

# CHILEAN NEWS

*Bulletin of the Anglo-Chilean Society*

*Editor - John Naylor*

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## THE SIR LESLIE BOWES MEMORIAL LECTURE

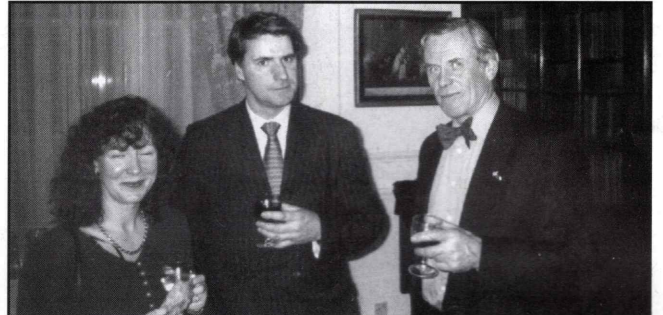
This was held at Canning House on 29th October. Dr Bob Rix from the Department of Modern Languages at Trinity and All Saints College, Leeds, compared the Chilean author and film director, Antonio Skarmeta's film "Ardiente Paciencia" with the recent Italian version "Il Postino", tracing the friendship between a postman and Nobel Prize-winning Chilean Poet Pablo Neruda. The talk was given in Spanish.

## CHRISTMAS PARTY

This was held at Canning House on 10th December. Entertainment was provided by the Manuden Singers with Christmas songs rendered with great skill. Most enjoyable. There was also harp music.

To accompany the wine, really good empanadas, canapés and mince pies were served.

First prize of the annual Christmas draw of £150 went to Michael Ogilvie-Davis.



*Jean Carey-Harris, Michael Gillman & Roger Venables*



*Rosemary Fairgrieve, Claudia Munro-Kerr, James Mason, Alistair Grant & Susannah Grant*



*Eileen Hay & Geraldine Eves*



*Betty Makin & Joan Richardson*



*Eliana Herrera, Peter Segura, Olive Neilson & Patricia Roach*



*Marzia Cavagnero & Jessie Seviour*



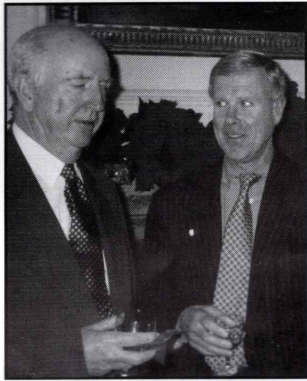
*Valerie Buxton, Sandra Blythe, Lorraine Campbell & Robert Evans*



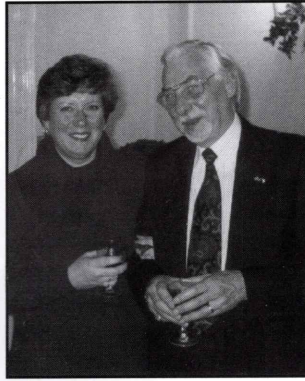
*Lorraine Campbell & Maria Luisa Echenique*



*Carmen Gloria Heap, Emma & Gordon Young*



*Harry Clements & Alan Macdonald*



*Mr & Mrs Michael Ogilvie-Davis*



*The Manuden Singers*

## TASTING OF WINES OF CHILE

This took place at Canning House on 16th December and Sue Pike, General Manager of Wines of Chile, presented a variety of wines for the assembled guests to taste while she talked about the various wine producing regions and the wines themselves.

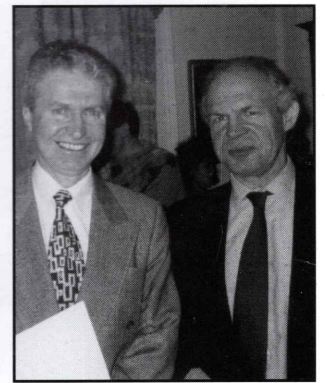
One of the keys to Chile's individuality and success lies in a history which makes it one of the oldest wine producing countries in the New World. The first recorded vines were planted by Spanish Conquistadores for sacramental wine as long ago as 1551, long before many of the familiar regions of Europe developed the wine styles for which they are now known.

Through luck or judgement the pioneering winegrowers chose ideal spots to grow their grapes, including Maipo, where vineyards have flourished ever since. Successful though these early wines may have been, the foundations of the modern Chilean wine industry were not really laid until the 1850's, when a number of wealthy landowners and entrepreneurs made the then arduous journey to visit the vineyards of Europe.

