

# Out of Captain Flint's 'Trunkette'

## Editorial Note

Welcome to the 'pilot' edition of the Mixed Moss Online Supplement (*MMOS*). This 'trunkette' has three sections - an **'Editorial Note'** about the supplement, a continuation of the **'About our Contributors'** story from *Mixed Moss* 2021 and **'Updates/Feedback'**.

*MMOS* was initially conceived as a repository for extra material that couldn't fit into the current printed edition. Articles are reproduced in full where possible, with minimal editing.

The story of how articles came across my desk is continued in **'About our Contributors'**. I've also made space for the more extended biographies I asked our contributors to provide. I find biographies of members really helpful, particularly for newcomers joining later in life from the other side of the world, although it is also helpful for longer-standing members 'meeting' new members (or catching up on the latest news for old). I hope you enjoy them.

*MMOS* has already evolved from the initial idea. One of the challenges of submitting an article to *Mixed Moss* is the limited opportunity for entering into a dialogue with contributors or providing updates to an idea ... while people are actually thinking about it. Could the supplement be used to facilitate updates and feedback ... or could making a space for it here inspire someone to come up with an even better idea?

**Why 'publish' on 7 December?** In addition to the articles I had already planned (for a supplement I hoped to publish in time for Christmas), I was inspired to not only include a new article from Maida Barton Follini, but use a date she mentioned in the article as my publication deadline. As I read her thought-provoking memoir about what was happening in her part of the world while the first editions were rolling off the press, I realised that not only the 80th anniversary of *Missee Lee's* first publication was approaching, but so was the same anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor – the day some say that the war in Europe really did become a 'whole world' war. I felt a bit spooked when I discovered that *Missee Lee* (the most warlike of the twelve, I think) was published for the first time just two days previously, on 5 Dec 1941, as Wayne Hammond mentions in his *Bibliography*. I also discovered that *Missee Lee* was the book that came closest to missing Santa's sleigh without actually doing so. In choosing this date, I do so as a mark of respect and compassion, to all who have been affected directly or indirectly by that, and indeed any, war. Of course, in many ways, this really means all of us.

And this is the way I also see Ransome – a person whose books venturing out into the hearts, hands and minds of so many people and whose Swallows and Amazon spirit might eventually affect all of us, if we just let that spirit get on with it and be.

I would like to again thank all those who have contributed to *Mixed Moss* and supported me in my first year as editor. For *MMOS*, special thanks are due to Mark Walker (my Aussie sounding board, coach and sub-editor) and Diana Wright, 'TARS' webmaster, for supporting the idea and explaining how to make it work.

Best wishes for the season and Happy New Year to all.

## About our Contributors (Continuing the Story from *MM 2021*)

Along with the articles 'in the pipeline' that I received on handover was the article that inspired me to consider an online supplement. Garry Wood's article on background to *Great Northern?* had already been published in a 2019 issue of *Furthest South* (the publication for TARSNZ and AusTARS). As it wasn't available to the wider membership online, I wanted to publish it, but I didn't think it fair to those Down Under to have this article repeated in the printed edition. Publishing it online seemed a good compromise, and then made it possible for me to make a similar offer to the increasing number of writers whose articles weren't going to fit into what was turning into a bumper edition. Not everyone took up that offer, of course, as TARS has other publications with more space. (Through the publications page, you can find both *Signals from TARSUS & North Pole News* and *Furthest South*.)

One enthusiastic contributor sent two articles to *Mixed Moss* last year – Stephen Sykes. Stephen has subsequently turned his delightful musings on the woodland and activities around his (and the earlier Ransome) home at Hill Top into a booklet for friends and those who visit Hill Top. He has kindly agreed to reproducing it (without alteration) here.

Julian Onderdonk's family memoir, mentioned and quoted in the article on overseas experiences, and which arrived when this year's edition was already overflowing, is reproduced in full. I wonder if this inspired Maida Barton Follini to write her own memoir about what it was like for a Ransome reader living in the same country in the Thirties and Forties. (Alternatively, could it have been inspired by David Rawcliffe's article 'In the "World of the Natives" – 1932 in the September 2021 edition of *Signals from TARSUS & North Pole News*, which takes a detailed look at what was happening in 1932.

