

CHILEAN NEWS

Bulletin of the Anglo-Chilean Society

Editor — John Naylor

46th Year No. 342

London, January 1992

12 Devonshire Street, London W1

SOCIAL EVENTS

A PRIVATE VIEWING OF PAINTINGS by three Chilean artists was held at the Orten Zeki Gallery, 176 Walton Street SW3, on 10th September 1991. The Cultural Department of the Chilean Embassy and the Anglo Chilean Society joined together for the first time to promote this exhibition, and it was well attended. Further joint ventures are planned because of the success of this occasion.

The Chilean Ambassador H.E. Sr, German Riesco gave a short address on the background of the artists, and wine and canapes were served.

The artists concerned were:

MONICA BRUNA, trained in France and Chile. Her work is a collection of dreams. Resident in New York, she has exhibited in Santiago, Paris, New York and Washington, and her work is found in collections in those cities.

LUIS GUZMAN, painter of watercolours, resident in Chillan. Plastic arts teacher, degree in Arts and PHD obtained in Spain. He has exhibited in Chile, Mexico, Argentina, U.S.A., Spain and Belgium. He has received many prizes and distinctions.

FELIPE ORTEGA, poly-faceted artist (sculpture, engraving and painting). Resident in Spain. The myths of the Andean Cordillera in abstract forms. He works with copper, iron and stone. His exhibitions have been held in Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Spain, Belgium, Holland and Germany.

THE ANGLO CHILEAN SOCIETY DINNER AT THE NAVAL AND MILITARY CLUB ON THURSDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER

Toasts were proposed to the Queen by the Chilean Ambassador H.E. Sr, German Riesco and to the President of Chile by the chairman Sir David Hildyard.

The Chairman then went on to welcome the 116 members and their guests. He referred to the strong links between Britain and Chile which now had a President of English descent in the person of Sr. Patricio Aylwin. He welcomed the Chairman of the Society in Santiago, Admiral Le May, who was among the guests with his wife. He also welcomed Mr. John Wilkinson M.P. There was applause when he mentioned that he had had the good sense to marry a Chilean wife. He thanked Morven Hutchinson, who was among the guests, for her supportive work at Canning House over the years. He concluded by greeting the guest of honour and speaker, Mr Tristan Garel-Jones and mentioned his meteoric rise from Parliamentary Private Secretary in 1982 to Whip and Deputy Chief Whip, and now as Minister of State at the Foreign Office. He appreciated that he and his wife were able to attend the dinner in spite of other pressing commitments.

Mr Tristan Garel-Jones then rose. He began by thanking the Anglo Chilean Society not only for having him and his wife at the dinner, but also for having been so understanding to arrange the date in such a way that it was possible for them to attend. He expressed the appreciation and that of the Foreign Commonwealth Office for all the work which the Anglo Chilean Society has done in promoting Anglo-Chilean friendship. He was not only in charge of Latin America at the Foreign Office, but also of the European Economic Community, and he finds himself as a latter day colossus bridging the New World and the Old.

Britain and Chile have always enjoyed a relationship that is so close that it belies the geographic distance that separated them. The British will never forget or cease to be proud of the roles played by Bernardo O'Higgins and Admiral Lord Cochrane in the founding of the Chilean nation, and indeed it was a great pleasure to find sitting on his left the grandmother of the 7 months old infant Lord Cochrane. Early links between Britain and Chile grew as more and more Britons went to Chile to seek their fortunes during the last century. Chile is unique not only in having an English President, but also a Minister of Mines, Mr. Hamilton, of Scottish descent and Mr. Foxley, Chancellor of the Exchequer, of English descent.

The relationship between Britain and Chile was strained after the coup in 1973 and the subsequent events inside Chile, and whilst during that period trade and investment made considerable progress, Chile's political relationship both with Britain and the rest of the world did suffer. The accession of Patricio Aylwin's democratic government in March 1990 has re-opened new possibilities to Chile's international position. The return to the democratic polls has been a matter of great rejoicing not only for the Chileans but for their friends here in Great Britain. This was symbolized by the visit of President Aylwin to Britain this year. This visit by the President has been complemented by visits of other Chilean ministers and HRH the Princess Royal is currently in the closing stages of her visit to Chile where she has visited a vessel named after Lord Cochrane.

It has been impressive the way Chile has returned to a position which she occupies in the free world, a new world where all of us face new challenges in Europe and Latin America. The contribution of a free and democratic Chile, a prosperous and liberal market orientated Chile will be of increasing importance to Britain, and to everybody else in the world.

The Chilean Ambassador began his address by mentioning that this was the second time he had attended a Dieciocho function.

Chile has had a democratic government for the last year and a half, thus healing the wounds of the past and bringing Chileans together, and at the same time maintaining a free economy. The challenges which lie ahead are being met with growing confidence. Some people were afraid of the dangers of a return to democracy, but their fears have proved unfounded.

There is good news on the economy. Economic growth last year was two percent and it is expected to rise to five percent this year. Exports have been growing and last year they were in the region of 8.5 billion. Investments in the first year of democratic government were the highest ever recorded in Chilean history, and they are being kept at the same level this year. While sustaining economic growth and political freedom the government is making sure that the fruits of economic growth reaches all segments of society. One billion dollars is being spent on social programmes - education, health and housing.

He referred to Chile's links with Britain which were highlighted by the visit of the Chilean President. The last time a Chilean President visited here was 26 years ago. There is also the visit to Chile of HRH The Princess Royal, where she was warmly welcomed.

It is considered that Britain is not only Chile's friend, but a country with shared values of political and economic freedom, and it is an honour to have with us tonight Mr. Garel-Jones and his wife in spite of his very busy schedule. When the President was in London he was able to feel that he was most welcomed by the Prime Minister, the British Government and the British people.

There are many reasons to be happy with the Chilean performance, and the friendship that has been received through good days and bad from Chile's oldest friend and ally. He concluded by calling on the assembled guests to toast the everlasting friendship between Britain and Chile.



