



The **BAFUNCS** Newsletter

September 2008

Nº 54

Somewhere to sit and dream of sunny days



Photo: Exbury Gardens

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British Association of Former United Nations Civil Servants

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BAFUNCS Newsletter N° 54

September, 2008

Note from the Editor

Once again we can celebrate another successful General Assembly and Annual Reunion. The Lake District did not live up to its reputation in that we were not subject to deluges of rain. In fact, it was quite warm and sunny in stark contrast with what, at the time of writing, passes for summer! As you can see from the report, we heard from Lord Mark Malloch-Brown the latest government thinking regarding overseas development, particularly with respect to the UN system; and former President Erik Jensen gave a personal view of the UN and his experiences serving in it, an entertaining retrospective.

Patricia Brown, Chairman of the Executive Committee, in introducing her report (see BAFUNCS Newsletter N° 53, March 2008) drew attention to the need for volunteers to help run the Association at both national and regional levels. This was underscored by the Regional Representatives at their meeting. New blood is needed, but, unfortunately, has not been forthcoming. One reason may be that increasingly retirees no longer retire; they continue working or taking consultancies. As a result some regions are struggling to function and find it difficult to offer members the kind of social activities that are part of the attractions of an association like ours.

One service that is freely available to Members are the various BAFUNCS Information Notes. They are listed at the bottom of the inside back cover of every newsletter. The Association used to print and distribute the Notes, but this was costly, particularly when, like INFO5 *Taxation in the UK* they needed to be updated regularly. The Membership Secretary now stores them as pdfs (the Adobe software to read them is free). He will send Information Notes as e-mail attachments on request. If members do not have a computer or are not on the internet, he will print and post requested documents.

Finally, for readers curious about the choice of cover picture I must apologise for letting the garden lover in me take over. When preparing this issue I asked each of the excursion destinations proposed for next year's Annual Reunion at Chilworth for pictures. Exbury Gardens sent me a wonderful selection. I used one for the back cover, along with others including two of the impressive hotel where the meeting will be held. This left me with a real dilemma because I had fallen in love with a beautiful picture of Exbury's Home Wood Azalea Bowl taken in early May. The rest is history!

The **deadline** for contributions to the **March 2009 issue is Friday, 20 February**. If you wish to try out an idea before writing, I can be contacted by phone (01844 343 652), by letter (36 Manor Park Avenue, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 9AS) or, **preferably**, by e-mail (tony.loftas@btinternet.com).

Tony Loftas

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Report of the 31st General Assembly and Annual Reunion of BAFUNCS

Castle Green Hotel, Kendal, 9 – 11 May 2008

Marilyn Carr

Rapporteur

Item 1: Opening by the President

The **President** welcomed all participants to the Reunion, and extended a particular welcome to those who had made the effort to travel from overseas to attend. These included: Patricia Brice, Ann Elter and Elizabeth Morris from Geneva, Else Larsen from Denmark, Patricia Poullain from France and Maurice Purnell from Rome.

The **President** recalled those members of BAFUNCS who had died during the year, and whose names were listed Newsletters Nos. 52 and 53: Mr P. E. T. Allen, Miss U.M. Banister, Mr N. Cobbold, Miss E. Craib, Dr E. W. Crunden, Dr. S. Cywinska, Dr P. Elkan, Miss M. Ellis-Jones, Mrs K. M. England, Mr E. Findlay, Mr. G. Fletcher, Mrs M. Frith, Miss M. J. Heron, Mrs A Kamp, Mrs J. M. Lassman, Mr E.B. Loveridge, Mrs O. D. Loveridge, Mrs I Mollet, Dr D. Nugent, Mr P. F. Percy, Mr F. J. Pidgeon, Mr C. W. Sowton, Miss H. Tetley and Mr S. Toptani.

To honour the memory of all those who had died in the service of the United Nations and its agencies, and of all the members of BAFUNCS who had died during the year, the Assembly observed a minute of silence. Preceding this, Bernadette Rivett read out the introduction to the United Nations Charter.

The **President** then announced that unfortunately the Mayor of Kendal, Councillor Gwendoline Murfin, was unable to attend*.

Item 2: The UN and Britain: the opportunities and challenges ahead

The **President** introduced **Lord Mark Malloch-Brown**, Minister of State for Africa, Asia and the United Nations. He started by commenting that few meetings could normally welcome a speaker on the same day as he was the subject of a two page spread in a leading newspaper. He pointed to the Special Report "Malloch-Brown's vision for Africa: having an aid policy is not enough" in the *Guardian* of that day and expressed the hope that participants would read it (see Box).

Lord Malloch-Brown's early work included with UNHCR in Thailand responsible for Cambodian

refugees – then a lead partner of the Sawyer Miller Group, after which his international career really took off. He was Vice-President for External Affairs of the World Bank, Administrator of UNDP, Chef de Cabinet to Kofi Annan, and then Deputy-Secretary-General of the UN. For anyone to achieve these positions was itself remarkable, let alone for a British citizen – a member of the P-5 for whom it was often said that they could not fill any Secretary-General or Deputy Secretary-General

Box: Quote by Lord Mark Malloch-Brown from *The Guardian*, 10 May 2008

"In international politics you are always looking for points of common agreements with the other guy. It is the nature of it. You are trying to find as much consensus as you can in a creative dynamic way to move things forward. Working with someone like Koffi Annan, you do have a great freedom to create that consensus because the 192 member states at the UN have now practical way of achieving one. In national politics, policed as we are by the media, it is the most damaging thing on earth to say there is anything of value in what a Tory just said. Before you know it, you are up for treason in the following morning paper's headlines. It creates a rigid party line that I have had some difficulty in adjusting to."

positions. He was a brilliant leader for the UN, a bold and outspoken advocate and a courageous reformer, taking on some of the most entrenched interests in the UN and in some governments, with considerable success, and, remarkably, living to tell the tale.

After leaving the UN, Mark briefly took up a position with George Soros and another at Yale, before he was summoned by the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, to join the Cabinet and become Minister of State with responsibilities for Africa, Asia and the UN. For those of us committed to internationalism this initiative by the UK to link these responsibilities in the Foreign Office and to give them to someone so experienced internationally was a stroke of genius and brilliant recognition of the importance of the UN. A summary of Mark Malloch-Brown's presentation is contained in *Appendix I* (see page 8).

Item 3: Reports, Accounts and Budget

(a) Report of the General Assembly 2007

This is contained in *BAFUNCS Newsletter N° 52* and was taken as read.

*At a meeting of the Executive Committee on 11 May 2008 it was decided to discontinue the custom of inviting a local dignitary to open Annual General Meetings in the future.

Annual Reunion 2008 - continued (Items 3 Reports and 4 Resolutions)

(b) Report of the Executive Committee for 2007/2008 (AR/2007/09)

This is contained in *BAFUNCS Newsletter N° 53* and taken as read. It was presented by **Patricia Brown**, Chair of the Executive Committee. She asked each member of the Executive Committee to stand in turn to be introduced and to be ready to answer questions on their section of the Report. There were no comments or questions on the following sections:

Section 2: Administration (Annie Keane)

Section 4: Membership (Ben Goffman - acting)

Section 12: Relations with Age Concern (Ziaul Islam)

Section 3: Finances (Bryan Suitters)

See (c) and (d) below.

Section 5: Pensions (Michael Davies)

Michael Davies raised two points. First, he informed members on the dual track that they had not received their pension increase in April 2008 for the same reason as in 2007 – namely that the UN Staff Pension Fund Office had not received in time the formal notification from the UK Government of the RPI increase for the year. As with 2007, the increase would be included in the June payment and would be retroactive back to the April payment date. BAFUNCS had initiated a resolution to be submitted through FAFICS calling for a change in the system. Secondly, he mentioned two issues under consideration which would affect members. The good news was that discussions were under way to see if the model of the World Bank Retiree Association in the UK could be replicated for former UN staff so that they might be able to get a third of total pension tax-free as opposed to the current 10 percent. The bad news was that it seemed that for those who retired after 1999, reimbursement of medical insurance benefits might become subject to taxation.

Enid Steward-Goffman asked for clarification as to whether this was on the contribution or on the benefits. She was assured that this was on net benefits. The rules had yet to be worked out. A status report would be given at the 2009 Annual Reunion.

Section 6: Welfare (Fred Beer)

Fred Beer thanked all the Regional Welfare Support Officers who volunteered their time and did a very effective job.

Section 7: Regional Convenor (Bill Jackson)

See below under Item 7.

Section 8: Editor (Tony Loftas)

Tony Loftas asked all members to check their own data in the 2007 Membership List and in the Corrigenda in *Newsletter No. 53* and to let him know by June of any changes which were needed so that the 2008 Membership List would be correct. The Chair congratulated Tony on behalf of all members on the excellent work he continued to do on the Newsletters.

9: Annual Reunions
(June Hargreaves-Beer)

June Hargreaves-Beer stressed that a great deal of work was involved in organizing Annual Reunions which fell on the shoulders of a very small number of people. She hoped that as many members as possible would continue to attend the reunions so as to make all this hard work worthwhile.

10: Archives (Jeremy Wells)

The Chair informed the meeting that Jeremy Wells had reluctantly resigned from BAFUNCS as he was moving to the United States. A replacement was needed for this position and volunteers would be welcome.

Section 11: United Nations Careers Records Project (UNCRP-II) (Michael Askwith)

Unfortunately, Michael Askwith was unable to attend the meeting. The Chair pointed out that Bill Jackson would address this item under Any Other Business.

(c) Accounts for 2007 (AR/2008/10)

These accounts were in *BAFUNCS Newsletter N° 53* and were taken as read. The Assembly expressed its thanks to **Mrs Elsa Brathaug** for her work as auditor.

(d) Budget for 2008 (AR/2008/10)

The Treasurer, **Bryan Suitters**, presented the budget. No questions were asked.

Item 4: Resolutions

The following resolutions, having been duly proposed and seconded, were put to the Assembly and approved unanimously:

- (a) That the Report of the General Assembly 2007 be accepted.

Call for items for AR2009

Members wishing to place items on the Agenda of the 2009 General Assembly of BAFUNCS are requested to send them to the Secretary before the end of December 2008.

-
- (b) That the Report of the Executive Committee for 2007/2008 be accepted.
 - (c) That the Accounts for 2007 be accepted and the Budget for 2008 be approved.

Item 5: Elections for 2008/2009

(AR/2007/08)

The following, having been duly proposed and seconded, were elected by acclamation:

(a) National Officers

President	Sir Richard Jolly
Vice-Presidents	Miss Irene Chamberlain Mr Ronald Chamberlin Dr David Axford
Chairman, ExCo	Miss Patricia Brown
Vice-Chairman, ExCo	Mr Michael Davies
Secretary	Mrs Annie Keane
Treasurer	Mr Bryan Suitters

(b) Members of the Executive Committee

Mr Fred Beer	Mr Michael Davies
Mrs June Hargreaves-Ber	Mr Tony Loftas
Mr Ben Goffman	Mrs Christine Woodworth-Batho

The Chair informed the Assembly that Mrs Woodworth-Batho would be filling a re-introduced position of Subscriptions Secretary to undertake work that used to be done by the Treasurer. She welcomed Mrs Woodworth-Batho, Mr Goffman, Mr Jackson and Mrs Hargreaves-Ber to the Executive Committee.

She also announced that former President Dr Erik Jensen had accepted an Honorary Vice-Presidency - a life appointment. The **President, Sir Richard Jolly**, called for a round of applause to congratulate Erik Jensen on this appointment. He also asked for clarification on the number and terms of appointment of members co-opted to the Executive Committee. The Chair replied that this was limited to four members who were appointed for a year, renewable as required when a new Executive Committee took office, to perform specific activities.

Item 6: Report on the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund 2007

(AR/2008/11 Newsletter N^o 53)

The Report was presented by **Cyril Groom**, Chairman of the Trustees. Over the twenty years of its existence as a registered charity, the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund had made 67 grants amounting to £18,000 and 5 loans amounting to £5,300. The grants had been given in support of colleagues on low pensions. Grants were made, for example, for

the purchase of medical or mobility or household equipment. Recent loans had helped: bereaved widows over the period until their pension entitlements had been settled; coverage of funeral expenses; and payment of a deposit necessary to secure accommodation for a family.

The financial report, published in *BAFUNCS Newsletter N^o 53*, provided details of incomings and outgoings for 2008. During the year, three of the Fund's most ardent supporters had died and the Trustees were therefore most grateful for the £299.80 in donations from the Kent and Sussex, and Surrey Regions, as well as a number of individual donors. Repayments of loans had been made in accordance with the letters of agreement with recipients. As at the beginning of May 2008, the Fund's Bank accounts stood at £2,456.11 (current account) and £36,114.14 (deposit account) giving a total of £38,570.25.

There were no changes in Trustees over the year. It had not been possible to meet in November 2007 because of venue problems, but there was a meeting at UNHCR (London) in March 2008 and the five Trustees attending the 2008 Annual Reunion had met briefly the previous day. Most of the Fund's work was carried out between meetings, mainly by telephone or e-mail. Decisions on making a grant or a loan were routinely made within 10 days, and were rarely held over to the next Trustees Meeting.

Cyril Groom reminded both new and old BAFUNCS members of the 'Gift Aid Scheme' for making an annual or one-off contribution to the Fund. Every donation helped to keep the Fund alive and ready to offer support whenever legitimate needs arose. He asked members to let Trustees know about any former UN employee, resident in the UK, who was in need of assistance. Cases were dealt with confidentially and with maximum understanding.

Finally, he thanked his fellow Trustees, especially **Nanda Wijayatilake** (Clerk/Treasurer), for their support throughout the year.

David Axford asked if, as a Charity, a full audit of accounts was required by the Charities Commission. **Nanda Wijayatilake** replied that the Fund was so small that this was not required but annual accounts were sent to the Charities Commission.

Philomena Guillebaud asked who was eligible to receive an interest-free loan and whether these could be used in cases where pension payments were being delayed for various reasons. It was confirmed that loans could be given for this purpose and that those applying for loans only need to be former UN staff, normally resident in the UK; they do not have to be a BAFUNCS member. In fact, several non-members had received grants or loans in the past.

Annual Reunion 2008 - continued

(Item 7: Report of the Meeting of the Regional Representatives)

Item 7: Report of the Meeting of the Regional Representatives

(9 May 2008)

David Axford, Chair of the Meeting, reported that all but one of the Regions had been represented and that the missing Region had submitted a written report. The meeting was felt to be very helpful by the 15 people present.

As was the custom, each Region described briefly the many events held – details of which had been published in the Newsletters and were available on the BAFUNCS web-site (<http://bafuncs.imo.org/home.htm>). The main point to come across was an increasing concern with dwindling membership, and the lack of willingness of the more recently retired members to participate in and take on the responsibilities of organizing social activities. There seemed to be a need to redouble efforts to attract new retirees and to involve them in BAFUNCS activities. It was pointed out that all the people who worked in the UN system, whether retired or not, could be BAFUNCS members.

Reports on the planning for the 2009 Annual Reunion at Chilworth, the 2010 Annual Reunion in the South West (originally envisage to be in Bristol but now to be held in Exeter) and the 2011 Annual Reunion to be hosted by the Surrey Region in Cobham showed that prospects for those events looked good. The great effort of Doreen Sayers to ensure the success of the current annual reunion was also noted with approval by all present.

During the discussions it was noted that several of the BAFUNCS Information Notes needed to be updated in the light of recent changes in the UK. In particular, the Regional Representatives were asked to make a priority of having someone in each region approach members who had recently returned to the UK to share their experiences and problems in re-settlement, so that INF 4 could be up-dated.