What they discovered there was a wine industry that was being comprehensively ravaged by the phylloxera vastatrix



*Sue Pike - General Manager of Wines of Chile*



*John Fisher & Frank Wheeler*

## THE ANDEAN PROJECT

A reception was held at Canning House on 14th January. *The Ambassador, HE Sr. Mario Artaza, opened the proceedings with an introductory address. He was deeply convinced about the Project, and knew that Pat Vincent was the guiding force behind it, a very important and ambitious one. There are still people who require convincing, but with Pat's motivation she will be able to get the finance required. There is a beautiful document which explains what it is all about.*

*He talked about the macro-situation of the Chilean economy and how well it is doing, one of the fastest growing economies in the world. It has been growing for the past 12 years at almost 7 percent per annum. Poverty levels in 1990 was about 48 percent of the population, and has since been substantially reduced. In the past year exports to Great Britain were over £600 million. Total exports are up to 17 billion*

dollars a year.

But there remain difficult areas in the extreme north and south of the country. It is hard to find the right mechanism to bring them better conditions. One of the main areas in this respect is the Atacama desert in the north, the driest on earth. The population live in small towns, and it has proved difficult to improve their lot. The right type of agriculture has to be found, and the provision of irrigation. This is what The Andean Project is effectively doing.

Tourism in the country for the past seven years has provided an important source of income, and is now about one billion dollars per year, the main areas being San Pedro de Atacama, Calama, the South and of course Easter Island. The northern area is interesting with its nitrate fields and copper mines, including the largest open pit mine in the country, Chuquicamata, and the type of tourist attracted is largely young people. But it requires a lot of support and work and this Project should do very well in this area.

He was extremely grateful to Pat Vincent for the important part she is playing as Chairman of The Andean Project, and explaining what it is all about. He was sure that under her direction it will be successful.

The objectives of The Andean Project were published in the Chilean News of May 1996, and its Founder and Chairman, Mrs. Patricia Vincent, then gave the following update of the Project:

We are privileged to day to have with us our Honorary President Don Mario Artaza, the Chilean Ambassador to The Court of Saint James.

Many of you will have attended one of these functions before. Welcome once again and welcome to those of you who have come for the first time. I'll run briefly through the reasons which led to the creation of the Andean Project and if there are any questions they will be taken at the end of the meeting.

The Andean Project was founded in 1985 by a group of people interested in the possibility of creating a sustainable development project in the Atacama desert in the North of Chile in the Province of El Loa in the 11 Region, to enable the mountain people of the high Andes to remain in their natural environment, as their culture and survival was being visibly threatened

To arrive at a consensus as to how this might be achieved was not easy. Many options were examined and discarded. It was eventually decided that work creation, the food chain, combined with animal husbandry and an ongoing study of the local flora and fauna would be most acceptable to the local inhabitants, and for future fund raising. The local inhabitants were consulted at each stage and are still being consulted to ensure that what is being planned will fulfil a useful and meaningful adjunct to their needs which for reasons I will explain later are changing.

Three years ago we were accorded legal status in Chile under the title of "Corporacion Sin Fines de Lucro" dated 17 January 1994, roughly translated into English, a non profit making organisation. Once we had legal status we were given the Chilean Government go-ahead to buy land. This was quite a complex process. The then British Ambassador, Mr. Frank Wheeler, donated the needed money out of a special fund for this purpose.

We have acquired two properties in the North of Chile, one in Ollague of 605 square metres and a second more extensive one in San Pedro de Atacama of 11.4 Hectares. The land in San Pedro will be the site of a Botanic and Physic Garden. A nursery Garden is also planned. We hope to establish an animal breeding programme for endangered species, especially camileads, focusing on animal health and in-vitro fertilisation and embryo transplant.

The two properties I have just mentioned as belonging to

the Andean Project are the legal property of the Project. All requirements as laid down in Chilean law have been met including registration at the land registry in Calama. This was a lengthy process but we are now ready to start the needed fund raising, first to fence the land and then to start creating the Botanic garden and planting on site. We will be looking initially at endangered species of plant life, including cactii. Central to research will be that of the medical properties of the Andean plants, natural dyes for the food industry and new species. It is worth remembering that the potato, tomato and asparagus originated in the Andes.

