

NEWSLETTER

No. 145

June 1973

THE CHANGING SCENE

FALKLAND ISLANDS REVISITED

The Falkland Islands, like Singapore, represent a page in the history book of RSRS. An outstation where many well known members of staff have "done their duty overseas", and I am sure the majority look back with pleasure and nostalgia to their association with one of the last of Her Majesty's Colonial territories. In case there are any new members of the staff who are not sure where the Falklands are, they are a group of islands, two of them large and about another couple of hundred smaller ones, lying in the South Atlantic between 51° and 53°S and about 350 miles east north east of Cape Horn. They cover a total area of about 4,700 square miles and have a population of 2100; one thousand of these live in the capital town of Stanley and the remainder in coastal settlements. It is a unique place, whose inhabitants are more British than the most loyal citizens of the UK., and where colonialism is still not a dirty word; but it is changing fast and some at least of that change must be attributed to RSRS.

The history of the Islands is interesting. Sighted in 1592, the first known landing was in 1690 and a French Settlement established in 1764 was sold to Spain for £24,000 in 1767. In between times, however, the British established a settlement in 1765, were forced out in 1770, returned in 1771 and finally departed in 1774 for economic reasons. (199 years later RSRS closed their telemetry station on similar grounds).

Around the 1820's the Buenos Aires Government proclaimed sovereignty over the Falklands and established a new settlement. This was destroyed by the U.S.A. in 1831 and in 1833 the British resumed occupation and have been there ever since. The post of Lieutenant-Governor was upgraded to Governor in 1843 but, a sign of the times, since Sir Cosmo Haskeard retired in 1971 it has no longer rated a Knighthood.

RSRS went to Stanley in 1947 and took over an ionospheric sounding station from the Admiralty. Originally sited near the lighthouse at Cape Pembroke, it was moved to comparative civilisation on the outskirts of Stanley and the first intrepid RSRS personnel commenced their tours of duty. Without actually visiting the Falklands, it is difficult to capture the atmosphere of the place. It was once described to me as the Isle of Skye towed down to the South Atlantic but with an average wind speed of 16 knots and nothing but ice and water between Stanley and the South Pole, the climate doesn't really match the Hebrides. Certainly it is never hot but equally it is never desperately cold. Also Skye does have a road system whereas in the Falklands roads are limited to the town of Stanley. Outside the town one needs a Land Rover or a horse to cover the wild moorland interrupted by outcrops of rock and the peculiar collections of angular boulders called "Stone runs".

My first direct interest in the Falklands was in 1965, when I rejoined RSRS from DSIR Headquarters, and had amongst other things the job of Project Manager for the establishment of an ESRO satellite telemetry facility in Stanley.

It soon became obvious that the only way to get to know the place was by a personal visit and so in 1966 I flew to Santiago; went from there to Punta Arenas and finally took passage on the B.A.S. ship Shackleton. At that period the normal link with the outside world was a hand-keyed W.T. station with a schedule of one hour a day and the monthly supply ship "Darwin" from Montevideo 1000 miles and four or sometimes five very long days away as some of our staff who were not good sailors will testify. Because of the Argentinian claim to sovereignty of the Falklands, the link had to be back to Uruguay and not to the Argentine mainland.

Transportation of staff and personnel concerned with constructing the ESRO facility, a communications station, houses and even roads was a major headache. They travelled on B.A.S. ships, an oil tanker, naval vessels, the Darwin; all were utilised to launch the project. In contrast today there is a weekly air service from the Argentine coastal town of Comodoro Rivadavia the pioneering days are over and even my wife was able to accompany me for a holiday in March of this year.

To return to 1966; everyone from the Governor down was helpful and friendly. It was a village community, completely honest where everybody knew everybody else and although suspicious of our intentions they accepted the SRC into their way of life. At the peak we injected up to 50 bodies (including children) into a group of 1000 Stanley inhabitants and contributed 17% of the Falklands income.

Today, and four liaison visits later the scene is rapidly changing. The Argentine is now open and the weekly air service to Comodoro Rivadavia is run by the Argentine Government. Even the temporary airfield runway was built by the Argentines. The airport building, an old Nissen hut complete with an Elsan and a second hand peat stove was provided by the Falklands Government. But the Union Jack flies proudly in the 16 knot wind and when the 10 watt navigation beacon does not function the pilot cheerfully navigates by dead reckoning and homes in on the local broadcast transmitter specially switched on for the occasion.

But civilisation is rearing its ugly head. I take back what I said about colonialism for the Colonial Secretary now wears the title of Chief Secretary. The Islanders enjoy a 5 day week. Tourist ships descend upon the town at frequent intervals to disgorge several hundred passengers who buy up all the duty free luxury goods like hoards of locusts. The Darwin, after 15 years of battling its way through the roaring forties, lies rusting at its moorings in Stanley harbour. Double yellow lines have appeared outside the FIC West Store, (now run on supermarket lines), and one member of the staff was fined £10 for speeding.