Regional Representatives were also asked by the Regional Convener to designate someone in each Region to approach their members with a view to their sharing experiences and memories in the UN System with the UN Careers Records Project Part II (UNCRPII). He felt that it was urgent that the experiences of the 'Second UN Generation' should not be lost. He pointed out that the Bodleian Library would allow those who provided inputs to place an embargo on the records they made freely available – up to 50 or more years if necessary. It was also emphasized that the experiences of general service staff and spouses were just as important for future historians as those of better known individuals.

Finally, a report on the activities of welfare support teams showed they were doing a good job. The only concern was that older members could be very shy in coming forward to state their needs.



Cyril Groom, Chairman of the Trustees, reports on the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund

Enid Steward-Goffman referred to the part of the report that mentioned getting new retirees to take on activities. She said that as a new member she wanted to become more actively involved in BAFUNCS activities both at the regional level and also more generally, but she felt the organization was run by cliques who were not generally welcoming to new members. Her experience was that it was difficult to gain acceptance and to find out who everybody was.

The **President** expressed surprise at this as he had found the Chair to be very forthcoming in asking members to take on various tasks. He suggested that anyone wishing to become more involved should contact the Chair about this. **David Axford** said that when he first joined BAFUNCS, there was a system at annual reunions of adding a pink dot to the name badges of members attending for the first time so that existing members were better able to make introductions. This could be tried again.

Peter Holdaway suggested sending a letter about BAFUNCS to all UN agencies in an attempt to recruit more members. This was the way that he had found out about BAFUNCS. **The Chair** and **David Axford** both replied that this had been done several times in the past, but information got stuck in the Human Resources Departments of the various organizations and rarely made it to notice

boards where staff would see it. An attempt had been made to send information to specific people identified in the various organizations, for example those responsible for pre-retirement seminars, and that had been successful to some extent, particularly in Geneva where AFICS was most helpful.

Leighton Van Nort, who was recruited in the US, said that the US Department of State had a list of all US nationals employed by the UN. If the same was the case with the UK Government, then it could be asked to send out information to their list of UN employees. The Chair explained that the UK Government did not maintain such a list as, unlike in the US, British citizens did not need to have security clearance before recruitment by the UN. **Evelyn Howson** said that she remembered hearing about BAFUNCS through an advert placed by Basil Loveridge in the local newspaper. **Ken Smart** thought that membership could be increased by asking servicemen who had served on UN Peace-keeping Missions to join. The Chair explained that this issue had been brought up before. One problem was that members of peace-keeping missions were not considered to be international civil servants, but the issue merited more discussion.

The President asked what role the web-site could play in informing potential members. **Tony Loftas** explained that the addresses of the web-sites were on the inside of the front page of the Newsletter. Unfortunately the information on the two web-sites was out of date because, although corrections had been sent to the two web-masters, they had not been made. However, there were signs that attempts to rectify this unfortunate situation would be successful soon. A new web-site was being developed in Geneva for AFICS/FAFICS, but it was not yet fully on-line. Sheila Cooper confirmed that, although she was sending information to IMO for inclusion in the BAFUNCS page of its web-site, action was not being taken. She wondered whether any of the members had expertise in web-sites and would like to offer their services.

Michael Davies said he felt that one of the problems was that in all other countries with large numbers of UN retirees, there was usually a major UN agency on which activities in the capital city were centred, often with offices and administrative support. In the UK, while the Regions were active, there was no real focal point in London. BAFUNCS needed some institutional presence in London which was where people come through. If IMO could be persuaded to provide office and other administrative support, that would be very valuable. **Annie Kean**, who previously worked for IMO, said that IMO did have a person who, for example, included reference to BAFUNCS and relevant information in its pre-retirement

seminars. Facilities were also extended for the Executive Committee to hold its regular meetings at IMO. She would see what she could do to promote increased support.

The President agreed that something needed to be done about membership and institutional issues and asked that a small group of people should get together over lunch to discuss the issue and to report back to the Assembly in the closing session. He asked **Michael Davies** to convene this group.

Item 8: From jungle to desert - with stops between: a UN life

The President welcomed **Dr Erik Jensen**, formerly BAFUNCS President. Erik Jensen retired as an Under-Secretary-General of the UN after five years heading the Western Saharan mission. Over his 31 years with the UN, he held posts in New York and Geneva, and in London where he was in charge of the UN office for eight years. In the early 1990s, he was Director of General Assembly Affairs at the UN at which time he was also organizing secretary of the Inter-Governmental Committee on a Framework Convention for Climate Change, the precursor to subsequent international efforts relating to the environment. And throughout the 1970s he was Chef de Cabinet to the UN Director-General in Geneva.

Before Erik Jensen joined the UN, he worked as a Divisional Development Officer in Sarawak as the administrator of the Lemanak, Lubok Antu Community Development Scheme. As a result of this he was awarded the Malaysian Order of the Crown and the Star of Sarawak. Other honours included the '20 May' Order of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic. His publications include: *The United Kingdom - The United Nations* and *Western Sahara, Anatomy of a Stalemate*. As Erik's experiences in the many countries in which he had worked during his career was the focus of his presentation, the President said he would not attempt to summarize his many achievements. A summary of Erik Jensen's presentation is contained in Appendix 2 (see page 14).

Item 9: Any other business

Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on BAFUNCS

Michael Davies said that, as requested by the President, a small group had met over lunch on 10 May to discuss issues of membership, format of the Annual General Meeting, etc. This was obviously a very rushed affair, but it came up with a list of points to be discussed further by e-mail. He requested anyone who wanted to be involved to

.....
give him their e-mail address and he would include them in this discussion. The aim was to prepare a report once these points had been fleshed out in more detail for presentation to the Executive Committee. The aim was to try to implement any recommendations that were approved, but it was unlikely that much progress could be made before the next Annual Reunion.

The UN Careers Records Project Part II (UNCRP-II)

In the absence of Michael Askwith, **Bill Jackson** gave an up-date on UNCRP-II. At the request of the Executive Committee, Bill Jackson had prepared a data base on those 330 members who contributed to Phase I. These included some very senior people - UK Ambassadors to the UN, as well as junior people. The full collection of material was now in the Bodleian Library. The full collection was not on-line, but it was possible to Google UNCRP to get access to a catalogue. This represented an important history of the first decades of global governance. The people involved were almost entirely born in the 1900s, 1910s, 1920s and 1930s, and represented the first generation of UN staff and spouses. However, if we had succeeded with this 'first' generation, there was a risk that we would lose the experiences of the 'second' one - those born in the 1940s and 1950s - because the response to Phase II of the Project, which aimed to record their experience, had been very disappointing.

So far, Michael Askwith had received about 100 questionnaires, but relatively little detailed material. There was a need for more people to send in experiences - whether they be male or female, senior or junior. There was a particular need for more women and more junior staff to contribute. The information could be anything from a personal memoire to something more formal. If people wanted to say something personal, then the material could be embargoed for 10 or 20, or even 50, years to protect the source. To try to increase the rate of progress on the project, each Region was being asked to delegate one person who would try to chase up others to contribute. An example of the fact that much valuable information was around was the offer, just made over the weekend, of the country files from six countries on the early years of the WHO anti-malaria campaign. .

The President thanked Bill Jackson for an excellent report and reminded the Assembly that Richard Symonds, originator of the project, had always encouraged spouses to make contributions.

Fred Beer reminded members that a copy of the first edition of *Travellers' Tales* had been sent to form part of the project. In relation to the planned second edition, **Kenneth Smart** commented that he and his wife had sent in contributions, but

nothing seemed to have happened. **June Hargreaves-Beer** apologized for the slow progress of the book and said that there were two problems: contributions were slow in coming in; and some of them came in book form and had to be picked through to find relevant material. She said that Susan Miller was now joining the project and she hoped that they would be able to start moving again. She also said that, in the meantime, some of the material would be used by the Editor for the Newsletter when space was available.

Michael Davies reminded people that contributions to UNCRP-II did not have to be formal. For example, Margaret Bruce, who had been a major figure in the UN, was intending to contribute her collection of letters written to her children about her years in service.

The President reminded people that the UN Intellectual History which he had been involved in over the past several years included the experiences of 79 people - albeit only the high and mighty. These were available on a CD Rom which he would be happy to send to people upon request. Information on the entire 12 published volumes on the UN History could be accessed through www.unhistory.org.

General Discussion on Membership

Robert England said that, as a new member, he appreciated what BAFUNCS did for us all corporately in terms of taxation, insurance and welfare issues, and also appreciated the fellowship it offered. However, he did feel that there was a problem in attracting new retirees. He felt that the problem was two-fold. First, those who were already in BAFUNCS needed to make a greater effort to reach out to contemporaries and to become more involved in activities that would make this happen. Secondly, the Association itself needed an 'up-date' to make it more attractive to those leaving the UN and even to existing members who are totally passive and did not participate because the meetings or social events simply did not appeal to them. For example, the programme for the Annual Reunions looked very much like an agenda for the Second Committee and possibly deterred many members from attending. He felt it was up to the Executive Committee to take measures to revise and update AR programmes and take other measures to make BAFUNCS more appealing to the latest generation of retirees. He would be happy to work with Michael Davies and others to contribute some ideas for consideration by ExCo. In general, however, he and his wife had found everybody very friendly and welcoming.

Bernadette Rivett wanted to refer back to the issue raised in an earlier session about BAFUNCS being run by a 'clique', as this was contrary to her

own experiences. In the Surrey Region, for example, new members were made very welcome and they soon got to know people by attending social events. At the national level, the current Chair was making a tremendous effort to find new members and to persuade them to join the 'band of helpers'. Of course, every Association was run by officers and other volunteers who made a tremendous contribution and formed a close bond. But that could not be called a 'clique' when new members and new helpers were welcomed as was the case in BAFUNCS. She was, however, very interested in hearing about suggestions for new directions for the association in line with new and younger members who were joining it and looked forward to hearing the outcome of the deliberations of the working group. She also referred back to the President's earlier comments about BAFUNCS providing a common forum for people coming back from international service and finding themselves living in communities where they were not always understood. She thought that BAFUNCS really did serve that need and that it was a welcoming institution for those willing to be welcomed.

Jean Pounder said that she felt excluded sometimes because she had no access to e-mail. She thought that many other people must be in this position and asked that if every time something was sent out by e-mail an effort could be made to send hard copies to people without computer access. **Michael Davies** agreed that this was a real problem. He himself made a conscious effort to ensure that all materials relating to pensions and insurance from UN bodies, as well as BAFUNCS, were circulated by surface mail as well as by e-mail. He pointed out that this was an issue even for BAFUNCS members who did have computer access because the technology kept on changing and people got more resistant to change and less able to adapt to new systems as they got older. It was also pointed out that the *BAFUNCS Newsletter*, a major means of communication, continued to be distributed in hard copy.

Item 10: Valediction and votes of thanks

The President thanked Marilyn Carr for her work as Rapporteur and Robert England for taking care of the sound and recording system. He knew that everyone had enjoyed the tours and thanked Ann Nightingale, Anne Fitzherbert and Jean Pounder for organizing them. The hotel had also been very comfortable and efficient and he thanked Julia Baker (Conference Officer) and Joe Snape (Junior Manager) for their assistance. Most importantly, he wanted to thank the organizing team from the Northern Region – David Macfadyen, Doreen

Sayers, Laurie Roberston and Anne Fitzherbert – for all the hard work that had gone into organizing the meeting over the past two years. Finally, he thanked Pat Brown, the Chair, for all of the work she did in holding us all together.

The President then called upon Margaret Anstee, former UN Under-Secretary-General, to give the Valedictory. Dame Margaret said that she had to admit that she had not been to many BAFUNCS Annual Reunions. She attended one in Yarmouth soon after she retired, where she was a speaker, but since then, work commitments had prevented her attendance. She wanted to say, however, how much she had enjoyed the Kendal meeting and how it made her realize what she had been missing. It had proved to be a wonderful mixture of efficiently run business matters, social activities and informal camaraderie. And, of course, there were the two really wonderful speakers – both of whom were entertaining as well as informative and reminded us of the importance of the work of the UN at a time when it got such thin coverage in the press. In particular, it was wonderful to hear from our very own mole (albeit a large and powerful mole) in Downing Street. She was certain that everyone had been truly inspired by what they had heard, and would return home armed with new ammunition to carry the story of the importance of the work of the UN.

Patricia Brown, on behalf of the Executive Committee, thanked the President for the efficient and kind way in which he had presided over his first Annual Reunion.

There being no further business, **the President** declared the meeting closed.

Appendix 1

The UN and Britain: the opportunities and challenges ahead

Presentation by The Rt. Hon. Lord Mark Malloch-Brown

In his introduction, Mark Malloch-Brown explained that, following a gap year in Africa, one of the first lectures he attended at Cambridge University was given by Richard Jolly who was talking about wage rates and inequality in Kenya. He remembered this as being a key moment in his deciding to do something useful in Africa and to work in development. When he left the World Bank to become Administrator of UNDP, Richard and many others were nervous that he would bring World Bank views with him. He reminded them that Richard had played a major part in his decision to join the UN in the first place, and

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he felt he had now proved to be as diehard a multilateralist as Richard himself!

He was very pleased to be talking at the meeting as one ex-UN official to others and wanted to offer everybody a thank you for what they had contributed during their careers. Sometimes, coming back to the UK and living in communities where there was not much knowledge of the organization, it could seem that recognition for having lived and worked in very difficult conditions was not always there. However, people now retired from the UN were the pioneers of a system that was going to get better and stronger, and he hoped that soon we would all be able to enjoy a time when the UN's reputation was back to where it should be.

Gordon Brown and the UN

Mark Malloch-Brown pointed out that while most people in the UK view Gordon Brown through a domestic lens, he looked at him from a totally different perspective. This was because he knows him through a different set of experiences as a man with a fascination for the global economy and a belief in the power of world trade to lift up countries and incomes. However, as a Scottish socialist, Gordon Brown also had a deep skepticism about the ability of markets alone to deal with issues such as poverty reduction and saw the need for the strong hand of government to regulate and invest in places where markets would not put resources. He had watched Gordon Brown acting on his vision for global economic prosperity ever since, as a new young Chancellor of the Exchequer, he became the British Governor of the World Bank and the IMF. When Mark Malloch-Brown moved from the World Bank to UNDP, Gordon Brown was intrigued that a British citizen was now running the other big multilateral development agency and, although he had little previous involvement in the UN, his interest followed him there.

In line with the Jackson Report recommendations of long ago, Gordon Brown, together with other eminent people, joined a team of three Prime Ministers (Norway, Mozambique and Pakistan) to look again at the perennial problem of how to coordinate the work of the agencies, funds and programmes of the UN at the country level, under some kind of UNDP leadership that would deliver a more efficient, lower cost operation. Gordon Brown's involvement in this, and his passion for the international organizations – how they operate and how they can be strengthened and re-tooled to fit the challenges of today's world - made him a very unusual British Prime Minister. But this had gone largely unnoticed by the media.

The bigger international picture

Gordon Brown's plans relating to the UN system



have to be seen in the context of the international crises which had so damaged the UN in recent years. It is not possible to make any analysis of the political difficulties between the member states of UN today without talking of Iraq and the divisions within the Security Council. In the eyes of the Security Council, and the General Assembly more broadly, Britain and the US – given the way the Iraq war started – seemed to have flouted the very system they helped establish. In fact, since 1945, many wars have been fought without Security Council resolutions. These include some, such as Kosovo, in which the UK was involved and where the UN resolution came after the conflict. However, Iraq has shaped up as a test case as to whether the rule of law and international consensus prevailed. Unfortunately, the UN's reputation has suffered badly as result of the Iraq war, with many countries worldwide (and especially in the Middle East) feeling that the UN did not stand up strongly enough in 2003, and that subsequently it had not promoted with nearly enough force the issue of a two-state solution to the Palestinian problem. When such a division existed between member states, it was impossible for even such a brilliant Secretary-General as Kofi Annan to protect the UN from the default blame for what happened. The UN became a convenient fall guy for the much deeper fractures in international politics.

