



BFES SCEA Association

WINTER 2016

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NEWSLETTER NUMBER 35

AGM & Reunion Lunch in York

The annual meeting of the association took place on **Saturday October 8th** at the Royal York Hotel, York: 48 people attended the lunch and it was greatly enjoyed.

Sadly, Michael and Christine Ford were unable to attend due to Christine's continuing poor health and the Chair read out an email from Michael to the meeting giving an update on Christine.

The main outcomes of the meeting were for the committee to review and revise the constitution to allow the inclusion of former pupils of BFES/SCEA schools to become members of the association if they wished to do so. This would hopefully ensure the longevity of the association and also encourage further contributions to the archive. It was suggested that notification via Facebook would be the starting point to encourage new younger members.

Subscriptions for the association would remain for 2017 at £10 per annum (£12 for overseas members without a BFPO address).

Three main functions will take place in 2017 – see below.



York AGM & Reunion 2016

Those attending were - Miss Sue Adams: Mr. Terry Aldridge: Mrs. Vanessa Aldridge: Mrs. Pat Almond: Mr. Philip Arrandale: Mrs. Barbara Arrandale: Miss Pam Bonner: Miss Janet Bradley: Miss Angela Butt: Miss Judith Brookes: Mr. Jimmy Caldwell: Miss Frances Cole: Mr. Nigel Cooper: Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper: Miss Diane Dickson: Mr. Alan Glenn: Mrs. Gillian Glenn: Ms. Rachel Cairnes: Miss Jan Gwinnell: Miss Rosie Denley: Mrs. Judith Harper: Miss Susan Hughes: Mr. Ken Jones OBE: Mrs. Brenda Jones: Mr. Tom Jones: Mrs. Beth Jones: Mr. Walter Lewis: Miss Jean Love: Mrs Edith Lucas: Mrs. Helen Maley; Mrs Lynn Marshall: Miss Joan McHale: Mr. John Monkhouse: Mr. Peter Nuttall: Mr. Kenneth Moore: Miss Chris Needham: Mr. Glyn Pascoe: Mrs. Jackie Rance: Mr. Alan Rhodes: Mrs. Angela Rhodes: Mr. Hugh Ritchie: Mrs. Christine Ritchie: Mrs. Susan Roberts; Mrs. Jane Tull: Mrs. Jo Vestey: Mr. Mike Vines: Mrs. Margaret Vines.

Eltham Palace

By Colonel Robin Field-Smith

From 1945 to 1992 Eltham Palace was associated with education, principally in the Army, but also for the children of Services families across the world. It was the headquarters officers mess of the **Royal Army Education Corps (RAEC)** and first the Institute of Army Education and then latterly the Directorate, including the direction and support of Service Children's Schools. Therefore many teachers and administrators for BFES visited Eltham Palace, for recruitment, induction, CPD, and conferences.

When the RAEC became a branch of the Adjutant General's Corps in 1992 it left Eltham and the lease on the palace was handed back to the Crown Estate who passed it on to English Heritage.

After years of negotiation, in 2008 the Patron of the RAEC, **HRH the Duchess of Gloucester**, officially opened the RAEC Commemorative Display at Eltham Palace.



The account balance stands at £11,171.59.

The committee was re-elected unanimously.

Nigel Cooper was co-opted to the committee for a one year period.

Diary Dates

Saturday

01 April 2017
Reunion Lunch at
Corpus Christi College
Cambridge

Tuesday

16th May 2017
Committee meeting,
Double Trees Hotel,
Bristol

Saturday

03 June 2017
Curry Lunch at the
Ghurkha Museum
Winchester

Saturday

14 October 2017
Reunion Lunch at the
Royal Naval College
Dartmouth

A warm welcome to new members

Rosie Denley lives in Portland Dorset; Rosie taught in Hildesheim, Sek Kong, St Patrick's, Ark and Brüggén Schools, between 1988 and 2015.

Peter William lives in Suffolk; Peter taught in Oslo, Mönchengladbach, RAF Brüggén and Bergen Hohne, between 1968 and 1996.

Membership of the Association is currently £10 per year (£12 for those who live outside the UK and who do not have a BFPO address).

Sadly this was dismantled in 2014 as part of English Heritage's plans to optimise the story of the Courtaulds who owned the lease from 1933 to 1945, and built the new house. It is fair to say that they have done an impressive job on refreshing the site, and making it effectively 'the jewel in their crown' – certainly worth a visit!