Only the wild life remains unchanged. The penguins are just as fascinating in 1973 as they were in 1966 but life in the Falklands is not what it was and I for one am glad I got there just in time to see one of the last of our truly British Colonies.

C. Clarke

The R.S.R.S. experiments which were carried by Concorde 001 while crossing Africa during the recent eclipse of the sun, would appear to have functioned successfully. It is hoped to give further details in the next newsletter.

THE TYPISTS AND THE SCIENTISTS
With apologies to Lewis Carroll

"The time has come" the typists said
"To talk of many things.
Of blobs and blots and crossings-out,
And other happenings."
The 'Scientists' are using us,
So HEAR these mutterings.

This morning at our office dear
(which isn't much we add,
It's hot and stuffy with NO view,
Hardly a welcome pad)
Four of our slavedrivers arrived,
Which never makes us glad.

The four old scientists rushed up
All eager us to meet,
Their coats were brushed, their faces washed,
Their shoes were clean and neat -
And all just to present us with
Their scribblings - what a treat!

Four other scientists came then,
And yet another four;
And thick and fast they came at last
And more and more and more -
All brandishing scraps of paper
And hopping through the door.

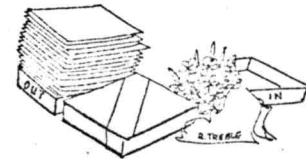
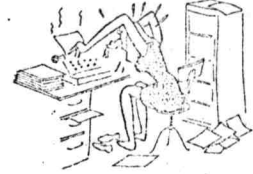
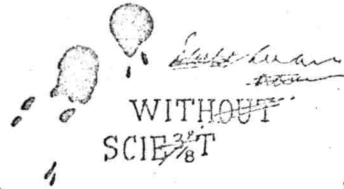
"But wait a bit" the typists cried
"For us to have our chat,
And cup of tea and piece of cake,
For none of us are fat."
"Well, hurry!" said the scientists
- We thanked them much for that!

We work all day for all these men,
With not a perk in sight.
They moan and groan and nag us, but
We ALWAYS get it right.
Oh where's the grateful smile, and thanks -
We work with all our might!

We do not want to burn a bra
Or cause a lot of fuss;
We wouldn't strike for equal pay -
You'd sack the lot of us!
But treat us like the weaker sex,
We've passed our eleven plus!

We know that you're above all us
In rank and intellect,
But what we are we shall remain -
You haven't killed us yet!
(Although the way you're going we'll
Be all dead soon, I bet!)

So here we close, with this, a plea
That you might treat us well
We're women, not machines you know,
I'm sure that you have guessed
Consider us, and we'll work hard
Signed, Typists, RSRS



STAFF NEWS

Congratulations to:

Toni and Persida Lucas on the birth of their son David

Welcome to:

Mrs. N. Wells	C.A. p/t
Mrs. J. F. Pober	C.A. p/t
Mrs. E. Mitchell	Casual Worker p/t (Winkfield)
Mr. J. Mason	S/S Lab.

Resignations:

Mr. N. Higson	H.S.O.
Miss G. S. Bush	C.O.
Mrs. J.W.E. Parks	E.O.
Mrs. M. C. Clark	T/P Op. p/t.
Mrs. B. Baker	Canteen Asst. p/t
Mr. R. Adlam	Cfn. I
Mr. F. J. Ford	Asst. Mech. (ESRO, F.I.)

Station News

Dr. Rishbeth is at present visiting the University of Texas at Dallas and will return to R.S.R.S. on 2nd October 1973.

NEWS OF FORMER STAFF

Congratulations to Roy and Anne Adlam on the birth of their daughter, Clare Louise.

WHICH ?

The Consumers' Association Which? magazine bulk subscription is due for renewal after the July issue.

A years subscription to the monthly Which? is again available at the discount price of £1.05. Money Which?, Motoring Which?, and Handyman Which? are published quarterly and may be ordered with the monthly Which? The years subscription for each quarterly Which? is also £1.05.

Please may I have subscriptions, and orders for any other C.A. publications by Wednesday 11th July. (Cheques should be made payable to:- R.S.R.S. Sports and Social Club).

Mike James, Spur C.

SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

BARBECUE '73

This year's barbecue was marked by the first operational run of Bert Childs creation, a home-made 'double-plate' barbecue stand. It worked perfectly! Due to Bert's efforts the ladies of the committee had plenty of space to cook and consequently achieved excellent results which were appreciated by everyone, not least by the chairman. My thanks to them all. It was also the first opportunity that we have had to test (on a 'live' audience) the new audio mixing equipment assembled by John Crawford for Sports Day. We were unable to measure the audience reaction accurately due to the success the bar was having in selling its produce, but the new unit is certainly a great improvement on the old. It kept our past chairman quiet for an hour or two at least. My thanks to the Bar and John for all their work.

The children also enjoyed themselves finding, as always, a new use for the old air-raid shelter. It happens every year and I'm wondering whether we should adopt the shelter as part of the SSC equipment. Does anyone know if it is an inventory item?