H.E. Sr. German Riesco and Sra. De Riesco with guest speaker Mr. Tristan Garel-Jones and Mrs Garel-Jones

RECEPTION AT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE

This took place on Tuesday 26th November and was the occasion for the presentation of decorations by the Ambassador on behalf of the Government of Chile.

The Ambassador gave the following address:

Your Excellency the Ambassador of El Salvador and Dean of the Latin American Diplomatic Corps in London, Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The President of Chile, Senor Patricio Aylwin, has conferred upon me the great honour to present the decoration "ORDEN AL MERITO DE CHILE", degree "Gran Oficial" to the following British subjects:

Sir Jock Taylor, past President of Canning House.

Sir Kenneth James, Director General of Canning House.

Sir David Hildyard, Chairman of the Anglo Chilean Society and former British Ambassador to Chile.

John Heath, past Chairman of the Anglo Chilean Society and former British Ambassador to Chile.

Colin Armstrong, Chairman of the British Chilean Chamber of Commerce.

And the decoration "ORDEN BERNARDO O'HIGGINS", degree "Gran Oficial" to Michael Cannon, Secretary of the Anglo Chilean Society and Executive Director of the British Chilean Chamber of Commerce.

It is a great pleasure for me to invest these distinguished and good friends of my country with our highest national orders. This shows how much we, Chileans, appreciate and value their noble collaboration and support to strengthen the relationship between our two nations.

The old friendship between Chile and Britain goes back to the beginning of our Independence movement. It was here, in London, that the Liberator of Chile, General Bernardo O'Higgins, got together with many other Latin American patriots and dreamt of, for the first time, the emancipation of the American Spanish colonies.

Admiral Lord Cochrane, who became the First Sea Lord of the newly born Chilean Navy and fought bravely to obtain for us the control of the South Pacific, as well as many other people from these shores who followed later, contributed enormously to the establishment and development of Chile as a modern, stable and democratic country.

Indeed, Chile and the United Kingdom have walked together along the path of freedom and democracy, and now that Chile has retaken its historic commitment to political plurality, these links have been further strengthened and reached even higher levels.

The official visit of His Excellency President Patricio Aylwin to Britain last April, followed by the one of Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal to Chile last September, are the best indication of the new peak reached in our long standing ties.

The ever increasing flow of Chilean and British high officials visiting Britain and Chile respectively has contributed to the present level of close bilateral contacts, increased trade and investment, and considerable academic, artistic and cultural interchange.

In the international field we observe with satisfaction the importance that Britain has given to her relations with Latin America, especially in the economic and commercial aspects. We acknowledge with deep appreciation that Britain's promotion of open trade within the European Community, her support of reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy and her efforts to conclude successfully the present Uruguay Round of GATT Trade talks have favoured Latin America.

My dear friends, before ending this brief reference to the historical ties that bind our two countries, I would like to stress the important roles played by you, the six British citizens I am decorating this evening. You have all individually given much of your time, your talent and your enthusiasm to the promotion of better Anglo Chilean relationships.

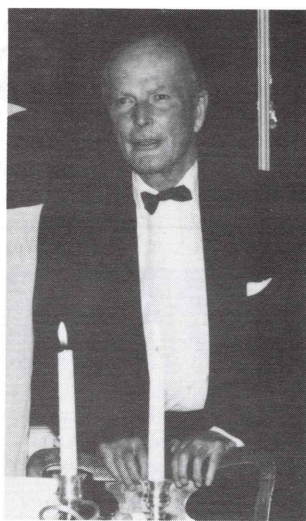
I wish to thank you all for your achievements, for your special love and interest towards Chile, and for your support to my Embassy.

I would now ask you to accept these decorations which represent the gratitude of the people of Chile and their Government.

Sir David Hildyard then replied on behalf of those who had been decorated. They all considered it a great honour and he expressed their appreciation, first to the Ambassador who had played a large part in this and through him to the Authorities in Santiago. They would continue to contribute to the furtherance of relations between Great Britain and Chile.



H.E. Sr German Riesco delivering his address



Sir David Hildyard delivering his address



Senor Fernando Zegers & Mr. John Heath



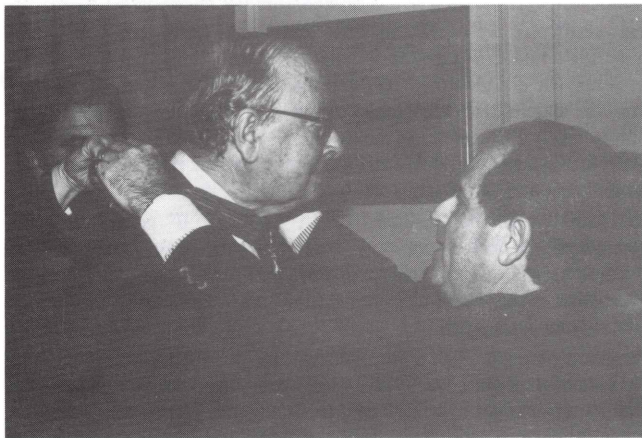
Lady Dundonald and Mr & Mrs Whistler



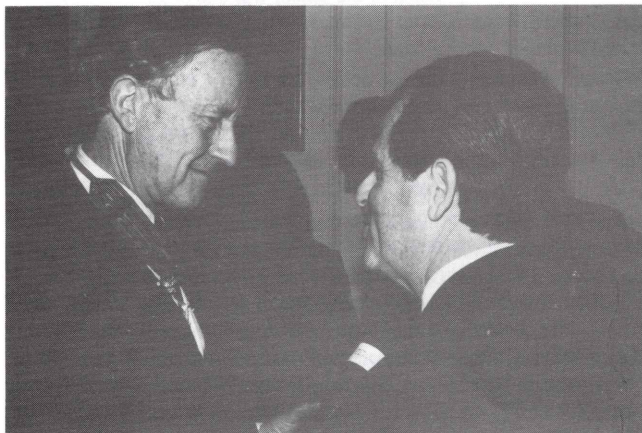
Sir Jock Taylor, Sir Kenneth James, Sir David Hildyard, Colin Armstrong, John Heath and Michael Cannon together with H.E. Sr. German Riesco and Sra de Riesco



