



Falkland Islands NEWSLETTER

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In February the people of the Falkland Islands celebrated the 150th anniversary of British administration in the Islands. A large number of distinguished visitors were welcomed and our member Mr. Eric Ogden MP gives an account in this issue of his impressions of the Islands during the celebrations.

The Association has had an extremely busy three months. Mr. Adrian Monk OBE, the official Falkland Island Government Representative in London, took up his duties on 12th January, at that time having neither staff nor accommodation. He started in one room in our small office in 2 Greycoat Place, and we have given him all the help which we could, while he interviewed staff and looked for suitable offices. For the next three months his office will be at Orchard House, 14 Great Smith Street while he looks for a suitable office building. He has the full time assistance of Mrs. Glennie, our General Secretary, and has engaged Mr. Alec Stephenson as his assistant.

The United Kingdom Falkland Islands Committee provided a memorandum to the House of Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, being called on to do so with only nine days notice, due to the wish of the Select Committee to hear the UKFIC evidence before going to the Islands. The Select Committee visited the Islands in February in order to hear the Islanders' views about their future. Members of the Select Committee can have been left in no doubt about the Islanders' wishes concerning their future. Indeed some element of controversy entered into the very lively exchange of views which took place, both formally and informally. Gone are the days when the people of the Falkland Islands could be described as either apathetic or dependant.

One of the distinguished visitors to the Islands has been Baroness Vickers who, by the time she left for the Islands had successfully piloted through the House of Lords an amended Bill to give full British nationality to all the people of the Islands. No tribute is too great to pay to Lady Vickers for her determination and persistence in re-introducing this Bill after the defeat of the Amendment to the British Nationality Act 1981. We are also most grateful to the officials of the Home Office who on Government instructions provided what was in effect a complete re-draft of the terms of the Bill in order to ensure that British nationality in the Falkland Islands would be acquired and passed on in precisely the same manner that it is acquired and passed on in the U.K. We are grateful to the Government for this assistance and for the acceptance of this principle, which was more than we had dared to hope for.

The Association bore all the legal and parliamentary costs involved and provided Lady Vickers in the House of Lords and Mr. Michael Shersby, M.P. who took charge of the Bill in the House of Commons with all the assistance for which they asked.

The Second Reading of the Bill was opposed in the House of Commons, but fortunately it turned out that the opposition was not to the principle of the Bill itself but for quite other reasons. Happily the opposition has been withdrawn and at the time of writing the Bill has passed all its stages in the House of Commons and will become law when it receives the Royal Assent.

The Association still has a very great deal of work on its hands. There is at present in course of preparation a second memorandum to the House of Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs. We are deeply grateful to the unpaid volunteers who have

been carrying the burden since the beginning of the year. We are looking forward to the day when Mr. Adrian Monk will be settled in a permanent office and can tell us what the Falkland Islands people need from their supporters in this country, and indeed in other countries, in the future.

We very much regret to report the sudden death in a traffic accident of our Vice-President Lord Boyd; the death on February 21 of our staunch supporter Richard Buxton of Jacomb Hoare and Co.; and the death on January 11 of Mr. Ted Lellman, who was born in the Falkland Islands and gave outstanding service to the Falkland Islands community resident in Great Britain. We have lost three very good friends of the Islands, all of whom in their different ways worked to support our objectives.

CEASEFIRE IN STANLEY

- by Mrs Norah Monk.

Adrian and I walked back to the bungalow where we had been living until two days previously.

It was late afternoon on the day of the Ceasefire. A strange uneasy quiet hung over Stanley. No guns were being fired, there was no sound of shells bursting.

Fires were burning, houses which had been set alight by the Argentines during the morning.

We passed groups of sullen Argentine soldiers, some still armed, standing. No doubt wondering what they should do next. What was to happen to them now.

Some had already thrown away their weapons, onto the road or over the sea wall.

On the roadside, a piece of sacking, covering what was obviously two dead bodies. Only their boots protruding from the end visible.

The bungalow was situated on the sea-front. Our last night there had been spent in a shelter in the peat shed. Very cold, a black frost. Dangerous too, because to get there, we had to walk or rather run. 'Duck down and run' Adrian had said. Impossible!

