

B.R.A.G.



BawBaw Radiomodellers Association Gippsland Inc.



NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2020 EDITION

SUNDAY 4TH OCTOBER

Sunday 4th October

Quite a few club members turned up for a fly but it got quite windy very quickly with Mick the only one game enough to pull out models for a fly



Some of the arrivals



View from the pits

One of the models
Mick flew in the wind
a Modeltech Magic
with an O.S .52



SUNDAY 11TH OCTOBER

Official Fly Day Sunday 11th of October.

The weather report was too expect it to be a little windy as it turned out the conditions were much better than expected with little to no wind an overcast sky helping to make perfect flying conditions.

With flying commencing no earlier than 9.00 am Bob was the early bird to open the gate several others arriving at various times a bit later, including a junior and some four legged family members well harnessed though.

Bob flew his drones and also a couple of cars.

Scott flew his indoor micro hobby zone sport cub and a Great Planes electric model.

Phil flew an Extra 300S which needed some fine tuning to get it running nicely he then had a short flight but was concerned about the amount of noise it made. Once reassured all was O.K the model was put back in the air with Mick also having a test fly of the model.

Phil also flew an EP Trainer.



Scott's Micro Cub



Phil's Extra 300

Steve had a new .40 size Trainer model which Mick test flew and trimmed out once sorted the controls were handed over to Steve with Mick setting him some basic bronze wing tasks to do.

Mick then flew his Hustler trainer to sort out some fuel problems it was still not right so was put away for more mods. Mick's very old P47 Thunderbolt was then committed to the air with several surprised by the spritely performance; next up was the Midget Mustang flown with plenty of gusto as there was some spectators watching no more encouragement needed for Mick to show off a bit.



Mick's 50 year old P47D Thunderbolt



Steve's Boomerang



Midget Mustang





Jamie flew his new Discus launch glider a composite CX5 Pro Glider this seemed to effortlessly climb to around 75 to 100 meters from a discus style throw from where Jamie managed a 14 min flight quite an impressive model to watch.



Buzzard Bombshell



Gavin and Terry dragged an old Buzzard Bombshell out of the Loft that Graeme had built back in the 1980's after plenty of coaxing and tuning the Old Timer's brought the Old Timer to life.

The model reached for the skies from a hand launch once trimmed & sorted Terry who had not flown a model for 40 years got back on the sticks and cruised around the skies, he was very happy to see the old model up in the air.

Graeme also flew his Old Timer model.



Scott's Great Planes CX8

Overall another top day out at the field great flying conditions & company.
Thanks to Steve for the report

HERE IS A STORY FOR YOU.

Sweet Dreams and Nightmares



A newly fitted-out PBX-5A Catalina flying yacht awaits the arrival of her guests at the Convair (former Consolidated) factory in San Diego, California in February 1950. This particular Catalina was made at Consolidated's San Diego Plant.

The photographs of this part of the story all come from *Time Life's* archive and are meant to demonstrate how the rich and famous lived at that time—private airplane, pretty girls and booze

The first step in the conversions is the moving forward of the flight engineer's controls into the cockpit. This enables the aircraft to be handled by the pilot and co-pilot alone and provides more 'living space'. Sleeping accommodation is provided for eight persons in three double beds and two singles. Near each bed are an individual light, radio switch and speaker, curtains, vents for air conditioning system, and a telephone. Occupants may contact the shore by means of a marine ship-to-shore telephone. In addition to this item of 'electrickery', the converted aircraft are fitted with no fewer than seven communications receivers, two transmitters, a broadcast receiver, FM-AM radio and a built-in television set!

Passengers can thus communicate anywhere in the world—to ships at sea, to another aircraft in flight, or to a private telephone on land.



During the day the two single beds in the aft or 'observation' cabin serve as seats. This cabin occupies the former mid-gun positions. On the starboard side, in place of the wartime blister, is a special one-piece blister typical of the luxuriousness of the other innovations: it is of specially free-blown Lucite to achieve good optical qualities without distortion and costs over £1,000. Measuring 7ft in length by 4½ ft deep at its widest point, it also has a permanent camera tripod in the centre, permitting panning of 180 degrees up and down, fore and aft.

