2,5) Take the first letter of its first word. Save the next two letters of this word for the last part of the hunt.

Clue Five: Titty - 'He's just this minute nearly been eaten by a... (what?) See Clue Three. Take the first letter of your answer.

Clue Six: Find an illustration that shows an alarm clock. What is the labelled box in the illustration? (5,3,3) Take the letter starting the second word of the label. Keep the third letter of the first word of the label for the second part of the hunt.

Clue Seven: Who's got a ship's biscuit? (5) Take the first letter of your answer.

Clue Eight: What was the last thing Captain Flint said when he left to cross Crab Island? Take the fourth letter of the first word and keep the first letter of the last word for later.

Clue Nine: 'Fallen trunks and feathery tops that would wave in the trade wind no more.' But what did Susan and Peggy see? (1,3) Take the single letter word.

Clue Ten: Description of object seen in Clue Nine - it's made from ?? (8) Take the first letter of this descriptive word.

Clue Eleven: Find a very dark illustration. Look at the caption and take the letters which begin the first, second and fourth words.

**Now reassemble all those letters you've found into three words to make something familiar, and you will have solved the first part of the hunt! Well done!**

(Extra clue, if needed: three words, 4,3,6)

## Part Two

Here's a final clue to solve the second part of this hunt for TREASURE: What is the chapter title of Chapter XXXIII? Take the first letter of the first word. Now gather up those extra letters you put aside for this second part of the hunt and then what have you found?

(Answers on page 17)



## *Beware the Trees – a Lesson Learned*

David Stamp

In February Elizabeth and I spent a few days on the Gippsland Lakes in our ancient Hartley TS16 *Quokka*, visiting some of our favourite places. Our last night was moored up against a grassy bank in Picnic Arm, near Paynesville. We have been there many times, as this spot is sheltered from all winds, it is quiet, and there is a peaceful view across the water. We make two of our lines fast to a tree, and the other two to our rond anchor, which almost falls into the same hole in the bank every year.

At every arrival we approach the bank slowly under sail or slow-running outboard, taking care to avoid catching our rigging in the overhanging branches of a tree near the water's edge, and in the morning we depart forwards, being aware again of the tree, now behind the boat.

This time, for some reason, or lack thereof, I thought it would be fitting to depart backwards, so I fired up the motor, set the throttle at a slow idle, recovered our lines and rond anchor, and engaged astern gear. *Quokka* moved slowly away from the bank, as expected, so slowly that it took me a while to realise that slowly had become stationary. It was only then that I looked up, to see our boom topping lift pushing into the overhanging foliage. It would have been hard to convince anyone that this was intentional. There were only the two of us to share my embarrassment, and luckily there were no onlookers. There weren't even any leaves on the deck, as there were with the unnamed boat rescued from a tree by the D and Gs in *The Big Six*.

Lessons, soon, no doubt, to be forgotten – Plan your departure – Look out for ghouls sensing emerging calamity and awaiting entertainment (Potter Heigham bridge!) – Look up and around until clear of everything – Proceed carefully, as something can still go wrong.





## Quiz answers

### Answers to AR's birthday party quiz

1. Skating people on the lake.
2. Coot Club (Ds)
3. A sovereign (offered John 4 more pounds)
4. Taicoon Chang
5. Hanging Johnny
6. The Beckfoot rowing boat
7. A missionary (in China)
8. Three
9. The cragfast sheep
10. Netherlands (Holland)
11. Jack
12. The Golden Gulch
13. A box of ginger beer (grog) (They had lost the tea)
14. Bergen-op-zoom

### Answers to virtual birthday party treasure hunt

#### Part One

The three-word answer to the first part from all the letters found is WILD CAT ISLAND.

- Clue One      The poet is Laurence Binyon. Letter is **L**.
- Clue Two      ““What about girls?” said Nancy rather fiercely.’ Letter is **W**.
- Clue Three      ““Sharks about!” “Look out, sir!” ‘ shouts Peter Duck and throws fish to distract the shark, which allows Captain Flint to scramble to safety. Initials PD. Letter is **D**. Keep **P** aside for second part of hunt.
- Clue Four      Isle of Wight. Letter is **I**. Keep **S** and **L** for second part.
- Clue Five      Shark. Letter is **S**.
- Clue Six      Illustration in Chapter XVI, *The Madeiras at Dusk*, page 201, *Sums*. First Aid Box. Letter is **A**. Keep **R** for second part.
- Clue Seven      Tailpiece illustration page 120 and elsewhere - two crabs holding a ship's biscuit. Letter is **C**.
- Clue Eight      Chapter XXVI, *Threatening Weather*, page 317. Captain Flint cries, ‘Swallows and Amazons for ever!’ Letter is **L**. Keep **E** for second part.
- Clue Nine      Chapter XXVIII, *The Finding of the Treasure*, page 342, ‘...saw... a box.’ Letter is **A**.
- Clue Ten      As for Clue Nine, page 345; the box is made from ‘teakwood’. Letter is **T**.
- Clue Eleven      Choice of two here: *Roger's Night Scene*, page 147, or page 385, *In Duckhaven at Night*, which is the only one with the necessary four-word caption. Letters **I**, **D** and **N**.

