



Furthest South



Volume 25 Number 1, May 2023

Newsletter of the Arthur Ransome Society in Australia and New Zealand

Sailing without getting wet...

Cam Cowled tells about his own approach

For those of us who are not so interested in getting wet, getting rope burns on your hands and suffering ‘Boat Bottom’ (bouncing up and down on a hard surface for a few hours has side effects!), the allure of sailing where you can fit your boat in the boot is hard to ignore. I have made model boats over the years when I couldn’t afford a real one and reading stories about boating adventure invariably sparked off the next boat build, so I have 17 boats now, most of which fit comfortably in the back of the garage.

I’ve left it a bit late to sail around the world in a classic schooner, so my fun is on Tuesdays racing home-made wooden yachts around the buoys on Lake Weeroona in Bendigo. We often start a race after half an hour warming up and keep going until someone calls out ‘afternoon tea’; no one counts the laps covered so it’s more about chasing other boats and occasionally running into them! All boats involved have to have rubber bumpers all round – something to do with when the club first formed and they were just learning to sail. We have visits from special needs groups now and then, and they have a great time and they all leave say



Schooner Misse Lee ready for her first sail

ing they are going to make their own boats (hasn’t happened yet!).

I have spent about three years sailing real yachts in various places and last year bought an ocean-going one,

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BMYS yachts gathering for a start; the skippers are all sitting behind me in the shade

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Revisiting the UK

I'm finally doing it: going back to England again in August this year, 31 years after my only other trip there. This time I'm taking my wife Karen, who will get to see for herself all the places I talked about incessantly after the earlier visit. Remembering the earlier visit made me think what was the most memorable *S&A* part.

I couldn't decide whether it was:

- Seeing the ocean for ten minutes before the cloud bank covered us, after climbing Kanchenjunga;
- Watching the tide come in, covering the mud flats in 'Secret Water';
- Enjoying the hospitality of Lucy Batty at Bank Ground Farm (especially the beer called 'The Big Six', brewed by a local boutique brewery) (There was also another beer called 'Great Northern' which wasn't quite as good as 'The Big Six' but still OK.);
- Searching for Swallowdale;
- Seeing a wherry sail past in full flight while on a half-day cruise from Horning;
- A half-day kayaking the Norfolk northern rivers (from Potter Heigham up);
- Imagining how stormy and rough the ferry trip from Harwich to Hoek van Holland was going to be, while waiting to board (it actually was a big letdown - the famous North Sea was as flat as a pancake that night);
- Being allowed to spend half an hour on Wild Cat Island (courtesy of the local ranger who even lent me his rowing boat to get there);
- Standing outside the Swan Inn at Horning, expecting at any moment to see the Coot Club members come strolling past;
- Or was it just losing myself in my childhood memories because I was actually in the places where the *Swallows & Amazons* stories were set?

Only one way to find out: go back and visit the places again! Stay tuned for my report after we return to Australia.



Sailing without getting wet (continued from page 1)

but sadly have since discovered it's just too much work, and at 6.5 tonnes with no brakes or rubber bumpers, a risky adventure every time we took it out! I may buy another much smaller one, having learnt the lesson 'buy the smallest boat (or car) that suits your needs and abilities'. I haven't made a model of *Swallow* yet, but it has been done many times in England and is tempting, even though its an open design dinghy and would fill up with

water if tilted too far. When TV is boring (most of the time) I watch YouTube, mainly yacht cruising all over the world, and especially the Broads – it's never too windy (don't mention the word rain!). I'm going to hire one of those classic wooden Broads yachts for a week one day, and drift casually from windmill to staithe, so if you want to come as crew, let me know.



Graham Morrell invites us to join him in

Remembering Joy

When I first joined TARS I asked if a family membership was necessary and the correspondence went along the lines of ‘often the other half doesn’t have any interest or doesn’t understand’. I thought this a valid point as Joy had heard of the Twelve but had never read them.

Along came Smiths Lake, my first TARS event. There was no way Joy was going to stay at home and let me run off with a group of people she didn’t know. All I can say is she had a whale of a time, despite the rain. She was often quiet, and no comment was as good as approval. I think she actually got in a kayak up there. If so it was the first time, to my knowledge, as she had a fear of water deeper than her chest, due to a near-drowning incident in her teens. That first encounter with TARS changed her outlook on the water and activities.



She started reading the books, although she never read them all, just the first eight, I think. It was enough for her to understand. We had the boat bought within a year and she enjoyed sailing in good conditions. The kayaks followed shortly after as the boat took a fair effort to set up and was better suited for a half day and TARS. I had mentioned selling the boat on a few occasions when things were tight but she insisted we keep it. We also bought the tent and did a little camping. It’s amazing how one event can change a perspective on life, and we were becoming empty nesters.