Finally, the 'contribution that didn't make it' (like *Picts and Martyrs*) in time for the Christmas stocking ... I had two articles of my own 'ready to go' (or so I thought until I asked two of the Ransome-related Facebook groups to help me decide which one). The responses inspired me to re-write them both (and even consider turning one into a presentation), and so I have not published either of them here, after all. Sometimes, the most appropriate Christmas gift when you have already written a lot (however interesting the topic appeared to be) is silence.

## Updates From, and Feedback About, the 2021 Edition

I have some exciting news or 'updates' for some of our articles ...

Stephen Sykes' purchase of Hill Top/**High Ealinghearth** and his subsequent interest in its previous owner led him to buy something at an auction that would clear up the mystery Ted Alexander brought to our attention ... Stephen purchased the missing **AR statuette**! Of course, we don't know where it has been meanwhile, but what a fitting place for it to end up - in Ransome's last home.

I've been advised that Peter Hyland and Alan Hakim have been continuing to update the all-in-one **Mixed Moss indexes** on the All Things Ransome website while Paul Wilson has been working on the official version for TARS. Those wanting to search the entire publication before Paul finishes merging the two TARS indexes can find it at [Online Mixed Moss Index \(allthingsransome.net\)](http://allthingsransome.net).

I have also been reminded (for **News of Dr Ransome**) that the various Ransome-related Facebook pages and [TarBoard: Forum for discussions on Arthur Ransome and the 'Swallows and Amazons' series of books](#) can be useful places to find or be inspired to write articles on Ransome. *Do make sure you check the facts before citing any of the comments.* I think one of my early (pre-TARS FB posts may have accidentally started a rumour (now actually recorded in a published book) that Ransome's

grandmother grew up in Australia. As far as I am aware, Grandma Boulton first stepped onto Australian soil at the age of 62. The 'grandfather with the Australian sheep station' had two wives. The first wife was Australian, but AR's grandmother was the second.

Shortly after publication, I received a **letter to the editor** (reproduced in the 'Original Articles' section) in response to John Fletcher's article on **What happened next?**. At the same time, I was participating in a lively discussion on Facebook generated by the following post by Jane Sullivan, which you can find at (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2612950856/posts/10158198612545857>):

I've just received the latest TARS bundle. I started reading Mixed Moss, almost at random, and to start with I feel I have to make a couple of remarks.

I read all the **poems** and I was astonished by how good they all were. When I was the ages of their authors there was no way I could have written as well as they did.

John Fletcher's '**Swallows and Amazons, What Happened Next**' is a wonderful summary of a series of books that, if it hasn't already been written, ought to be. I don't suppose I should say this with AR's literary executors in the shadows, but is there any chance of these stories appearing as fan fiction?

More comments later, perhaps.

While I get frustrated with technology, I have to confess that I appreciate the opportunities we now have to engage more immediately (and with more people) with articles than previously, when the most common way to respond was to send a letter to the editor for the following year! You'll read in *Signals* how the discussion generated by a question I was clarifying for another article led to Peter writing his editorial. This all just goes to show how many surprising and heart-warming things can happen if you make a contribution (or even *suggest* a contribution be made) to one of the TARS publications. Please do consider contacting the editors for suggestions and tips if you'd like to become involved.

**Erratum.** Feedback is welcome, although feedback that seeks clarification, focuses on what 'works' or 'problems' that can actually be fixed is more likely to be taken seriously.

- I noticed a mistake in the article on **Deep Democracy** the day after the final version went to the printer. The tendency to attribute blame to people, rather than situations mentioned on p.65 is known as the *Fundamental* Attribution Error (not the *False* one).
- The straight apostrophes were a nightmare to insert and have been banned from future editions. Ironically, they arose as a result of a mistaken belief by me and my proofreader that the other person wanted them, when neither of us did. By the time we discovered this (it was the wordprocessor of two contributors that had introduced this space-saving practice), it was too close to printing to change.

Finally, I have received about ten entries for the **Poetry Competition** and am excited to announce that the poems will be judged by Karen Babayan, Jeff Cooper, and Julian Lovelock. Please send your entries in to [mixedmoss@arthur-ransome.org](mailto:mixedmoss@arthur-ransome.org) by 31 January. Remember that Ransome's poetry was mostly done for fun!

Best wishes

Catherine Lamont

Editor