A door to the rear of the observation cabin leads to a built-in stairway. This gives comfortable access when on land and can also be lowered afloat, where it makes an ideal diving board. Much of the 104ft wingspan can be used for sunbathing.

Noise is kept to a remarkably low level by a 4in-thick lining of Fibreglass. Overall carpeting adds further to the comfort. A shower bath, in waterproof plastic, runs hot and cold water. The w.c. is electrically flushed when on water; in the air a chemical toilet is used. The galley, in white porcelain and stainless steel, rivals the equipment of the most modern kitchen. A three-plate cooking range, oven, large refrigerator and frozen-food unit are installed.

Externally, few alterations are made. The nose gun-turret and bomb-aimer's window are replaced by a sleek clipper-style bow. Slung under each wing, where bombs and torpedoes used to hang, are two 14-ft dinghies. Each boat fits snugly against the wing and is raised or lowered by a built-in electric hoist. Cruising speed with the boats in position is 175 m.p.h. The maximum range is, as might be expected, exceptional for a 'private' aircraft, and is given as 3,000 miles.

A Landseaire costs a lot of money—\$265,000 is the basic price— something not far short of £100,000. This, coupled with heavy operating costs, virtually lifts the craft beyond the reach even of most millionaires. King Farouk had one on order before his abdication, but mostly it is the executive class of wealthy corporations that are attracted by these fabulous toys. The fact that the Landseaires are amphibious does mean, however, that they have a considerably wider scope of usefulness than more conventional 'executive' aircraft. Those sold are said to fly quite usefully on cross-country trips for plan and location inspection, using airfields, landing strips, waterways and rivers.”—Maurice Allward, Flight

Once the first new Landseaire prototype was complete, it was necessary to get the story out to the public. Odekirk invited some fellow executives from Southern California Aircraft Corp., a few family members and rounded up a couple of very attractive, very young aspiring Hollywood actresses and assembled them at the Convair factory ramp in San Diego's Lindbergh Field. He managed to get LIFE magazine to send one of their accomplished photographers, Loomis Dean, and two of his assistants to capture a day with the Landseaire. The agenda included air-to-air photography, landing on the Pacific Ocean for some fishing and sunbathing, lunch, cocktails, cards, lounging, a party on board and some sightseeing of San Diego's navy base and the coast.



From Dream to Nightmare

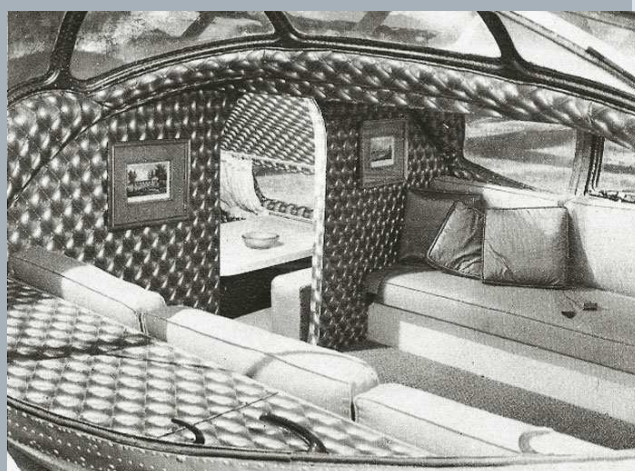
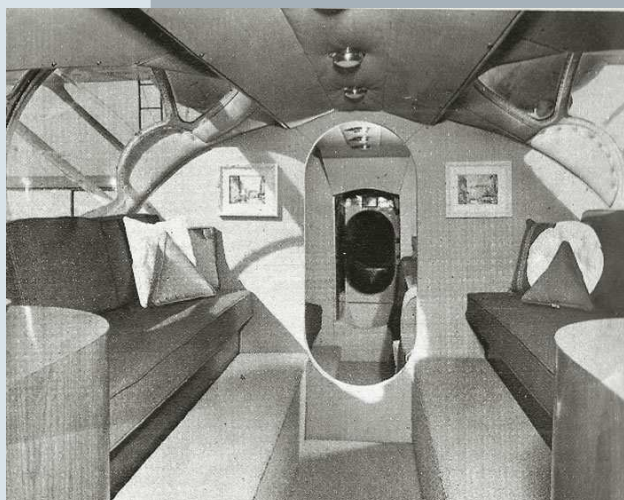
The sad end to Thomas Kendall's dream of freedom

In the 1950s, Los Angeles industrialist Thomas W. Kendall and his wife decided to create a similar flying yacht to Odekirk's Landseaire.