I know Joy was thought of as Susan at times but I think she thought of herself as Mrs Barrable, as she enjoyed taking *Teasel* out, having a short sail, then anchoring and painting for the bulk of the day.



Joy looked forward to TARS events as much as I did and really enjoyed the friendly atmosphere that surrounds them. Even though I’d be swotting through a book if we had had forewarning of the theme for the day. Our visit to the VicTARS Christmas party was a standout for her; just to be accepted by everyone on the day made an impression.

Our trip to the UK in 2015 had us climbing Coniston Old Man, finding the Dogs’ Home and cruising around the Norfolk Broads, putting the books into perspective.

All I can say is Joy enjoyed TARS events and the members. The close group of WaraTARS and VicTARS with Jan and Stuart always made her feel welcome. I am very grateful for the allowances made for her abilities. As her condition worsened, she always came home feeling that she belonged and had been part of the day.



Quizzes

1. Minor characters - but often crucial to the action

In the next issue of *Furthest South*, we will be featuring minor characters in the books. We'd like you to tell us who your favourite minor character(s) is/are and why you chose them. It might be interesting to see just which characters, human or otherwise, get your vote, and to see who comes out tops. So hit that keyboard and send us your choices.

Meanwhile, we bring some minor characters to prominence here. Do you know in which book(s) these characters appear?

- a. Sammy Lewthwaite
- b. Young Billy
- c. The farmer who was a friend of Jim Brading
- d. Sinbad
- e. Jim Wooddall
- f. Mr Jonnatt
- g. Miss Powell
- h. Ralph Strakey
- i. Robin
- j. Mrs Whittle

2. Who said it? In what context? What is the book?

- a. 'It was just a mistake. We thought something had happened and it hadn't.'
- b. 'They've got it in proper for Tom Dudgeon.'
- c. 'May we lie down, just to try?'
- d. 'Change your minds. We shall be wishing you were with us all the time.'
- e. 'Hot baths!'
- f. 'There is *one* way we could do it.'
- g. 'Let's hang on till Yarmouth. We'll have to stop there anyway.'
- h. 'Think of explorers swimming tropical rivers.'

PRIZES for members who send the first three correct answers to the two lots of challenges above to the Editor, before the end of June, 2023.

3. Illustrations

When did you last read that ripping yarn, *Peter Duck*? Here are some questions about the book's illustrations.

Answers are on page 14 .

- a. What is the name of the lightship illustrated at the end of Chapter IX?
- b. In the illustration showing two people below a palm tree, what is the object on top of the tree?
- c. Which illustration has a parrot in the foreground?
- d. What are the two crabs holding?
- e. Who is shown climbing a palm tree? (look carefully)
- f. Which illustration shows a hot man?
- g. Name an object seen by Roger through the porthole as the waterspout passed.
- h. Name any three supplies kept in tins aboard *Wild Cat*.



Dick's Nature Notes

Gwyn Johnson is a fascinated observer of the wildlife in and around her garden in Sydney's northern suburbs. Some days it is all action! Just like Dick, Gwyn records her recent observations.

Turkey starts building its nest mound on 20th September. By 1st October it was finished. 12th October: both turkeys have dug to the bottom of the turkey defending hole and Mrs Turkey laid her first egg. We saw her laying five eggs over the course of the next week or so. The moment she had laid the egg, Mr Turkey chased her away from the nest and he did the covering up job by scratching leaves over the hole and filling it in. Mr Turkey incubated the eggs for the next month, adjusting the temperature in the mound by adding extra leaves or removing some.

In November the weather started warming up and a goanna appeared on the scene. I watched with interest as it sniffed round.

19th November: goanna met turkey at the nest. Goanna can smell the eggs and is planning to eat them. Turkey managed to repel the invader and chase the goanna away down the bank and back to the bush.

The goanna wasn't to be deterred and returned an hour later about midday when it was warm, and tried digging his way into the nest. There was a very spirited response from the turkey who scratched the leaves back over the goanna and the hole, as fast as he dug them out of the nest. But the goanna just kept coming back and trying to dig his way into the nest. The turkey responded by scrabbling wildly at all the leaf debris, scratching dirt into the goanna's eyes and pecking its tail, which pro-

duced a strong swish of the goanna's tail in reply.