When one talks about sustainable development in distinctly inaccessible areas of the globe it concentrates the mind wonderfully. Planning on the drawing board has to be transposed into reality and undergo the cold analysis of the money men. The higher the altitude the more costly the exercise. When you also have to take into account millennia and the cultural habits at all stages of planning it is not difficult to see the altiplanicos as I call them, need to be included. This is to avoid distress to the peoples the high mountains, traditional owners of all land, water, plants and fauna

The Chilean Government under this and previous governments have been tackling the problem of de facto and de jure ownership of land rights in the mountain areas of Chile with great sensitivity. But the problem is a continuing one. The development potential for the mountain people and the future of tourism depends very fundamentally on consultation and consensus. The Chilean Government is fully aware of all the issues involved and is designing projects taking these factors into account

The Minister of Public Works, Mr. Lagos, is building and improving the major and minor road networks in Chile with the added plus of modernising road communications. He is giving priority to the Bio-Oceanic route to Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay and Uruguay. This major road is being designed to enable these countries to transfer by road exports to the Pacific basin. We are a major beneficiary of this new major road as we now have an access road to the Andean Project Botanic Garden. Mr. Lagos kindly gave me an audience, and during our talk he offered to build a well on the site of the project garden site. He said he very much approved of our initiative in creating a garden. This as you can well imagine was most encouraging for the future of the project.

The Inca trail is another of Mr. Lagos's initiatives. He is finalising plans to make the Inca road into a reality. This road as you will see from the map will touch two of the points where the Andean Project has property.

I went up to Guallatri on the Inca road, half way to Ollague, with the regional director of FAO last year up to 5300 metres. It was the most wonderful experience. Don Severino Araujo wanted to see the development possibilities for economic growth with the development of agriculture, and what contribution this would make towards helping the peoples of the high Andes.

At this moment the road is only for semi-professional drivers and I wouldn't recommend it even with the best four wheel drive long wheel base station wagons. The altitude of over 16,000 feet make it a taxing drive for even the most experienced drivers, and there is every real danger of "puna" which can affect the most hardy of them. In the not far distant future this updated road will make the journey from Visviri to San Pedro one of the most exiting trips in the world. Stunningly beautiful, magical mountains, endlessly changing - the curious magnetic power that makes one want to go back again and again. San Pedro is full of back packers that can't bear to leave. People of all ages come from all over Europe and elsewhere in ever increasing numbers to enjoy one of the most beautiful places on earth. What a place to create a

garden. Help us to make the garden a reality.

The Inca road has not just been designed with the tourist in mind, but as a sustainable development project to give employment to the mountain villages.

Eco Tourism does already exist on a small scale in the first and second regions. In the first region on the border with Peru and Bolivia you have the nature reserve Lauca and Parinacotta run by the Ministry of Agriculture Department Conaf. Conaf is a government body in charge of all the nature reserves in Chile. They carry out an outstanding job of conservation in some of the most remote areas of the world.

Last year Nick Hawkins showed a video which in part covered the lush South of Chile. Tourism in the south is mainly for the fishing, rafting, walking, climbing and horse riding fraternity. Sailing is an expanding option. If you travel South don't forget the Antarctic, the last frontier on earth.

But returning to the Andean Project in the highest desert in the world where there are also mining interests. Copper, gold, lithium, nitrates, sulphur and trace elements and many more minerals are worked, too many to mention. Climbing, mountain biking, walking, riding and last of all sightseeing require strong nerves as some tours tend to take you to destinations in areas which can be hair raising. These are areas of great natural beauty as you will see with the slide show which will be next.

I would like to introduce Hugh Beveridge who will show slides, most of which were taken by Eliza Beveridge. I would like to thank her in advance for letting us see them today - Hugh Beveridge.

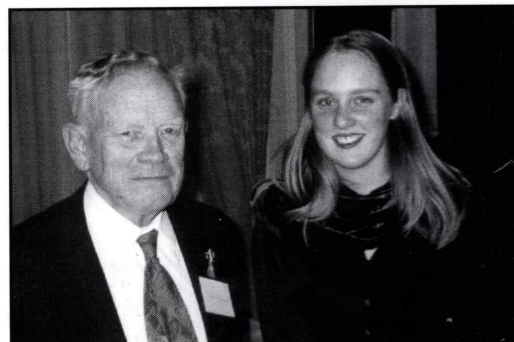
This was followed by a reception at which pisco sours and wine were served.



Susan Atkinson, Fergus Trim, Michael Hosford-Tanner & Louise Cavanagh



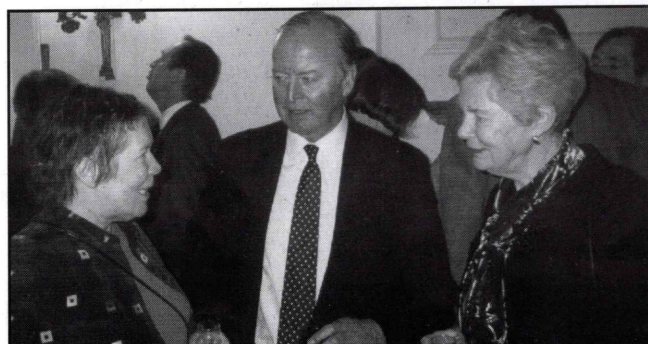
H.E. Mario Artaza, Elisa Beveridge & Rose Deakin