Purchasing three surplus Second World War PBY Catalina's, the Kendalls' hired noted Los Angeles interior designer George Erb to convert the warplanes into a trio of flying and floating luxury suites.

Kendall, a retired businessman who made his fortune in air conditioning, planned to create a business converting and leasing them, with plans to build 14 similar conversions—Kendall purchased 13 surplus PBYs in 1956, one of which still exists today at the San Diego Aerospace Museum.

Erb gave each of the three Catalinas their own unique colour scheme and personality creating a Gold, Turquoise and Red and Black aircraft. Each of the giant amphibians had a capacity to sleep fourteen with covered foam rubber sofas that converted into beds, a full galley, lavatory and even a dining room with a table for eight.



**The Kendall Landseaire
at Croydon**

Kendall, his wife, four children (one of which, Bob, was old enough to be co-pilot), his secretary and her son.

They appear to have set off on their dreamed-of round-the-world flight from London, bound for Egypt and the Pyramids. In Egypt, they were joined by another LIFE photographer, David Lees, who was to record their adventure for the famous magazine.

After visiting Cairo, the Suez Canal and Luxor, they landed at the Strait of Tirana (between Egypt's Sinai and Saudi Arabia) and anchored the aircraft a short distance from the shore to spend the night there. This would be the last landing that PBY ever made, and the Kendall family had a harrowing near-death end to their plans—in the end they got an unforgettable family memory.



Photo: David Lees

The beginning of the Kendall family trip had all the flavour and extravagance of a Turkish Pasha travelling throughout his empire. Here, locals in the Middle East gawk as the entourage sets up patio furniture on the broad wing of the Catalina.



The number one selling point of the Landseaire was most certainly the waist blisters, which offered passengers an unparalleled view of the world below them.

Kendall's family gather at the starboard blister as dad circles the Great Pyramids at Giza.

Peering from the PBY's plexiglass blister at the pyramids are Mrs. Kendall (left), Mrs. Shearer (right) and the four youngest children.

Photo: David Lees



Nightmare windup of family's dream trip

Fifty feet from the beach I let down the landing gear so that the plane wouldn't be washed ashore during the night. By the time we were secure it was pitch black and the wind had become quite strong.

We cooked supper and the children climbed into their bunks.

I was outside making a final check on our anchorage when I heard someone yelling. I thought it was Arabic, but the rattling of the wind and waves made it impossible to tell from which direction the shouts were coming from.

I went back into the plane and told the others not to go outside. But we yelled, 'Okay... we're okay.' And shouted, 'Salam' to show we were friendly.

Susan told me she had seen the outline of a man gesticulating, but by that time the voices had stopped.

The following morning, Wednesday 23 March, we arose at 6 and immediately hoisted our American flag above the pilot's compartment. We figured if anybody was around, the flag would identify us as being friendly. We had been told that the Saudi Arabs were friends of the United States.

What we did not realize was that many of their soldiers don't even know their own flag, let alone the Stars and Stripes.

During breakfast, David Lees and my son Bob mentioned that before sunrise they had seen five men watching us from knoll 150 feet from the plane.

The men were dressed as soldiers and one carried a machine gun. After a while they had walked away.

Since they hadn't approached, we figured they had just come to look us over and had left when they saw we were peaceful.

We had become used to seeing soldiers everywhere we went in the Middle East so we thought nothing of it.

By 7 o'clock the children had waded ashore and were wandering on the beach, collecting sea shells.