There were Argentine soldiers all around us. One was crying in the street. He sounded very young.

Shells were coming over us from the British Navy. They were said to be 'softening up' the Argentines, who were 'replying' with their guns - again over us. The noise was incredible. A bungalow was hit by a couple of shells two doors away. That was enough for me, although I know Adrian would have stayed. However, later that morning the Argentines evacuated all the houses where we were living, 'from the Monument upwards'.

We were fortunate in being given room at the Upland Goose Hotel. Room to sleep on the floor with the 40 other F.I. Refugees.

The Upland Goose is situated in the middle of Stanley and built mainly of stone. That together with people around, one felt at least a sense of security.

By the time we left the 'Goose' that afternoon to walk home, many more refugees had taken advantage of the Des Kings hospitality. People whose homes had been set on fire, or perhaps had become nervous with good reason.

One family had been warned by Argentine Officers that they should move elsewhere because, they explained, their men were getting out of hand and dangerous. They could no longer control them.

As we neared home we could see the appalling damage that had been done while we had been away. Behind us, on Racecourse Road, not one bungalow had escaped being damaged. Number five no longer existed. It had been burnt to the ground, only the foundations could be seen.

The bungalows on either side of us had been hit by shells. Our home had had the windows blown in by blast, shrapnel holes in one wall. Shell holes in the garden where Adrian's horse had been living. Thank goodness we had taken him into Stanley with us, and the kitten, otherwise they would never have survived.

'Do you know where we can get some beer?' Two certainly British soldiers! Super. This is what we had been waiting for!

We all went into the bungalow. And there we had a surprise. About 14 Paratroopers from the 2nd Battalion of Parachutists had taken up residence! And their kit! Hardly an inch to spare. We lit fires for them, showed them where our store cupboard was – and left them to it. There wasn't room for us! They moved into all the empty places, even if there were shell holes in the roof! They said any shelter was better than spending another night out of doors. Poor chaps, they had walked all the way from San Carlos. They did so want baths, but of course there was no water, no electricity.

To the 'Goose' again that night. When we walked the next day (our land-rover had long ago been requisitioned by the Argentines) to our own house which we were rebuilding, we were met by more Paras. I never counted them!

For the next ten days, until the Paratroops began their journey back to the UK, we stayed with Mrs. Luxton, together with 12 Special Branch Commandos! Very pleasant they were too.

Crowds of Argentine prisoners, down at heel, depressed, were being marched away daily to the Airport, by British soldiers. It was marvellous to see 'our' soldiers. They looked so professional and were, but most of all, so British. They had arrived, as we knew they would.

FALKLANDS RE-VISITED..... FALKLANDS RESURGENT – by Eric Ogden, MP (SDP, Liverpool, W.Derby.)

The Falkland Islanders are in good heart and the Islands are safe under the care and guard of the British Forces.

This is my sure conviction after a lively and hectic visit to Stanley and out into camp, sharing the official (and unofficial) celebrations for 150 years of British Governance. Meeting old friends, making new ones, doing a lot of talking, but more important, doing even more listening to the Islanders themselves.

My privilege was to be invited with a goodly company of Friends of the Falklands, and we had all had some part in the Islands' story long before April 1982, to share memories and experiences and to give thanks together that we had come "through the eye of the storm".

Islanders or incomers, we all know that the old days are gone forever. Those times are to be remembered, but everyone there is too busy working for the present and preparing for a better future, to look back too long.

Of the invasion and the liberation, the poem by the Rev. H. Bagnall, padre and patriot, which began the Thanksgiving Service on Sunday the 20th February, says more than any words of mine.

The Islanders know the price of freedom, their freedom and ours.

Stanley is now a busy busy place, the harbour full of fine ships, not least "The Red Plum", Endurance. Stanley town, especially the lower roads down by the harbour and jetties, is a garrison town. Higher up the hill many homes and roads are unchanged, the Falkland gnomes grace the garden as before, roses and geraniums and sweet peas flourish in conservatories. Only the circle and cross on house walls remain as reminders of those homes used as refuges from shot and shell. The pace of life is brisk, even if only a few shops and services were open for any part

of anniversary week. The possibilities for commercial enterprise is not yet fully appreciated by everyone.