Denzil Dunnett & Louise Bagnall



Claudio Gonzalez, Monica Alegria, Ben Laidler, Florenz McConnell & Patricia Vincent



Rose Deakin, Hugh Beveridge & Gillian Wagner

## TRINITY HOUSE

A visit to Trinity House took place on March 16th. As the General Lighthouse Authority for England, Wales and the Channel Islands, it has the responsibility for maintaining lighthouses, light vessels, buoys and beacons used in general navigation around our coasts. To carry out this task the Service employs around 550 people with a vast range of skills and expertise. They work in locations spread throughout England, Wales and the Channel Islands including depots at Harwich, Cowes, Swansea, Great Yarmouth and Penzance, at manned lighthouses and onboard the Trinity House tenders and launches.

Trinity House is responsible for a total of 72 lighthouses, 90 percent of which have been automated, and by the end of the century they will be all unmanned. This achieves substantial savings with no loss of reliability on the level of service, safety and welfare of mariners. It currently maintains 13 major floating aids to navigation stations off the coasts. These are 11 light vessels, 2 light float stations and 400 buoys of which three quarters are lighted.

The most famous lighthouse in the British Isles is probably the Eddystone. There have been no less than four separate lighthouses built here, the earliest being constructed in 1698. This bears testimony to the problems peculiar to lighthouse construction. The present one was converted to automatic operation in 1982.

The Corporation of Trinity House undertakes various activities of benefit to the maritime community in addition to

its role as a General Lighthouse Authority. These are funded through the registered charities of the Corporation rather than by light dues from which the lighthouse service derives its income. It is dedicated to the relief of aged and needy mariners, their widows and dependents by way of grants and annuities. The Corporation also maintains purpose-built retirement homes at Walmer in Kent. The accommodation at Walmer comprises 19 dwellings and a furnished guest unit. Each dwelling is completely self contained bungalow fitted out with the needs of the elderly in mind. Although nursing care is not provided, staff are on hand in the role of helping with every day domestic needs.

The Corporation operates a scheme to give financial support to young people seeking a career at sea in the Merchant Navy as a deck or engineer officer. It awards a number of scholarships to those who have the necessary entry qualifications. Cadets then commence a three to four years training programme, on the completion of which an examination for a Department of Transport Certificate of Competency is taken and successful candidates are then able to take up a career at sea as an officer.

Trinity House was constructed in 1796 and is situated on Tower Hill within view of the Tower of London. It's an exquisite Queen Anne mansion with wonderful paintings, sculptures, painted ceilings, specially woven carpets and ships models. It was badly damaged during the blitz and had to be virtually rebuilt. The Master of Trinity House is H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh

Wine was served after the tour.



Mrs M. Soledad Gutiérrez, Mrs Carmen G. Heap, Mrs Georgina Roberts & Mrs Elizabeth Rodenas

## FAREWELL AT THE CLARIDGE'S

By Georgina Roberts

It was a joyous occasion, but it was also a sad occasion.

On 12th January the Group of Chilean Ladies in London gathered for tea at Claridges's, the essence of English style and elegance in its centenary celebration, to say good-bye to Mrs. Maria Angélica Arancibia. After spending two years in this country she was returning to Chile with her husband, the departing Chilean Naval Attaché, Admiral Jorge Arancibia Clavel. Her sunny disposition and outstanding support for our charitable work for Chile had endeared her to everyone of us. She had all the finest qualities of a true Chilean with a great love and admiration for everything British. She will be greatly missed.



Mrs Anita Artiaza, Mrs M. Angélica Arancibia, Mrs M. Rita Phillips & Mrs Valentina Parada



Mrs Gaby Gadelius, Mrs M. Inés Nozawa, Mrs Carmen Troup, Mrs Carmen Pearson & Mrs Anita Artaza

## TRAGEDY IN COLINA

By Georgina Roberts

Los Ceibos, one of the sixteen children's homes <sup>at that</sup> COANIL (Corporacion de Ayuda al Niño Limitado) has throughout Chile, was destroyed by fire in the early hours of Monday, 29th September 1997.

Los Ceibos (silk-cotton trees) was founded in 1985 to provide accommodation and assistance for mentally deficient and handicapped children of both sexes. The centre is situated in the town of Colina, approximately 33 kms from Santiago. The blaze started in Section C of the home, which housed children who were either confined to wheelchairs or bedridden. It is believed that the fire was caused by an electrical fault in a lamp. The whole Centre was in flames in minutes, spreading rapidly along the plastic insulation of the electrical cabling in the roof-space above the ceilings.