Juan E. Eguiguren of the Chilean Embassy, Sir David Hildyard and H.E. Sr. German Riesco

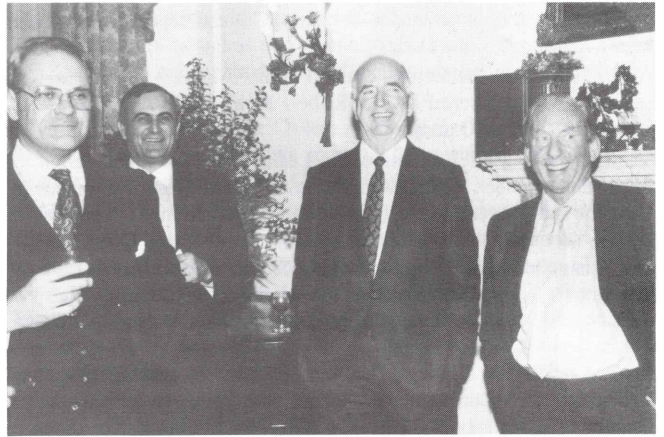


John Heath and H.E. Sr. German Riesco



Colin Armstrong and H.E. Sr German Riesco

THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY was held in Canning House on 12th December with an attendance of some 100 members and their friends. The annual draw was conducted by Sir David Hildyard with a first prize of £100, second prize of £50, third prize of £30 and ten prizes of £15 each, together with ten bottles of pisco. In our role as a registered charity the proceeds of the raffle will go towards the educational work of the Society. The intention was to hold the party in the Jerusalem Chamber in Westminster Abbey, but floor loading limitations dictated otherwise. However it is planned to hold a Spring party at this location on 29th April.



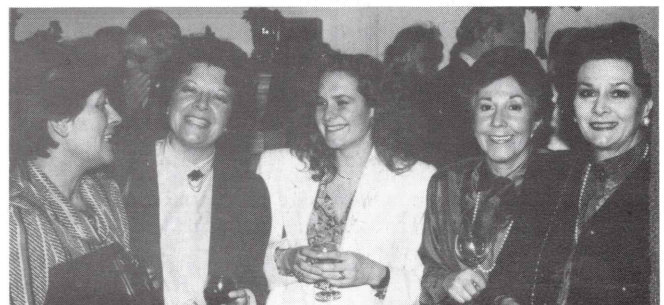
Mr Gordon Baker, Commander John Hart, Mr Harry Clements and Mr John Hickman



Mrs Henriette Subercaseaux and Mrs Evelyn Trevena



Miss Glenys Jones, Mr Sydney Jones, Mrs Maria Angélica Shaw, Mrs Emma Young, Mr John Naylor & Mrs Ester de Toro



Mrs Maria Angélica Shaw, Miss Eliana Herrera, Miss Jacqueline Bowes, Ms. Patricia Roach and Miss Valerie Birrell

THE THIRD SIR LESLIE BOWES MEMORIAL LECTURE

This took place at Canning House on 15th October.

This series of lectures are to commemorate the life of Sir Leslie Bowes and the enormous contribution he made to Anglo-Latinamerican, and especially Anglo-Chilean, relationships. Organised on an annual basis by the Anglo Chilean Society in conjunction with Canning House, they are promoted with a view that they should be educational in content and of benefit to the younger generation in their studies and understanding of the history of that part of the world.

With this in view the lecture, entitled Pablo Neruda – A Poet for All Seasons, was delivered by Dr. Robert Pring-Mill, a fellow of St. Catherine's College, Oxford.

He began with a brief outline of Sr. Leslie's life and his devotion to Anglo-Chilean links. He first went out to Chile at the age of seventeen in 1910. On the outbreak of the first World War he returned to England to join up, serving with distinction in both the Royal Flying Corps and the RAF. He returned to Chile in 1921 where he remained until 1948 as Manager for Chile of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company. He then went on to a yet more exalted career in business in this country, initially still in shipping, first as Director and General Manager of the PSNC and then as Chairman of the Royal Mail Line, followed by banking. His active involvement in Britain's cultural relations with Chile was reflected in his Chairmanship not only of the Anglo-Chilean Society but also of Canning House itself.

Whether Sir Leslie and Pablo Neruda even met is not known, but had they done so they would undoubtedly have found themselves at variance over many things. Neruda was not just a card carrying communist but a loyal member of the Comité Central del Partido Comunista de Chile from the time of his election to the Senate by the miners of the northern desert provinces in 1945 until his death in Santiago in 1973. What they did have in common however was their love for Chile itself and the Chilean people, and there is no doubt that Sir Leslie was as delighted as any Chilean when Neruda was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971. Chile remains the only Latin American country to have achieved a double distinction in this respect. The first poetic Laureate was Gabriela Mistral who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1945.

Dr. Pring-Mill worked closely with Neruda, and has written extensively about him. He presented a very comprehensive review of his works, and his talk was accompanied by recordings of the poet reading selections of his work.

The lecture was well attended and a glass of wine was served afterwards.

THE BIRDS AND LANDSCAPES OF CHILE was the subject of a very interesting illustrated lecture given by Anthony and Brenda Holcombe at Canning house on 7th November. They have both had a life-long interest in natural history and have travelled widely in many parts of the world studying and photographing wildlife. Apart from teaching and lecturing they have led many groups of naturalists on tours to different countries, Kenya, Uganda, Venezuela, Madagascar, Australia, Costa Rica, Malaysia and the United States to name but a few. Their interests are not confined to birds, but extend to mammals, insects, the flora and landscapes of many fascinating parts of the world.

