

# Bahrain Society



**Editor: Laurel Winter**

**Winter Edition - February 2015**

## *Annual General Meeting 2015*

The AGM was held on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at the prestigious Oxford and Cambridge Club, Pall Mall, London. The meeting was well attended by a cross section of members.

The meeting followed the normal format where The Chairman opened the meeting with a preamble covering some of the highlights of the Society's activities during the previous year and he expressed the Society's appreciation to The Ambassador for her support of the Society's events and for organizing and hosting the Ambassadors Reception. He went on to say that he had proposed a Society visit to Bahrain, in November 2015, to the Ambassador who was enthusiastic at the prospect.

The Secretary presented her report which summarized the social events that had been successfully completed during the previous year and talked about the events that were planned for the forthcoming year.

The Treasurer presented his report which provided a clear presentation of the

current, healthy, financial state of the Society. This prudent management of the Society's financial affairs has allowed the membership fees to be retained at their current level for the foreseeable future.

Several committee members stood for re-election, namely Peter Sincock, Lynn Collins and Wendy Brigden. These individuals were duly re-elected by the members present. A new committee member, Bob Cowell, was also elected to the committee as a replacement for Sir Harold Walker who was stepping down from the committee but was remaining in his role as Vice President of the Society. The Chairman thanked Sir Harold for all his support to the committee. Robert Chase was elected as the Society's auditor to replace the previous incumbent, Bob Cowell, who was now a permanent member of the committee.

The formal activities of the AGM were followed by a social gathering where members had the opportunity to catch up with old friends and renew acquaintances over a glass of wine and a light buffet.



Members at the AGM



Committee prior to AGM



## *Committee Members*

Brig Peter Sincock, MBE, Chairman  
Mrs Laurel Winter, Hon Secretary  
Mr Robert Jarman, Hon Treasurer  
Mrs Margaret Colley, Assistant Secretary  
Miss Enid Billington  
Mr Peter Blood  
Mrs Wendy Brigden  
Mrs Lynn Collins  
Mr Bob Cowell  
Mr Hasan Monfaridi  
Mr Stuart Read  
Sir John Shepherd  
Mr Vic Whittingham

## **Obituaries**

We wish to extend our condolences to the family and friends of Mr. James Taylor who passed away peacefully on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

James went to Bahrain in 1955 to work on the construction of Manama "B" Power Station (by the British Club). This was opened by Sheikh Salman bin Hamad al Khalifa (grandfather of the present King) in 1958 and operated by the then Bahrain State Electricity Department.

We also extend our condolences to the family and friends of Mr. Ian Livingstone who passed away in December 2014.

## Society Visit to The Goldsmiths Hall City of London

Another successful day was enjoyed by 50 Society members. The 1st of December, a bitterly cold windy day was perhaps the reason why a number of members were seen indulging in a hot coffee/chocolate in a local coffee house prior to the visit!



Brian and Elizabeth Wood relaxing with a coffee after their journey from Kent

The Goldsmith's Co is the 5th most prestigious livery in the City of London. Formed in 1300 for the guaranteeing and assaying of quality silver, gold, and precious metals. It was King Edward 1st who passed legislation on quality of metal initially silver, which he deemed had to be of equal quality to the current coin of the day. So the assaying of precious metal was formulated and remains today. An assay mark is represented with a manufacturer's mark, purity mark, and assay office mark. Traditionally marks also incorporate date and finest mark. British assay marks are represented by- London leopard, Birmingham anchor, Edinburgh castle, Sheffield rose. Precious metals bearing one of these assay marks provide a guarantee of quality.

An insignificant building externally, located in Foster Lane and close proximity to St Paul's Cathedral. However, on entering the building sumptuous would be a good description. Members were given a private tour and most interesting history of the building and the origins of assaying. How privileged we were to see priceless large plates in gold which were brought from the vaults for our perusal. Prior to leaving the room the plates were being carefully packed and returned to the vaults, highlighting their value and the importance of keeping them free from environmental damage. Many items both ancient and modern were on display of the highest quality of workmanship possible.



Our group gathering on the steps of the Goldsmiths Hall prior to departing to the Old Watling

Leaving behind the Goldsmiths Hall a brisk walk found us in one of our familiar hostelry's the Old Watling. An ancient old tavern which has served us well on previous occasions. Whilst our private room is small a cosy environment, good service, wholesome food for London prices, is achieved.



Amongst the group enjoying the repast at the Old Watling were Dodo and Peter Rawlings



Members renewing friendships at the Old Watling

## *Forthcoming Events*



Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015 a talk by Mr Mohamed Abdulwahed Al-Koheji a Bahraini Surgeon who is working in a London Hospital. This event will be held at the Oxford and Cambridge Club, Pall Mall, London.

Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2015 a private tour of Lords Cricket Ground followed by a late afternoon "high tea" at The Lords Tavern.

Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015 The Ambassadors Reception at the Jumeirah Carlton Hotel, London.

Late September/early October visit and tour of Kensington Palace with afternoon tea.

November 2015 potential Society visit to Bahrain.

November 2015 Annual Dinner.

Further details on these events will be provided by The Secretary in due course

## *New Members*

There were no new members in this period

## THE AWALI REUNION

Awali (The High Place) was created from 1936 onward to house the expatriate employees of Bapco and their families.

Bapco – The Bahrain Petroleum Company was the first association of Standard Oil of California, Chevron and The Texas Oil Company, TEXACO. Of course today Bapco is totally owned by the Bahrain Government.

At its height in 1950s and 1960s the town housed some 600 expatriate families, drawn principally from the UK, but with significant numbers from USA, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Until the advent of cheap air travel Bahrain was very isolated and with two years between home leave the town had to provide everything, literally from the cradle to the grave for all inhabitants.

In these circumstances close bonds developed between those dwelling there, bonds that continue to exist to this day.

To facilitate the desire to keep in touch after leaving Bahrain an ad hoc organisation developed. Though it has no formal set up or constitution it has survived for over 35 years. Former residents, employees, wives and children have gathered every eighteen months over a weekend at various locations, usually in Central England, with no essential aim other than to be with old friends to catch up with their news and to share warm memories.

In its heyday 300 plus would gather under one roof, which limited the number of hotels that could accommodate such numbers, but time has taken its toll and at

the last Reunion there were only 80 attendees. It looked like the end of the road for these gatherings, however, offspring who spent their childhood and teenage years in Awali were determined that the Reunion should continue and they are currently organising and rallying young and not so young to the next Reunion which will be held in Bristol from 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

Meanwhile, for those unable to make the Reunions contact is maintained through the Newsletter, which is distributed worldwide to some 400 addresses three times a year.

Our debt of gratitude for championing and organising this Reunion over the years must go to Ruth and Ray Weaver.

If anyone has any association with Awali and would like to get in touch please contact:

Ruth & Ray Weaver, 56 Castlewood Close, Clevedon, North Somerset, BS21 7HS – Telephone Number 01275 875414 or email Peter Francis on: [pwhfrancis@btinternet.com](mailto:pwhfrancis@btinternet.com).

Contributions for the newsletter and suggestions for events, speakers etc. would be welcomed by your committee

Please contact Laurel Winter on telephone number: 01223 844471 or email: [laurel.winter@ntlworld.com](mailto:laurel.winter@ntlworld.com)