Despite the combined efforts of the staff on duty and the fire brigade, who managed to save the lives of the majority of the 176 residents, 31 children in Block C lost their lives. Those confined to their beds had to be carried out of the fire in arms, making their rescue a difficult one. But what made it a worse tragedy was that some thought it was all a game and got back into the blazing bedrooms and hid under the beds.

The fire deeply shocked the country, exposing the terrible state of abandonment suffered by these children; some of the bodies were never reclaimed by their families!

COANIL is in the process of rebuilding Los Ceibos, and hopes to have it ready for occupation within the next four months. However, this is at a cost of approximately £300,000, excluding the fittings and furniture.

The Group of Chilean Ladies in London decided to make Los Ceibos the beneficiary of the funds collected in 1997. As usual, the donation will not be given as cash, but will be used to buy what is most urgently needed. If you think you can help us with any amount, big or small, please give me a call on 0181-398-9448.

## CHILE VERSUS ENGLAND

By Helbecia Larsson

On the night of the 9th February I had a telephone conversation with the Chilean coach Nelson Acosta and he kindly invited me to meet the Chilean players at the Royal Gardens Hotel, Kensington the following day. It was such a pleasure to meet them in such a relaxed atmosphere among other Chileans like me who had come to wish them good luck. They were all looking forward to the game and they agreed that it was going to be a difficult match as England carry a big reputation, but they said "We can't go into the pitch already defeated. We have to give it our best", so they appeared to be in good spirits and hoping to score at least one goal. Their previous visit to Wembley was in 1989 when they only managed to draw 0-0 with England.

On the evening of the match more than 65,000 people were at Wembley Stadium, including many Chileans resident in the UK and a large number who had travelled especially from Chile to see the match. We all gathered together to support the "Seleccion Chilena" throughout the game in a family atmosphere with everybody singing and chanting "C-H-Is. All eyes and hopes were mainly on Marcelo Salas nicknamed "El Matador", South American footballer of the year and soon to be playing for Lazio of Italy.

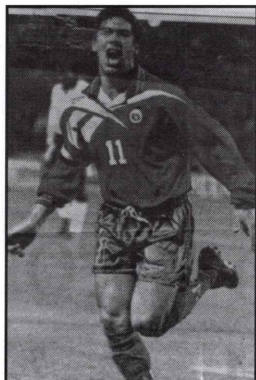
The first half was controlled by the Chilean team and just seconds before the end of the 45 minutes came the first goal, a pass from Sierra which Salas controlled on his left thigh before launching a volley from the edge of the goal area. GOOOAL! we all shouted and stood up clapping our hands in elation. The second half was better and more exiting as Shearer and Ince had come in to replace Batty and Sheringham for England, but the Chileans kept on dominating and at the 78th minute came the 2nd goal by Salas, a penalty taken with cool precision after Campbell had tripped him in the box. The Chilean supporters couldn't have been happier or prouder that night, seeing the big Wembley screen saying ENGLAND 0 CHILE 2.

We wish the Seleccion Chilena the best of luck in the World Cup. They are in group B with Italy, Cameroon and Austria. Their first game is believed to be on the 11th June against Italy. Chile narrowly qualified for this summer's France 98 World Cup after finishing fourth behind Argentina, Paraguay and Colombia in their group. For the first time since 1982 Chile are World Cup bound and it is due to the great work of the coach Nelson Acosta. The Chilean team had been in a Pre World Cup Tour playing Hong Kong, New Zealand and Australia and arrived in England only three days before the game.

Chile was introduced to football in the late 1880's through British nationals resident on the shores of Valparaiso. They gave Chileans the first taste of the game and they have never looked back; In 1889 the first national club Valparaiso was formed and six years later the Football Association of Chile, the 5th oldest in the world, was created with the membership of 9 clubs of mainly British origin. Regional Associations were born across the country as the popularity of the game spread. The 1st major competition was the "Copa Arturo Allessandri" between representatives of each region. After 20 years the championship was replaced by a new professional national league in 1933 which also gave birth to the most famous and successful national side of Colo-Colo. Although they have been dominating Chilean football from the start, their dominance is being tested by teams like Universidad de Chile, Universidad Católica, Union Española and Cobreloa, but a hint of British influence is still evident with the teams playing under the banners of Everton and Wanderers.



Helbecia Larsson & Javier Margas



Marcelo Salas

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## THE CANNING CLUB

By Roger Venables

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The Canning Club is situated within The Naval and Military Club (The "In and Out") in Piccadilly. Later this year, along with the Naval and Military Club, the Canning Club will be moving to new premises at No.4 St. James Square.