The Kofi Annan years: some successes

Despite the difficult 2003 and post-2003 period, the Kofi Annan years can be seen as some of the most important since those of Dag Hammarskjöld. Kofi Annan emerged from his ten years as Secretary General not only as a Nobel Prize winner, along with

the organization itself, but also as the most truly recognizable global figure that any Secretary-General has been. Besides bringing a new lustre, moral authority and integrity to the UN, some really important things happened during his leadership.

The Millennium Development Goals and the focus on Africa There was a very real possibility that the MDG of reducing the proportion the world's population living in extreme poverty by a half by 2015 will succeed. This is largely driven by a dramatic reduction of poverty in Asia where the majority of the world's poor still live. Sadly, it is offset by a slower rate of reduction in Africa where no progress was occurring in some countries. However, this success is only in part attributable to the efforts of the UN, the World Bank and the donor community at large. It turns, particularly in Asia, on the policies that governments in countries such as China and India have pursued in recent decades.

Those who have worked in the UN know how hard it is to see progress – even when based in the field – because everything was too close. However, it is important to remember that those officials who served in the UN during past two or three decades have had the privilege of working during one of the most dramatic social transformations of humankind in history. Increasing levels of education and health care provision have dramatically changed the underlying statistics of our world. More was added to average life expectancy between the late 1940s to the 1970s than during the history of human kind to that point. In some countries, this had subsequently been offset by HIV/AIDS, but even that is now changing as the international policies implemented through the global fund for HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria start to have an impact. In education, it often seemed that the school system is running down, but in fact it is more a case of there being more children and an inability of the educational infrastructure to keep pace with the increasing numbers in need of education. In fact, there have been massive increases in literacy from 1960s onwards.

The achievement of the MDGs floats on the base of this transformation which began long before them and was part and parcel of the work of UN staff during the past few decades. This successful social revolution, has been reinforced by two other revolutions:

- **democratic revolution** There has been a dramatic expansion in democracy since the late 1980s with two-thirds of countries at the UN being democracies and with poor people in many of them experiencing a new accountability in political decision-making. In Africa, there is now an effort to move to a 'second tier' of political reforms. The vote is not enough. It needs to be reinforced with broader far-reaching political changes such as stronger, more effective parliaments, free media and with respect for human rights and the rule of law fully entrenched in a country's political culture. Democracy is an

unfinished business, but there are dramatic moves in the right direction.

- **Information and Communications Technology revolution** By the late 1990s, UNDP was putting a heavy focus on the role of ICTs in development. However, it recognized that this would be more about the private sector starting to seize opportunities than a massive influx of support from international development agencies. It also recognized that private sector opportunities can lead in unexpected directions. For example, in 2000, UN experts were promoting solar-powered computers as a way to link Africa to the internet and set it on a fast track to development. But Africans jumped straight to mobile phones which they use for instant messaging and other means of sharing vital information about markets and crops. As a result, there is now very little talk about the need for a PC in every village in Africa. Cell phones are everywhere.

Just last week, Gordon Brown had a meeting on the role that private companies can play in achieving the MDGs. Vodafone announced a scheme to enable the transfer of money over cell phones which would facilitate the transfer back home of remittances from migrant workers. So even traditional banking networks are being overtaken by this new technology.

- **Institutional reforms and new doctrines** Many new reforms, including the responsibility to protect – the idea that we cannot stand idly by while governments commit mass humanitarian crimes – are in a precarious position. The adoption by the 2005 General Assembly summit of the doctrine relating to the responsibility to protect (R2P as it is now known) is the most fundamental breach to date of the original charter commitment to non-interference in the internal affairs of member states. In that sense, it is still being resisted and fought inch by inch by those governments who were against it in 2005 and whose doubts have grown since.

Other reforms include new institutions such as the Peace Building Commission and the Human Rights Council (to replace the old Human Rights Commission). Early action has been taken on the new emerging global problems such as climate change. There has also been dramatic growth in functions such as peace-keeping. When Kofi Annan came to office in 1997 there were 20,000 peace keepers worldwide under UN flags and the whole area of peace-keeping was in crisis with many failed missions. When he left, there were over 100,000 peace-keepers. The administrative organizational consequences of this expansion for the UN were dramatic in that the civilian component (international civil servants) working in peace-keeping missions exceeded in number the Secretariat staff working in New York and Geneva combined. There was a shift in the UN's geographical footprint to become a field-based organization. As a result,

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there was a real struggle to rewrite the UN rule book to deal with human resources issues arising from the fact that new UN careers were suddenly to be made in places such as Darfur and not just in UN and Geneva. Battles to change the rules to accommodate this sea-change continue and peace-keeping staff still do not have the same conditions of service in the field (such as long-term contracts) as those enjoyed by UNDP staff.

Response of the UN to global changes

The UN has the best placed set of institutions to manage global changes and has grown significantly in response to them. There is a growing demand for: the impartiality and universality of UN global standards; peace-keeping; and humanitarian activities. The fall-out of growth – overpopulation, climate change, falling soil qualities - is increasing the propensity for natural disasters and there is a demand for the UN to deal with them. At the same time, growing economic inequalities are increasing the propensity for political disasters and the crisis management role of UN is having to grow in response to this.

Until recently, the best known figure for the UN annual budget was \$1.5 billion per year, but this excluded peace keeping, special political missions and booming parts of the UN system such as UNDP and the World Food Programme (WFP). Recent estimates encompassing all of these components are closer to \$20 billion per year. In 1999, UNDP had a budget of \$1.7 billion per annum which rose to \$5 billion per year by 2005. WFP has experienced similar if less dramatic growth. So the image of the UN flat on its back with declining resources is a very partial view which does not do justice to the fact that as new problems arise, governments race to the UN for solutions – usually, if reluctantly, with their cheque book in hand.

However, two sets of problems are limiting the ability of the UN to grow in order to manage these new global changes and challenges:

- *first*, some of the very countries that should have the greatest vested interest in enabling the UN to manage global changes on behalf of the whole world community are some of the most foot-dragging resistors to strengthening the UN. These range from China and Russia which resist breaching respect for the internal affairs of members states to those that have issues they seek to hide from the international spotlight. The question here is how do we ensure that the UN has a global reach and authority while understanding that not everybody shares a homogenized liberal view of the world where political and cultural differences are put aside? How, instead, do we have a UN which demonstrates its respect for different points of view and cultures, but works to help countries find points of common agreement and ways to take their problems forward?

This is why the reform of UN is so important whatever difficulties are involved. We need more than just increased resources – we need a way to show more powerfully to people everywhere that the UN is doing things that matter to them. Within this context, the UK government feels strongly that there has to be UN reform.

- *secondly*, resistance to UN reform by many governments comes from the sense that too much power is concentrated in hands of the winners of 1945. An increased number of states – Germany, Japan, India and Brazil – and yet to be decided African countries need a voice on the Security Council. Until this issue is addressed, none of the managerial and institutional reforms will work, because every change merely delivers more power to the old power holders. The UK government has to do everything it can to ensure that the Security Council is expanded. But this expanded membership has to come with responsibility. There has to be an agreement to review Security Council processes and, in particular, the practice of keeping issues such as Zimbabwe, Burma, Nepal or Sri Lanka off the Security Council agenda has to be tackled. The Security Council has to be more representative, but it also has to be tough and engaged in dealing with the world's security problems.

Only if these two sets of problems can be overcome will the UN be able to prevent global changes being driven only by a fundamentalist market doctrine that allows powerful economic or national interests to determine how the world will look in the future.

Gordon Brown's priorities beyond UN reform

In a number of recent speeches, Gordon Brown has put forward three priorities over and above UN Security Council reform. These are:

- *to strengthen the IMF's role* – not in its old function as lender of last resort, but as an effective forensic surveillance instrument to tell us when sub-prime mortgage crises and their like are coming. There is a real need for such an early warning system.

- *to expand the role of the World Bank* – it should be a bank not just for development but also for the environment. The UK government is willing to put up a large amount of money to start a trust fund to help developing countries with adaptation issues, including enabling them to adopt new technologies that allow for high growth but with a low carbon structure. The battle here is to demonstrate the supplementary nature of the change and to show that it would not simply be diverting resources from development to the environment.

- *to review the UN Conflict Cycle* – there should be changes at all three points in the cycle. At the pre-conflict stage, there is a need for a more aggressive approach to trying to stop problems before they

develop into open conflict. An example of this was Kofi Annan's role in mediation following the Kenyan elections. At the open conflict stage, there is a need to strengthen peace-keeping – both in the UN and the African Union. This would involve more investment in training forces and improved stand-by arrangements to put troops into conflict zones more quickly. And in the post-conflict stage, there is a need to ensure that assistance for reconstruction is readily available when humanitarian assistance stops and to help newly independent governments to operate more effectively in the after-math of civil wars.

Looking to the future

Mark Malloch-Brown ended by saying he is very focused on trying to make the existing UN work through, for instance, pushing for reforms of human resources and procedures and making sure that development resources going through the UN and the World Bank continued to grow. In this context, he noted that Britain has not yet met its target of 0.7 percent of GDP for development assistance. It will have done so by 2012, and it is important that a significant amount of this goes through the multilateral system. The budget of the Department for International Development (DFID) is growing by leaps and bounds – it is the one area of government that is growing rapidly, with increases of about 17 percent per annum. By 2012, the UK will have doubled the amount of bilateral aid going to Africa.

Although the UN has an important role, it is also necessary to bring other partners into the global development cooperation effort. The UN and its agencies have worked with civil society organizations in the past, but they need to be given a much fuller role as agents of change in advocacy and local service delivery. They have a particularly important role in driving the provision of health and education services in difficult to reach regions. But the private sector also has to be brought into the equation. The UK government has been particularly active in this respect and recently convened a meeting of private sector CEOs to share their experiences on how they have indigenised their business models. At this meeting, S.A.B. Miller, which has many breweries in Africa, explained how it has been trying to grow its barley locally. Cadbury is investing in Ghanaian small farming to ensure it has a secure supply chain for cocoa for its chocolate.

All of this effort will come to a head at the UN in September 2008 where Gordon Brown has persuaded Ban Ki Moon to hold a Summit on the MDGs. This will focus on the fact that the MDGs are in crisis, that we are falling behind and that world leaders need to re-pledge. It will also look at why so many leaders are not reaching the 0.7 percent target that they set for themselves at Gleneagles. And it will bring the private sector and NGO efforts to the main table. A

big push is needed to make real progress on social and income provision across the poorest parts of the world before 2015. This is the sort of effort a Gordon Brown could not undertake without a UN as a platform to do it from, and without other leaders and organizations sitting with him on that platform.

The UK has to adjust to a reduced share of the global economy and a reduced share of political influence. In this context, the government has come around very strongly to the proposition that strengthening the UN creates the platform from which, in the words of a former Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, the UK can punch above its weight. It provides a means to use the different networks of which the UK is a part – the Commonwealth, Europe, the Permanent Members of the Security Council – in creating alliances around changes the government believes in whether they be democratic change in Zimbabwe, a humanitarian response against the regime in Burma, getting global public health problems under control, or getting global development back on track. In Britain, in a way never so clear since 1945, the government is committed to the idea that one lasting legacy on the international scene can be international institutional reform to update a UN of which we can all be proud and which all of our neighbours in and around Britain can be proud of too.

Discussion

Leighton van Nort said that when the new Secretary-General made his first official visit to London, he was asked about the Middle East Quartet and what benefit had accrued from the UN participating in it. Mr van Nort wondered what Mark Malloch-Brown's thoughts were on this.

Mark Malloch-Brown replied that the other three partners in Quartet - the US, EU and Russia - have not had a consistent approach. As a result, the UN has had difficulty in ensuring a balanced approach. The original concept of combining as a group of friends to drive both sides in the Middle East to make an agreement was a valid one, but did not live up to expectations.

Farid Oufi said that he worked at WFP from 1968 until the last decade. He agreed that more money had come into the budget of WFP, but he felt that this had been done at the cost of abandoning the concept of the WFP which was to use the production of food to alleviate poverty. What has been happening is that WFP has become an emergency agency using food as a handout for those in need. In the early days, food for work projects made up about 80 percent of the budget, but now emergency cases exceed 90 percent of the budget. He believed this was not in the interest of the original concept of the WFP.

Annual Reunion 2008 - continued (Appendix 2 "From jungle to desert - with steps between: a UN life", summary of the address by Dr Eric Jensen)

Mark Malloch-Brown replied that he was very much aware of the WFP issue, as WFP was part of the UN development group that he used to chair, and it did seem to be out of place as it had drifted into becoming a humanitarian organization. He felt, however, that this was less a matter of the leadership saying this is where the money is, and more a question of the nature of the world in which there were more humanitarian disasters. Indeed, people are now asking WFP to do more work of this type as a short term reaction to the food crisis even though food surpluses are suddenly not available any more. The leadership of WFP is trying to self-correct by changing its purchasing policies to buy food locally so as to stimulate local agricultural production, rather than transferring Western food surpluses.

A broader point is that the current food crisis exposes a very confused international food policy going back over several decades. In the 1980s and 1990s, international aid for agriculture collapsed for a number of reasons and this, compounded by global changes such as droughts, the substitution of fuel crops for food crops and changes in diet including increased meat consumption which requires more land per person, have led to the current crisis. The food crisis is tabled for the G8 meeting to be held in July 2008 to see what measures could be taken to make African agriculture work, but more broadly to make global agricultural markets work in a way that increases production and gets affordable food on to tables everywhere.

The President said that he would like to hear more on what initiatives the UK government might take to tackle food problems in a really global way.

Maurice Purnell pointed out that the UN Charter starts with the words "We the people's of the United Nations....." after which we do not hear very much about the people, just the governments. Given revolutions in democracy and ICTs which the speaker identified as being very important, he wondered to what extent it is possible for the peoples of the UN, rather just the governments, to get more control over the organization.

Mark Malloch-Brown said that when we talk about we the peoples, there are an awful lot of us. Even with the internet, how to organize direct participation by the public in the UN is a very difficult issue. Most UN meetings can now be seen and heard over the internet, but there is a long way to go in democratizing the UN. Problems still remain as to how governments participate, let alone the people.

David Stephen thanked Mark Malloch-Brown for his inspiring speech, but found it remarkable that he had managed to speak for so long without mentioning terrorism or the words 'collapsed' or 'failed' states. His concern arose from his experience as the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Somalia over a five year period. Somalia is a country where there has been very little progress. The

question is how the UN can stick up for the people of Somalia when the world subsumes the country in a terrorist view and where the security of other states, including the United States and Ethiopia, seem to get a great deal of attention in the international arena while little or nothing is done for the country itself. There are other 'collapsed' states in addition to Somalia where their neighbours do not always appreciate the arguments for putting them back on their feet.

Mark Malloch-Brown agreed that terrorism is very much a part of the modern world. The question is what you do when a country collapses and is a threat not just to its own citizens but to its wider neighbourhood. This is one of the hard edged reasons for having an effective UN that can ensure these sorts of problems do not go unattended. Somalia is now the second fastest growing source of terrorist cases in the UK (after Pakistan). The only effective solution is a development strategy for Somalia which puts it back on its feet again as an effective country. Trying to support the transitional government is a struggle because it does not have the same legitimacy and support as the Islamic courts. But the biggest threat to development and human rights in Somalia is not the Ethiopians or the Islamic courts, it is the lack of effective government. Our objective must be to create a government that can get some basic services functioning again.

