

# Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila

Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila  
"These Pleasant Days"  
Spring 1983



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

"In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful."  
Holy Quran

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On the cover:

Fertile farmlands spread across the tranquil  
'Asir province of southwestern Saudi Arabia.

Please forward address changes to:

Aramco Services Company  
Public Affairs Department  
1800 Augusta Drive Suite 300  
Houston, TX 77057

Attention: Pat Dougherty

Attach old mailing label to your change of  
address notice. One notice will suffice for  
*Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila*, *The Arabian Sun* and  
*Aramco World Magazine*.

## Letters

New Braunfels, Texas

**W**e hope 1982 was a good year and that we'll hear from you soon. Wish we could get together more often.

1982 was both a great and a hard year for us. On January 15, Ray was rushed by ambulance to the hospital with congestive heart failure. From then until July 14, he spent 111 days in the VA hospital in San Antonio, where he was treated royally. He had a heart catheterization and quadruple bypass open heart surgery, followed by an excellent recovery period and a successful stress test.

Then we had a scare—an extremely low platelet count caused by allergic reaction to two medicines. So out came the spleen, followed by two operations to drain large abscesses, pneumonia and a collapsed lung.

With four major surgeries within four-and-one-half months, Ray lost 40 pounds and had a very slow recovery. It was mid-October before he had any energy or wanted to do mental work. We are now suspicious of any new medicine and possible side effects. Ray is doing very well now. He walks, exercises and can do most things. One hundred percent improvement since November.

During that time so many people were helpful, and we made some new friends to whom we are also grateful. Dot and Bill Rogers (formerly of UPM, Dhahran) came back into our lives, giving us moral support and R.A. hospitality in San Antonio, saving us a daily 84-mile round trip to our motor home. R.A.'s

sister, Priscilla, in Austin and her neighbors, Peggy & Leon Hargis and Henry & Velma Solar, of San Antonio, have been most kind and helpful. Letters, cards and telephone calls from those far away (even from England) were much appreciated.

December 14 was groundbreaking day on our home. The excavation and septic system was completed. We lined up the cement slab and masonry contractors. The house plans are now revised and printed; doors, windows, locks and latches, block and brick are ordered. Ray is working on the lumber order, and we'll decide which shell builder soon.

Ray cannot do the heavy block work now, but we still plan to do all the inside carpentry, electrical, plumbing and finish work except for the high sheetrock which we'll contract out. On December 27 the garage cement floor forms were started. The well was drilled in 1981.

Our three-level, hybrid solar design takes advantage of the hillside and lovely 180-degree view. Lowest is a 60-foot-long garage for the motor home plus a two-car garage. Four feet higher is a workshop and game room with a half bath. The upper level over both lower levels has a greatroom with an open kitchen, having a pantry and laundry room behind. Also, there are two large bedrooms and baths plus a solar greenhouse. Over part of the greatroom is a balcony room with an attic on each side. We'll use a solar hot water system and two heat pumps for heat and A/C. The outside will be a combination of

wood siding and Mission block and brick. A 60-foot-long deck will entice you to relax and enjoy the view.

It's easy to see what we'll be doing in 1983. You are invited to come visit us at *Ras-Haven*.

We wish you all the best and hope you have a grand year.

Sincerely,

**Ruth Ann and Ray Stevens**

Eugene, Oregon

We've just received the Fall *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila* and notice in it that you have a few souvenir digital desk clocks from the last reunion. While we were unable to attend due to prior commitments, we were, however, there in spirit, and if you have one of these souvenirs left over we would love to have one.

I also have a further request which may or may not come within your province, but if not, you could probably refer my request to the right channel. Some years ago I received from Public Affairs a set of slides of Saudi Arabia with a cassette. During this past year, I have shown these slides at several functions—senior community centers, adult mobile home parks and other groups. They have generated tremendous interest, and we have had repeat showings, as well as other invitations.

We have encountered at these affairs parents whose children are now in Saudi Arabia, and they were glad to get first-hand information about the country, people and living conditions. I know there have been tremendous

changes since we left Saudi Arabia, and if there is a new addition to the slides, I would be most interested in purchasing a set.

With best wishes to one and all in Houston.

Sincerely,  
**Charles E. Miller**

*Although we no longer have the souvenir clocks, we do have an updated version of the slide kit, "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," which is available free of charge upon request. It contains 80 slides along with an audio-cassette tape and accompanying booklet.*

**Editor**

Phoenix, Arizona

If you still have the calendars for 1983, I would greatly appreciate having one, for through the years, I've come to depend on those yearly issues.