Bob and I worked on the plane all morning and David Lees took some pictures. By noon, the temperature had reached 100° and we all went for a swim before lunch.

During the day we saw a few people walking off in the distance, but they were so far away we couldn't tell if they were adults or children.



Sightseeing, dining alfresco, and beach walking were very enjoyable pursuits for the Kendall family.

After a late lunch I went up on the wing to check the left engine. Bob was in the water checking some equipment in the nose. Stephen and Paul were wading in the shallows about 60 feet away, playing with our bright blue rubber life raft.

Everyone else was in the plane. When I finally buttoned up the engine, I stood up and glanced around. Except for the boys, I saw nothing but rocks, low hills and empty sand. I looked at my watch. It was 4:32 exactly.

Then I heard what sounded like distant firecrackers. My first thought was that some local Bedouins were celebrating the Muslim holiday of Ramadan, which was then in progress. In Luxor, Egypt, our last stop, they had celebrated by firing off a cannon.

Suddenly, I noticed little splashes in the water beside the rubber raft. Somebody was shooting at the children.

I yelled to Stephen and Paul to swim to the plane immediately, and I jumped down off the wing into the cockpit and ran back toward the tail to help them aboard. As I ran I shouted for everyone to lie down on the floor because we were under fire. Mrs. Shearer ran with me to the tail and we watched our small sons dog-paddling very slowly toward the hatch, just their heads above water, towing the raft for cover between themselves and the bullets.

By now machine-gun and automatic-weapons fire was hitting the plane, I don't know how long we stood there screaming at the children to hurry—it felt like eons.

Mrs. Shearer exposed herself to direct fire to help me pull them aboard, and Stephen said, 'Mother, they're shooting at us.' After that I don't remember anyone saying anything, just the noise of the bullets tearing into the skin of the plane.

It was like being in a barrel— which someone was banging with a steel pipe. Later, David Lees said that in all his eight years of war he had never experienced such concentrated fire. We estimated 3,000 to 4,000 rounds were fired. At least 300 hit the plane.

The ambush lasted 30 to 40 minutes, and only the cowardice of our attackers saved our lives. If they had come closer instead of hiding behind a knoll three quarters of a mile away, I am certain we would all have been killed.

During the barrage I told the three smallest children—Kathy, Paul and Stephen—to lie on the bathroom floor in the wheel well. It was the smallest compartment but probably the safest. It was below the water line, and our heavy canned goods were stacked around the walls.

My wife lay on top of the children like a big bird trying to protect them with her body.

They were still in considerable danger, however. Although it would be almost impossible for them to receive any direct hits, the wheel well was directly under the gas tanks. I worried about gas draining out of the perforated tanks and then maybe ignited by an incendiary bullet.

David Lees lay aft in the blister compartment. Mrs. Shearer was on the floor of the forward compartment and Susan was under the galley table.

I moved about a good deal at first, checking hatches and seeing that everybody was okay.

When the firing got too bad I lay down near Susan.

After a while we saw the upholstery was smoldering from a tracer bullet. I knew gas must be leaking everywhere. I could either stand up to start the engines and maybe get shot, or I could stay on the floor and maybe get us all burned alive. When I got up to go to the pilot's compartment to throw some switches so we could get out of there, there was another burst of fire and I felt a blow in the right side.

The bullet entered just below my ribs and it spun me around and threw me about six feet. I fell down backward. When Mrs. Shearer heard me grunt that I'd been hit, she raised her head to look at me. Just then a bullet hit her right arm, exactly where her head had been. She clawed a big chunk of metal out with her fingernails but there were two more pieces she couldn't reach. I was dazed for a moment but she gave me a towel and then, somehow, lying on her back, she lifted the seat up so I could reach under and connect the batteries.

Then I went forward to the cockpit to throw the switches.

My son Bob, who was still outside the airplane, was pounding on the hull, yelling for a knife so that he could cut the mooring line.

Mrs. Shearer got a kitchen knife from the galley and crawled up to the cockpit and handed it to him through the window. Then Bob climbed in through the pilot's hatch and Mrs. Shearer piled some tables around him for protection while he started the engines. I crawled aft to close the hatches.