Sheila Macrae wanted to speak from the perspective of UNFPA and to address the issue of overpopulation, especially since fertility rates are actually going up again in many African countries. This is partly because development funds from the United States and many other countries are being diverted from reproductive health to HIV/AIDS. To address the MDGs on poverty, we needed to be able to address the denominator, and if this is growing at such a rate, then we are on a losing wicket. UNFPA and others had failed to get population issues fully into the MDGs, but we have to address the unmet needs of women who are at reproductive age but do not have access to family planning services.

Mark Malloch-Brown agreed the question of population is key. The fact it was not fully included in the MDGs reflects that we do not have the required global consensus on reproductive health. We are now in the type of environment where there is no longer an appetite for large families and so if services were available, population growth would decrease. One of the problems is that funds coming into the UN and its agencies are tied to specific issues – so in the health sector there is money for diseases, but not for basic health systems – or less 'fashionable' services such as reproductive health. There has to be a way of overcoming this to allow a country to have a sensible health strategy and find a way of funding it – rather than having donor-driven approaches which lead to some areas being underfunded and duplication occurring in others.

Margaret Anstee said her last post in the UN was as the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Angola – another peace-keeping mission that failed. Apart from being under-resourced and under-mandated, one of the many problems was the level of preparedness of the military contingents provided by various countries. While there is now wider recognition of the problems involved in getting countries to provide troops, there remains the problem of having a more coherent approach to peace-keeping and peace-building. Dame Margaret is now working with various governments involved in troop training. In the UK, there used to be a lot of support for simulation exercises from the Foreign Office, but, latterly, this support has declined. Those exercises that are going on are largely limited to the military and do not bring in the civilians – the diplomats, the NGOs and the humanitarian organizations – to encourage better cooperation. She wanted to know if there were any plans for a more sustained approach and more support from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as this is an important way in which the British government can support the work of the UN.

Mark Malloch-Brown replied that while DFID's budget is growing, the FCO's budget, along with that of other Ministries, was decreasing. He had argued that it does not make sense for a Foreign Office to support long-term UN reform and stable peace-keeping if, in the short term, programmes such as simulation exercises cannot also be supported. However, given its declining resources, such activities are the ones most likely to fall off the table.

Michael Davies raised the issue of human resources within the UN. He felt that many of the human resource problems within the UN arise from the fact that the UN Civil Service Commission is both insignificant and has few human resources professionals among its members. Governments, including the UK government, give a low priority to this Commission. As a result, neither the UN nor any of the agencies has any sensible, modern human resources policies.

Mark Malloch-Brown agreed that the International Civil Service Commission is made up of people who generally lack personnel skills. Member states do this with all panels of this kind and refuse to allow the concept of experts who are disconnected from their country bases and operate in the interest of the institution itself. Interestingly, at the World Bank/IMF, the Executive Directors who represent countries are paid for by the two institutions themselves and have a much greater sense of loyalty to them than has been achieved within the UN. The International Civil Service Commission is rather ineffective and its reports contribute little of value. So there is little political support for management issues and it has been almost impossible to push through human resources reforms.

Appendix 2

From jungle to desert - with steps between: a UN life

Presentation by Dr Erik Jensen

From jungle to the United Nations

Erik Jensen's was an informative and amusing presentation with many humorous anecdotes which, unfortunately, are almost impossible to summarise. What follows is the chronological outline. He began with an account of his early work as organizer and administrator of the Lemanak development scheme and as a divisional development officer in Sarawak. He had gone to Borneo to do anthropological research but, having mastered the local language, was rapidly recruited by the Sarawak government to run a development project in a remote part of the country. The people of the region were recently reformed head-hunters but far from reformed shifting cultivators; Erik's job was to convince them that they could benefit from a settled way of life. After two years, progress had been made: people had accepted schooling, some health work and begun to dig fish ponds and grow vegetables and fruit, and they had even started planting cash crops – all new ideas.

As results became visible, central government began taking notice. They also started putting the project on the itinerary of visiting international experts. Given the lack of communications, visitors often arrived, by river, unannounced. One, a UK national, was WHO's Regional Advisor on Nutrition. Although Erik was no nutrition expert, the WHO Advisor considered the regular diet of mainly rice, fish, vegetables and fruit being propagated through the project to be excellent and approved warmly of what was being achieved. As a result, he arranged an invitation for Erik to participate in a WHO meeting in the Philippines on improving nutrition at the village level. The government allowed him to attend, provided it was charged to accrued leave. That was how he first came into contact with UN people. Some, he found, were running projects similar to his own in other countries though with vastly larger budgets. When one suggested that he might like working for the UN, the idea of continuing in development work but with much greater resources was very appealing – as was the idea of serving under the UN flag.

Back in Sarawak, Erik was given more responsibility and again asked to stay on, but he felt that the era of the white man in a position of authority was probably coming to an end. On

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home leave in London, he got in touch with the WHO expert who had visited his project and asked for advice as to how he might go about applying to the UN. The WHO official had no contacts outside the health and nutrition fields, but suggested writing to Julia Henderson, Director of the Division for Social Affairs in New York. Having done so, Erik received a standard reply and was asked to complete and return a multitude of forms. A long, long wait followed. So he took up a research grant. It was only by chance that he came to visit the UN personnel department when he happened to pass through New York. Following interviews, he was in due course offered a post and he arrived in New York to take up his P3 step 1 in April 1967.

The UN Secretariat Years

Although inspired by the UN building in New York and the general excitement of being a part of the UN, Erik was disillusioned. Having come from a position of considerable responsibility and routinely long working days, it was a shock to find that he was only expected to draft letters, not sign them, and that people regularly went home at 5.30 and did not work on Saturdays. It was a very different world.

It was also a time when things generally were far from good – either at the UN or in the US. Both Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy were assassinated. The UN had remained side-lined while the Arabs sought to drive Israel into the sea as a result of which Israel drove the Arabs back into the desert. The Prague spring blossomed and died. Afterwards when the Biafra war was everywhere in the media, once again, the UN seemed peripheral. Having passed yet another group of protesters outside of the UN on his way to lunch one day, he wondered with a colleague why the UN was not doing anything...something that would make it worthwhile staying to work in the UN. His colleague was about to depart on home leave; in his absence it was Erik who happened to be dispatched on mission to Nigeria.

Biafra U Thant, then Secretary-General, cared deeply about the situation in Nigeria and had been frustrated at the UN's inability to act. He had succeeded, in the face of some opposition from the Federal Government, in obtaining agreement to a modest mission. The mandate was to further humanitarian efforts while observing conditions on the ground and to report back as to whether there was any justification behind allegations of genocide. The mission was supposed to last some three weeks but was still in Nigeria more than a year later.

While in Nigeria, Erik became friends with the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Defence,



Erik Jensen shares an amusing experience with the audience

also an Oxford graduate. One of the Permanent Secretary's main complaints about UN organizations was that their representatives always came one at a time to discuss related issues, and this in the midst of very difficult circumstances when time was of the essence. Erik agreed with him entirely that it would certainly be in the interest of the receiving government if the UN agencies came jointly as well as being in the interest of the UN system itself and more conducive to effectively coordinated aid.

After his year in Nigeria, Erik returned to New York, as Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs. One function of this office was to prepare routine reports to the General Assembly on the disbursement of the Secretary-General's token fund for assistance in cases of natural disaster. In this context, Erik proposed using his Nigeria experience as a way of planting the idea of the need for a coordinated approach to disaster relief by UN agencies. A meeting was arranged with Harry Labouisse, then Executive Director of UNICEF, who liked the idea and thought it worth pursuing. That was the beginning of initiatives on the part of the UN system to act in a more coordinated fashion in response to disasters. At the time, emphasis was exclusively on natural disasters, but Erik believed that if structures could be put in place for natural disasters, they could also be applied in man-made disaster situations. In addition to coordination among UN agencies, the plan was to persuade

governments that they themselves should have structures in place for responding in a more coordinated way when disaster struck. A preliminary report was well received by ECOSOC and the General Assembly, and the following year a comprehensive report was submitted for detailed consideration. This attracted wide interest and support from many governments, including the UK and the USA.

Bahrain The next mission in which Erik was involved was to Bahrain. This was very successful and, in consequence, almost totally ignored in the press. By 1970 Britain was withdrawing from the Gulf. Bahrain, close to oil lanes and the main oil production centres, had historically been claimed by neighbouring Iran, then in the western camp. At the same time, on the other side, beyond Saudi Arabia, lay Egypt and the larger Arab world mainly sympathetic to the Soviet Union. The future status of Bahrain could easily have become the cause of major East-West conflict. The Shah of Iran, realizing that he could not simply surrender the claim to Bahrain, accepted another formula. U Thant, under a cloak of secrecy, was able to obtain the agreement of the Shah that if he could deliver a report to the Security Council on the future of Bahrain that was adopted unanimously, the Shah would abide by the Council's decision. The Good Offices Mission to Bahrain duly investigated and produced a report which was presented to and adopted by the Security Council. Without a shot being fired, Bahrain became an independent sovereign state.

Comoros and elsewhere Erik participated in many missions - to India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, to East Timor, to Chad, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Djibouti, Central African Republic and more. Most were occasioned by warfare and civil breakdown with appalling humanitarian consequences. The Comoros had less to contend with, but the country was in trouble and had appealed for international assistance. Erik, as head of mission, was advised by his team that the President insisted on giving highest priority to an aircraft, but if that was at the top of the needs put to the General Assembly, there would be no serious donor response. In audience with the President, Erik had to humour him and find a formula that placed less emphasis on an aircraft. The President, having delivered an oration on the vital importance of an aircraft, eventually relented; as a good will gesture he presented Erik with a tin of home-grown vanilla - 'for virility'.

The London Years

From his years running the UN London Office Erik remembered especially accompanying UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar on visits to

Margaret Thatcher, then the Prime Minister. Mrs Thatcher was very supportive of Perez de Cuellar because, although Latin American and only newly appointed, he had taken a brave and principled stance at the time of the Falklands conflict attempting to mediate a compromise between the two sides before the war actually broke out. She never forgot that. During their several meetings, Geoffrey Howe, as Foreign Minister, was sometimes present. Mrs Thatcher liked having the last word and whenever Howe interjected something with which she disagreed, in school-mistress fashion, she tapped him smartly over the wrist.

The Desert: Western Sahara

Once more back in New York, Erik became Director of General Assembly Affairs before, in 1993, being named Chairman of the Identification Commission in Western Sahara. He went on to head up the UN (peacekeeping and political) mission in Western Sahara and act as the Secretary-General's Special Representative in the region. These proved the five most difficult, challenging and exciting years of his career. It was rewarding that only a week earlier, the Security Council had adopted a realistic resolution trying to push the warring parties in the direction that Erik had advocated during secret talks over a decade ago and set out subsequently in a book published after his retirement. That gave hope.

Discussion

Leighton van Nort had a question about the speaker's early career prior to the UN. He wanted to know what his fellow anthropologists felt about him changing the culture of the people in Sarawak as opposed to preserving it. **The President** added that having started his own career as a community development officer, he agreed that, at the time, the emphasis was on listening to the people rather than promoting new ideas.

Erik Jensen replied that this was an entirely valid point and one often raised. In his own case, although he was doing anthropological research, once the tribe got to know him, they were constantly coming to ask advice. Though he knew the rules of research, he decided that these were inappropriate to his circumstances and he chose to engage by responding to requests for advice and assistance. He found engaging with the people more significant and valuable than pure research, but his anthropological knowledge was immensely helpful in the development project work. He did write up and publish his research though without emphasizing to his academic peers the action-

oriented side of his time in Sarawak.

The President asked about the Communist insurgency at the time and whether this affected his work.

Erik Jensen said that the insurgency had a very significant and somewhat unexpected impact. The government at the time had extremely limited resources and suddenly with the war with Indonesia and a Communist insurgency, there was funding to build bridges and for roads and other projects. He achieved more infrastructure in two years during Confrontation than in all the years before. He added that after 37 years, he had returned to his old haunts in Sarawak. The language came back haltingly. The people remembered him and touchingly told him how he had changed their lives.

Margaret Anstee wanted to say how glad she was that the speaker had reminded us that Integrated Rural Development was not invented by McNamara during his speech at the Nairobi Conference in 1971. Just as the speaker had been doing this sort of work earlier than 1970 in Sarawak, she had been involved in similar work – then called community development – in the Philippines in the 1950s with a very small amount of money. The same was being done in the Andes with the Andean Indian programme, but the UN never received any credit for this.

Erik Jensen replied that when he first arrived at the UN, he was proud of the work that he had been doing in Sarawak, but found hardly anybody in the organization even mildly interested in rural development. People were focused on industrialization, huge dams and similar large scale projects. This was long before small became beautiful.

Susan Miller raised the issue of natural disaster reduction. She recalled that in 1989, the General Assembly voted for a Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. After this, a secretariat was set up in Geneva which hobbled along with very little money. However, since the beginning of the 21st Century, a proper programme seemed to be under way. She wanted to know when and how the speaker had become involved with this programme.

Erik Jensen replied that he had become involved in natural disaster reduction in the very early days when there was serious support from the British, US and a number of other governments all of which were committed to creating a serious Office of the UN Disaster Relief Coordinator, based in Geneva. The choice of the first Disaster Relief Coordinator was an unfortunate one which got the programme off to a poor start.

John Rodda wanted to know if being British was an advantage to the speaker's career. He also wanted to know how he rated the various Secretary-Generals of the UN.

Erik Jensen replied that he did not want to say too much about being British since as people could tell from his name he was a bit of a hybrid.

On the subject of the Secretary-Generals, he mentioned that Brian Urquhart always maintained that U Thant was the most underrated. Erik had the privilege of working, at a remove, with U Thant both during the Nigerian-Biafran and Bahrain missions and had found him a fine man. He didn't come across as especially strong, but this was at a time when an overly assertive approach would have been counter-productive. However, he achieved much discreetly in certain cases of importance. Kurt Waldheim was an exceptionally hard worker but thought always in terms of political manoeuvring. He badly misjudged the impact of his dubious background in the Second World War when campaigning to become President of Austria. Waldheim had hoped to become Secretary-General for a third term, and it was because he fought so tenaciously for this that Perez de Cuellar, the outsider, became Secretary-General. Waldheim assumed he would outlast the Chinese veto but did not, and the US government was never going to vote for Salim Salim of Tanzania, so Perez de Cuellar was elected as being someone certain not to attract a veto. After him came Boutros Boutros-Ghali who was not especially well-liked by the UK government and was not popular in the Secretariat, although in many respects a capable and courageous man in defending UN interests against American pressure. He departed on an unhappy note, campaigning for a second term, when the US government was determined to block him. Thus Kofi Annan became Secretary-General. Boutros Boutros-Ghali had been the official African candidate, and the Africans could not pull the rug from under his feet and start discussing an alternative candidate until it had become totally clear that the US was going to maintain its veto on Boutros. By that time, it was too late for the Africans to decide which former Minister might fit the role. Hence, Kofi Annan emerged from the Secretariat and rose magnificently to the Secretary-Generalship.

Responsibilities of Executive Committee Members and Advisers 2008/2009

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Chairman:	Patricia Brown
Vice chairman:	Michael Davies
Secretary:	Annie Kean (Deputy Secretary, Ziaul Islam)
Treasurer:	Bryan Suitters (Deputy Treasurer, Christine Woodworth-Batho)

Regional Convener: Bill Jackson

- (a) convenes the annual meeting of Regional Representatives at the General Assembly of the Association;
- (b) collects and edits the reports of regional activities for the Newsletter;
- (c) issues to Regional Representatives such briefs on ExCo activities as are desirable;
- (d) represents the Regions at ExCo on such matters as they wish to bring, jointly or severally, to the attention of the Committee; and

(Regional Representatives should keep the Regional Convener informed on such matters as social activities and changes in the membership of their Regional Committee, especially any changes after the AGM.)