Their lecture covered a journey they did along the length of Chile during December 1990 to January 1991 and took in Santiago, Africa, Azapa and Lluta valleys, Putre, Chungara, Porvenir, Puerto Williams, Punta Arenas, Puerto Montt, Ensenada, the Osorno Volcano and back to their starting point in Santiago. They showed the most remarkable coloured slides of several species of birds and flora along the route, and it really was very interesting and well presented. This was their second trip to Chile.

The evening concluded with a glass of wine in the dining room.

PROFESSOR MALCOLM TROUP, a recent member of the Executive Committee, has had a busy summer. Following concerts in Chile, where he received an ovation for his sold-out piano recital in the Teatro Municipal in Santiago and where the Mayor of Arica presented him with an inscribed maquette of Eiffel's famous cathedral after his appearance there, he only had time to change planes in London before dashing to Moscow.

In Moscow he gave a recital of first performances of modern British piano music including works by Sir Michael Tippett, Robert Saxon and Professor Wilfrid Mellers, the latter of which was dedicated to him. In his capacity of Chairman he was also present at the 13th European Conference

of EPTA (European Piano Teachers Association) from 6-9 September, hosted jointly by EPTA USSR, the Tchaikowsky Conseratoire and the Russian Musicians Union.

Of his Santiago appearance leading music critic Frederico Heinlein wrote as follows in *El Mercurio*:

"Troup revealed to us a world at once virile and poetic . . . In the Finale, the interpreter drew sparks with his fabulous domination of the keyboard which resulted in a fluid, well-integrated and dazzling account . . . Troup enthralled us all with his fantastic and irresistible artistry. A similar enchantment characterised the works which he was obliged to add to the programme as a result of the delirium of the public . . ."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to the people who made it possible for me to send seven sewing machines to the Talleres de Trabajo in Santiago and thus fulfil a promise made to Sra. Leonor de Aylwin during her recent visit to Britain:

Lady Dundonald

Mrs. Dora Rye from the Anglo-Peruvian Community

The Schneider Family

Mrs. Peggy Hart

The Goñi Brothers

Georgina Roberts

MISTRAL BLOWING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

I first learnt of the existence of the Gabriela Mistral School when the children performed at the Andean Fiesta last June.

The surprise of discovering the school in Britain named after the Nobel prize-winning Chilean poetess – combined with my professional interest in education – naturally aroused my curiosity. So it was that I travelled to South London to visit the Saturday School where over twenty Latin American students, mostly Chilean, take a break from normal weekday classes to learn about their language and culture.

The school, which started five years ago, survives thanks to the dedication and sacrifice of the parents and teachers who offer their services free. What little financial and tutorial support existed in the early years has dried up. The donation of £700 from Telethon 1990 thus provided a most welcome and valuable recognition of the work being done by the school. Unfortunately the scarcity of funds can prevent the children developing some of the extra-curricular activities provided by the school, such as exhibitions, outings and sports.

Last year five students gained four "A" and one "B" grades in GCSE Spanish. Three further pupils will be taking the exam this year. The children's artistic expression can be seen in the strikingly colourful ceremonial masks made of papier-maché and in the rudimentary looms used to learn basic weaving.

For the modest sum of £1 a nutritious lunch is provided thanks to the skill and creativity of the cook, Nelly, while the mums help with the serving. The day of my visit coincided with a birthday celebration for two of the pupils, which was marked by a beautiful birthday cake at the centre of the table.

My overwhelming impression of the school was one of admiration for the parents who give so much in seeking to maintain the links between their children and their cultural roots.

On behalf of the Anglo Chilean Society I donated seven coat stands in the shape of large coloured pencils, made in Chile.

Georgina Roberts

JOAN RICHARDSON, who has been a member of the Anglo Chilean Society for more than 30 years, took on a daunting task. When the Anglo Chilean Society moved from its original office in the Basement to smaller premises on the second floor of the Chilean Embassy it became necessary to dispose of many old files from the period of the formation of the Society in 1944. Joan decided to sort through these valuable records of those years, a task which has taken much spare time over a period of two years. There is still work to be done but hopefully early 1992 should see the work completed. There only remains someone competent to write the History of the Society.

GAP CHILE

by Paula Meehan - Project Manager for Chile

GAP is an educational charity aimed at bringing young people from different countries together, thus promoting better understanding between nations. GAP contributes to this ideal by offering work opportunities overseas to school leavers during part of their GAP year, between leaving school and going to further education or training.

GAP volunteers live and work in countries as diverse as Nepal and Canada, assisting in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language, helping the underprivileged in poor areas or doing conservation work. In this way they contribute by their commitment and concern to the improvement of international understanding, and to the protection of the endangered environment of our world.

The GAP project in Chile has grown steadily over the past two years, due largely to the efforts and enthusiasm of Jenny Gibbons, Project Coordinator in Britain, and Richard Collingwood-Selby, GAP representative in Chile.

Most GAP placements in Chile have so far been in schools, many of which belong to the Association of British Schools in Chile. English native speakers are particularly welcome here for the support they can give in the teaching of English and for their contribution in promoting a wider knowledge of British culture. Their assistance with sports, drama, music or other extra-curricular activities is also of great value to the host schools.

Schools currently involved in GAP projects are limited to Santiago, Concepción, Valdivia and Viña del Mar but the scheme has grown in popularity and the signs are that it will continue to expand into new areas.

1991 was also noteworthy for the launching of a project in the field of conservation. Last October five volunteers left for Chile to work with CONAF (National Forestry Corporation) in Chilean Protected Areas. These are places of outstanding natural beauty, often in isolated regions. One volunteer was destined for the Pampa del Tamarugal National Reserve, while two more were assigned to the Rio Clarillo National Reserve in the Metropolitan Region and the final two were selected for the Coihaique Dos Lagunas Monumento Natural. All the volunteers are based at ranger stations and are involved in general duties to do with upkeep of the parks and with the running of the tourist information centres.