A very successful evening all round and once more my thanks to all my committee who put in so much time and hard work to make it so. My thanks also to Norman Woodall and Ernie Coles for their invaluable assistance.

J. E. Allnutt

CAMERA CLUB

The much improved darkroom is now ready for use by numbers of the Club. All the usual darkroom facilities are available. Keys are kept by P. Dickinson (Treasurer) and G. Webb (Committee Member).

Annual membership fee is 25p.

U. Yilmaz
Secretary

A.C.O. EVENING

TENNIS

Normally Friendly matches are played on our Hard Court but on this occasion A.C.O. wanted us to have the pleasure of playing on their grass court. It was indeed a pleasant evening despite the uncertainty of the bounce in both height and direction. R.S.R.S., who were represented by Mike Dick, Wendy Harrington, Richard Smith and Yvonne Dias, inevitably won by 5 sets to 1 against a team of three mixed pairs.

FOOTBALL

The six-a-side match against A.C.O. resulted in a victory for the Observatory by one goal to nil. The game was unfortunately marred by somewhat erratic refereeing and the fact it was played on a five-a-side pitch, resulting in some confusion. Although both teams had their chances, neither side looked really like scoring until A.C.O. scored a fine goal with literally the last kick of the game.

D. Wright
(Secretary)

TABLE TENNIS

In this years away fixture with the A.C.O. the R.S.R.S. Table Tennis Team showed its independence by both playing at home and winning. By mutual consent the match was played at RSRS because of the difficulty of playing Table Tennis while the Disco was warming up, and anyway people might have thought that the activity at the table was an attempt to invent a new dance. We fielded a fairly strong team with two of our first team and a second team player whereas A.C.O. were unable to get their full league team and were weakened as a result. Unfortunately the A.C.O. were so incensed by their defeat that they carried off the results as a sacrificial offering to Halex, the god of Table Tennis, (i.e. They threw them on the fire) and so we only have a record of the winners of each match.

John Dudeney beat Ken Warrington and
Doug. Obee

Alan Buck beat Ken Warrington and
Doug. Obee and
Nigel x

Piers Eggett beat Nigel x
and lost to Ken Warrington and
Doug. Obee

Alan Buck

LETTER TO THE OUTSTATIONS

Dear Colleagues

Water, water, everywhere, and all the boards did shrink, does not, necessarily, indicate the need for stronger refreshment for those good men and true in whom we repose our hopes of current employment and possible future advancement. The quotation does, however, provide a likely explanation for the numerous small pools which have appeared in various huts in recent days. An alternative hypothesis, that of the transit of a small animal with a rapid recycling time, may be dismissed for a number of technical reasons.

For an unusually long spell, the summer sun has blazed down upon the cluster of wooden buildings which mark the outposts of R.S.R.S. Pleasant enough, this, but, when the inevitable downpour came, it penetrated the ceilings in various places. After a time all seemed to come right again, no doubt the wood resumed its previous size and shape, growing to normality rather after the fashion of those curious flowers which unfurl when placed in water.

Have we not the germ of an idea in this? You lack office space - no problem. Select a tasteful site in the park, cut open the plastic bag containing the dehydrated pre-prepared office; soak overnight in water and behold - with the dawn comes your accommodation. (Office furniture etc. will be found, like giblets, in a separate pack inside the main container). Should you also rate a P.A., I hesitate to advise, other than that you should make your own arrangements. Bear in mind the problems that arise when it comes to disposing of an unwanted bird. Choose for yourself and, like the Ancient Mariner, you can blame only yourself, not,

Yours sincerely

The Editor

List of Reprints - June 1973

H. Rishbeth

Physics and chemistry of the Ionosphere
Contemp. Physics 1973. Vol.No.3. 14 229-249

D. Eccles
J.W. King
R. Ruster
A. Slater

The maintenance of the ionosphere at high latitudes
in Winter. J.A.T.P. 1973, Vol.35, 1285-1291

P.M. Gondhalekar

The behaviour of the topside ionosphere, during
magnetically disturbed conditions. J.A.T.P. 1973,
Vol. 35, 1293-1298

P.M. Gondhalekar
J.W. King

The Latitudinal Variation of the electron
concentration in the topside ionosphere in Winter
J.A.T.P. 1973, Vol.35, 1299-1308

D. Eccles

Enhancements of the electron concentration in
the F2-layer at magnetic noon. J.A.T.P. 1973, Vol.35
1309-1315

R. Ruster
J. W. King

Atmospheric composition changes and the F2-layer
seasonal anomaly, J.A.T.P. 1973, Vol.35, 1317-1322

Internal Memoranda

I.M. 362
M.P.M. Hall

Statistics of high-level beyond-horizon signals at
2.2 GHz and 2.6 GHz, and measurements of the
Variation of the arrival-angle-structure

This paper was presented at the AGARD Conference on
'Propagation Effects on Frequency Sharing'
held in Rome on 7-11 May 1973