Membership of the Club includes all those with interests in the Latin American countries. The new premises will offer a splendid dining room, sitting rooms, bars, squash court and single and double bedrooms.

For details of membership enquiries should be made to the Secretary (Mr. Tom Harrington), The Canning Club, 94 Piccadilly, W1V 0BP (0171 499 5163)

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## NAVAL NOTES

By Roger Venables

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Immediately after the terrible earthquake which struck the Concepcion area in January 1939, the British Warships HMS AJAX and HMS EXETER, steamed at full speed to TALCAHUANO to render assistance to the Chilean Authorities. The crews were landed and were involved in rescue operations and in re-establishing communications, water supplies and power.

A gentleman who was aboard HMS AJAX at the time took numerous photographs, but these were all lost as a result of war damage.

Anyone able to help him with photographs or copies of photographs of these events should contact him:

Mr. J. E. Fielding, 46 Slaidburn Drive  
Accrington, LANCs BB 50 JJ

In case anyone has forgotten it, HMS AJAX and HMS EXETER, after the outbreak of World War Two, were the protagonists at the Battle of the River Plate, eventually causing the German Battleship GRAF SPEE to scuttle herself in the waters off Montevideo.

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## THE DAYS OF SAIL

By John Naylor

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This article is twofold. It describes how arduous a long sea voyage was in the mid 19th century, and what visitors to the New World at that period had to endure. It also tells how my family came to be established in Chile. The editor welcomes contributions from members of other Anglo Chilean families for future publication in Chilean News.

The sailing ship "Royal George" of some 500 tons was loading at West India Docks on the Thames preparatory to leaving for Tasmania, then known as Van Dieman's Land. The date was 23rd September, 1836, and among the passengers were my great-grandparents, John and Sarah Blanch, and their firstborn John.

One can only imagine what it was like to embark on such a long sea voyage and the uproar of the dockside scene, both on deck and below. Women crying, children playing regardless of everything, men running around and almost knocking each other down, passengers arranging their berths, carpenters hammering, the noise of the pigs, sheep and poultry, the shouting of the sailors, boats alongside with goods for sale, carcasses of beef and mutton hanging about the rigging, luggage tumbling about on deck and the multiplicity of ropes and spars, altogether resembling bedlam.

The cargo was being loaded and it was a miscellaneous lot. She had on her manifest 5 puncheons of rum, 66 cases and ten casks of wine, 50 casks of vinegar, 300 hogsheads and 52 cases of Hodgson's Pale Ale, 25 casks of mustard, 2 millstones, 22 cases of pickles, 120 tons of salt, 723 deal planks and 8 cases of merchandise classified as "hard and soft"

goods, articles of luxury calculated to appeal to the rugged settlers in a minor colonial outpost. At the same time provisions for the voyage were being taken on board and these consisted mainly of live cattle, sheep and pigs to supply fresh meat, eggs, geese, duck and fowl, fruit and water. The noise from the duck, fowl and geese was considerable and led the passengers to believe on waking early in the morning that they were in some farmyard.

Gradually the din subsides and by nightfall just the Captain, two or three passengers and the usual watch remain on deck and all is silence like the grave.

The Blanches were among the cabin passengers consisting of two other married couples and ten single men, and some were beginning to exhibit peculiarities already which, on a voyage of four months, would become only too wearisome. At this early stage they were companionable enough. In steerage were some 60 married people, 21 single men, 19 single women and some 50 children. The crew consisted of the captain and three mates, 26 able seamen, 4 apprentices, a carpenter, a cook, surgeon and his assistant and a steward with three men under him, altogether some 270 souls. The number was reduced during the voyage due to ten cases of infant mortality. The last of the passengers joined the ship at Gravesend.

The pilot was dropped there. Then Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate, but everybody was too sick to pay regard to passing objects, and eventually they anchored in the Downs. It was two weeks before a favourable wind carried them through the Channel past Eddystone lighthouse and on to Plymouth where they were boarded by customs officials.

Then the serious part of the voyage started on entering the infamous Bay of Biscay which lived up to its reputation. The vessel rolled round in the most alarming manner, and everything that could be was lashed down. Passengers being sick, the crash of glasses and china and the wind against them. Sheer misery. This went on for several days until a change of wind got them out of the Bay.

On the first Sunday the ship's bell tolled, the ensign spread on the hatch and the Reverend Mr. Jenkins commenced the service of the Church of England to the assembled passengers and crew, the latter being clad in their white jackets and trousers. They appeared to attend to the service with much greater decorum than the passengers. It was generally considered that sailors did attend more to the religious aspects of their lives because it can be truly said that in the days of sail they followed a perilous profession. Many ships were lost without trace. Hence the well known hymn "For Those In Peril On The Sea". The fatalities of sea travel in the early 19th century far exceeded those of aircraft travel in our day.