The goanna never attacked with its mouth, always just with a swish of the tail. And the turkey didn't try using his claws to scratch the goanna either. He always kept his back to the goanna and scratched leaves and dirt backwards, only turning round briefly to peck the tail and jumping into the air to get out of the way of the response.

This went on all afternoon of the 19th. It was exhausting work for both turkey and goanna and every so often they would have Time Out and both go and rest in a sunny spot, replenishing their energy, ready for another round. Turkey was working really hard, defending and repairing his nest. He kept pecking at the goanna's tail and the goanna would swish its tail to whack the turkey who would jump into the air and come down, claws first, on the tail. One determined turkey scratching, and one very determined goanna digging into the nest... who was going to win?

The goanna became completely buried in the leaves with just the tail sticking out and swishing at the turkey, who was pecking and scratching. After about an hour, the turkey managed to chase the goanna out of the nest, and they both took time out and rested in the sun. Then the goanna started again and the turkey chased it up the tree. This went on all afternoon until it cooled down and the goanna left.



Turkey defending mound

Next day, 20th November, the goanna was back again as soon as it warmed up around about lunchtime and this time it burrowed right into the nest, with its swishing tail still out, and we watched closely and saw it come up with an egg in its mouth while the turkey was still desperately scrabbling and pecking the tail. We saw it get a second egg within an hour, and then, eventually, when it cooled down, the goanna went off back to the bush.

The following day I went out and I missed the rest of the action, but my next-

Continued on page 6

door neighbour observed the goanna eating three more eggs, so that was probably all five eggs that Mrs Turkey had laid. The goanna has returned a couple of times for a brief sniff, but then left the scene.

Mr and Mrs Turkey are still wandering around my garden, and he goes back to the mound every so often, just to make sure it's still his, probably claiming his territory, and occasionally Mrs Turkey has a sniff at it, but she didn't do any further laying of eggs; however, the mound is still there. It will need tidying up and I will watch with interest next springtime when they start again. So it took from 20th September, when the turkey started building the mound, the eggs being laid a week or two later and incubated from mid-October until 20th November, and that's when the eggs were eaten. Poor old turkey. He worked so hard and had nothing to show for it.

At the time, I wasn't sure who I wanted to win this war. We have so many turkeys proliferating in the village, and they are very messy while building their nests, and destructive in terms of scratching garden beds and eating flowers and vegetables. If anybody's got tomatoes, those will get eaten.



Powerful owl

Ever since the foxes have been baited there are lots more turkeys around everywhere. Anyway, the balance of nature has prevailed, and the goanna has survived and the turkey will no doubt be back having a go again next spring.

In late February, the brush turkeys who nested last year were still around, occasionally looking at their mound and making sure of possession for next spring. On hot afternoons, a small goanna often passes through. I wonder if the tree snake will return to my garage in May to overwinter there?

In early March: I had another exciting(!) wildlife encounter on Saturday afternoon. I went to get some parsley from my herb garden and took a large sprig that was low down, and after I had nipped it off, I saw a very neat, finger-sized hole going down into the soft soil. I watched for a while, and nothing appeared out of it, so I went inside for my Mortein with the long yellow tube. I gave a good squirt down the hole, and watched again, and still nothing stirred. I wasn't sure if it was a spider or a cicada, as lots of cicadas had hatched inside the netted cage over the herbs.

I gave another good squirt of Mortein, and then I saw one spider leg appear. It didn't move any more so I went and got a trowel and carefully dug up the whole nest and surrounding soil, and laid it out on the lawn and opened it up, and surprise, surprise... it was a female funnel-web! I wasn't sure if it was dead or just stunned and playing dead, so I photographed it and carried it to the far side of the road where I could examine it carefully to identify the markings. I'm sure it was a funnel-web. The carapace looked exactly like the picture in the spider identification chart, so I'm sure it wasn't a mouse spider



Funnel-web spider

Continued on page 7

Dick's nature notes (continued from page 6)

or trapdoor spider. I turned it over to look at its underside, and then it showed unmistakable signs of life, so I whacked it with the spade and ants immediately appeared and cleaned it up in no time.

It wasn't aggressive at all, but that probably means there is a male somewhere around. I will clean up the herb garden and remove the cover and take my chances with everything being eaten by possums, turkeys, wallabies, etc. I'll make sure I am fully protected, clothes-wise, before I start cleaning up.

March 9th: A powerful owl is in a tree in our village this morning and it has a brush turkey in its talons! Much excitement. I don't think I have ever seen one before, though we used to hear them in the bush at our former home.

There are other turkey mounds in our vicinity and a young turkey was taken by a powerful owl last week right in the middle of the village. Then ravens attacked the owl who had perhaps had his fill, and he dropped the carcass for them to clean up.