My wife was still lying over the children, guarding them with her body. But just then there was a crash in the wheel well and I heard the kids scream. I yelled, 'Is anybody hit?'

A bullet had skimmed over their heads and struck the big bathroom mirror so that glass shattered all over them. I shouted, 'No more squawks unless somebody is really hit.' And from then on there wasn't a peep out of them.

No one cried or panicked. The children knew we were in a serious position and that seemed to make them grow up on the spot.

I continued crawling aft on my stomach and, just as I raised up to wriggle over one of the watertight bulkheads, I got nicked in the fanny, or so I thought at the time.

I could see where the bullet had frayed the bottom of my swim trunks. I thought, 'Ha,ha! You missed me!' and it seemed such a good joke that I actually laughed.

Later, the doctor told me the bullet had gone clear through me and the hole where it came out was six inches from where it went in.

The engines would run, though roughly, and Bob started them up. I shouted to him to get the wheels up. I didn't think we'd get airborne, but at least we could taxi out of range.

He couldn't hear me over the engine noise, so I crawled forward and put the landing gear selector valve in 'up' position.

The airplane began to move very slowly. I looked back and saw water pouring in the open tail hatch. I was in a good deal of pain by then so I shouted to David Lees to close it.

He struggled with it for three or four minutes but he didn't understand the mechanism so I had to go back again. My daughter Susan came along to help me.

While we were struggling, the watertight bulkhead leading to the front of the plane closed behind us and the tail compartment began to fill with sea water. We kept trying to get the hatch down but when the water got up to our chins, we had to give up.

It took all our strength to pry open the watertight door against the water pressure in the tail section. When we got it open partway I pushed Susan through, but I didn't have much strength left.

When I tried to follow her, the door slammed shut on my ankles. I blanked out. Somehow Susan forced that heavy door open enough to get my feet through. She still has a big ugly knot in her arm where the door banged shut on her at some point and broke blood vessels.

By the time we got up forward the plane had taxied about half a mile—out of range, although the gunfire continued—and had run aground on a coral reef.

Water was pouring in through foot-long gashes in the fuselage that looked as if they had been ripped by a giant can opener. Everything was floating around. All we could see of the children was their faces above the debris.

A four-inch stream of oil was gushing out of the right engine and the fumes were nauseating. I ordered everybody out through the pilot's hatch and they made for the shore 100 yards away. The water was only five feet deep. There was oil and gasoline all around us.

We had 900 gallons of fuel and it was pouring out of the perforated tanks and splashing off the wings like a heavy rain off a roof.

I still don't know why we didn't go up in flames. David Lees helped me wade ashore. Stephen kept saying, 'I love you, Mother', and Mrs. Shearer kept saying, 'I love you, Steve.'

When I reached the beach I lay down, lightheaded and really feeling the pain. Everyone was standing around barefooted, dripping wet, and smeared with oil and blood from the mirror cuts and our wounds.

We were all in bathing suits except my wife and Susan and Mrs. Shearer, who had on shorts and blouses.

Stephen and I had shirts. Paul was clutching the big American flag which he grabbed when we abandoned ship. He didn't once let it out of his sight until we got back to civilization.

Bob went back to the plane to get some first-aid supplies. After a while the others heard him in the cockpit babbling and laughing and acting strangely. When Susan and David Lees went after him, they found him giddy and half-asphyxiated from the gasoline fumes.

They couldn't make him come out. At last my wife waded and swam back to the plane. 'Bob,' she called, 'I need you. It's your mother.'

That got him to stick his head out so David could grab him and haul him ashore.

We saw our attackers for the first time when three trucks carrying 60 to 80 men came bouncing over a hill a mile away. The men were screaming barbarically and firing wildly in our direction. We all stood up and put our hands in the air. Paul waved a white T-shirt and his flag. As they approached I decided to walk forward and meet them. David Lees tried to come with me, but I told him to stay back with the group and if I got shot to see that they take cover as best they could.