Pensions: Michael Davies

- (a) keeps the brief on all pension matters by liaison with the Secretariat of the UNJSPF in Geneva and New York, and with FAFICS;
- (b) provides assistance to individual members with any problems they may have on pension matters;
- (c) keeps the brief on all health insurance matters by liaison with the various schemes provided by the UN and its agencies; and
- (d) is responsible for contact with FAFICS on technical matters.

(Confidentiality is assured in all cases. Members are advised to contact Michael Davies before resorting to the Offices mentioned in (a) above as this may save time.)

National Welfare Support Coordinator: Fred Beer

- (a) coordinates all BAFUNCS welfare activities and advises on general and individual matters referred to him by Regional Welfare Support Officers;
- (b) coordinates and administers the fund for reimbursement of Welfare Officers' expenses;
- (c) maintains contact with organisations concerned with the welfare of the elderly;
- (d) advises members on the health insurance schemes and facilities, public and private, available in the UK, including sheltered housing, nursing and convalescent accommodation; and
- (e) responds, in association with the Pensions Officer, to requests for advice from the newly bereaved

who have difficulty in dealing with immediate matters, personal and administrative, consequent on the death of their spouse.

(Members seeking advice on a personal problem should ordinarily contact their Regional Welfare Support or Help Officer, but may, if they prefer, approach the National Welfare Support Coordinator directly. In all cases strict confidentiality will be observed.)

Membership Secretary: Ben Goffman

- (a) maintains the membership records;
- (b) prepares, together with the Editor, the Membership List and reports in the Newsletter on the membership;
- (c) undertakes all member recruitment activities; and
- (d) keeps stocks of the Newsletter, the Membership List and BAFUNCS documents.

Subscriptions Secretary: Christine Woodworth-Batho

handles the financial aspects of member recruitment and subscriptions in liaison with the Membership Secretary.

Editor: Tony Loftas

- (a) edits and produces the Newsletter and arranges its distribution using labels prepared by the Membership Secretary;
- (b) in association with the Membership Secretary, prepares and distributes the Membership List;
- (c) prepares, coordinates and edits all other official documents of BAFUNCS for which responsibility is not otherwise allocated; and
- (d) submits relevant material to the AFICS website.

Annual Reunions Coordinator: June Hargreaves-Ber

- (a) oversees the general organisation of Annual Reunions;
- (b) liaises with the regional convener of each Annual Reunion and advises them on any matters connected with its organisation; and
- (c) maintains the CD-Rom containing the Planning Document for Annual Reunions.

Archivist: (Vacant)

- (a) maintains the CD containing the ExCo Minutes, the General Assembly reports and issues of the newsletter and is responsible for the Association's holding of hard copies of archival material of lasting interest to the Association;
- (b) using the archives, undertakes research, as necessary, on matters to be discussed or required by ExCo.

Responsibilities of Executive Committee Members and Advisers 2008/2009 - *continued*

Regional activities

Overseas Members Representative:

Fred Beer

serves as the representative for all overseas members.

(Overseas members should correspond directly on any matters affecting them personally or which they wish to bring to the attention of the Executive Committee.)

Relations with other bodies:

Patricia Brown, Chairman

liaises with FAFICS and its member Associations on policy matters, particularly those calling for support from BAFUNCS.

Michael Askwith

serves as Special Adviser on the UN Careers Record Project II (UNCRP II) and liaises with NGOs that use

the voluntary expertise of retired UN professionals in developing countries.

Marilyn Carr

liaises with the UNA and the National Pensioners Convention

Ziaul Islam

maintains contact with Age Concern and Help the Aged.

BAFUNCS IMO website: Sheila Cooper
(ad interim)

AR2009: June Hargreaves Beer (South-Central Region)

is responsible to EXCO for the organisation of AR 2009.

Regional activities

Compiled by Bill Jackson

Regional Convenor

Cambridge Region

Vincent Austin

On 6 March 2008 the Region held its AGM, as in the two previous years, at the Bell Hotel in Thetford, which has proved to be a comfortable and reasonably accessible venue for our widespread region. It was attended by 21 members and 27 sent their regrets. It was the final event chaired by Thérèse Bruce, who sadly was subsequently obliged to resign for health reasons but remains an active member. I agreed to be Acting Chairman until the next AGM.

On 11 June, 11 members gathered for a coffee morning hosted by Ron and Edwina Chamberlin at their home in Bildeston, Suffolk. The weather was kind and we sat in their lovely garden before going for a pub lunch in nearby Little Waldingfield.

Our next event will be a lunch on Wednesday 10 September, offered by Carolyn Allaman, who has recently moved to the attractive village of Moulton, near Newmarket.

Following our practice of rotating the location of our Christmas Lunch to different parts of our Region, the next one will be on Thursday 11

December at The Angel Hotel in Bury St Edmunds. Since the hotel is situated immediately opposite the Abbey, participants will be able, weather permitting, to visit the remains of this ancient shrine which drew so many pilgrims during the Middle Ages.

Kent/Sussex Region

Joan Wilson

Our Summer lunch was held in Winifred Saunders' garden at Ditchling. It was really enjoyable, the food was delicious, the company relaxed and even the sun came out for the day! Her garden looked absolutely as an English garden should; not a weed showed its head and the lawn was immaculate.

We next met for a monthly lunch at Dean's Place in Alfriston on Thursday, 7 August 2008. Instead of Alfriston, the Autumn Lunch will be on Wednesday, 10 September 2008, at The High Rocks, High Rocks Lane, Tunbridge Wells, Kent and it is hoped that a good number will be able to meet on that occasion. Most will have probably just returned from summer holidays, so there will not only be Joan Wilson's Scottish odyssey to be related there, but others' too.

Despite the fact that most of our recent meetings seem to have been in the form of lunches, we hope that members will be able to join us for a Christmas lunch at the Brickwall Hotel in Sedlescombe, booked for Wednesday, 10 December 2008.

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We are very grateful to the following Welfare Officers for the various parts of Kent and Sussex: Margaret Bills, West Sussex; Jennifer Brooke Kearns, Lewes and district; Sheila Cooper, Mayfield district; Ann Miller, Kent; and Grania Skeldon, Brighton.

London Region

Walter Hoffman

As in the past, London Region will be marking both United Nations Day on 24 October and Human Rights Day on 10 December, by holding lunches at the Sherlock Holmes Hotel in Baker Street. There will be a further lunch in Spring 2009.

Northern Region

Robert England

Because of the wide geographical spread of the membership of the Northern Region, we have been in the habit of having just one regional get-together per year, in the form of a two- to three-day meeting. Given that the Region organised the Annual Reunion in Kendal in May, it was agreed to skip this year's regional meeting so as not to divert scarce organising energy from Kendal. (The region was well represented there, with 19 members present, many of them supporting the organisation of the Reunion itself, as well as the excursions.) We are in the process of identifying a location and suitable dates for our 2009 get-together – which we will naturally advertise to the general membership in due course.

Our panel of Officers changed after our own meeting held during Kendal Reunion. Robert England agreed to be the Secretary and for the time being, will combine this function with that of Regional Representative. Laurie Robertson kindly agreed to continue as Treasurer and, until we identify someone willing to accept the burden, will also double as Chair. Robert England will also champion the Career Records Project in the Region.

Oxford Region

Bill Jackson

Twenty-four members attended our AGM and lunch at the Four Pillars Hotel, Sandford on Thames on 21 February; a further 23 sent their apologies. The AGM regretted the death of the well-loved and ever cheerful Menna Ellis-Jones, who had been our Welfare Officer since the formation of the Region in the 1980s, and the passing also of Myra Frith, Joe Pidgeon, Dr Cywinska and Granville Fletcher. Granville, who was a founder member of BAFUNCS and our Regional Representative in the 1980s, died at the

grand old age of 96 and he was buried in his home village of Blewbury.

As this report was being prepared, we learnt of the death in early August of Doreen Crellin, following ten years of increasing disability brought on by the advance of Parkinson's disease. Our sincere condolences go out to Cecil and their sons. The couple had been married for almost 62 years and had regularly attended our outings and lunches. We subsequently learned of the death on 22 August of Oliver Knowles and our thoughts go out to his wife, June, and their four sons.

The AGM thanked Dr John Miller for his cordial chairmanship of the Region over the past few years and Cyril Groom for his indefatigable work as our Secretary. Bill Jackson was invited to be Dr Miller's replacement; he will also seek to promote UN Career Records Project in the Region.

In April, 22 members went to the Pike and Perch at South Stoke. A suitably international item on the menu was the South African dish, bobotie.

On 7 August, 21 members visited the Northmoor Trust's museum and Project Timescape at Hill Farm at the foot of the prominent Wittenham Clump. An instructive hour spent in the museum studying humanity's impact on the Oxfordshire landscape was followed by soup and rolls and then by an energetic walk for most, taking in the Clumps themselves (Round Hill and Castle Hill) with their magnificent 360 degree views, the 14th century church at Long Wittenham and the nearby Day's Lock on the Thames (*see photo, page 32*).

South Central Region

June Hargreaves-Beer

We would like to convey our best wishes to BAFUNCS' oldest member, Kathleen Duckworth-Barker, who will be 105 years old in September.

We started this year's quarterly lunches with our Spring Meeting on 20 March at one of our favourite venues, The Cloud Hotel in Brockenhurst in the centre of the New Forest. Twenty-two members attended, including members from the Oxford and Kent and Sussex Regions. Sadly, five others who would have attended were prevented from doing so by illness. Fortunately the weather was dry, though cold. Some members braved the wind to take a pre-lunch walk in the lovely surrounding countryside.

Our Summer Meeting should have taken place on 12 June, with a buffet lunch in our garden, preceded by a light-hearted talk by Fred. Unfortunately, he fell ill and had to start treatment on that day and we had to postpone it. We have therefore decided to combine this meeting with our Autumn one and propose to hold it in early September. We shall keep the same format; a buffet

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lunch, weather permitting in the garden, otherwise indoors, and Fred will give his talk.

Our Christmas lunch will take place on 4 December. We have once again chosen the Upland Park Hotel in Droxford as the venue and, as usual, we shall endeavour to arrange for some entertainment before lunch. Announcements will be sent out in due course and we welcome attendance from as many as possible.

Our Region will be hosting the Annual Reunion in 2009 and the working group is busy with all the arrangements. As will be seen from the documents enclosed in this Newsletter, the venue is the excellent Chilworth Manor Hotel in Chilworth (*see* photos on the back cover) and the dates are 8-10 May 2009. We look forward to welcoming a large number of participants.

South West and Channel Islands Region

Rosemary ap Rees

The AGM was held in Taunton in March. Twenty-four members attended and we enjoyed a very good lunch at the County Cricket Ground. Ron Forrest was in the Chair. As we are organising the 2010 Annual Reunion, Tony Patten agreed to be the Convenor and David Nott the Registrar. It will held at the Southgate Hotel in Exeter.

Ron Forrest stepped down at the AGM, having been our Regional Representative for three years. Rosemary ap Rees was elected to replace him; Barbara Whitehead is Deputy Regional Representative; Irene Chamberlain remains as Membership Secretary/Meetings Adviser and Eileen Wait is Treasurer. We have assigned five Welfare contacts to cover the various districts of our Region: Peter and Rosalie Lees, Bath and North-east Somerset; Joyce Bowen-Ashwin, Bristol area; Barbara Pisarski, Cornwall; Elizabeth Barton, East Devon, West Dorset; Barbara Whitehead, Plymouth and Torbay; and Ron Forrest, Somerset.

We were well represented at the Annual Reunion in Kendal; unfortunately, Irene Chamberlain had a very nasty fall (from which she has now recovered) and was unable to attend for the first time since she joined BAFUNCS in 1982.

Our Regional Reunion will be held on 4 October at the Wessex Hotel, Street.

The Strode Arms lunches continue and the next one is on 4 September. Our Christmas lunch will be on 11 December. Irene Chamberlain is going to try to organise lunches in the Plymouth area so anyone who is interested, please contact her

We welcome our new members, Consul and Mrs Torsten Johanssen, Mr and Mrs David Stephen and Mr and Mrs Donald Swift. Sadly, we also have to report that Jacqueline Cane died suddenly, but peacefully, on 12 July.

Surrey Region

Patricia Brown

By March 2008 no fewer than half the members of the regional committee had resigned; among them two who are going to live abroad, and Heather Vit, who, with her late husband, Henry, served BAFUNCS long and faithfully, but had to move to be near her daughter in Harrogate. At her request she remains in the Surrey Region. Intensive efforts to find replacements have failed up to now. This leaves a much reduced committee. Unless the situation improves we have but a pessimistic view of our agreement to act as host to the 2012 Annual Reunion. As seems to be the case with other regions, members of a core team, and indeed others, will be well into their 80s by the time the reunion year comes round, with no new younger members coming forward to help.

The following social events have taken place: in June, 14 people met in Woking for a hot buffet lunch followed by a talk given by Tilly Armstrong on 19th century shopping and the rise of the department stores, with the title "What is your pleasure, madam?". In July, nine people visited the Geffrye Museum which shows the changing style of the English domestic interior in a series of period rooms from 1600 to the present day.

A very comprehensive questionnaire aimed at improving the Region's social programme was sent out to members. Seven were returned. Among the reasons for not attending some of the events already held were: difficulty of access – though lifts in cars are offered; absence on the date of the event; otherwise engaged; or already visited with other organizations – the latter a reason heard during a similar discussion in another region. A purely social occasion, such as a luncheon on a regular basis, was favoured by one member, and this will be among the suggestions looked into, possibly following the example of the KSX Region.

One encouraging development is that Marilyn Carr has agreed to be the Surrey member designated to take on some responsibility for promoting the United Nations Careers Records Project in the Region, and for encouraging individuals to respond.

As at 7 August 2008 the Region had 90 members, three of whom are new members.

West Midlands and Wales Region

Duncan Morris

Sadly, I have to report the death in March of Mrs Kay England of Newport. Kay was a long-standing and active member of BAFUNCS and she was a great help at AR 2005 in Cardiff. However, I am delighted to announce that the Region has gained two new members: Niels and Janice Volcker who live in Gloucester have joined BAFUNCS and we look

forward to seeing them at our functions. The region now has 57 members.

As always, we extend our thanks to Mrs Phyl Marshall, our Regional Welfare Officer, who continues to do sterling work.

The Region's Spring Reunion was held on Tuesday 8 April 2008 at the Berkeley Arms Hotel in Berkeley, Gloucestershire. Ten members plus June Hargreaves-Ber and Fred Beer (South Central and ExCo) sat down to a very English lunch, after which we held our usual short meeting. In the afternoon, most members took a guided tour of Berkeley Castle while others visited the nearby Jenner Museum.

At our last reunion, we decided to hold the region's autumn reunion on Wednesday 22 October somewhere in the Cotswolds. My attempts to find a venue were hampered by my current inability to drive but, thanks to Sheila Rashed and Evelyn Howson, we finally found what appears to be an excellent venue, the Unicorn Hotel in Stow-on-the-Wold. Unfortunately, we then discovered that the famous Stow Horse Fair is due to be held on Thursday 23 October which rules out Wednesday 22 October. So, we have decided to postpone the reunion by one week to Wednesday 29 October.

BAFUNCS members from other regions and their guests are always very welcome at our reunions and anyone wanting to join us on this or any other occasion should contact Duncan Morris on 01452-740773.

Overseas Region

Fred Beer

Membership remains at 70 plus worldwide and we have just been informed of a new member, living in Barbados. There have been exchanges with new members, but there is little else to report.

It is always pleasing to have contact with our overseas members. It was good to meet the six members who attended the Annual Reunion in Kendal. Should you find yourself in the UK and wish to attend a regional social function, I am sure you would be made most welcome. If in doubt please do not hesitate to contact me.