Update from the AusTARS Committee

The AusTARS Annual General Meeting was held via Zoom on February 10th, as required for our incorporation, with a quorum of nine members attending. There were no items of Special Business on the agenda, so it was concluded promptly. No other nominations having been received, the existing committee members were all re-elected for a further term of one year. The Annual Report was presented and accepted (See page 15). If any member would like a copy of the minutes of the meeting, please contact the Secretary.

Kryisia Clack, our very efficient TARS Overseas Trustee, has maintained regular contact with AusTARS and TARSNZ and apprises us of relevant TARS UK matters which may affect us. She also deals capably with any queries or communications we make back to UK TARS. She has been a regular presence at our Zoom sessions and enjoys meeting and getting to know our members, as we, in turn, enjoy hearing her news of TARS events in the UK.

Our membership looks like settling at 37 again this year, provided all existing members renew. The new renewal process, via the main TARS website, seems to have gone smoothly for most members. **HAVE YOU RENEWED?** Renewals are now **OVERDUE**. Make sure you renew **NOW** so that you do not miss out on any of this year's publications. If you would like assistance with your renewal, contact the Secretary.

Committee for 2023

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First memories of Swallows and Amazons



My first memory of the *Swallows and Amazons* books is when I was about five years old. My parents, my three year old self and my six months old brother had sailed to Melbourne in 1968. While we were exploring our new home, there were many car rides around Victoria's fishing spots for my father to continue his love of angling. While my father was otherwise occupied, my mother had two rambunctious boys to entertain on long summer days next to rivers and lakes. One way she did this was to read the *Swallows and Amazons* books to us kids, during the long car journeys and while hanging out getting bored waiting for the trout to bite.

We were absolutely captivated by the unfolding adventures in the exotic landscape of Arthur Ransome's mind, and even father used to want to stay within hearing distance so he could keep up with the action. This early introduction to AR's world led me to start reading the books myself, since my mother had tired of reading them repeatedly out loud. Funnily enough, my teachers reported that I was 'not a keen reader'. This surprised my mother, who replied 'well, he is reading *Swallows and Amazons* at home!'

Cut to many years later, when I had a family of my own and a bookshelf laden with well-thumbed, dog-eared and collapsing paperbacks of the whole canon, literally read to bits by the whole family. I had the opportunity at last to travel to England in 2001, and had the chance to final-

ly visit the areas where some of the books were set. This was not without some trepidation, as the landscapes and world of Ransome had existed in my mind for 25 years, and I was worried that the real thing would not live up to the atmosphere that my childhood mind had conjured up. However, the Lake District did not disappoint! I found that the magic felt real, and I thoroughly enjoyed immersing myself in all things Ransome.

My love of the books, having lain fairly dormant for years, was reinvigorated. On my return, having found and bought the audiotapes from the Steam-

boat Museum, I searched on the internet to see if I could obtain the other stories on cassette somehow. My search led me to The Arthur Ransome Society in Australia website. This was quite a surprise, as I had no idea there was such an organisation, let alone an Australian one! In order to get a good deal on the audiotapes, I could join the group. I proceeded to join and in a few days received a phone call from Jan Allen welcoming me to AusTARS and inviting me to join a forthcoming gathering at Yarra Bend. I was rather taken aback that in joining a group on the internet to order some audiobooks, I was now invited to visit a group of people I had never met! However, on the following Saturday, with my wife and two-year-old son in tow for moral and perhaps even physical and emotional support, we nervously arrived at the venue.

The rest, as you might say, is history. With the very kind, relaxed and interested welcome we received, it was a 'no brainer' that we were keen to join them at the next event, and the next and the next. We have now been members for about nineteen years and having fun with our newfound friends, the birds of a feather, our comrades in AR, became an intrinsic part of ours and our children's lives. AusTARS has become our adopted extended family, the family we choose - particularly for one expat and one child of £10 Poms who love Australia and England in equal measure. We have definitely found our herd!



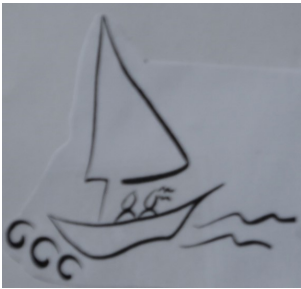
John Parsloe enjoys a favourite game from childhood

Mad Dogs and Englishmen - a summer at home

One day me and Jolly and Bright and Peri were all playing Poohsticks together from the Horseshoe Bridge.