Those soldiers were the fiercest looking men I have ever seen. They were Bedouin tribesmen serving in the Saudi Arabian army. Many had long matted hair and their teeth were filed. Most wore a scarecrow combination of tribal dress and khaki uniform.

They were all wild-eyed and highly excited, showing their guns.

A man running toward me alongside the first truck was screaming and pulling the pin on a phosphorous grenade. Two other men jumped off the first truck and all three shoved their rifles into me while the rest continued on to where my family was waiting.

I was in considerable pain and could barely hold my hands up, and I had nothing but bloody bathing trunks and a sports shirt, but they frisked me.

Then they stepped back apace and all three pointed their rifles at my chest. I watched their fingers, which were literally twitching on the triggers. I said, 'American, American.' Finally, one of them repeated the word so I knew he understood.

He was about 50, bald, with crossed bandoliers on his chest and a red, checkered Bedouin skirt tied over his pants. The youngest man, about 20, had a red and white sweat rag around his forehead and a bandolier around his waist.

The one with the grenade wore a G.I. uniform and a steel helmet. He had the pin out of the grenade, so he had to hold down the grenade trigger with one hand and handle his rifle with the other. I just stood there wondering which one was going to go off first.

A wild desert ride

When the trucks got to the others, Paul showed our flag and someone gave them our American passports, but this had no effect. Later we learned that most Bedouin troops are illiterate and that even the general who had ordered the attack could neither read nor write. In 5 minutes the soldiers had used their keffiyeh headdresses to blindfold all of us except the 3 youngest children.

Then they shoved us into two of the trucks and started off across the desert. We were lying on the floor under some filthy camel blankets, bouncing over the rough, rocky desert.

I was in extreme pain and felt myself going into shock. One minute I was in a rosy, relaxed glow and the next moment, I started shaking with uncontrollable chills. Miriam and Kathy were lying next to me, trying to warm me.

Under Bob's direction, 11-year old Stephen tore his shirt and used half of it to make a pad for my wound. He tied the other half around his mother's arm, which stopped the bleeding somewhat.

I didn't want to frighten the children, so whenever I felt a bad time coming on I said to them in a normal voice, 'Now I am going to put on a big act to see if I can scare these fellows into taking us to a hospital right away.'

So when I start making a lot of noise and moaning and shaking, don't you worry about it.' Then I'd relax and let myself go a bit, and that helped.

After two hours' ride we stopped at their camp, and the soldiers took everybody but me out of the trucks. They apparently figured I wasn't worth unloading because I was going to die anyway.

Finally I slipped off my blindfold and got out of the truck myself. I fainted at least five times in the process, the last time as I jumped to the ground. It then took me five minutes just to get up on my feet. The Arabs just watched to see if I was going to make it.

I walked toward the only building in the cluster of tents. No one tried to stop me. Inside, I found my family and they helped me lie down. The children put some blankets over me.

We were under guard in a bare 12-by-12-foot adobe room with a dirt floor. There was a single kerosene lamp, and a chest which our guard sat on.

Men kept milling in and out to look at us, and one of them brought us a handful of small tomatoes to eat. Much later, we were fed some sickly sweet tea and rice.

One Arab gave Paul a huge white floppy robe, and he stood in the corner looking like a shmoo, still holding on to his American flag.

Mrs. Shearer was the only one of us who smoked, and an old Arab kept offering her cigarettes, holding them so she had to stretch her hand way out to get them. He was watching the rings on her finger.

For a time we played word games to keep the children from thinking about what the rest of us were thinking about.

It was cold and windy and after a while we all huddled together on the floor and tried to stay warm.

About 1 o'clock they got us up to load us back in the trucks. They tried to take the women first, one at a time. I got in the way and protested that we would all stay together. I didn't have to put it into words—I just looked them straight in the eye and they got the idea.

I think by this time it had occurred to them that they might have pulled a colossal blooper. When they took us back to the trucks, we feared they would drive us out into the desert, shoot us and pretend we never existed.

As we were climbing aboard the trucks a man pulled Mrs. Shearer's wedding ring off her hand. A mile from camp we stopped at a tent where we met a man who could speak a little English. He told us we were being taken to a hospital. Half an hour later the trucks suddenly turned back to camp and we were dumped back in our adobe room.