There was a strong desire within the **RAEC Association** to recover the lost ground, but it was unreasonable to expect that English Heritage would agree to restore the 2008 display. This in any case focused on a typical officer's bedroom, and did not perhaps adequately cover the story of the RAEC and all its responsibilities and achievements. Thankfully we have been able to convince them to provide a satisfactory record and display of our residency, and so far they have been very prepared to engage with the Association and enable something worthwhile.

This year has seen a new section at the end of the Multi-Media Guide (MMG), which is available free to all visitors, and a panel about the RAEC in the Visitor Pavilion. We have also started offering content about the RAEC on the English Heritage website. In the coming years, we are working on a display area, and further revisions to the MMG and the guidebook.

I have been leading the negotiations on behalf of the Association, so I am now contacting all BFES Association members, especially those who through visits gained first-hand experience of Eltham. We need memories in the form of papers or documents, photos and verbal testimony, either about being at Eltham, or of key events attended there, or about significant activities emanating from there.

If you think you have some stories to tell, and are prepared to go on audio record to capture your memories for posterity, English Heritage will arrange to make a recording, either at Eltham, or at a mutually convenient location.

Please let me know by e-mail – robin@field-smith.com - if you have anything to offer. I look forward to hearing from you.

Cambridge Reunion Lunch 01 April 2017

Our Cambridge re-union lunches have been very popular over the last few years and once again we are able to offer the chance to dine in another of the University's



finest colleges, Corpus Christi. Situated in the centre of Cambridge and dating back to 1352; the College, boasts many fine buildings and grounds which members attending will be able to explore.

Our re-union will start at 11:30 with a pre-lunch drink of sparkling wine or soft alternative served on the lawns (weather permitting) followed by a lunch (a fixed menu of three courses, with a vegetarian option). Two glasses of wine (or soft drink option) per person will be served at the table with tea/coffee available at the end of the meal.

The cost of the lunch and drinks (as listed) will be £46 for members and £48 for non-members. Accommodation is available, subject to availability, at the various Colleges, as a separate agreement by individuals wishing to pursue this matter with the University's accommodation service.

Membership is open to anyone who has served with BFES, SCS(NWE) or SCE, or indeed is still teaching in one of the remaining SCE schools.

The membership year runs from 1st January to 31st December and payment can be made by Standing Order or cheque. Membership fees can be paid up to 3 years in advance.

Membership renewal - There are just over 70 members who pay by cheque and whose membership expires on 31 December 2016. A reminder will be sent to those members. (by e-mail, or by post if no e-mail available) nearer the time

Any member who wishes to check on the status of their membership can call on **01227470763**, and we can check it for you instantly, or you can e-mail

bfes.scememb@gmail.com

and a reply will follow ASAP.

The option to set up a standing order to pay your membership fee, avoids the bother of remembering when it is due, writing a cheque, posting envelopes, etc. Standing orders can be cancelled by you at any time.

A membership form is available to download from the Association website a

<http://www.bfes-scea-association.org/membership.html>

Details of the menu will be made available once the College Chefs have released their spring menu. Members are invited to express their initial interest by emailing paulmacardle@gmail.com.

Further details will be published in the New Year.

Archivist's Report October 2016

By Walter Lewis (Hon Archivist, BFES/SCEA Association)

Over the past year the closure of schools in Germany has continued. The remaining schools are those in the Gütersloh, Bielefeld, Sennelager/Paderborn areas. Blankenhagen School, previously Andrew Humphrey School, Gütersloh closed in July of this year. The head, Ben Turner, himself a product of BFES/SCEA schools in Brüggem & Osnabrück, has gathered boxes of documents and photographs tracing the school's history. These are being brought back to the UK by Mike Chislett: Mike is also returning with archives of the HQ SCS days which he has unearthed over the past few months.

By the time you read this, this documentary evidence will be sorted, annotated, listed and taken to the Archives at the Institute of Education at University College, London, where it will join the growing history of BFES/SCEA/SCE.