Priority is, rightly, being given to making sure that all the Forces will be properly housed before the onset of winter. The Civil and Military Commissioners work together, closely, constantly. Examples to all. The three Services work miracles every day, Tri-Service in actions and attitudes.

Military and civilians recognise that a degree of separation from garrison and town is desirable. Just as it's nice to have close relations close, but not permanently sharing the kitchen.

This is being achieved out in camp, as at San Carlos, where the settlement is close to, but across the water from, the new military base at Kelly's Garden.

At my request, Velma Malcolm arranged an informal meeting for the Stanley Members of the Falkland Islands Committee with the Minister and our friends from our London Committee and the South West Atlantic Group. Very useful for us all, though they were more certain and unanimous about what they did not want, than what they did want.

Not easy to change the outlook of 150 years when all major decisions have been taken by Governments or companies in London. Yet they and more and more Islanders are now aware that they have to make more and more decisions themselves in the Islands, by the Islanders, for the Islanders. They are thinking hard and long about new ways to do just that.

The Islands have been regained, rehabilitation is well under way, friendship between troops and islanders is excellent.

Now our friends in the Falklands are beginning to look and plan ahead, working for their future as British Citizens of British Islands with confidence, energy and hope.

ISLAND HERITAGE by the Rev. Harry Bagnall.

To these fair isles our fathers came not to
rob or rape good nature's bounty
Merely to raise their children and their sheep
in peaceful country

This life was hard with cold and bitter winds
the land a soggy waste, rivers of water and of stone
tested the courage of those who chose this
paradise to taste

More dangerous than nature's hazards, the greedy
eyes of those who would our rights deny
Until that day unable to resist, they took away
our peace and liberty

Brief period of fear with freedom gone,
We trusted God and looked again
to that far distant shore from which our fathers
came nor looked in vain

Once more restored to freedoms way,
these boggy lands give rest to those from far away
as do the waters round our shores envelope those
who died and thus the price did pay

We mourn the cost of victory
and keep for e'er in memory, the names of those
our cousins from afar, who gave their blood
in this our darkest hour

Now join with me and let your praises sound,
to God our maker, saviour, friend
to thank him for this island home, our Queen
and government.

'CALLING THE FALKLANDS'

The BBC 'Calling The Falklands' programme is still broadcast twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays at 21.30 GMT. Anyone wishing to keep in touch with relatives and friends in the Falkland Islands through the BBC, should write with their messages and/or record requests to:-

Calling The Falklands, Room 702 CB Bush, BBC, Bush House, The Strand, London WC2B 4PH.

"AN ARMY VET REMEMBERS"

- by Lt. Col. B. Thompson, MBE, RAVC.

I was very fortunate in being able to meet so many of the Kelpers, and to share their daily life. Whilst some of my duties involving the humane destruction of injured animals in the minefields, were harrowing, they were compensated by the joy at the birth of a foal.

The Camp abounds with "Characters" real solid genuine country folk whose exploits make "The Archers" and "Coronation Street" sound tame.

Most of my travel was by helicopter, nevertheless other vivid memories remain of cross country travel by landrover; getting bogged down, sharing the cab with vomiting pigs; being passed on from family to family down the track; fording streams bubbling with thrashing mullet and a lively ride up the West coast in "The Foam".

Recently, I was recounting to an audience in the Midlands, my experiences with the 14 strong gang in rounding up the horses on Blind Island, eating and sleeping in outside shepherd's houses and my first Gentoo egg, eaten at Fanny Cove House. Afterwards one of the audience introduced himself and thanked me - he had been able to relive his early years listening to me, as he had been born in Fanny Cove House!

The opportunity to share in the daily routine at shearing time and see at first hand the determination and dedication of all those involved will be lasting memories, as will the sweat of being Junior Member of the Jetty Gang at Johnson's Harbour!

I admire the tenacity also of all the Kelpers in overcoming the rigours of the climate, and I was able to share with them the peace, and beauty of a day when the sun shone, and there was no wind.