Any contributions to the United Nations Careers Records Project (UNCRP), or to Travellers' Tales, would be most welcome, as well as contributions to the Newsletter.

Visit events in other Regions

The Association encourages members to visit events in other regions. For the latest information on them visit the BAFUNCS pages on the IMO website (bafuncs.imo.org/home.htm). To place notices on the website please contact Sheila Cooper, preferably by e-mail: sheilacooper.mayfield@btinternet.com.

Cambridge

10 September- lunch offered by Carolyn Allaman, Moulton
11 December - Christmas lunch - The Angel Hotel, Bury St Edmunds

Kent/Sussex

Second Thursday of each month - meet at 12.30 for lunch at Dean's Place Hotel in Alfriston, contact Joan Wilson on 01424 221458
First Thursday of each month - lunch in Arundel, contact Margaret Bills on 01903 787081
10 September - Autumn lunch - The High Rocks, High Rocks Lane, Tunbridge Wells
10 December - Christmas lunch - The Brickwall Hotel, Seddlescombe

Contact: Joan Wilson at 01424 221458 or by e-mail joanewilson@btinternet.com

London

24 October - lunch for UN Day - The Sherlock Holmes Hotel, Baker Street. Meet at 12.30 for 13.00.

10 December - lunch for Human Rights Day - The Sherlock Holmes Hotel, Baker Street - 12.30 for 13.00
The AGM will be in March/April, probably also at The Sherlock Holmes Hotel.

For information contact the Secretary, Brenda Suitters on 01582 763457.

Oxford

25 September - lunch, venue to be decided
11 December - preChristmas lunch - Four Pillars Hotel, Sandford-on-Thames.
Contact Cyril Groom (01844 218399)

South Central

4 December - Christmas lunch - Upland Park Hotel, Droxford.
Contact June Hargreaves-Ber (023 9241 2568)

South West and Channel Islands

4 October - Regional Reunion - The Wessex Hotel, Street
11 December - Christmas lunch - venue to be announced

Surrey

18 December - Christmas Lunch - venue to be decided.

West Midlands and Wales

29 October - Autumn Reunion Lunch - The Unicorn Hotel, Stow-in-the-Wold, Gloucestershire. Meet at about 12 o'clock for a two course lunch, £15 a head
Contact Duncan Morris by 22 October (01452 740773)

Matters of interest to members from the FAFICS Council 2008

Together with Michael Davies I attended the FAFICS Working Group on the Rules of Procedure and that on After Service Health Insurance and Long Term Care and the 37th FAFICS Council (from 3 to 8 July at the headquarters of FAO in Rome) on behalf of BAFUNCS. As in previous years, my purpose here is not to produce an exhaustive account of the meetings but to focus on matters of possible interest to BAFUNCS members.

Twenty-five member associations were represented at the session, directly or by proxy. The Council admitted two new member associations (IAFICS Israel and IGFICS Myanmar) bringing the membership of FAFICS up to 42 national associations.

Items on the agenda of the 55th session of the Pension Board There had been an actuarial surplus for the sixth year in succession, but only 0.49 percent. After some discussion FAFICS decided to pursue with the Pension Board elimination of the 0.5 percent CPI reduction on the basis that it was in the interest of retirees and that the administrative costs of applying the reduction were of the same order as the extra cost to the Fund.

A paper on the management of the investments showed that the Pension Fund was resilient despite the economic problems, as it is pro-actively managed from a global viewpoint. The proposals of the Representative of the Secretary-General to place a proportion of the assets within a passive management indexation portfolio were considered to be questionable at this time.

The Emergency Fund A high proportion of payments had been made in France and the United States: possibly a bias that reflected the need for strong retiree association support. It was suggested that the Guidelines for applications for its use should be appended to the Annual letter.

New IT system Considerable concern was voiced over the proposed introduction of a new IT system into the Fund Secretariat (the 'Plan Design'). Michael Davies pointed out that such a system would require full parallel testing for a minimum of three pension cycles rather than the 30 days envisaged. Otherwise there could be many errors with ensuing chaos. It was agreed that FAFICS should raise this with the Board as it was duty bound to protect retirees' interests. A technical Working Group on the 'Plan Design' is to be set up. Michael Davies was proposed as one of the possible FAFICS representatives on it.

Currency fluctuations and their impact on UNJSPF pensions was the subject of lengthy discussion. It was suggested that income replacement tables were misleading and potentially dangerous because they were based on flawed logic. Whereas post adjustment ratios were not applied to retirees' pensions, they were used to develop income replacement ratios: an ICSC approach dating back to 1986. The Fund should adopt a different yardstick for the purposes of comparison, the best being parity of purchasing power (PPP) which offered a more

effective means of comparing salaries in different countries. The World Bank, the IMF, the regional development banks, the EU and the Coordinated Organisations all used PPP to aggregate their salaries.

Present currency trends, particularly the weakness of the US dollar, was similar to the situation in the early 1980s that had led ultimately to the dual track. The present situation differed, however, in that the problem of currency devaluation was having an inordinate impact on countries where the option to move to a local track was potentially difficult. A careful re-examination of the management of pensions in those countries was clearly called for. The Council urged the CEO of the Pension Fund to look beyond conventional 'in-house' solutions and consult with experts working on the same issues in other international organisations such as the IMF or the IDB.

Article 35 bis, which concerns benefit provisions of family or former family members, is a routine concern of FAFICS. After much discussion, the Council reaffirmed its position that the provisions of the Article should apply only when the divorce took place on or after 1 April 1999, and not at the time of separation from service. Furthermore, it agreed to abide by its proposal that the duration of marriage should be calculated by reference to the date of the divorce settlement or effective settlement, rather than pronouncement of the divorce by a court.

The Council also decided that its representatives should press for a reduction in the time that a marriage must last to five years during which contributions to the Fund were made and deletion of the conditions that the former spouse must not have remarried and that "the participant's death must have occurred within 15 years of the final divorce unless a legal maintenance obligation to the former spouse was in place". The Council wished to add to the condition "The former spouse must have reached the age of 40" the phrase "unless there are more than one or more children resulting from the marriage in his or her custody".

It seems unlikely that the Board will agree with all the FAFICS positions, so it can be expected that this item will appear again next year.

Pension adjustment system BAFUNCS had submitted a note to the Council proposing that the Pension Fund take into account the existence of new channels of communication for official data rather than wait for a formal transmission letter from the Government to the United Nations Statistical Office (UNSO). Delays in the transmission of data had been experienced in the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Australia and Austria with concomitant effects on the adjustment of pensions in those countries. In the past, retirees in Italy had lost a whole year waiting for the annual adjustment. The United Nations official notification process was of limited value to member states which made greater use of the internet for the publication of official data. It was

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decided: the paper should be seen by the CEO and UNSO; the question was to be raised at the Pension Board meeting; and a formal proposal of a solution (in full General Assembly language) would be submitted to the Pension Board in 2009.

After-service health insurance and long-term care

Michael Davies, the convenor of the Working Group, stated that the advocacy statement would be revised and distributed to the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and to staff bodies, such as FICSA. Individual associations would receive copies for onward transmittal to the administrators of their health insurance plans.

A two-track approach had been adopted with respect to the FAFICS database. In addition to continuing to request inputs from individual staff associations, CEB would be requested to establish contacts between the database administrator and the individual plan offices, in order to explore the possibility of each plan administrator reporting changes directly.

CEB would also be advised of those member associations that had committees focusing on long-term care issues so that they and FAFICS could be included in relevant discussions. The working group also reaffirmed the importance it attached to ensuring that long-term care benefits also covered care in the home as being both cost- and care-effective. It had rejected the differentiation of long-term care benefits by income level.

Administrative and financial questions

The Budget for 2009 had been presented three months in advance, as requested by BAFUNCS some years ago. It was a 'deficit' budget and it was proposed to raise subscriptions on an *ad hoc* basis to cover the deficit. I objected strongly. Fortunately I received sufficient support to stop these proposals. After a vigorous discussion the budget for 2009 was adopted in the form given three months in advance. It was agreed that, in future, budgets should be balanced so that similar discussions would not be necessary.

Election of FAFICS officers

Andre Castellanos del Corral (AFICS-New York), the only nominee for President, was elected for the year 2008-2009. Witold Zyss, the previous President, was made a Vice President Emeritus. No changes were proposed in the Council Officers.

Two of the six previously appointed FAFICS representatives on the Pension Board were unable to attend the forthcoming 55th session for health reasons. The assignment of replacements led to a heated debate in the Bureau concerning election of

the representatives for 2009. The appointment of representatives is governed primarily by gender balance and geographical rotation. Whereas gender balance had been addressed, geographical balance had become an issue.

The Federation was urged to broaden the representation of African and Asian member associations. The problem stems from a growth in the number of members and its maturing evolution. In my view any agreement on geographical- and gender-based representation must be tempered by the need for technical expertise if FAFICS is to participate fully in meetings of the Pension Board. This may not be easy!

Other business

Security and retiree access ARICSA was concerned over the plans apparently afoot in Vienna to deprive retirees of access to headquarters buildings. Council confirmed that it would object very strongly to the withdrawal of such facilities. Member associations in headquarters duty stations were urged to keep each other informed of any moves to curtail such facilities. In BAFUNCS' case this means keeping an eye on IMO.

Date and place of the next session

Based on the Pension Board's present plans, the Council expects to meet in New York, 6-10 July 2009 but faced with the prospect of building works in the UN the Board has had informal talks about meeting in London in 2009. If this were to happen BAFUNCS would need to host the FAFICS Council meeting with help from IMO.

To give an idea of what this might involve, participants at Rome received a briefing on accommodation; were invited to a cocktail reception in FAO together with their spouses; and enjoyed a dinner at an outside restaurant, again with spouses, sponsored by the UN Federal Credit Union. The lunch with the CEO of the Pension Fund and his party (6 or 7) was held in FAO HQ and each FAFICS delegate attending had to pay 23 EU.

(Since the above was written it has been announced that the Pension Board will meet in Geneva in 2009. However, it may be useful to know the likely problem and be prepared.)

David Axford, Vice-President

Meeting with the Pension Fund

On 8 July 2008 the Council met with Mr B. Cochemé, the Chief Executive Officer/Secretary of the Fund, and senior colleagues. As usual a list of questions had been submitted in advance. The formal response to these and others arising during the meeting will be reported in the March issue of the Newsletter.

Thermal imaging: a village group looks at heat loss from homes

Feature

John Rodda
Oxford Region

The cover of the March issue of the BAFUNCS Newsletter had a photo taken by Dr Doug Miles showing John Rodda using a thermal imaging camera as part of a village project to study heat loss from homes. When I heard that this group of environmental enthusiasts in the small South Oxfordshire village of Brightwell-cum-Sotwell had also won a prize, I invited John to write a note on this unusual project.

Editor

Most people are anxious to have a warm home during the winter, to reduce any losses of heat and to save money. So when Ian Bacon of Thames Valley Energy gave a talk to the Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Environment Group on "Sustainable Energy for the Home" in April last year it created considerable interest. It also gave rise to the idea of using a thermal imaging camera to study heat loss from houses in the village. Images from the camera would identify where losses were occurring, raise awareness and lead to improvements in home energy efficiency.

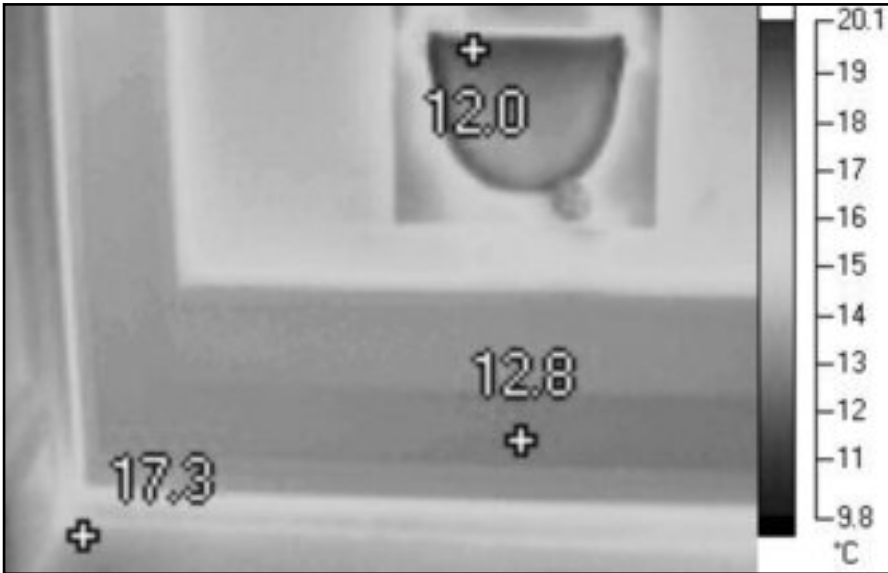
In November 2007, after research into the matter, the Environment Group submitted a "Thermal Imaging Proposal" to the South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) for the purchase of a thermal imaging camera, coupled with a programme for its use amongst the 580 or so properties in the village. After testing several types of camera, SODC purchased one along with the supporting software. The camera was delivered on 3 January 2008 for loan to the Group. Subsequently six members of the Group were trained in how to use the camera and three of them loaded the imaging software on their home computers.

During the second week in January the six Group members practised using the camera. Then during the period up to the end of March 2008 nearly 500 images were captured from some 60 village properties of different ages and types, together with the Red Lion pub, the Primary School and the Village Hall. Field notes were made for each building to record information on walls, windows and roof, the insulation and other details. Imaging was undertaken mainly from dusk onwards, when there was at least a 10°C temperature difference between inside and outside the building. Rain prevented imaging on some days as did occasions when the winter sun heated the fabric of a building causing 'solar gain'. The availability of householders and camera operators also limited the use of the camera, while the fact that the camera lens did not have a wide enough angle meant that in some cases multiple images had to be taken to give complete coverage of the face of a building.

The buildings surveyed ranged from ones with wattle and daub walls, small windows and thatched roofs dating from the 15th and 16th centuries, to those constructed within the past year or so to the most recent and exacting building standards. Then there were properties built in Georgian and Victorian times, some with solid walls, together with post-war dwellings, a number from the 1960s and 1970s with large picture windows. There were small cottages and larger houses. The majority of householders had fitted double glazing and insulated their lofts and walls. Most took care to reduce draughts and conserve energy for example by drawing curtains. Some of these measures also applied to the Primary School and to a certain extent the Village Hall. The result was that, in general, properties in the village were reasonably well insulated and had few 'hot spots' where heat was being lost.

The variety of methods of construction, differences in age, the materials used and other factors, made interpretation of the images challenging. In a number of cases the images led to questions rather than answers as some features were difficult to explain even with the help of the householder.

Because walls make up the largest external surface area of properties, the nature of the walls governs the largest percentage of the heat loss.



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 Depending on their thickness, solid walls are likely to lose most heat, but this can be reduced by cladding the wall with insulation. The cavity in cavity walls can be filled to improve thermal characteristics, but for some houses the study found that the insulation had settled leaving a space near the eaves where the wall was warmer. Dampness in walls promotes loss of heat and this also occurs where radiators are

A cat flap in a double glazed aluminium door. The picture was taken from the inside. Although it is a black and white version of a colour thermal image, it is still possible to discern darker areas of heat loss, where cold comes into the house and heat is lost to the outside. It illustrates the effectiveness of the double glazing and the heat loss through the metal frame of the door and, of course, the cat flap itself (Photo: courtesy of Peter Varley)

mounted on external walls without foil backing and below windows. For a few properties a small amount of heat was found to be leaking out through metal strips used for supporting brickwork over windows and where metal was used to bond an extension to the main part of the house.