In May of this year we deposited a significant amount of memorabilia provided by a wide variety of personal sources. These came mostly from ex-teachers and covered a great deal of our history; some of them identifying previously unknown schools in commands all around the world. They included information on Singapore, Malaya, Homs (amazing photographs of our school catering for the children of an RTR in the 1950s), Sardinia, Hong Kong, Belgium and The Netherlands. When contributions have been received from individuals the deposits are attributed to them personally. This collection included memories from Mike Glover, George Andrew, Peter Hall, Marion Andrew, Sue Adams, Joan Hunt, Pauline Isaacs, Tom Nielsen-Marsh, Joan McHale, Gareth Morgans, Jo Vestey (Eyre), Dave Aubin and Lynn Marshall.

One difficulty arose when requests for information were received on specific schools but our catalogued archive holdings failed to find anything on a school. This progressed by trawling through old SCEA Magazines and BSEA Association Newsletters from decades ago, all of which contained gems of information provided by teachers on sometimes forgotten schools; Antwerp Primary was an example of a good result for an ex-colleague who wished to return to the site of our school there.

This is a very time consuming exercise but the Archivists at the IoE have appointed a member of staff and a volunteer researcher to carry out this task and are continually up-dating our on-line catalogued items.

Once again we appeal to members of the Association and others to record some of their memories and send them to me for inclusion in our archives. These tales prove enormously exciting for present day researchers investigating the education of Services' children since 1947, and even before.

Royal Naval School Verdala Reunion

By Sue Adams who attended Verdala School from 1958 – 1960.

A reunion for former staff and pupils of Verdala was held in Malta during October this year – just over 40 years after the school closed in July 1976. One former teacher, Liz Mardel, (nee McMeeking) attended the reunion.

Forty people attended the reunion and they came from many parts of the world – this time from Spain, America and Australia. Such is the affection for the school and its memories that it doesn't take long for conversations to start and stories to pour out of very happy times spent there.

These reunions are held roughly every 2 years and always include a visit to the

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We're on the Web!

<http://www.bfes-scea-association.org/>

Your comments, articles, news items, photographs, and letters would be gratefully received in electronic or hard-copy format.

Contributors are encouraged to send photographs in support of text submissions.



school which has continued to function as St. Margaret College Boys Secondary Verdala. One of the staff, Rita De Battista, who although is head of the geography department has a strong interest in the history of the school and has established an archive. She and the school staff are very keen to maintain links and are very welcoming to visitors who come to see their old school again.

This year, Rita had put together a wonderful PowerPoint presentation of past photographs from the 50s-60s and of how the school had developed since then. It



was quite an emotional experience looking at these old photographs and recognising former pupils and friends – many a quiet tear was wiped away as the photographs recalled old memories. In some ways the school has not changed very much, the classroom blocks are still there and the main building with the school hall still remains. Some classrooms had been in Nissen huts and these are now replaced with newer classrooms more suitable for a Secondary curriculum.

The playground has altered a little – the famous marble pitch and climbing frames have now gone but a Palm Tree (now believed to be a hundred years old) still remains. Nearly everyone at the reunion could remember exactly where their classroom was, the bus journey to school, school plays, sports day, NAAFI school lunches and all the games in the playground. Much was also remembered of the teachers – always in positive terms! And lessons were remembered too! But beyond that was the sense of freedom we all had on a safe island with little crime and the friendliness of the Maltese people. Of course school days seemed shorter and much time was spent swimming in the afternoons.

So why the strong affection for **Verdala School**? Undoubtedly because of the great teachers who were there and who made school a positive and happy place to be. Also, Malta was a new experience for many pupils – what could be better than free time every afternoon, meeting friends on the beach? It was also a great opportunity to be absorbed in different traditions of the island and to make friends from another country.

Malta is much changed now with a booming tourist industry – extensive building



Where are they now?

From **Joy Harris** in the Italian **earthquake** zone. November 2017.

Hello Friends and Former Colleagues.

The quakes were nearer to my home this time and I felt them! No damage to our Comune though. **Norcia** (the epicentre) is 90 km away south west. People from the earthquake areas are being evacuated to the **Trasimeno** area near where I now live and where hotels and hostels are being used.

I am just off to the supply receiving area with clothes and supplies for earthquake victims and we are praying it won't hit our Comune.

Following the most recent earthquakes I am swimming again to raise **£600** for the **Children of The Italian Earthquake Appeal**. Having raised £600 pounds for **Amatrice** in September I wish to repeat the challenge.