At the briefing prior to their departure we were able to share their enthusiasm, answer their queries and stimulate their curiosity. We also had the chance of listening to the exciting experiences and mature views of a volunteer who had just returned from Chile after working for six months at St. John's School in Concepción and after having travelled the length of Chile from North to South.

The Salvation Army has also offered an opening for a volunteer at a Home for girls in Calama. The selected candidate who will take up her duties in January will help with the pastoral care of about fifty orphans in the Home.

In March 1992 a contingent of fourteen volunteers will be leaving England to take up their posts as English language, drama and sports assistants in eleven different schools scattered across Santiago and the rest of the country. At present all of them are engaged in various and imaginative ventures to raise the money to finance their GAP experience.

The above describes a fraction of GAP activities worldwide since GAP arranges for over 500 young people from the UK to work in projects in about twenty different countries. In 1992 GAP will celebrate two successful decades of providing young people with varied and interesting opportunities for personal growth and service to others.

If anybody is interested in finding out more about GAP activities in Chile, contact: GAP Activity Projects, GAP House, 44 Queen's Road, Reading, Berks RG1 4BB.

THE REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY IN SANTIAGO was received too late to include it in full, and it is only possible to present it in the briefest of summaries.

Princess Anne's visit was a success. Members of the Society were present when she gave her address at the British Chilean Chamber of Commerce.

The Military Attache Colonel Roberto Arancibia is investigating the early life of Bernardo O'Higgins in London, and the Society has donated £500 towards this.

The monthly luncheons have been well attended this year with Ambassador Nielsen and guests. There have been six guest speakers.

The annual school essay competition drew entries from St. Margaret's School in Vina del Mar, Craighouse School in Santiago and The Mackay School in Vin del Mar.

The sword presentation ceremony was presided over by Ambassador Nielsen and his wife at the Residence in Providencia.

In accordance with his wishes Dr. Blakemore's ashes were scattered in the Atacama desert at a ceremony addressed by Ricardo Couyoumdjian.

ANTOFAGASTA RELIEF

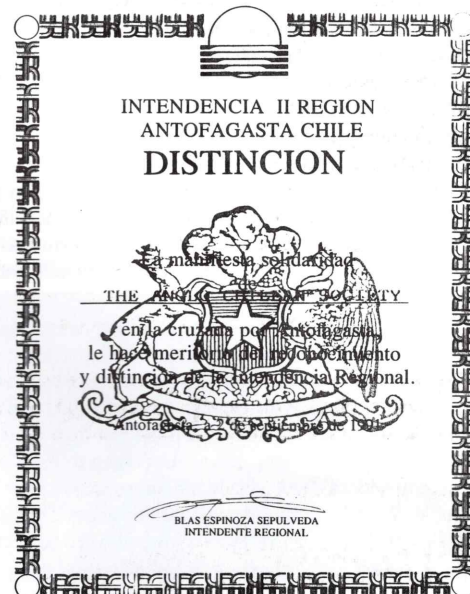
It was with great sadness that we heard the news of the torrential rains and landslides which took place in Antofagasta last June.

My appeal to help the victims of the disaster which left hundreds of dead and thousands of homeless had an enormous response and I was able to send more than one hundred boxes of clothes, shoes, toys and household goods to the disaster zone.

My very special thanks to the Chilean Air Force for providing the transport to take the aid to Northern Chile and to all those who contributed I would like to convey the thanks of the Chilean Government as received in a letter from Sra. Leonor de Aylwin. Georgina Roberts

Confirmation has now been received from the Intendente of Antofagasta, Sr. Blas Espinoza Sepulveda, that the sum of £5,276 was raised as the result of the appeal by the Anglo Chilean Society.

The Society wishes to express its gratitude for the generous response to this cause.



THE PERILS OF WARTIME TRAVEL

by John Naylor

We were a batch of forty volunteers for H.M. Forces from Chile, more or less equally divided between girls and boys, and were gathered in Buenos Aires all ready to set sail for England. It was October 1942. The "Esperance Bay", an armed merchant cruiser, was to be our ship, but there were five berths available on the better appointed "Andalusia Star" and they were eagerly sought after. Lots were drawn and Joan Cooper, Phoebe Edmondson, Pamela and Mary Munro and Anne Orde duly sailed in her.

The "Esperance Bay" sailed to Freetown unescorted, but not without incident. Just a few days out of Buenos Aires three naval vessels appeared on the horizon. We immediately did a U-Turn and full steam was piled on. It was known that German surface raiders were lurking about the Atlantic looking for defenceless merchant shipping. We watched fascinated as one cruiser and two destroyers caught up with us in less than twenty minutes and put a shot across our bows. A boat then came across and we were boarded by the American navy. They examined our papers and were then allowed to proceed.

In the meantime we had received news that the "Andalusia Star" had been torpedoed, with our friends on board, about a week out of Buenos Aires, and we were much relieved to hear that nearly everybody had got off into the life boats.

Joan Cooper wrote a graphic account of the attack in a letter to her parents, Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Cooper of Concepcion, and it was published in the

South Pacific Mail. Apparently the first torpedo struck at 10 o'clock one night with a shuddering crash. They did not attempt to go down to their cabins to retrieve anything, but ducked into their life-jackets and rushed up to their boat stations. A second torpedo struck, and then a third as the boats were being lowered. There was strict observance of women and children first and families were separated. It was the following day before they sorted themselves out and relatives and offspring were reunited after much signalling between the boats. The organization was superb and they were full of praise for the officers and crew at the efficient way they handled the situation. The ship sank in 35 minutes with the loss of only four lives. They were at sea for 30 hours before being picked up by a corvette and taken to Freetown, and they suffered from sea-sickness for the most of the time. On their boat sanitary arrangements were provided behind a sail in the stern. Time spent in a crowded lifeboat is no place for false modesty. Such are the fortunes of war. They finally arrived in England on a troopship.