As they proceeded south conditions became more tolerable. The sea had assumed a deceptive calmness and sea sickness, which had plagued the passengers, had largely abated, and it became much warmer. One can just imagine the conditions which were endured when the steerage passengers were confined below decks during frequent periods of rough weather. The stench must have reached the cabin quarters. How long suffering our Victorian forbears were, and yet it must be said that they had no choice but to accept these conditions with patient resignation.

The first call was Madeira at the port of Funchal where they were boarded by customs officials who demanded a bill of health. They provisioned themselves with fruit from this beautiful isle. South of the Canary Isles they encountered the northernmost trade winds which made for pretty good going at some seven knots, and then past the Cape Verde Islands.

A feature of these voyages was meeting other vessels travelling in the opposite direction, and it followed a ritual. When within hailing distance the respective captains would

get out their speaking tubes and exchange news. At one stage the brig "Caroline" was observed coming towards them and a boat was lowered and rowed over to the "Royal George". The "Caroline" was four months out of Sydney with a cargo of wool for London. The passage having taken longer than expected they were out of flour, tea and sugar, and they asked that they be supplied with these items. Accordingly the request was granted. Appeals of this kind were seldom refused, a sort of brotherhood of the high seas.

By this time they were approaching the equator, which is traditionally celebrated by the arrival of Neptune and the usual frolics would ensue. The captain decided that these should be dispensed with, and instead there was to be a free issue of grog for the crew, followed by dancing. There was however an additional cause for celebration as on the day they crossed the line Sarah Blanch was delivered of a boy. There was a suggestion that he should be named Neptune, but the clergyman turned this down on the grounds that it was not fitting that the boy should be christened with the name of a pagan god, and he was named William Harnett.

Further south 3 cape pigeons were observed and the cry "Land Ho!" was heard as they sighted Rio de Janeiro through a telescope. At this latitude the wind increased very much which caused the vessel to roll in an alarming manner. The noise in the cabins was beyond description, the furniture breaking up and the bulkheads creaking and leaking. There was no escaping these conditions as the decks were awash. It must have been alarming to face these conditions on a vessel not much bigger than a Thames barge, and such storms were frequent.

They were able to land at Tristan de Cunha and obtain some potatoes and fresh vegetables. Tristan de Cunha was an appointed station for men-of-war, and a temporary garrison was appointed there. On giving it up a corporal of marines obtained permission to remain on the island with his wife and children. He set himself up as a supplier of water, potatoes, and vegetables to visiting ships and received in return pork and beef, spirits, tobacco and clothes. The Glass family, for that was his name, were joined over the years by members of shipwrecked vessels who preferred to stay there rather than be repatriated to England.

In those pollution free days the marine life was prolific and whales were sighted blowing and tossing themselves and also flying fish and grampuses and porpoises. As they approached the Cape of Good Hope quantities of birds accompanied them.

A fair wind took them to the volcanic island of Amsterdam at a rate of seven knots. It was possible to catch fish in the cold waters and then let them drop in an adjoining hot spring where they were boiled for fifteen minutes ready for eating. Crayfish abounded and were caught by the basket load in a few minutes. Not only was the marine life prolific, but there were animals such as pigs left behind by earlier settlers.

Very favourable winds carried them at a respectable speed during the last stages. By this time they were all counting the days to be freed from the prison-like conditions. For most of the voyage the passengers were engaged at playing cards, reading, chess, writing and smoking, but these activities began to pall towards the later stages of the voyage, and it must be said that everybody became thoroughly tired of each other. Even the daily activities of the abundant marine life around the ship ceased to be of interest. Van Dieman's Land was reached on January 12th, 1837, a voyage lasting a hazardous four months. John and Sarah's third child, my maternal grandmother Ann Helena Blanch, was born in Hobart Town on 20th May, 1838.

John was a gun maker and joined his cousin Henry William Mortimer who had already established a gun making

business in Hobart Town, at that time a small colonial outpost. Certainly it was primitive and lawless. At that time free settlers, as opposed to convicts, were allowed a free grant of land, and convicts were assigned as servants, albeit sullen and unwilling ones. Tasmania was at that time at its infamous height as a convict colony. Highwaymen, known as bushrangers, roamed around the countryside. Martha Jane Mortimer recounts in her reminiscences that her father was away on business when nine bushrangers appeared. One of them, holding a pistol at her mother's head, said, "Now misses, if you will sit still and tell us where to find things we will not harm you, but if you call out and make a fuss I will blow your brains out." They then proceeded to ransack the house. Before leaving they told her that if they made a fuss and had the soldiers out to hunt them down they would return, tie her husband to the doorpost, cut his ears off and set fire to the house. The men were eventually caught and sentenced to death. This was not an isolated incident. Actually when one comes to think of it we have not progressed much in the last 160 years. This sort of thing occurs quite frequently in modern day England, the only difference being that the penalties are not so appropriate.