Please donate to my **JustGiving Crowdfunding Page** and help make it happen:

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/joy-harrisfrsa-1?utm_id=2&utm_term=4AvOx6Gb7

Thanks for your support

Joy Harris FRSA

Former SCE Performing Arts Consultant
Arts Awards Adviser & Artsmark Trainer.

everywhere to support this. But many of the towns and villages retain their old character and many of us were able to find where we used to live and meet up with old neighbours, some very elderly now but remembered who we were.

The happiest days of your life? For everyone at the reunion, they certainly were.

The 2017 AGM and Reunion Lunch

Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth – Saturday 14th October 2017

Founded in 1863, this is the initial officer training establishment of the British Royal Navy. **Dartmouth** is situated in the South Hams area of Devon and is registered as an area of outstanding beauty. Besides the college, there is much to see and do. It is rich in architecture, history and National Trust properties – in particular, “Greenway”, the home of **Agatha Christie** and Coletton Fishacre, the home of the D’Oyley Carte family.

Plans are currently being finalised for this occasion which will be hugely enjoyable. This advance notice is to let you know the date and maybe plan a short break in the area as well. Unfortunately an organised tour of the college cannot be arranged as this date coincides with a family’s weekend to which priority will be given. Alternative dates were not possible as the college is fully booked for other events such as weddings. However just walking through to the dining area and seeing the outside of the building and grounds will give you a wonderful insight.

An **approximate cost per head** for the AGM/lunch will be £40 but this will be confirmed with the booking form and further details will be in the Spring newsletter.

Numbers for this function are limited to 70.

If you are fairly certain that you would like to attend this AGM/lunch, you are strongly advised to start booking accommodation now as it is highly likely that nearer the time, families will be booking also.

As an example – two nights’ accommodation at the Best Western Hotel in Dartmouth (Fri/Sat or Sat/Sun B&B 2 persons sharing = £247. This also includes use of all spa/pool/gym facilities and a 25% discount on green fees for golf.



The 1990 Curriculum Awards

The Barbican – London (article on following page)



The 1990 SCS recipients of the Curriculum Awards

shown overleaf came from **Edinburgh School Muenster, Gloucester School Hohne, Prince Rupert School (PRS) Rinteln and The Havel School Berlin**. All UK schools were free to enter and were assessed by how well they responded to local circumstances and environment. The scheme was founded in 1982. Seen in the national context SCS (SCEA) schools were definitely a little on the unusual side however the submissions made by all four schools highlighted the way in which each school regarded itself and its environment as special. **Muenster** offered access to a highly prestigious university and a rich variety of cultural opportunities. **Gloucester School** chose not to ignore that it was a close neighbour of the infamous **Belsen** Concentration Camp regarding it as a very important historical site from which many lessons are still to

The Past Shapes Us All (Part 2)

Taken from "Memories of Teaching in BFES in 1954" by Peter Granville

Originally published in **SCEA Bulletin number 23 – Autumn 1984**.

The new building to which the school had removed was light, airy and surrounded by playing fields with gardens at the front and sides. Trees provided shade at the front of the school and such provision was far superior to anything in which the writer had served until then. Equipment was plentiful and of the normal quality used by an authority at home - indeed, most of the classroom apparatus came from educational suppliers in the UK. Stationery was of good quality, no doubt reflecting Trevelyan's early insistence that it should be, though distinctly 'HMSO' in character.⁶ It was, too, the first time that the writer had been able to use simple scientific equipment in school at junior level and such an opportunity did not occur again back in the UK until the late nineteen sixties. The staffing ratio was far more generous than teachers newly arrived from home were accustomed to, having been arbitrarily set at 20:1 in the earliest days of the Service. This varied, of course, from time to time and station to station but was generally at a most acceptable level. Ancillary staff was also provided on a generous scale for it was at this school that the writer first became accustomed to assistance from a full-time secretary. There was also a driver attached to the school and a seemingly endless 'pool' of dining and caretaking assistants, all locally employed Germans and pleasant to work with. This amicability did not appear to include their working colleagues for the writer remembers the almost constant bickering that took place between themselves, with disagreements and arguments over seeming trivia. Whether this was a characteristic of German workers, the work in which they were engaged, or the conditions under which they were employed was never clear. Buckley and Smith refer to one BFES teacher's 'professional' contact with the RAEC in 1946 as follows:

Visit Army Education Centre and am told the Education Officer wishes to contact me. He agrees to help with teaching equipment and also to give me the loan of a Sergeant Instructor Johnson who is shortly to go to Cambridge University and wishes for teaching experience.