We reached Freetown without further incident and remained in the harbour for a week. Shore visiting was not allowed because of malaria and black water fever and it was really hot. The ventilation does not work very well on a stationery vessel. While we were there we had a visit from three of our torpedoed friends, Pamela and Mary Munro and Anne Orde. They came on board wearing the only clothes they possessed, khaki slacks and shirts, and we contributed items of clothing so they could all land in England suitably kitted out.

We finally set out in a convoy of 40 ships escorted by four corvettes. It was a motley collection, our speed being governed by the slowest boat and I think our progress was about seven knots. At 14,000 tons the "Esperance Bay" was one of the biggest ships and our position was at the head of the convoy next to the commodore ship, with the rest of the fleet stretching out in the distance.

We were not aware that there were as many as 200 U-boats operating in the Atlantic at this time and that over one thousand ships had been lost. And so we continued to be relaxed, the only concession to wartime conditions being that we were obliged at all times to have our life-jackets with us and have our panic parcels to hand. This last item was a small haversack containing such items as chocolate, condensed milk and a small bottle of brandy for use in the lifeboats.

It happened with startling suddenness. We were in the dining saloon, just about to dig into the rice pudding at the end of dinner at 7.30 in the evening when the alarm bells rang which signified that we were under attack. It was a horrible, harsh, nerve-wracking sound which was meant to frighten us and make us hurry, and by God it did just that. We looked at each other in dismay, not believing it was happening to us. The saloon emptied very rapidly indeed and we made for our respective cabins to pick up what we could. We were then ordered over the tannoy to assemble on the stairs opposite the purser's office. Nobody was allowed on deck.

We stayed there for about two hours and heard at least three metallic sounding explosions which we learned to recognise as torpedoes hitting their targets. The initial shock began to wear off. Yet here we were in the middle of the ocean and out of sight of land. Outside and separated by little more than the hull of the ship and a few feet beyond was an efficient weapon of destruction intent on getting us, and even now sizing up its next victim. It does not pay to have too much imagination in these circumstances. We were eventually dispersed and sent back to our cabins. On going on deck the following morning we noticed that three ships were missing.

The day was peaceful enough, but the events of the previous night had sobered us up somewhat. Everybody tried to convince themselves that we had somehow shaken the submarines off, but at dinner that night, at precisely the same time, the alarm bells went off again, and then we realised that the U-boats were keeping up with the convoy. They had evidently decided to attack at night and this plan they were carrying out with strict German precision – 7.30 on the dot exactly. We followed the same routine. The dining room emptied once again and we were assembled in the same place.

There were several more explosions at quite close range and we went on the deck in the morning to find that the commodore ship which had been next to us on the starboard side, together with the ship directly astern of us and the one on the port side, had all disappeared. That we were not hit was little short of a miracle. We made a collection for the engine room staff who had little chance of surviving when a torpedo struck as most of them were aimed at that part of the ship.

That night the dining saloon was not as well attended as usual as some of the passengers considered it more prudent to stay near their cabins and thus be one step ahead when the alarm bells sounded. My wife Betty, my

sister Margaret and I and a few others thought it more important to get some food down us as one never knew how long one would have to spend in the life-boats. But we did rather hurry through the meal as we were pretty sure that another attack was imminent, and we were not disappointed. Bang on 7.3 – clang! clang! clang! and another standby. After about half an hour word came through that the convoy was to split up and each ship to make its own way to England. I think we must have kept up our maximum speed of 14 knots for 24 hours judging by the vibration. We went up on deck and looked back on the stricken convoy breaking up until the last ship was out of sight, wondering at the same time how many survivors had been picked up. One of the reasons for dispersing was so that the escorting corvettes could drop depth charges, something they had been unable to do while the ships were in formation. We heard later that they had scored some hits.

And we continued on our way suitably chastened by the events of the last three days. The pleasure cruise was over. We had been subjected to the realities of war and had received our baptism of fire. We became more vigilant than ever and the watches were stepped up and a special eye kept open for enemy aircraft. We got further instruction on aircraft recognition.

We arrived in Liverpool after 47 days at sea with tremendous respect for the Merchant Navy. There was always a shortage of merchant seamen during the war but those that did volunteer for this very hazardous service sailed again and again, right through to the end. I have since been curious enough to consult the records and apparently there were about 190,000 Allied seamen at this period, of which an estimated 140,000 were at sea at any given date, and a total of 30,000 died through enemy action. We must have made a substantial contribution to this because we later learned that 18 out of 40 ships had been sunk in our convoy. There was also a rumour that we had been used as a decoy to attract the U-boats and keep them away from the Allied Africa landings which were taking place at that time.

There was a delay caused by fog as we entered the Mersey and so we decided to pool our resources and have a party. Accordingly the liquid content of our panic parcels were emptied into a bucket and we were having a noisy old time when the captain stuck his head around the corner and told us to keep quiet. He did however accept a drink or two and told us some interesting things about periscope sightings and torpedo attacks. This was our first real contact with him as he had spent virtually his entire time on the bridge. I have seldom seen a more exhausted looking man and yet one so fully in control of himself. His eyes told the whole story. They seem to have absorbed the blue of the sea by staring out at it for hours and days at a time and deep crinkles had formed at the corners, a gallant man who had brought his ship through the gauntlet of the German navy, and I prayed that he would continue to do so.

As we drew alongside we were entertained by several women dock workers who sang to us among the rubble of a recent air raid. We had arrived in wartime England.

RALEIGH INTERNATIONAL

By Jonathan Cook

Research and Conservation Coordinator

This Chilean summer will see the second phase of a scientific fieldwork programme supported by the youth development charity Raleigh International, formerly Operation Raleigh. The projects, led by British and Chilean scientists investigating various aspects of environmental change, are focused on the Taitao Peninsula and nearby San Rafael in Region XI. Raleigh has been running expeditions to Chile since 1985 and is now on number fourteen – more than in any other of the 63 countries visited in Raleigh's seven year history. Two ten week expeditions take place during each austral summer coordinated from a permanent base near Coihaique, capital of Region XI.