'Poohsticks?!' you ask. Yes, that Winnie-the-Pooh game. The bear invented it, and he and his friends used to play it on the edge of their Forest. A broad track, almost as broad as a road, led from their Outland to the Forest, but before it could come to the Forest, it had to cross a river. So, where it crossed, there was a wooden bridge, almost as broad as a road, with wooden rails on each side. This was where Poohsticks was launched.

The rules are simple, as befits an inventive Bear of Very Little Brain. First find your stick, mark it to distinguish it from those of your friends, drop all sticks together on the upstream side of the bridge, hurry across to the other side, lean over the edge of the bridge (trying not to fall in) and wait to see whose stick will come out first. It can be as exciting as a race in the America's Cup!



On their way to winning the Cup (Auckland)

But it can be a long time coming from under the bridge if the river is having a lazy day, as it was this day at 'Pebworth'.

How did we come to be playing Poohsticks that day?

This sailor was home from the sea, and keen to enjoy a rare *summer* at home! Thus it was to be a summer of no scraping of ice on ship's hull – only the clinking of ice cubes in a glass of homemade 'grog' (ginger beer). Lazing in the shade, beyond the wide green sea of house lawn, under the ancient silver poplars of the Wilderness by our stream, while swinging in a hammock in the heat of the midday sun and remembering how hot it can be, after so many years in cooler latitudes at this time of the year. And memories of even hotter summers of my youth, sailing in Indian waters as a cadet.

It was a very quiet and peaceful hot summer afternoon by the water race at the edge of our Wilderness to the Waihi Bush. The Horseshoe Bridge sags drunkenly across this flowing water. But it is safer to cross this bridge than Walking-the-Plank further up and it's much

Summer at home

*Oh, the butterflies are flying,
Now the winter days are dying,
And the primroses are trying
To be seen
And the turtle-doves are cooing,
And the woods are up and doing,
For the violets are blue-ing in the green
Oh, the honey-bees are gumming
On their little wings, and humming
That the summer, which is coming,
Will be fun.
And the cows are almost cooing,
And the turtle-doves are mooing,
Which is why a Sailor is snoozing
in the sun.*

*For the spring is really springing; You can see
a skylark singing.
And the blue-bells, which are ringing,
Can be heard.
And the magpie isn't cooing,
but he's oogle-oogle-oodling
And a Sailor is simply sailing like a bird.'*

(With apologies to Winnie-the-Pooh and A. A. Milne)



A summer at home (2002/2003)

wider than the narrow Totara Footbridge by the dry-stone walls running alongside Totara Lane.

So, this day, we were all playing Poohsticks together on the Horseshoe Bridge. That is, Peri and Bright and Jolly and me. Well, it wasn't quite the real Poohsticks. We had reinvented the game. The sticks had become plastic ducks (duck racing—Ducksticks). They were much easier to mark and see than sticks:

- Green (for Peri)
- Red (for Bright)
- Blue (for Jolly)
- Black (for Me)
- Yellow (TARS decoy)

We had all dropped our ducks in the water when Bright said 'Woof!', and then hurried across to the other side of the bridge, and we were leaning over the edge, waiting to see whose duck would come out first.

'I can see mine! No, I can't, it's something else. Can you see yours, Jolly? I thought I could see mine, but I couldn't. There it is! No, it isn't. Can you see yours, Peri?'

'Meow,' said Peri.

'I expect my duck's stuck. Bright, my duck's stuck. Is your duck stuck, Jolly?'

'Woof, woof,' said Bright, meaning 'they always take longer than you think.'

'How long do you *think* they'll take?'

1. Soon?
2. Sooner?
3. Soonest?
4. Later?
5. Latest?

'Meow, meow,' said Peri suddenly – could she see Jolly's duck?

Jolly was looking for her bluish one, not daring to lean too far over in case she fell in. Yes, that's what she could see. It was coming over on to her side.

Bright was leaning over further than ever, looking for his, while I was jumping up and down calling out 'come on duck! Duck, duck, duck!' and Jolly was getting very excited because hers was the only one that had been seen, and that meant she was winning.

'Meow,' said Peri – it's coming.

'Woof,' whined Jolly – were we *sure* it was hers?

Yes, because it was blue. A big blue one. Here it came. A very – big – blue – Oh, no, it wasn't, it was *Ling!*

And out floated Ling.