In 1954, however, in the garrison in which the writer served, there was little or no 'professional' contact, probably because there were two different branches of education, staffed by people pursuing quite different aims. At a social level, some of the young, single female teachers knew, as occasional escorts, some of the National Servicemen who held the rank of Sergeant and like Sergeant-Instructor Johnson, were waiting to go to College or University upon completion of their tour of duty, though little was seen of personnel serving in the RAEC upon a regular engagement for most were married and entitled to a quarter in the garrison. In addition to a commitment to Army education, it is recalled that courses in German were arranged for Servicemen and civilians who wished to learn the language and colleagues of the writer attended and took their first steps towards mastering the language. Instruction was given by German civilians at the Army Education Centre which at that time was in a requisitioned house in a suburb of the city.

It is interesting to note that in the mid-1950s, there appeared to be comparatively few trained teachers serving in the RAEC and the lack of overlap in their function may have been one of the reasons why in this garrison at least there was little or no contact with BFES teachers. In later years, as the educational perspectives of the writer widened, it came to be a matter of some regret that there was little or no cross fertilization of ideas and that the two educational services remained distanced from each other.

be learnt. **PRS** – purpose-built on a green field site – joined **British Military Hospital Rinteln** as one of only two units in a small town. They emphasised the importance of good relations with the local **German** community. The Havel School of course emphasised that in 1989/1990 its pupils had the unique opportunity to live and work at the heart of **unprecedented** historical and social change.

Adapted from an article in SCEA Bulletin No 29 by Mrs P Smith former DHT Edinburgh School.

Departed Friends

John Welshman who was the Head of Drama at King's School Gutersloh in the 1970 's and who then went on to become Head of English at The Havel School, Berlin, sadly died in a Care Home in Hoylake after a long period of declining health.

John Williams who initially joined SCEA as a Biology teacher in St George's School, Hong Kong in the 1960's and was then appointed as the Head of Biology at King's School Gutersloh in the 1970's, sadly

Life for teachers serving in BFES in 1954, accompanied by their families, could be extremely pleasant. Sensible families could live upon their salaries, allowing their overseas allowance to mount up at home to cushion them upon their return to the UK. The 'perks' of life in BAOR were considerable and conditions for wives much easier 'than at home. Wages paid to maids were subsidised so that they were available to those who would normally need to command a much larger salary to obtain their services and although to employ one could occasionally turn out to have disadvantages, on balance, for those with young children especially, their help was most welcome. The fact that cars could be bought free of tax and run on petrol which in those days cost approximately 5/- per gallon meant that a new element of mobility was introduced and extended foreign travel became commonplace. In addition, for the entitled civilian, two free passes were provided each year to any point on the West German border, with reduced fares available for wives and families. Alcohol was cheap and the writer remembers that whiskey was 10/- per bottle, for example, and a bottle of 'Liebfraumilch' could be bought in a German shop for the equivalent of 1/2d. Cigarettes cost a 1/- for 20 and though nominally rationed to 200 per week, there were likely to be members of the family or possibly friends who did not take up their complete ration. Thus, entertaining at home was cheap and with the assistance of a maid, a fairly simple matter. Boilermen were in attendance too, to look after the central heating boilers so that trouble-free warmth and comfort were assured even in the depths of a German winter.

Family medical and dental care was provided by the Services and there was the assurance of the availability nearby of a British Military Hospital. Indeed, two members of the family had minor operations there and were grateful for the care and attention they received. Such facilities, at that time and in that place, were not overburdened as they are today in the UK and this made a great deal of difference to such provision. Rest and recuperation was still available at Leave Centres in the Harz Mountains and these were like echoes from the past, with their 'Grand Hotel' atmosphere at a much reduced cost. Recreation within the garrison was also plentiful with the **AKC** providing up-to-date films, the Garrison Theatre putting on plays - one of the most enthusiastic and accomplished performers returned to the UK from his posting as a garrison dentist to take up a career on the stage professionally and is frequently to be seen appearing on television - as well as a variety of clubs at which one could wine and dine reasonably and comfortably.