Because of the angle of most roofs, roof temperatures measured by the camera could be confused with sky temperatures. Nevertheless as roofs make up the second largest surface area of a building it is prudent to install loft insulation to reduce heat loss, the thicker the better. Thatch was found to be a very good insulator. Properties with single glazing showed most heat loss through the windows, while double glazed windows with aluminium frames lost heat through the metal. Curtains, especially those lined with insulating material, will reduce heat loss through windows and through external doors which have thin panels and panes of glass. Curtains also help to reduce draughts induced by badly fitting doors and windows. Letterboxes, cat flaps (*see photo above*), vents and similar devices were found to be routes for heat to escape. Single glazed conservatories lost more heat than those with double glazing.

Each householder was given a report on his or her property containing images taken with the camera. These showed where heat was being lost and where insulation could be improved together with a possible explanation of the findings. Householders were also provided with a "Brief Guide to Energy Saving" prepared by the Group with help from the Thames Valley Energy Centre and the Energy Saving Trust. This Guide sets out practical steps to take to save energy and reduce household costs. It also provides information on what grants might be available.

The Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Study was entered in the Climate Change Communities Competition organised by the Oxfordshire Climate Xchange. It was awarded a prize of £500 at a meeting of 40 or so bodies involved in the Climate Xchange Programme in Oxford on 27 February.

Some results from the study were displayed, with permission of the householders concerned, in the Village Hall at a meeting of the Women's Institute and again at the General Meeting of the Environment Group. The display was also used at the Primary School's Ecoday and was on show at the Village Fete in early July.

A 'follow up' is now being planned to be launched in November. This may include the use of the camera for a short period and the circulation of a questionnaire to the 60 or so householders who were surveyed to discover what action they have taken in light of the earlier findings. Of course, the general conclusions of where heat loss was occurring were not surprising. The results become much more exciting, however, when moving from the general to the specific and individual householders can see just where that expensive heat is leaking from their homes! The study, an interesting initiative for a small village, is making a tangible contribution to reducing household energy bills and, of course, in the longer term to helping protect the environment.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due for their help and assistance in this Study to: the South Oxfordshire District Council, the Brightwell cum Sotwell Parish Council, ORCC, the Northmoor Trust, the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, TVEC, Energy Saving Trust, Brightwell Primary School, the Village Hall Trustees and those villagers whose properties were surveyed.

Everything you wanted to know about the United Nations

Feature

At this year's Annual Reunion, Sir Richard Jolly, the President, presented each of the guest speakers with a 'thank you' gift - a recently published book about the United Nations. What I wondered could a former Deputy Secretary-General or a former Under-Secretary-General want with such a book. Was it like a concerto by a favourite composer? Hearing it for the first time, you would recognize the style and enjoy the new experience or if it was a familiar piece you would enjoy listening to an old friend and might even mentally hum along with the music. I use the word "concerto" advisedly because I could see from my vantage point that it was not a massive tome. Once I had acquired a copy of the book* and delved into its contents, I discovered it was a bit of both, something old and familiar, something new and surprising.

To my mind, Maggie Black has succeeded in a daunting task, managing to explain the United Nations system, its aspirations, successes and failures, within 150 pages of text (excluding the prelims, a list of UN bodies and a useful index). I now understand why Sir Richard had been so enthusiastic about the book. It is quite possible that Mark Malloch-Brown and Erik Jensen will find little new in the book; its subject matter will be familiar. The opinions expressed, however, may give even them pause for thought because the author has not been slow in presenting insights and opinions on the personalities, events and forces that have helped shape the Organization and its institutions.

As someone who joined a specialized agency essentially to practice my own specialization, I had comparatively little contact with the international bureaucratic milieu in which it existed. Of course, it was impossible to avoid noticing during some 17 years of service the increasing politicization of the agency, the pressures and subterfuges of member countries, and the usual machinations of ambitious individuals. My main focus, however, was on achieving the targets, particularly budgetary ones, necessary for my group to operate effectively. I am, therefore, an ideal target for a book that offers a no-nonsense guide to the UN system as a whole. Rather like the slim volume drawn from the United Nations Intellectual History Project, also a gift from Sir Richard, I found this book difficult to put down.

While Maggie Black is a professional writer, it would be wrong to say the book is an easy read. I found myself having to read some sentences more than once to understand fully the message, particularly in the chapter devoted to human rights. Her own characterization of the UN human rights machinery as it developed over more than 50 years as "the ultimate cat's cradle of institutional confusion" gives a clue as to what she was up against! Even so, I was surprised at the number of major events and conventions relating to human rights that had seemingly passed me by both before and after my first working contact with the United Nations in 1969 when I gave up the editorship of a marine magazine to work six months for FAO helping prepare science-based features and to write a booklet on child nutrition for the Interagency Protein Advisory Group.

As might be anticipated in a guide, no nonsense or otherwise, the book contains a great deal of straightforward description. but it does not shrink from looking at some of the thorny issues that have or still confront the UN. Perhaps inevitably, the focus of the book tends to be on UN headquarters and the institutions set up by the UN Charter: the General Assembly, the Security Council and, of course, the Secretariat and the bodies that it services, particularly the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). If you are looking, therefore, for a blow by blow account of, say, the dispute between FAO and WFP that led to the latter's independence you will be disappointed. I did find, however, some of the old chestnuts repeated.

Set against the breadth of the UN system, the author has, perforce, had to be selective. The coverage of the book is also influenced by the thematic focus of the chapters: ending the scourge of war; rescue and relief; development assistance; human rights; protecting and managing the global commons; and concluding with the chances of UN reform.

As I read the book, I found myself wishing that Maggie had been given just a little more space. I found the contraction of the treatment of the

Tony Loftas
Editor

The Power of UN Ideas; Lessons from the First 60 years, Richard Jolly, Louis Emmerij and Thomas G Weiss, United Nations Intellectual History Project, New York, USA (2005) \$10.00

"How to exercise power on behalf of an essentially powerless structure is a contradiction at the heart of all UN affairs."

"Contributors are notoriously stingy with funds (for peacekeeping) and often refuse to pay up, and the legitimacy they confer is often hedged about with impractical caveats and subject to withdrawal."

"The principle of humanitarian neutrality...has been jeopardized by the politicization of humanitarian affairs."

"...its multiplicity was less a product of managerial lunacy than a creative response to the political obstacles facing any UN system response."

An independent writer and editor specialising in international development issues, she worked for UNICEF from 1977-88 initially as an information officer in East Africa and then as Editor of UNICEF Publications.

***The NoNonsense Guide to the United Nations**, Maggie Black, New Internationalist, London (2008) £6.99 ISBN 978-1-904456-88-9

A long journey from the Indian Army to the United Nations

Tony Loftas
Editor

"I chose the gunners because free driving instruction was included in the course. Sergeant-Major Slatter of the OTC consequently spent a number of rather hair-raising moments giving me driving instruction on the new Oxford bypass."

"Our troop train appeared to have some priority for we passed many trains in sidings on the way."

***Back Seat Driver**, Oliver Knowles, Pen Press Publishers, Brighton (2008) £9.99 ISBN 978-1-906710-08-8

These are the memoirs, modestly entitled **Back Seat Driver*, of the late Oliver Knowles who served both Empire and the United Nations. Briefly, he was born into a professional family in Warrington, went to a succession of private schools and then on to Oriel College, Oxford. At the start of the second world war, he halted his studies and was posted to the Indian Army. Rising to the rank of lieutenant-colonel in Burma at the age of 24, he returned after the war to Oxford to complete his studies. He combined these with preparations for the Colonial Service which he completed after graduating. He joined the Kenya Provincial Administration in 1949 and in 1955 he transferred to the Kenya Treasury where he remained after Kenya independence. In 1969 he finally left Kenya and joined UNCTAD where he served for 14 years before retiring to Watlington in Oxfordshire, having lived outside England for 35 years (apart from a sabbatical year at Oxford and couple of years in London).

Sensing that war was inevitable after Chamberlain's Munich visit, Oliver joined the 'gunner' branch of the Officers Training Corps when he arrived at Oxford University. In 1940, when the academic year came to an end, he did not expect to return. Towards the end of the summer he received an offer of a cadetship in the Indian Army and he was called up just before Christmas. After preliminary training in the UK, he and his fellow recruits set sail for India. They arrived at Bombay in early March 1941. "It would have been unwise to let 500 cadets loose in Bombay after several weeks at sea, so we were hastily marched to a troop train that headed south for Bangalore." Weary from their journey they went to bed. They awoke to find a personal servant (bearer) standing by each bed with morning tea and toast. "From that moment on we had no cause to complain about our conditions and lived in Kiplingesque luxury."

Everything you wanted to know about the United Nations - *continued*

"GEF (Global Environment Facility) expenditures on environmental protection conform to the neoliberal economic view of development policy and international trade, rather than any alternative, fundamentally greener and more radical vision...."

"UN bodies, while they are more open to leverage from Southern member states than non-UN international bodies, appear hardly more attuned to the plight of people still living in subsistence economies in the most vulnerable environments."

"Although the UN looks to them more than it used to, it still tends to regard civil society organizations as junior and amateur extensions of itself..."

international governance of the oceans a little misleading. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) focuses essentially on ships and those who sail in them - including their impact on the marine environment. I was not aware that it is involved in fisheries management; this lies for the most part in the hands of international fishery commissions, nearly half of them set up under the auspices of FAO. Maggie also moves without a break from IMO's responsibility for overseeing marine pollution conventions to the Third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea. It is a pity she did not have space to mention the two earlier conferences that set the stage for major changes in international law or the part played by a small nation, Malta, in creating pressure for UNCLOS III, fueled in part by fears of an undersea land grab by the industrialized nations.

One of the most interesting chapters for me was the final one on the chances of UN reform. Maggie Black is not particularly optimistic. The underlying message is that the opportunity for major reforms has been lost, thanks in no small part to the machinations of John Bolton following his appointment as the American Ambassador to the United Nations just weeks before a UN World Summit billed as San Francisco II. Bolton succeeded in undermining the momentum behind the consensus achieved in the run up to the gathering by proposing some 750 amendments to the key document. "Drip-drip reform - the way things are usually done - has reasserted itself as the default position," the author concludes.

This is not to say that Maggie believes beneficial changes are impossible: "what needs to change at the UN is less attempt to streamline and consolidate, and more devolution of responsibility to regional organizations and national missions with an effective and properly informed presence on the ground. This includes out-sourcing to NGOs that are not formally part of the system...A more participatory and democratic environment for internationally inspired and funded work would be a great improvement; and it would help extend the promise contained in UN programs to the point where they genuinely connect with people's lives."

Oliver had a 'good war'. He became an expert in logistics and supplies. Promoted to captain in 1941, he demonstrated his skills by keeping the brigade well-supplied when, in May 1942, it was moved to Palel in Manipur state on the border with Burma. By then most of the retreating Burma army had passed through the lines following the fall of Rangoon. The aim was to keep the Japanese army out. He remained there until just after the end of the monsoon season in October when he left for a senior officer training course. The following January he was promoted to major and appointed Deputy Assistant Director of Supplies (DADS), based first at Vaniyambadi and then Delhi.

Oliver was to return again to Manipur under very different circumstances. In 1944 the Japanese had invaded and surrounded the main army base. It now depended almost entirely on air supplies. He was flown into Imphal, the state capital, as DADS for air supply. He remained there until the siege was lifted. His job done he returned to Delhi and subsequently to Barrackpore near Calcutta where preparations were in hand for the reinvasion of Burma by the 14th Army under General Slim. The offensive, launched in 1945, went well and just before the start of the monsoon season, the British were back in Rangoon. In July, Oliver arrived at the military headquarters there. Shortly afterwards he was made lieutenant colonel and appointed Assistant Director of Supplies, responsible for feeding the army in Burma. A military career was not for him; a year later he left for England to be discharged from the army. By October he was back at university.

The Oxford he returned to was very austere compared to the one he left. It was a time of postwar frugality and rationing. He had returned to one of the coldest winters on record. Practically the only places where some warmth was guaranteed were the libraries. It was in the New Bodleian library that he met June Watkins his future wife. He was intrigued to find her family had served the empire overseas for two generations: her grandfather was a chaplain in India and her father an administrator in Kenya. She had left the family home in Kenya to join up, serving as an officer with the Women's Auxillary Air Force (WAAF). Oliver, who had revived an earlier application to the colonial service, had been accepted for the Devonshire course. By the time he went before the Colonial Service interviewing committee he had a reason to be posted to Kenya. He completed the Devonshire course in the same year as graduating from Oxford. June still had another year to go to graduation. They were married in 1949 at St Marks church in Nairobi.

Oliver's first posting in Kenya was Lodwar in Turkana where he served for 18 months. He discovered the Italian campaign during the war had been turned to some advantage. When a lone Italian bomber dropped a bomb and set some huts on fire, the District Commissioner had radioed Nairobi "Lodwar bombed, township on fire, construction of static water tank essential against future raids". Funds were made available and a static water tank indistinguishable in design from a swimming pool was built. Similarly, wartime expansion of the transport fleet necessitated construction of a garage, but its rear wall had to be buttressed by a structure that resembled a squash court. "Thus, Lodwar administrators managed to maintain their sanity under difficult conditions."

After Lodwar, where June joined her husband, other postings took the couple to Malindi on the coast, a comparative paradise after the semi-desert conditions of northern Kenya, and then Kiambu, a district made up mainly of a mixture of European coffee farms and a Kikuyu reserve. While he was in Malindi, a piped water supply was installed and a new hospital built. In Kiambu, which had several district officers, Oliver was able to focus mainly on African court work and the district's markets. Within a few months, however, he was called to join the central secretariat in Nairobi. Six months later, having completed a three year tour and accrued seven months of leave, he was able to take a sabbatical leave in Oxford to study agricultural marketing.

Returning to Kenya in 1953 he was posted to Kisii, an important, prosperous district with a correspondingly large headquarters. After this tour of duty, he was assigned to the Treasury, then a stimulating place to work; the post-Mau Mau reconstruction of the economy was just beginning. While there he was offered a two year secondment to the UK Treasury in Whitehall. The family moved to

"During the monsoon our main enemies were the mud and mosquitoes, not the Japanese who had very extended lines of communication and were suffering from the mud and mosquitoes even more than us."

"The airlift worked well and we were able to maintain supplies and rations at a higher level than we had enjoyed in 1942...the Japanese were at the limit of their advance and it became obvious that it was only a matter of time before we should be pushing them back."

Named after the Devonshire Committee which reported on *Post-War Training for Colonial Service* and advised a thorough pre-service training for candidates before going abroad.

"When I arrived in Kenya I had to confess that I neither played cricket nor was very interested in bird watching. This confession apparently left no option but to post me to the northern frontier..."

"As His Majesty's sole administrative representative...I was a sort of Gilbertian Poo Bah - district officer, port officer, keeper of the lighthouse, receiver of wrecks, sub-district accounting officer, officer in charge of the prison and the detention camp, officer in charge of the tribal police, receiver of stolen ivory, town clerk, chief sanitary inspector, keeper of burial grounds, and custodian generally of law and order and public decency..."

A long journey from the Indian Army to the United Nations - *continued*

“My first impressions of the Treasury were deeply depressing...after the sunshine, new office buildings and innovative optimism of the Kenya Treasury.”

“Annual receipts from aid equalled £14 per head of population, the highest of any developing country in the world.” As result of this success Oliver Knowles was awarded the OBE. In the citation he is credited as being “largely responsible for the success of the Government’s efforts in obtaining aid for development from international organizations and overseas governments.”

The seeds of Oliver’s decision to leave Kenya were perhaps sown when the findings of the commission were ignored. He felt that the President should have sacked two ministers.

Glasgow University had approached him about a research fellowship in economic cooperation and development. June had been offered a teaching post in economics.

The goodwill arose, it is claimed, after the five heads of state, who all spoke English, met in Malaysia where they played golf together.