Ling? Let me explain. We share 'Pebworth' with a menagerie of creatures. 'Colonel' **Ling** is a huge and fearless Muscovy drake, hand reared from a day-old duckling chick and is more dog-like than duck around the property. **Bright** is a dog but more like a flighty duck in the presence of Ling, while **Jolly** is a bitch – she would have jumped in to a river or water race after *anything*. Including Ling! Jolly's prowess had been shown when she pulled a drowning lamb from the nearby river, now grown into a pet sheep named **Roger!** But today **Peri**, our tamed wild cat, would have none of that. When she arrived from the Bush as a very young, small starving abandoned wild kitten, she fed at the duck bowls – the ducks became her 'family'. Beware any dog that touched her ducks!

*What shall we do about poor little Peri?
If she never eats nothing she'll never get biggy.
She doesn't like honey and toast and thistles
Because of the taste and because of the prickles.
And all the good things which a sailor likes
Have the wrong sort of swallow or too many spikes.*

So Ling joined the game. And though he had never played it before, he won more times than anyone else;

Poohsticks Score Card											
Name	Race									Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
1 Me	✓										
2 Jolly			✓	✓							
3 Bright		✓									
4 Peri											

What the score card said

and Jolly fell in twice, the first time by accident and the second time on purpose because she suddenly saw the Mistress coming from the house, and she knew she'd have to return to the dog yard.

So we all went off together, Peri and Jolly and Bright and me. And Ling. All processing across the vast green sea lawn towards the house, in a menagerie kind of way, doing a caper while chanting a rhyme of very little relevance:

*One two buckle my shoe,
Three four sweep the floor,
Five six pick up sticks,
Seven eight close the gate,
Nine ten*



Duck racing at 'Pebworth'



David Bamford discovers a scientist who shares part of AR's name, and whom both AR and Dick would have admired

John Michell

My current reading is *A Short History of Nearly Everything*, by the American author Bill Bryson. I first noticed the name shared by AR, and reading further I have learned about John Michell, who was:

a country parson, who resided in the lonely Yorkshire village of Thornhill. Despite his remote and comparatively humble situation, Michell was one of the greatest scientific thinkers of the eighteenth century, and much esteemed for it.*

Among a great deal else, he perceived the wave-like nature of earthquakes, conducted much original research into magnetism and gravity, and, quite extraordinarily, envisioned the possibility of black holes two hundred years before anyone else - a leap that not even Newton could make. When the German-born musician William Herschel decided his real interest in life was astronomy, it was Michell to

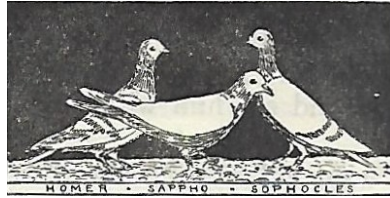
whom he turned for instruction in making telescopes, a kindness for which planetary science has been in his debt ever since.

But of all that Michell accomplished, nothing was more ingenious, or had a greater impact, than a machine he designed and built for measuring the mass of the earth. Unfortunately he died before he could conduct the experiments, and both the idea and the necessary equipment were passed on to a brilliant but magnificently retiring London scientist named Henry Cavendish.


Now, if you were naming your son, wouldn't you want to borrow the name of such a person?


*Bryson, B. (2004). *A Short History of Nearly Everything*. Doubleday.





The Pigeons' Posts

 Last weekend the AGM of the Arthur Ransome Society was held in Scotland. As part of the proceedings the annual AusTARS Cup was awarded. This year was the turn of the UK to nominate a winner. We're excited to pass on the news that AusTAR **Jan Allen** has been awarded the cup in recognition of her sustained and outstanding contribution to all things TARS. Jan has held many leadership positions in AusTARS. Her amazing efforts have led to many wonderful activity days, adventures, and great reads. Her enthusiasm knows no bounds. In the past she has travelled widely to catch up with TARS everywhere and many of you will have met her personally. The award is well deserved, and we extend our congratulations to Jan. Three million cheers, Gill and Dawn, AusTARS Secretary and Coordinator.

 Congratulations to Amie Kaufman on the publication of her new novel, *The Isles of the Gods*, co-authored with Jay Kristoff. We learn from the publishers that 'Magic, romance, and slumbering gods clash in the start of a riveting fantasy series that spans gangsters' dens, forgotten temples, and the high seas from the *New York Times* bestselling author of the Aurora Cycle.'



Jan Allen

VicTARS out and about

There were party games, a hunt, a board game, the lucky dip, a parcel to open and pass on, and much hilarity as VicTARS celebrated AR's 139th birthday at Emerald in January. Captain Flint, the S's, A's and D's would have enjoyed it. We certainly did.