Understandably, a time upon on which to reflect and look back appreciatively.

Service with BFES, in the case of the writer, enabled fruitful contacts to be made with the local population. Our quarter was the last remaining in British occupancy on the village-city boundary and we became well known to the villagers as they passed by, especially as our fair haired young daughter loved to 'converse' in German with everyone she saw. The local policeman kept a friendly eye on us and one Christmas Eve we were invited to visit his family when the **Weihnachtsman** was due to appear and the sight of their shimmering Christmas tree and the flavour of the specially baked gingerbread house gave much pleasure to our two children. We became friendly with another family in the village whom we visited frequently, learning something in the process of the customs and practices of German families and we felt that their visits to us opened their eyes a little to the ways of British families, a fact which we regarded as being of some importance since they had previously not met any British people. Each year we accompanied our friends to the local **Schuetzenfest** and were soon able to exchange pleasantries and gossip with other residents of the village who accepted us into their festivities quite naturally.

died after a brief illness following the diagnosis of cancer.

Jane Cox (husband Robin was amongst other things AEO in both Minden and Episkopi) died at home on Saturday, June 18th, 2016, after a short but difficult fight against Cancer. Jane (and Robin) contributed enormously to the local Military communities in which they served.

Several members have expressed a wish to pay for Association Lunches by **Electronic Transfer**. If you wish to use this method please remember that your Booking Form – duly completed – will still be required by the event organizer. Please see the instruction on the Event Booking Form.

Find us on Facebook

Log on to Facebook and type in "British families education service association".

If you have a Facebook page please spread the word about the Association!!

Thank you.

If you would you prefer an electronic version of the Newsletter please get in touch.

Through the Anglo-German Centre '*Die Bruecke*', we became acquainted with another family connected with agriculture and business and many enjoyable visits were made to each other's' homes and endless discussions were held upon the subjects of politics, economics, language or recent history and there is no doubt that we were all better able to appreciate the others' point of view, though the areas of disagreement were remarkably few.

These friendships have lasted for thirty years and we continue to be guests in each other's homes - indeed, the children of children are now linked into the continuing circle of friendship. We may have been somewhat unusual in the number of relationships we made, for most of our colleagues seemed to adhere much more closely than we to the local British network. Service personnel particularly, seemed not to have contact outside working hours with Germans but we always put this down to the fact that their tour of duty was not necessarily long enough to enable fruitful developments to take place. Additionally, of course, they had recently been engaged in a particularly bitter war against the population in whose midst they were now living and this may have coloured their feelings somewhat.

However, we always felt extremely fortunate to have been able to make, and enjoy, the relationships with local people that we did.

So why should one look back after thirty years to a period of service with BFES with such obvious affection and appreciation? The writer's return to the UK was followed by appointments to Headships in East Anglia and then once more the North of England, with eventual early retirement and the opportunity to consider carefully a varied and extremely happy career in teaching. Included in that career were additional periods of study and highlights too numerous to mention, so why should these years in Germany thirty years ago stand out so vividly? Perhaps it is because they came at just the right time in a teaching career and gave so much to a young teacher who had already experienced contrasting school environments, was eager for more experience and might well have been - in his late twenties - at a particularly receptive age to absorb and benefit from what was to follow. The writer remembers the new ideas to which he was exposed and the freedom given to work them out; he remembers the new perspective upon authority which developed as a result of the trust shown to employees and the more personal, caring attitudes experienced; he remembers the increase in confidence which developed as a result and how these factors proved to be of seminal importance to the furtherance of a career at home in England. It has always seemed to the writer that LEAs in the UK which have built up a tradition of engaging teachers returning from BAOR have been the ones which tended to be more progressive and forward looking and have thus been able to take advantage of the ethos gradually developed by BFES.

It also gave to a family as a whole, a unique opportunity of living and working abroad, with the unlooked for and added benefit of a rich and satisfying developing web of relationships, with Germans and British, from which much pleasure has been gained and strength drawn through the years. It might also be mentioned lightly in passing that it also proved to be a period of financial consolidation, adding immeasurably to the comfort and well-being of a young family upon their return home to the starker financial realities of life in the UK.

Are these memories those of someone to whom the past means more than the present? The writer thinks not but feels that it is worthwhile remembering that

the past shapes us and reminds us constantly from whence we have come and in so doing, may be worthy of recall.