The young people who join Raleigh, known as Venturers, come from a range of social and cultural backgrounds. Once with the expedition they work on a variety of community, conservation and scientific projects where they provide support for the scientists in the field, learning to live together as small teams to achieve tangible and worthwhile results while also providing essential logistical support. The majority of Venturers are British but a significant number come from other countries where Raleigh has National Committees, including around 1-% from the host country; two Malaysians and a Hong Kong Venturer recently joined an expedition in Chile. Aspiring Venturers are required to pass a challenging selection weekend which stretches them both mentally and physically in an effort to identify those who are likely to be compatible and to gain most from the

experience of an expedition. No formal qualifications are required although all Venturers must be able to swim and speak English in the interests of safety.

The Taitao area of southern Chile is of interest to scientists from many disciplines including geology, geography, glaciology, zoology and botany. However the logistical difficulties of working on the remote Taitao Peninsula have, until recently, deterred all but the most determined, or well funded, investigators. Geologists have realised for some time that the area holds some of the answers to an understanding of plate tectonics – the process of interaction between the earth's crustal plates. A unique triple junction, where three tectonic plates meet, lies just to the west of the Taitao Peninsula beneath the Pacific. The Nazca and Antarctic plates, which diverge from each other along an axis running from the Taitao Peninsula to Easter Island, are both being subducted beneath the South American continental plate at this point. The plates descend beneath Chile at the rate of barely a few millimetres per year – 'lightning fast' in geological terms – and the resulting tensions create massive earthquakes. The world's largest ever recorded quake, the Lebu shock of 1963, originated at this junction and the recent eruption of Volcan Hudson took place almost directly above the point where the descending plate boundaries are thought to rest. The challenges of working in the area have been met by a collaboration between Raleigh, providing logistical support and manpower, Liverpool University and the Universidad de Chile, all of whom bring expertise and equipment to this unusual project. The Venturers take responsibility for much of the day to day management of boats and food while supporting the scientists who would otherwise face extreme difficulties working alone. The 1991 field season successfully established a network of seismometers which automatically recorded earth movements for nearly three months and also carried out a survey of variations in the strength of gravity across the Peninsula using portable gravimeters. Both studies will give geologists important clues about the structure of the geology to a depth of about 100km. The project, funded by the UK Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), is continuing during this austral summer and adding to the data gathered so far.

In a separate but complimentary study, NERC have recently agreed to fund two British volcanologists to work alongside colleagues from the Servicio Nacional de Geología y Minería based in Santiago. Their work will focus on the area around Volcan Hudson, which erupted in August 1991 with such catastrophic consequences for the inhabitants to the east of the volcano in the communities of Cerro Castillo and Chile Chico, and will rely on the support of a group of Raleigh Venturers.

Botanically, this area of southern Chile is a zone of transition between the Valdivian forests to the north and the Magellanic moorland to the south. Lying between these zones the Taitao is dominated by the cool temperate *Nothofagus* rainforests which thrive in the high rainfall near the Pacific coast. The rainfall decreases rapidly inland and the vegetation to the east of Coihaique differs dramatically despite being only 100km away. Charles Darwin passed this way in December 1834 and was struck by the abundance of the lichens which festoon trees like Christmas decorations. The lichen flora is one of the richest on earth and reflects the remarkably unpolluted nature of this region. Lichens are increasingly used as indicators of environmental quality because of their sensitivity to atmospheric pollutants produced in the industrialised world; accordingly, the lichens of western Europe are not nearly as diverse or well developed as those of southern Chile. Raleigh has supported three botanical studies on the Taitao and 1992 will see work in the area by botanists from Missouri Botanical Garden and Edinburgh's Royal Botanic Garden. Their findings will contribute to the Flora of Chile Project, coordinated by the Universidad de Concepcion, which aims to produce a definitive guide to Chile's plant life by the end of the century.

The quality of this pristine environment provides other scientists with the opportunity to make valuable comparisons with more polluted areas. Two environmental chemists from Kingston Polytechnic will be joining this year's expedition to collect water samples from the tidal channels and freshwater lakes around the Taitao. Their work over the past twenty years has focused on the polluted waters of southern England, particularly mollusc populations which absorb heavy metals from their habitats. Studies of the waters of the Taitao will give valuable baseline information for comparative purposes and may indicate which atmospheric pollutants have become widespread despite being produced in specific locations, perhaps the most obvious of these being low level radioactive contamination from nuclear testing. Other environmental changes are the subject of a two year study by palaeo-ecologists from Cambridge University who have extracted sediment samples from small lakes on the Taitao Peninsula. The cores contain fossil pollen which can be used to trace the changes in vegetation cover over the past 10,000 years. They also

contain layers of tephra (volcanic ash) which testify to the geological activity in the area.

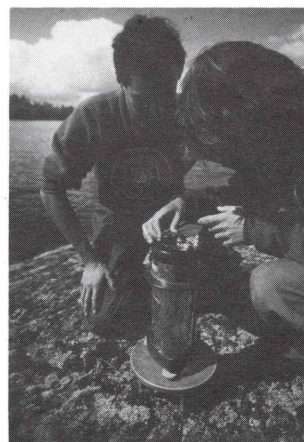
The spectacular San Rafael glacier is another indicator of environmental changes in southern Chile. The glacier is one of many to descend from the north Patagonian icecap, and it boasts the unusual distinction of terminating in the tidal Laguna San Rafael. This makes it the closest tidewater glacier to the equator on earth and a site of pilgrimage for glaciologists. Ice, ranging from small blocks to vast icebergs, falls from the front face of the glacier; this activity is continuous but varies in intensity depending on a variety of factors, not all of which are understood. A scientist from Edinburgh University has worked with Raleigh Venturers to monitor the glacier snout on a 24 hour watch recording all calving activity. Recent decades have seen a rapid retreat of the glacier from its mid-Laguna position in the 1950's and these observations should help to understand some of the glacier's behaviour. Two geographers will be adopting a longer time-scale approach in their investigations into the glacier and the neighbouring San Quentin glacier, 20km to the south, which terminates on land. Radio-carbon analysis of tree trunks emerging from the ice should help in piecing together the periodic advance and retreat of the ice since the last ice age about 13,000 years ago.

