

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN RE-UNION – 2013 (By Stan Benjamin 1962)

Before we left the Portsmouth OW Re-Union in 2012, I was determined to do two things. The first, to try and bring together some of those OW's for another 'salmon' re-union in South Australia and the second, that in so doing we try to involve Dave Ramage (1963) who had to cancel his 2012 trip because of prostate cancer and the placement of radio-active seeds as a treatment. During Pompey 2012, so many of Dave's friends sent best wishes and positive feed-back to him on the radio active seeds that some had already experienced.

Before I knew it, I had invited Tom Sparks and his partner Liz, Campbell (Polly) Pearson (1962) and his partner Jackie, Keith Broderick (1963) and his wife Toni to join us on Kangaroo Island, off the coast of South Australia, in March 2013. Imagine my panic when Keith Broderick on the bus, duly fed and watered after the Guildhall Dinner, invited the whole ship's company to ".....Stan & Chris Benjamin's House on Kangaroo Island – You're all welcome!!"



Polly, Tom, Stan & Keith – Pompey 2012

Nevertheless, by July 13, Tom Sparks had booked his flights to Adelaide and the re-union in South Australia was on for young and old. Keith Broderick signed on too and we both made contact with Dave Ramage in Melbourne to convince him to join us. It was a critical time for Dave but we recognised that perhaps an opportunity to join with other OW's and relax, might be just what the Doctor ordered. Poor Polly Pearson and Jackie could not make it but would be there in spirit.

On March 17 2013 Tom Sparks and Liz Binstead arrived at Adelaide Airport for their Aussie Adventure. After a few days R&R and a chance to see Adelaide and the wine country of McLaren Vale, we excitedly de-camped to American River on Kangaroo Island. Tom had brought a small Worcester Ensign with him and I knew I had a Bosun's Pipe on the Island. We were champing at the bit as Kangaroo Island came beautifully into sight from the Sealink Ferry.



Tom & Liz in Australia with Stan & Chris
In McLaren Vale & on Pennington Bay
on K.I.

Flying Proud



Cadets?? No!! Two Benny Hills more
like it.

Waiting for Dave and Keith to arrive, Tom and I were like a couple of excited 14 year old Worcester cadets. We had planned a welcoming ceremony, Bosun Pipe and all, Ensigns flying from my flagpole and both dressed in the Pompey Re-Union T-Shirt and cap.

Keith's car swung into the driveway at the allotted time and after the traditional piping aboard, Tom Sparks and Stan Benjamin, standing rigidly to attention, saluted and cried out "three cheers for the Old Worcesters – hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!!" The sight of four excited OW's and their spouses jumping up and down amid hugs and kisses was a sight for sore eyes.



So much laughter.....& booze!!

Later that evening Keith presented us with his wonderful token in honour of our re-union. A beautiful bottle of 2003 Adelaide Hills Shiraz with the Worcester Logo and a commemorative back label.



Keith's wonderful memento. The re-union wine for O.W's,



Ships Company!! ATTENTION!!

The next few days were taken up with beach walks, boating and fishing and laughter so loud and so incessant we all thought it may have been wise to bring along some of those incontinence pads one sees on TV adverts. I even managed to get the lads out in the morning and at sunset for the raising and lowering of the flag and the Worcester Ensign. Amazing that we could all stand to attention, as one and on command, salute and even

fake the bugle call. Freddie King and Black Mac (Mr. McAllister) would have been proud.

We ate like Kings and Queens, recounting stories of Worcester, bringing Dave up to speed with what happened in Pompey back in June 2012 and caught up with news, lives and memories. The fair ladies got on very well and at times looked at us four men askance, but with amusement and love. I shouldn't say, but we consumed 4 litres of gin, 8 bottles of champagne, 18 bottles of wine and a bottle of Baileys. But not a single headache!!

The postscript to this happy event was that after leaving KI, Dave and Lyn Ramage spent a further week in the Barossa Valley and Tom Sparks proposed to Liz in Hong Kong. Their wedding will be in August. "Ee go yah!!"



Four very patient women + Dave Ramage and a delicious whiting. Tom finally caught fish from Stan's Boat – Nice Snook Tom!!