The man who spoke English told us a wireless message had come through saying that in the morning the 'Big King' was coming to see us.

I was in great pain during the bitter cold night. My abdomen became so swollen that twice I almost stopped breathing. At daybreak they gave us some English canned pineapple and more tea and again spoke about the 'Big King' who was coming. The soldiers got all dolled up in clean uniforms. Peeking through the cracks in our boarded-up window we could see a welcoming party assembled, wearing long blue robes with gold braid.

About mid-morning I was lying on the floor with my head propped against the wall, still without bandages or first aid of any kind, when the guard brought us in a soft mattress and put it on the wooden trunk.

It was not for me. The 'Big King' came in and sat down on it. He was Prince Khalid ibn Saud, one of King Saud's sons.

He wore flowing white robes. He was tall, courteous and very quiet. With him was a Saudi Arabian Air Force officer who interrogated us in English and translated for the prince.

It became clear at once that the ambush, the attack and the treatment we had suffered were all due to the Arab's fanatic fear of Israel.

They had somehow convinced themselves that all of us, including my wife and children were Israeli commandos in disguise.

Their first question was: what had happened to the jet fighters that had escorted us onto the area? Next they asked us about the battleship that had sailed in behind us, and about the Israeli troops that were massing to support our invasion.

We said we had seen no other men, planes or ships and were simply a family of American tourists. They asked why we had returned their fire if we were not Israelis, and why we had thrown our guns overboard and why we had refused to surrender.

Despite our protestations they continued asking variations of the same outlandish questions. We found out later that the interpreter was not translating correctly. He was not giving Prince Khalid the real story because he did not want the Saudi army to be shown up as cowards and damn fools. I asked for a doctor and lifted my shirt so the air force officer who was interpreting could see my wound, but when they left I realized he had not told the prince anything about it. The prince was sitting on the other side and could not see for himself.

Prince Khalid and his retinue went off to inspect our airplane. After he left, he had a soldier bring us a canteen of his private water. It was delicately scented with rosemary.

That afternoon, soldiers blindfolded us again, put us back in the trucks and hauled us two hours across the desert, right back to where the airplane was.

The prince had set up camp near the plane and we were taken to a tent of our own that looked like a stage prop from *The Desert Song*. It was striped in brilliant colors and it had padding and oriental carpets on the floor.

During the afternoon, the soldiers brought up a few of our clothes which they had salvaged from the plane and spread them on the ground to dry.



Held prisoner

We couldn't believe our eyes when an American stuck his head in our tent and said, 'Hi.' He told us he was a Saudi Arabian Airlines pilot who had flown the prince down. This American pilot had been trying to get a chance to speak to us all day. He told us that the king was embarrassed and wanted to hush up the whole incident. Soon the soldiers found the pilot talking to us and insisted he leave our tent. He gave us some vitamin C tablets which was all the help he could offer. Later we heard him arguing with the prince, trying to get permission to fly us out right away. In the evening they turned on electric lights powered by a portable generator and fed us one great bowl of lamb and rice which we ate Bedouin style with our fingers. After nightfall there was a good deal of activity because during Ramadan the Moslems fast all day and then have a big feast after dark. Our American friend had advised us to leave the lights burning in our tent, and all night long Bedouins came wandering in and out and peered at us through slits in the canvas. One of the officials who had visited us with the prince that morning said to me, 'How come you got hurt? You weren't hurt this morning.' The prince slept most of Friday and we didn't see him until the afternoon. In mid-morning a soldier brought us the first-aid kit from the airplane, but the bandages were soaked with sea water. The only thing usable was some weak antiseptic which we used to wipe off our wounds. In mid-afternoon a plane arrived from Tabuk with an Egyptian doctor, and anaesthetist and complete field operating equipment. They had come prepared to do an abdominal operation in a Bedouin tent with sand blowing all over everything. But after giving me a cursory examination the doctor said that since I was still alive, it was unlikely that I had a bullet in me. He painted my side with Merthiolate, slapped a bandage on, gave me a shot of penicillin and told me I was ready to travel. With the American pilot's assistance I hobbled down to the prince's tent, with some reluctance, to thank him for his hospitality.