A recent review seminar at the Linnean Society of London, the oldest scientific society in the world devoted to natural history, was attended by over 100 ex-Venturers who came to listen to a series of presentations given by the expedition scientists summarising the results of the research so far. The one day meeting was opened by HE Snr German Riesco who welcomed the work around the San Rafael and the Taitao Peninsula, and in particular its potential for collaboration between British and Chilean scientists. This was the first meeting of its kind and will hopefully become a regular event. The projects will continue for at least the next two summers until 1994, by the end of which there should be enough research to justify a two or three day review conference which could be held in Chile as a fitting conclusion to a unique Anglo-Chilean collaborative effort.

For more information about Raleigh International, please contact: Jonathan Cook Research and Conservation Coordinator, Raleigh International, Alpha Place, Flood Street, London SW3 5SZ.



Dr David Prior (right) from the University of Liverpool with Raleigh Venturers downloading data from a seismic monitoring station on the shores of Lago Presidente Rios



Two Raleigh Venturers taking a reading from a portable gravimeter on the shores of Lago Presidente Rios

THE WEDDING OF DAVID SHAW, son of Peter and Maria Angelica Shaw, to Susan White took place at Kilkenny, Eire, on 7th September, 1991. David was born in Santiago in 1964 where his father was with Gibbs & Go. His parents took him to England in 1968 where he eventually took up a career in the RAF. Susan, the third of seven daughters of Tommy and Bernadette White who farm near Kilkenny, has been working in the UK for some years as a nurse, and her current job is as a theatre nurse in a hospital in Huntingdonshire.



The Bride and Groom

OBITUARY

The Society regrets to report the death of Miss Aileen Wodehouse Raby on December 28, 1991.

NEW MEMBERS

Lieut. Commander The Hon. Michael Cochrane RN
 Mr. Kenneth George Mayne
 Mr. & Mrs. Rodolfo Wittenberg
 Mrs. Guille Caceres-Castillo
 Miss Sara Wheeler
 Mr. & Mrs. Harold Rogers
 Mr. Christopher H. Carrell
 Miss Elizabeth Ogilvie-Davis
 Mr. Mark Donald Viner
 Mrs. Pilar Gough
 Mr. & Mrs. Jose Vargas
 Mr. & Mrs. John C. Akass
 Miss Rosalind Kate Wilson
 Mr. & Mrs. Juan Eduardo Eguiguren
 Mr. Anibal Huneus
 Mr. Gonzalo Opazo
 Mr. Roberto J. Guiloff
 Mr. Richard Hugh Aylwin
 Miss Chloe Louise Feilding
 Miss Lucy Anne Miller
 Mrs. Claire Robilan
 Miss Denise Haywood

FORTHCOMING EVENTS FOR 1992

February 27th – Annual General Meeting
 April 29th – Spring cocktail party at the Jerusalem Chamber in Westminster Abbey
 June 19th – The Latin American Society Golf tournament at the Bramley Golf Club
 June 21st – Asado al Palo at Michael and Cherida's farm

July 24th – Reception at the House of Commons
 September 12th – Latin American Fiesta at Battersea Park
 September 22nd – Dieciocho luncheon at Kensington Roof Gardens
 October 13th – The 4th Sir Leslie Bowes Memorial Lecture
 December 10th – Christmas party at Canning House

ANNUAL REPORT

Annual General Meeting

Presided over by the Chairman Sir David Hildyard K.C.M.G., D.F.C., the Meeting was held at Canning House, 2 Belgrave Square on Wednesday 29th May 1991. The attendance being 31 persons.

The Chairman requested the AGM to consider the Annual Report for 1990 and thanked the Hon Treasurer for his hard work. The Annual Report was unanimously adopted.

The Meeting proceeded with the election of the General Committee and the following names were unanimously approved, Dr. Malcolm Troup, Mr. Charles Muller, Mrs Maria Clea Schneider, Mrs Ester Toro and Mr John Meehan.

The auditors were given a vote of thanks and re-elected unanimously. There were votes of thanks to the Ambassador for his support of the Society; to Peter Shaw for his hard and accurate work with the accounts of the Society, and for his stewardship of its financial assets; to Antofagasta Holdings for their support of the Society and the Secretary for his day to day work for the Society.

The Ambassador thanked the Society for the help he and his wife had received from the Society during the visit of the President of Chile. He also conveyed the thanks of Sra. Leonor Aylwin for the financial help for her charitable institutions.

OFFICERS AND ORGANISATIONS

General Committee

At the Meeting of this committee following immediately after the General Meeting, it was proposed that Sir David Hildyard be re-elected Chairman and this was passed unanimously.

Executive Committee

Resignations were noted from Mr. Raul Aguirre, Mr. John Heath, Lt. Com. J. Michell and Mr George Richardson. New members of the Executive Committee approved at the Meeting were, Mrs Georgina Roberts, Mrs Helbecia Larsson, Mrs Ester Toro, Lord Aldenham, Dr Malcolm Troup and Mr John Meehan

MEMBERSHIP

Taking into account resignations, deaths and eliminations under rule 6, membership at the end of the year was as follows:

	End 1991	End 1990
Commercial members	16	19
Life members	81	90
Ordinary members	<u>351</u>	<u>370</u>
	448	479

VOTES OF THANKS

The Committee takes pleasure in expressing their thanks and appreciation to the Honorary Auditors Messrs. Price Waterhouse, for their invaluable assistance during the year, and to Peter Shaw for his dedicated supervision of the finances of the Society. The accounts for 1991 are incorporated into this Bulletin.

David Hildyard
 Chairman