#### Part Two

The title of Chapter XXXIII is *All Aboard Once More*. Letter starting first word is **A**. With letters **P**, **S**, **L**, **R** and **E** from the first part, you have found your treasure, which is PEARLS. Well done!

## Answers to Peter Duck quiz

1. From page 145: pitch, nothing, flashing, lighthouse, land, black, then, clouds.

Page 400: below, bathing, decks, mornings, bucketfuls, water, turns, deck, mops.

Page 322: cloud, trade, suddenly, breath, heat, hot, beach, palms, haze, veil.

2. 1 (c) 2 (e) 3 (b) 4 (a).

### The quiz

*As this quiz appeared in the December issue of FS it is reproduced below to refresh your memory..*

**1. Can you supply the missing words in these excerpts from *Peter Duck*? If you need some help, quite a few of the missing words are listed below, at random, following these three paragraphs.**

‘It was a ..... dark night and they could see ..... outside the bulwarks except the.....lights on Start Point and the Eddystone L.....Sky, .....and sea were all ....., though patches of star-sprinkled sky showed now and .....between the black .....overhead.’

‘They hurried .....again to get into their .....things for washing ....., as on the old, happy .....of the outward voyage. They soused each other with ..... of salt ....., and took .....in driving the water along the .....with the long-handled .....

‘And just then the copper .....closed over them. The .....wind from the sea ..... fell away to nothing. Then came a hot .....as if the cloud were throwing ..... before it, a .....breath along the ....., from the south, where, already, the feathery green .....were fading in a ruddy brown .....as if they were behind a ..... of coppery silk.’

**Some words to help: heat trade nothing bathing suddenly haze clouds decks flashing**

**2. Also from *Peter Duck*, can you choose the correct option from (a), (b) or (c) to complete the sentences?**

<p>1. She saw Peter Duck swing the mallet (a) straight at Black Jake’s head. (b) and smash the heavy box. (c) and strike the belaying-pin out of the link.</p>	<p>3. ‘I want one of them to take the wheel from Mr Duck, (a) and try a turn at steering.’ (b) while we’re hearing what the passenger has to say for himself.’ (c) so he can take a look at the chart with me.’</p>
<p>2. A few moments later, the water was pouring in on them through the seams of deck and sides, (a) and the wreck was getting wetter and wetter around them. (b) and they were desperately trying to keep it out of their sleeping bags. (c) and they put their heads inside their sleeping bags to keep dry.</p>	<p>4. So they sat down and fell to, Roger, Titty, Peggy and poor Bill, (a) who had to cut everything up into small bits. (b) who could only drink cocoa. (c) who was unable to eat anything.</p>



## From the archives

A happy day (2004 or 2005?) at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne. Masses of tea trees were in flower, though they are not in the photo.



### FOR SALE

Is anyone missing a title from their twelve? Or building a collection for the grandchildren?

Alan Symons, QTAR, has a spare copy of *Missee Lee*, green British 1964 edition hardback, no dustjacket, in very good condition, with school stamps only on title page, which he is offering to members for \$15.00. Alan would like the buyer's payment for the book to go into AusTARS funds, to be used for our members, and he is happy to post the book free of postage charge to the buyer.

If you would like to own this copy, contact Alan <[alanlsymons@optusnet.com.au](mailto:alanlsymons@optusnet.com.au)>, and pay your \$15.00 into the AusTARS CBA account: BSB 063 842 Account number 10288511 and put your name as the identifier. Remember to write the account name as 'The Arthur Ransome Society in Australia, Inc.'

If you are after a copy of *Great Northern*, Jan Allen has a first edition British hardback, minus dustjacket, available. Contact her at <[jp8fillyjonk@bigpond.com](mailto:jp8fillyjonk@bigpond.com)> if you are interested. A similar arrangement will operate.

*Next issue: SHOWCASE for creative TARS!*

# TARS!



In our next issue we intend to feature work by our members, so please send in your stories, poems, paintings, nature photos, photos of your knitting, model making, maps... the sky is (more or less) the limit! Your entries may be AR-related or not, as we know our members have interests in an extraordinarily wide range of subjects. This is not a competition, but some small prizes may be awarded.

And please remember: *Furthest South* depends on its subscribers for material, so if you haven't sent us an article before, then don't be shy!

Send your items to the AusTARS Secretary, Gill Metz, <gm\_squared@hotmail.com> by **30 May**.

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