“ASEAN has been a success story. Starting with five members it now has ten member states, most of which are showing considerable economic growth.”

London. In his own words, he managed to survive his two years in the Treasury “without making too many serious mistakes”. In fact, he may well have helped to rescue the Jodrell Bank telescope which had hit funding problems as result of “some optimistic costing by Sir Bernard Lovell and the main contractor”.

Oliver returned to Kenya in early 1960 at the beginning of an exciting decade that started with preparations for independence. In the Treasury he resumed his old post in development planning and as joint secretary of the Cabinet’s development committee he came into contact with many of the country’s leading politician. In August 1961 Jomo Kenyatta was released from detention and in 1962, following a constitutional conference at Lancaster House in London, a coalition government was formed. On 12 December 1963 the Kenyan flag was unfurled in Uhuru Park: a year later Kenya declared itself a republic with Jomo Kenyatta as its first president.

In the lead up to independence and immediately afterwards, the volume of foreign aid work developed rapidly as countries from both the West and East vied to send missions and open embassies. Oliver became something of an expert on aid. In 1965 he was made deputy secretary for finance. In 1967 President Kenyatta appointed him to a commission of enquiry into the maize industry. Later that year he became acting Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Finance. Scheduled to last six months, the assignment came to an abrupt end when he collapsed at a meeting. When he returned, he did not go back to the Treasury but was seconded to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. At the end of 1968 he decided to resign and prepared to leave Kenya in early 1969.

While attending a conference of the Economic Commission for Africa at Addis Ababa in 1962 Oliver had met Christopher Eckenstein who was then special assistant to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD. At the time Oliver had not even heard of UNCTAD, but the encounter was to establish his career when he decided to leave Kenya. He was literally sitting on a packing case on the last night in Nairobi when Eckenstein paid a visit. He recalled their earlier encounter and wanted to know whether Oliver would be interested in an appointment with UNCTAD as an interregional adviser on economic cooperation between developing countries. He was taken by surprise because his plan was to go to Glasgow University where both he and June hoped to take up posts.

When the Knowles left Kenya, they had still not heard from Glasgow so Oliver decided to visit Eckenstein in Geneva while they were holidaying in Europe. He was persuaded to accept a six month assignment. The papers for the Glasgow appointments had still not arrived by the end of the first contract so Oliver signed another. In the end he worked for UNCTAD until 1984 when he retired to the UK. For most of this time he occupied the post first suggested on his last night in Kenya. He spent the final four years, first as an adviser and then as a consultant to ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States).

One of Oliver’s proudest achievements in UNCTAD was the part he played as Deputy Leader of the UN advisory team that helped set up ASEAN (the Association of South East Asian Nations). The project arose from a series of happy coincidences: the Netherlands had provided a £500,000 fund for a project to help cooperation in Asia; the heads of the five Southeast Asia governments had signed an agreement to set up an organization for cooperation; and UNCTAD was in a position to offer support and expertise for such a project. UNDP funding of the project followed.

In the Epilogue to his book Oliver explores why some nations or groups of nations have succeeded while others, notably in Africa, failed. He is particularly concerned with Kenya, but he postulates that many of the problems there and elsewhere relate to an imbalance that arises when a population is growing so rapidly that it prevents growth in per capita incomes even when the economy is growing overall. Corruption is another problem. It is not helped by poor government wages and salaries. He points to the Code of Pecuniary Interest in the colonial service which prevented a civil servant from going into business and laid down what presents could be accepted. This code was abandoned in Kenya in 1971. “Nothing would give me more satisfaction than to see Kenya leading the way in the reduction of corruption in Africa,” he concludes.

“Ding, ding, ding, dong”. The machine beeps to say “adjust me”, and then, “ding, ding, de de ding dong” and then sometimes a pleading buzz. These sounds come from the apparatus to which you are hooked up, and from others nearby attached to fellow patients. All combine with telephone rings, mobile phone chants, the swish and squish of a revolving cooling fan, the sound of rolling wheels on the nurses’ chairs, the rattle of the welcome tea trolley. One nurse has squeaky shoes, another tap taps around as she walks the seemingly endless miles of hospital corridors. Even the rustle of newspaper and magazine pages, and the grinding noise of repair work being carried out somewhere, and from outside the beep beep of a reversing delivery vehicle and the occasional ambulance siren. The drone of an aircraft flying high overhead and occasionally the clatter of Hayling Island’s coastguard helicopter, and the loud screeching of Southsea’s seagulls. An ever increasing crescendo. A continuous barrage of sound.

Not exactly the sound of music. Not exactly Manchester’s Hallé Orchestra’s 150th birthday celebratory music at the BBC Proms 2008 in the Royal Albert Hall.

Have you seen, or rather heard, the theatre revue “Stomp”? A figure in overalls steps onto the stage and begins to sweep the stage with slow brush movements. He is joined by one, two, a dozen more, all sweeping, the sound gradually increasing in volume. They leave the swept stage but return with lengths of rubber hosepipe which they beat on the floor, making a rubbery plop, plop. Dustbin lids are banged. Washboards, reminiscent of the skiffle era, are brought in, together with, yes, kitchen sinks which are filled with water and then drained. Together they produce a mind-boggling symphony of sounds. Quite an orchestra.

As you sit “quietly” for four hours or so in the Oncology Outpatient Day Clinic, the drip slowly dripping in, you become acutely aware of surrounding sounds and begin to devise your own musical composition.

Yes, I was sitting having another of my courses of R-CHOP (it is called that) treatment, having time to put together a Traveller’s Tale, until now postponed and postponed. Trying to think positive, waiting for the specialist nurse to remove the cannula from my hand. You do have tremendous support from the Oncology staff, consultants, nurses, tea ladies and all other cancer patients. I have joined the Lymphoma Support Group set up in Portsmouth. And family and friends rally round and provide all kinds of help – even down to dead-heading the roses. The many telephone calls, emails, get-well messages I have received have all been very much appreciated and encouraging. They have made me realize even more how important it is to keep in touch with friends and colleagues. Don’t forget to send that message, make that phone call – maintain that feeling of togetherness.

I have had time to watch some of the Tour de France on television. One hundred and sixty riders cover more than 3000 kms throughout July. It reminded me of Lance Armstrong, who suffered from testicular cancer while a young racing cyclist and came back after chemotherapy to win that exhausting race seven years in succession. He was being positive.

More and more people, often those suffering from cancer and other illnesses, make supreme efforts to help themselves and others. They run for charity in the London Marathon, they climb mountains, throw themselves out of planes (with a parachute, of course), and I’ve just seen a group of school children are to cycle for charity from John O’Groats to Lands End (not downhill all the way!). All this is positive thinking and raises awareness of others less fortunate than ourselves.

June and I thought we would be positive and walk the Taff Trail in South Wales. And so, on a cold March day, we packed our walking gear in the car and drove to the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Storey Arms, a one-time drovers and coaching inn, situated at a height of 1500 feet, on the main road between Merthyr Tydfil and Brecon. Our intention was to start our 55 plus mile walk (in sections, of course, and with stops) from there, going on to Pen y Fan, the highest point and the watershed which supplies the reservoirs and clean water to South Wales, then on to where the sources of the River Taff - the Taff Fawr and the Taff Fechan - join to form the main stream of the river. We would then make our way south to the docklands of Cardiff Bay. We arrived at the Storey Arms in the midst of a raging blizzard; we could not even open the car door. A walk was definitely a “no go”.

We have walked the pleasant, easy section from where the Taff enters Cardiff – past the magnificent Civic Centre, the Castle, the Millennium Stadium, stopping off at the Royal Hotel in St. Mary’s Street where Captain Scott and officers of the British Antarctic Expedition to the South Pole dined in the Alexandra Room before setting off for the Terra Nova via Madeira. Some day we hope to complete all sections of our Taff Trail walk.

Think Positive. “Ding, ding, ding, dong.”

Fred Beer

National Welfare
Support
Coordinator

Once again, it seems to happen every other issue of the *Newsletter*, I must offer an apology to the Editor who has told me not to write about cycling/racing – a passion of mine. Sorry! (I wonder if he knows that Nicole Cooke, a Welsh lass, won Britain’s first medal, a gold, at the Olympics in Beijing, by winning the women’s cycling road race?)

The BAFUNCS

Benevolent Fund, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary, is always in need of donations. We thought that we would try to obtain some sponsorship for our walk and give the money to the Fund.

New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members who joined the Association between March and August 2008.

FENNER Mrs G
IMO LON

FRANCIS Mrs M
IMO SRY

GESER Mrs A
WHO(IARC) LON

HALVORSEN Mrs D
WHO OVS

**HANCOCK Mr A &
GALLAGHER Mrs M**
UNESCO OXF

NORTHWAY Ms J
FAO OVS

POULSEN DR K B
FAO LON

SLARK Mr G & Mrs N
ITLOS LON

**TEUNISSEN Mr T &
Mrs M ROES**
UNDP SRY

**VOLCKER Mr N &
Mrs J**
FAO WMW

Resignations

Mrs M T Bamford

Professor R and Mrs M Hoggart

Mrs B and Mr R Johnson



Members of the Oxford Region set out from Hill Farm to scale Wittenham Clumps. In the background is Didcot Power Station. The Clumps, two prominent hills, offer a panorama of the Thames valley. The area is of archaeological interest: Hill Farm has a museum and Project Timescape covering the area from the Bronze Age to the present. The aim of the walkers was to reach the top of Castle Hill - site of an Iron Age fort. The Clumps also show evidence of Roman occupation and King Offa of Mercia apparently built a look-out post on Castle Hill after defeating the West Saxons at the Battle of Benson in AD772. (Photo: David Axford)

In Memoriam

Deepest sympathy and sincere condolences are extended to the families and friends of members who have died recently:

Miss U M Banister	WMO	NOR
Mrs V J Bungay-Prevet	ITU	KSX
Miss J Cane	FAO	SWT
Mrs D Crellin	UNESCO	OXF
Dr P Elkan	UNCTAD/UN(ECE)	CAM
Mrs A Kamp	UNDP	CAM
Mr O S Knowles	UNCTAD	OXF
Ms J B Paterson	UN/UNCHS	KSX
Mrs A J Powell	UNICEF	SRY
Dr K S SEAL	WHO	SWT
Mrs D E Thomas	UN	KSX

The Corporal and the Celestials

In the September 2007 issue of the *BAFUNCS Newsletter*, Bill Jackson gave some of the background to this fascinating book which he edited. It features the work of James Hutchinson, a young corporal of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, while stationed in China in the early 1900s. Hutchinson was fascinated by the ancient civilization of 'the Celestials' and its dawning modernization. He not only photographed it but, incredibly, developed his prints and lantern slides without the benefit of a darkroom: 140 of the best are reproduced, including 18 of those that Hutchinson hand-coloured. The book, published by the Ulster Historical Foundation (ISBN: 978 1 903688 63 2), is now available price £13.99 plus packing and postage. It can be ordered direct at www.booksireland.org.uk.

REGIONAL OFFICERS OF BAFUNCS

Contact details for all BAFUNCS officers are in the Membership List

CAMBRIDGE

Regional Representative/Chairman
Secretary/Treasurer
Welfare Officer

Mr Vincent Austin (*ad interim*)
Miss Philomena Guillebaud
Dr Ian O'Neill

KENT AND SUSSEX

Regional Representative/Chairman
Treasurer
Secretary/Membership
Welfare Officer (Brighton)
Welfare Officer (Lewes and Haywards Heath)
Welfare Officer (Kent)
Welfare Officer (Tunbridge Wells and environs)
Welfare Officer (West Sussex)

Ms Joan Wilson
Dr Brian Dando
Mrs Waida Dando
Mrs Grania Skeldon
Mrs Jennifer Brooke
Miss Ann Miller
Ms Sheila Cooper
Miss Margaret Bills

LONDON

Regional Representative/Chairman
Vice Chairman
Secretary
Treasurer

Mr Walter Hoffman
Dr Ziaul Islam
Mrs Brenda Suinters
Mrs Lynda Young

NORTHERN

Chairman *ad interim*
Regional Representative and Honorary Secretary
Honorary Treasurer
Welfare Officer

Mr Laurie Robertson
Mr Robert England
Mr Laurie Robertson
contact Chairman

OXFORD

Regional Representative
Secretary/Treasurer
Welfare Officer

Mr Bill Jackson
Mr Cyril Groom
Vacant

SOUTH CENTRAL

Regional Representative/Secretary/Treasurer
Welfare Officer

Mrs June Hargreaves-Ber
Mr Fred Beer

SOUTHWEST & CHANNEL ISLES

Regional Representative
Deputy Regional Representative
Membership Secretary
Treasurer
Welfare Officer (Bath & North-east Somerset)
Welfare Officer (Bristol area)
Welfare Officer Cornwall
Welfare Officer (East Devon, West Devon)
Welfare Officer (Plymouth and Torbay)
Welfare Officer (Somerset)

Mr Rosemary ap Rees
Barbara Whitehead
Miss Irene Chamberlain
Mrs Eileen Wait
Mr and Mrs Peter Lees
Mrs Joyce Bowen-Ashwin
Mrs Barbara Pisarski
Miss Elizabeth Barton
Ms Barbara Whitehead
Mr Ron Forrest

SURREY

Chairman
Regional Representative
General Secretary
Treasurer
Social Programme Secretary
Help Line

Miss Tilly Armstrong
Miss Patricia Brown (*ad interim*)
Mrs Alison Husaunndee
Mrs Isobel Taylor
Mrs Pat Mukhtar
Mrs Pat Mukhtar
Miss Dell Tierney

WEST MIDLANDS & WALES

Regional Representative/Treasurer
Regional Welfare Officer
Local Welfare Contact, Cheltenham

Mr Duncan Morris
Mrs Phyl Marshall
Mrs Sheila Rashed-Angelini

OVERSEAS

Regional Representative (*to be contacted on all matters*) Mr Fred Beer

BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund

Trustees

Chairman
Cyril Groom (FAO)

Clerk/Treasurer to the Trustees
Nanda Wijayatilake (UNHCR)

Members

Fred Beer (WHO)
Susan Idreos (WHO)
Susan Miller (UN-IDNDR)
Geoffrey Shakespeare (UNWRA)
Brenda Suinters (WHO)

Correspondence

All correspondence with the Benevolent Fund, is treated as confidential and should be addressed to:

Clerk/Treasurer
BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund
41 Riverine, Grosvenor Drive,
Maidenhead, Berks SL6 8PF

Tel: 01628 636000

The Fund is a registered charity. It welcomes contributions through the Gift Aid Scheme. The Fund can reclaim income tax on all donations as long as a Gift Aid Declaration is completed and the donor has paid income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax the Fund reclaims on the donation during that tax year. Forms and/or further information are available from the Fund's Clerk/Treasurer (see above).

BAFUNCS membership

Members are urged to recruit friends and former UN colleagues. The annual subscription is £14 for a single membership or £21 for joint membership (husband and wife). Life subs are £140 and £210 respectively. Members receive the Newsletter in March and September and the Membership List in September. BAFUNCS also issues Information Notes:

INF1 Guide to BAFUNCS

INF2 When a pensioner dies

INF3 Accommodation for older people

INF4 Planning for retirement in the United Kingdom

INF5 Taxation in the UK

INF6 Personal information checklists

INF7 Guide to welfare support that BAFUNCS can provide

Application forms and Information Notes can be obtained from:

*BAFUNCS Membership Secretary,
6 The Lawn, Ealing Green,
London W5 5ER*

e-mail: bengoabc@talktalk.net

The 32nd General Assembly and Annual Reunion is in Hampshire ...



Exbury Gardens



Breamore House



Mottisfont Abbey House ©NTPL/Robert Morris



**... at Chilworth Manor Hotel
from 8 to 10 May, 2008**