The feasting kicked off with the Chocolate Tasting, now a tradition. Undisputed victor was yet another member of the Spiers family, of the experienced and discerning palates - this year Bradley took home the winner's shield.

Spiers were again unbeatable in the hotly-contested Dick Callum Quiz, with Martin and Bradley just edging out Dawn and Gill on the final count to take the shield, and Nancy and Larry a close third. The rest of us definitely need to brush up our knowledge and re-read the books. Losers consoled themselves with afternoon tea birthday cake, this year's original Stamp joint creation being Timothy the armadillo, complete with prepared hutch.

In February we travelled to Ballarat for a picnic by Lake Wendouree. After the early keen breeze died down a bit it was very pleasant to sit in the shade by the water and catch up on members' news over lunch. Gill and Jan ac-

companied novice kayakers Jess and Nancy out on the water to join the coots and ducks in exploring around the reeds and waterlilies. Cam and Nola had travelled from near Bendigo to join us and Cam gave us instruction in sailing his model yacht, a new activity to us. We messed about with balloon activities and a *WDMTGTS* card game and lunch seemed to roll on seamlessly into afternoon tea. Although we missed local resident Hedley, as he wasn't free to join us since he was performing Shakespeare at Buninyong, the Spiers family caught up with him later in the day. Chocolate featured throughout the day so all of us Rogers went home happy.

In late April a few of us made the most of a beautiful but chilly autumn day to picnic at Mount Macedon. Gill and Dawn made a fire to boil the billy on (quite safely since they are prominent members of their local Country Fire Authority Brigade). Along with our billy tea we shared quantities of delicious goodies, as well as our own sandwiches. Then the more enterprising (= fitter) members made the fairly strenuous hike to the Camel's Hump, the highest peak in the Macedon Ranges. Those of us less active (= fatter) remained to gossip by the fire and enjoy the fresh (though c-o-l-d) country air.



Latest TARS news from our Overseas Trustee, Krysia Clack

Hi All,

A lot has happened since I last wrote. Some of you may know some of the news already so bear with me while I update everyone else.

First of all, Alan Kennedy gave a superb talk about the 'Durham Debacle'. It should not be missed and there is now an audio of it on the Arthur Ransome website. You will need to login as a member and then go to Publications and Events, then Regions. Click on 'South-Western' as they organised this talk. The link is there but I did find it tricky to find and had to read the instructions twice! Scroll to the bottom below the quiz and click on which is just below where it says Fram. It is worth the effort.

Secondly, the 1974 film *Amazon* dinghy is being purchased by TARS. It will be joined by *Swallow* which until recently has been with Rob Boden and Sailing Ransome. Rob is no longer well enough to maintain it and take people sailing. Both boats will be accommodated at Hunter's Boatyard in Norfolk. Hunter's Boatyard was used in the filming of the TV series of *Coot Club* and *The Big Six*. We visited it last summer when a TARS group were camping in the area and we were delighted to find the TV *Titmouse* was well looked after and available to sail by any experienced sailors. Hunter's Boatyard were over the moon to be given the opportunity to be asked to repair both boats (which are not in good shape) and to be the agents looking after hiring them out once they are sailworthy. We had initially tried to find a location in the Lakes but had had no success. We hope to have *Amazon* sailworthy some time in 2023 but it will be some time after before all repairs will be completed. *Swallow* will take longer.

Next year we are also going to celebrate 50 years of the 1974 *Swallows and Amazons* film at the Windermere Jetty in Bowness. We hope to have both boats on display there and also to have some sail worthy members of the cast attend in addition to Sophie Neville. We are celebrating the anniversary on 29th-30th June, 2024. I am letting you know this just in case anyone is visiting the UK at that time and wants to include this event as part of their holiday.

We have noticed that we have not had applications for the Junior Adventure Fund for some time. Details about this are on page 49 of the Jan-April edition of *Signals*. The fund is available to junior members between the ages of 13-19. At the last Board Meeting we agreed that we should remind everyone of this fund even though it is advertised in each edition.

Peter Willis, the editor of *Signals* has put together all your contributions to create a massive spread in the next edition. He would like to be able to continue news from overseas in future editions so please email him directly with any articles. And don't forget to include photos! They do not have to be long or literary. You will have seen what the UK regions news is like. His email address is peter.willis1144@gmail.com

Finally, our next big event is the International AGM in Dundee in May. You can join us again on Zoom on Sunday 7th May. The details will be in the next edition of *Signals*.