The business did well in Tasmania, and John decided that there were even greater opportunities over in the mainland, so they sailed over to join the pioneers who were just establishing the town and port of Melbourne. John Blanch was the first gunmaker in Melbourne, and although he was still in his mid twenties he became one of the leading figures in the new settlement. Not only was he quite a character, but also as a gunmaker he was the only person licensed to stock and sell gunpowder. In those days before bulldozers came into use gunpowder provided the only means of clearing the massive trees and great rocks which covered much of the land that the settlers wanted to build on. However, gunpowder was also the cause of the downfall of the Blanch family.

A customer was getting caps to fit his gun and fired it off in the cellar of the house where the gunpowder was stored, not thinking it was loaded. The spark went off into a barrel of gunpowder and set off an explosion which demolished the house, and killed John and Sarah. The three children were not in the house at the time and survived as orphans. The date was 17th December, 1839.

Grannie and the boys were shipped back to England and brought up in the City of London by grandparents. In her old age Grannie used to tell us about this return trip and how frightened she was as a child travelling with strangers, and what a noise the sails and rigging made and how much the vessel rolled. Her memory of this experience was quite vivid. She was a true Victorian, having lived through the entire Victorian reign, witnessing events which today are regarded as history.

It was she who provided the link with Chile. She married Edmund I'Anson, a banker. They were sent out to Mexico in the early 1860's, and subsequently to Peru where he opened the first South American branch of the London Bank of Mexico and South America in Lima in 1868. They eventually retired to Chile, accompanied by my mother, who met and married Valparaiso businessman Arthur Naylor. They had six children, and all of us were born in Chile.

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## NEW MEMBERS

Marcela Contreras Arriagada  
Megan Williams  
Mark Wheatley

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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**"DRAMA IN THE ATACAMA"**, an illustrated talk given by Georgina Gubbins at Canning house on Thursday 23rd April at 6.30 pm. She will be visiting us from Chile and will describe the events surrounding the rise and sudden fall of Nitrate mining in the Atacama

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** to elect a Chairman and one Executive Committee member, followed by wine and small eats, at Canning House on Thursday 7th May at 6.00 pm

**ANGLO-PERUVIAN TENNIS** at Kingston on Sunday 7th June. Any member wishing to take part should contact Yolanda Williams of The Anglo Peruvian Society on 0181 946 8773

**ANGLO-LATIN AMERICA SOCIETIES GOLF TOURNAMENT** on Thursday 18th June at the West Surrey Golf Club

**AN EVENING RIVER THAMES TRIP**, the "Flagship Event of the Year" will take place on Wednesday 17th June, with buffet supper and dancing to a Salsa band.

**CARTIER POLO MATCH CHILE VS ENGLAND** with the presence of the Queen on Sunday 26th July.

**DIECIOCHO DRINKS PARTY** on Thursday 17th September at the Army and Navy Club, 36 Pall Mall.

**SIR LESLIE BOWES MEMORIAL LECTURE** will be held at Canning House on Thursday 15 October at 6.30 pm. The subject will be "Thomas Somerscales - Marine Painter" who settled in Chile in the late 19th Century and achieved international fame both as a marine and landscape painter of the Chilean scene

**HALLAM MURRAY** who has travelled the length of the Andes by bicycle, and who has already lectured to the Royal Geographical Society and to the Anglo-Peruvian Society, will give an illustrated talk of his cycling adventures in Chile at Canning House on Thursday 12th November at 6.00 pm.

**CHRISTMAS PARTY** at Canning House on Thursday 17th December.

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## NEW SECRETARY

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Valerie Buxton tendered her resignation as Secretary of the Society and was replaced by Mrs. Maria Teresa Lamarca who was born in Santiago in 1951.

After studying Fine Arts at the Universidad de Chile, she took a course in carpet weaving at Massana University in Spain, from where she graduated.. She followed this with a Fine Arts course at the San Jorge University, Barcelona. She has been studying textile conservation at the Hampton Court Centre since 1981

Her tapestries are part collage, part traditional weaving, or a combination of both. The highly individual, imaginative works of this Chilean artist, which have met with much success wherever they have been exhibited, show great pictorial qualities, a deep sensitivity and simplicity. Although they are expressionistic and tend to be abstract, they do not fall easily into any category of artistic classification.