I shook his hand with my left hand as I normally do, because my right hand was injured in an accident years ago.

Afterward the pilot told me I had given the prince a terrible insult because Arabs use their left hand only for toilet purposes.

At 7:30 we landed at Jiddah. Two limousines pulled right up to the airport ramp and whisked us away to the Kandara Palace Hotel nearby.

We were held in seclusion at the hotel for five more hours of interrogation. All during that time we were denied the opportunity to make any telephone calls.

The major interrogating us threatened to hold us there incommunicado 'until such time as you have given us all the information we want.' I finally got so furious that I refused to say another word.

Things were at a stalemate when suddenly, about midnight, U.S. Ambassador Donald Heath, his wife and several members of the embassy staff walked into our room accompanied by a high official of the Saudi Arabian Foreign Ministry,

Sayyis Omar Sakka. Ambassador Heath routed his excellency out of a big end-of-Ramadan ball in order to force his way in to see us.

In the ambassador's presence we told the full story of what happened to us.

Then Mrs. Shearer and I were taken to the hospital for x-rays.

The doctor's report on me was a masterpiece of evasion: 'One opaque F.B. [Foreign Body] of metallic density is seen in the abdomen at the lower pole of the right kidney at the level of the upper margin of the third lumbar vertebrae.

Its shape resembles a bullet.'



We remained in Jiddah at the hotel for three weeks, recuperating from our experience, giving details of our story to the American officials and presenting our claims to the Saudi government.

While we were there we were told that the officer in charge of the troops which ambushed us had already been court-martialled and beheaded, and that the soldiers who had stolen jewelry, furs and other valuables from the plane would have their hands cut off.

I don't know about all that.

All I know is that when Ambassador Heath fired off a strong protest to the Saudi Arabian government he got back a fast answer: the government refused to accept any responsibility for the ambush, for our injuries, or for the property we lost.

As far as Saudi Arabia was concerned, the incident was at an end."

Thomas Kendall

In the 53 Years since



A haunting image of a dream that came to a sad end



Working Bee – This Sunday 8th November

Dear B.R.A.G members,

Steve and the committee would like to let you know that there will be a working bee this weekend on Sunday.

Looks like the weather should be good, and the materials should be available.

The main jobs are:

Construct pilots fence and Construct pits/spectator fence.

Installation of the wind sock pole will be done at a later date, as Godwin who made the pole will not be available this weekend.

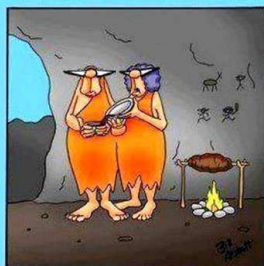
So maybe the weekend after.

Camping:

Where you spend a small fortune to live like a homeless person.



WINE PAIRING IN THE STONE AGE



"Simple rule of thumb; if it tries to eat us, serve with red. If it runs away from us, serve with white."

People say that drinking milk makes you stronger.

Drink 5 glasses of milk and try to move a wall.

Can't?

Now drink 5 glasses of wine. The wall moves all by itself!



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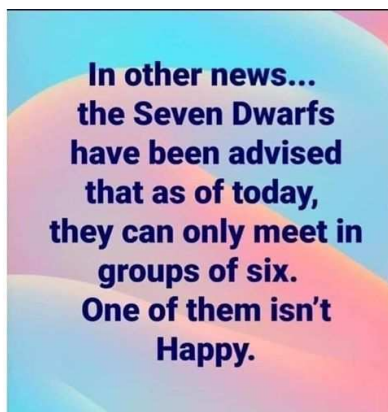
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President

Steve

info@bawbawrc.com.au

Vice President

Dave N

davidnichols2736@gmail.com

Secretary

Phil

secretary@bawbawrc.com.au

Treasurer

Graeme Blackman

Editor: Mick Gunn

Phone: 0439537901

email: registrar@bawbawrc.com.au