All the best,

Krysia



VicTARS activities calendar June-December 2023

(PROPOSED - dates and activities may alter). Events are open to all AusTARS members

Saturday, June 3rd	11.00 am - 3.00 pm	Pirates and Plays Day	Emerald
Sunday, July 16th	1.00 pm - 4.00 pm	Cosy Winter Mystery Afternoon	Emerald
Saturday, August 12th	11.00 am - 3.30 pm	AR and the Romany Life	Tecoma
Saturday, September 16th	11.30 am - 3.00 pm	Roses and Birds Day	Werribee
Sunday, October 15th	1.00 pm - 4.00 pm	Dick's Butterfly Day	Cranbourne Botanic Gardens
Saturday, November 25th	11.30 am - 4.00 pm	Mining and Misse Lee Day	Bendigo
Saturday, December 9th	11.00 am - 4.00 pm	Christmas Party	Ivanhoe East



Answers to Peter Duck illustrations quiz (page 4)

- Royal Sovereign* (Tailpieces, p. 255 132).
- Peter Duck (as a boy) (tailpieces, pp. 175, 266, 423)
- Bill's Landing (p. 243)
- Ship's Biscuit (pp. 120, 297, 389)
- Gibber - Hard at Work (p.301)
- Hard at Work. (p.301)
- Roger's View of the Waterspout: hull/bow, mast, rigging, figures, debris, timber, rope, sail, stern, rudder, spars, waterspout (p.409)
- The Cooks' Galley: tea, sugar, salt, cocoa, flour, rice, (tapioca), marmalade, (plum jam); in large bins Captain's biscuits, squashed fly biscuits, bunloaves, flour, etc. (p. 123).

Did you get all eight right?



VicTARS at Mount Macedon (page 12)

The Arthur Ransome Society in Australia, Inc.

2022 Annual Report

Memberships:

These currently stand at 38, one less than last year. Membership renewal process started early for 2022 with most members renewing promptly. Subscription renewals and maintenance of personal contact details will become the responsibility of individual members via the redesigned TARS UK website from now on which will reduce the workload of the Secretary. Members have started renewing online.

Financial Status:

The Society remains comfortably solvent (see 2022 Financial Report) and able to conduct its affairs.

Committee:

Thanks are extended to all committee members, who met for the required three meetings and conducted the business of the Society very capably. Particular thanks to Alison Spiers and David Stamp who completed their time on the committee. The committee liaised with AusTARS members as well as administrators of TARSNZ and TARS UK, especially Overseas Trustee Krysia Clack and Chairman Peter Wright, regularly, to mutual benefit. The links between AusTARS and TARSNZ were extended through shared platforms.

AusTARS Cup:

As in previous years, the committee liaised with TARS UK re this award and the Cup announced and presented at the UK AGM. The award was presented to Alan Hakim.

Consumer Affairs Victoria:

David Stamp carried out the annual requirements and submissions for CAV.

AusTARS Library:

No Holds Barred was added to the AusTARS Library. Thanks to David and Elizabeth Stamp for maintaining the Library.

Newsletter *Furthest South*:

Members continued their support of the newsletter with sufficient and varied contributions. Three editions were distributed to members in Australia and New Zealand and to TARSUK Board recipients and other overseas coordinators. The newsletter is uploaded regularly to the members' only section of the TARS website. Thanks to Phoebe Palmieri and assistant editors Jan Allen and David Stamp for their work.

Events Program;

The proposed calendar of TARS activities was again curtailed due to COVID and health issues. Zoom sessions continued with members from New Zealand and Australian states being given the opportunity to interact and participate in discussions and quizzes covering different themes. Several overseas guests also joined the sessions. Events included Arthur Ransome Birthday Party on Zoom, rowing on the Yarra, activities at Ballarat, afternoon tea at Woodlands, Col. Jolys day at Riddells Creek, activities day at Emerald and a Christmas party.

Charity Donation:

At their Christmas event, VicTARS raised \$150.00 through an auction and donations which was donated to the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project in Melbourne.

Trans-Tasman Links:

As planned, interaction via Zooms, email and the newsletter continued between members in New Zealand and Australia. The bond was further strengthened by the development and awarding of the Cheryl Paget Memorial Award. The first recipient of the award was Garry Wood in recognition of his frequent, well researched and illustrated articles to *Furthest South*.



Our next issue will be a literary one, with an emphasis on children's books: what are or were the ones you love(d)?

And when it comes to AR, which are your favourite of the minor characters?

Articles about other topics are needed, by the **end of August**, please.

We apologise once again for the late publication of this issue. Delays were caused by the small number of articles received, by illness (again) and family problems (again) .

Furthest South is prepared and produced for AusTARS and TARSNZ by the AusTARS Committee

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