Two examples illustrate my faith in the future, firstly that of the family who decided that their house was wrongly positioned, so they towed it on skids, with the aid of their friends to the new site, and secondly that in both West and East Falklands I was driven in Landrovers by two young Kelpers, whose total age was 20 years!

Yes, there is much that remains to be done, but I am very appreciative of all the hospitality shown to me and believe that if more immigrants are selected who show the same standards of moral fibre and are willing to work hard and come to terms with the climate, then the future for the Kelpers is assured.

ANNUAL RECEPTION

The Annual Reception will be held in Lincoln's Inn on 15th June. Application forms for tickets will be sent out nearer the time.

The following poem was sent to the Falkland Islands Office during the campaign in the Falkland Islands last summer. The office was very over-worked and over-crowded at that time and the covering letter was unfortunately lost.

We hope the author will forgive us printing it without permission in the circumstances; we think it so well worth recording.

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

"It's not worth it,
Not for a few Falklanders",
The pacifist cried.
"It's not worth it",
Said the wife of a sailor
When the "Sheffield" died.
"No? Not worth it?"
Sighed the soul of an Auschwitz Jew,
Echoed throughout Siberia
By Russia's thoughtful few.
"Not worth it?"
Cried the Afghan.
Watching red tanks rumbling by.
"Are you sure?"
Asked the East German,
Building a brick wall high.
The cry taken up
By Poland's Solidarity,
"How can you know?
You, who have democracy?"

S.J.J.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

From the Honorary Membership Secretary

The invasion of the Islands in April 1982 had as you know immediate and severe repercussion in our small office in Greycoat Place, London. Not only were we swamped by representatives of the media but also by shoals of letters from hitherto unknown persons eager to demonstrate support for the UK Government and our people in the Falklands.

Wherever an address was given we replied with our thanks and enclosed a membership form. In many cases in this way we acquired a new member and it is to these people I am particularly addressing the fact that shortly subscriptions will be due for renewal, if payment is not made by Bankers Order. We find that the cost of postage to circularise members is formidable and I shall be very much obliged if members will examine their own records and if necessary forward me their payment.

L.F.T.

A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

The Falklands Story 1592-1982 by Mary Cawkell. Our member Mrs. Mary Cawkell has written, and our Member Mr. Anthony Nelson has published a ninety page concise history of the Falkland Islands from their discovery by John Davis on 14 August 1592 down to the Argentine invasion on 2 April 1982. The foreword is by our Chairman.

This is an extremely valuable handbook and a valuable corrective to the full page advertisement which was placed in the "Times" newspaper and in other newspapers, an Argentine account of the sovereignty dispute paid for by a number of Argentines.

Copies are available from the office at £2 including p. & p., or from booksellers at £1.75. Publisher: Anthony Nelson, P.O. Box 9, Oswestry, Shropshire.

The following articles are available from the Falkland Islands Association Office, 2 Greycoat Place, S.W.1. Please enclose cost of package and posting.

Navy blue Ties, Falkland Islands crest, £3.
Navy blue Ladies Head Squares, Falkland Islands crest, £3.50.
Knitted Cap, "Falkland Islands" printed on white £2.50. the set £5.50.
Knitted Scarf, "Falkland Islands" printed on white £3.50.
Tea Cloths, Map of Falkland Islands, £1.50.
Dusters, Map of Falkland Islands 50p.
Ord. Survey Map of Falkland Islands £1.50.
Illustrated Map of Falkland Islands, in colour £1.75.
Child's Map of Falkland Islands, illustrated, black & white for colouring 40p.

Penguin Posters £1.60
Green plastic Car Stickers "Remember the Falkland Islands - They're British" 50p.
Plastic Stick-on Badges, Falkland Islands Crest 10p.
Lapel Badges, Falkland Islands crest 50p.
Key Rings, Falkland Islands crest £1.
Carrier Bags, Penguin motif. "Happiness is knowing he's British" 10p.
Notelets, Royal Marines Beating Retreat at Lincoln's Inn Annual Reception, "Best Wishes". No envelopes, 50p.
Falkland Islands Desk Flags £1.

Members are reminded that they can subscribe to the Penguin News if they wish for regular information from the Falkland Islands. Write to the Editor, Mr. Graham Bound, P.O. Box 178, Port Stanley.

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