Since retirement I have found the calendars of great interest to Girl Scout and Brownie groups here. Just yesterday I took the 17 I now have to a Brownie troop I talked to about Saudi Arabia. The pictures suggested many questions, showing a real need for children here to know about life in another environment.

Thank you for making the calendars available.

Sincerely,  
**Evadna Burba (Mrs. H.R.)**

Austin, Texas

Sorry we missed the reunion—perhaps next time.

I retired last May after 30 years in Saudi Arabia. Yep, 30 years; even so, it was early retirement. A neighbor whose husband still goes daily to his office at age 68

asked Paula, my wife, why I quit work at a relatively young age. The High Sheriff told the lady: "He had no choice, because he's too lazy to work and too nervous to steal."

Have a perfect 1983 and keep up the great work in *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila*.

All the best,  
**Jack England**

Denville, New Jersey

Today we received the Winter edition 1982 of "These Pleasant Days" and, as always, enjoyed every page.

I am writing to request a 1983 Girl Scout Engagement Calendar as offered. In the past years I have shown the calendar to my neighbor's daughters who are Girl Scouts and they have always been most impressed. They always bring back fond memories of when daughter Barbara was a Dhahran Girl Scout.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,  
**Helen Holt**  
(Mrs. Robert W. Holt)

*We still have Girl Scout Engagement Calendars available. For a free copy, write:*

*Girl Scout Calendar  
ASC Public Affairs  
1800 Augusta Drive, Suite 300  
Houston, TX 77057*

**Editor**

Ontario, Canada

Please note the change in my home address and publish this change to all my dear Aramco annuitant friends in *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila*.

You may also publish a little

update on our progress since March '82.

We are well settled in Ottawa, Canada. I now work for a Canadian Crown Corporation as a senior quality assurance analyst in their EDP Department. My wife Zena is employed with the American Embassy in Ottawa. Our son Neil is in his second year of the premed Biology program at Ottawa University and is preparing to sit for the Medical College Admission Test in the summer of 1983. Our daughter Sharon is doing her first-year studies in Political Science at McGill University.

We take this opportunity to thank you for your continuing assistance and service.

Yours faithfully,  
**Anthony E. Mariados**

Hong Kong

Celebrated the new year in Hong Kong where I have been since Christmas. Am on a round-the-world trip, my twelfth, stopping and staying as the spirit moves me. Hong Kong remains one of the world's most interesting places. How long will such endeavors be permitted to exist?

So far, I have visited in the eastern U.S., the U.K., and had about 10 days in Saudi Arabia where I still have many old friends, inside and outside Aramco, Arab and American. Many of the latter were busy with travel plans to holiday spots ranging from Greece to the U.S.: the Lee Carsons, the Waters, etc. Had a couple of days in Bangkok before going on to the Philippines for about a week in Mindanao's Davao City. Had Christmas dinner flying across the South China Sea between

Manila and Hong Kong on Cathay Pacific.

Hope to go on, soon, to Japan for an indefinite stay in Fukuoka. My youngest son, Robert, is to be married and I must be back for that event. Robert works as a geologist for Cities Service Company, based in Oklahoma City. Anyway, after Japan it will be Hawaii for a few days, the same in Los Angeles and, finally, back to Houston where my trip began. My best to all in 1983.

Sincerely,  
**A.C. Vick**

Atlanta, Georgia

This letter is in answer to the Fall '82 magazine. The cover is lovely.

For the newsy-type items for the next issue, I wonder if you'd put in some of the things some of us are doing?

Norma Cumpston had a grand letter to the editor in the *Christian Science Monitor*. (My letters don't get printed in my local Atlanta paper—I try, though.)

Carlton and Annie Ruth Duke and I lent Saudi crafts to the Saudi National Day exhibit at the World's Fair in Knoxville and had radio and newspaper interviews.

The Presbyterian Church has put out a very good study package and also a filmstrip, "On Jordan's Stormy Banks," which we take around to civic and church groups.

Perhaps others can share ideas that have been well received in their area and encourage us to be more active in educating Americans about the Saudis and other Arabs.

Prince Talal of Saudi Arabia came to Atlanta under the aus-

pices of UNICEF and was well received.

Hopefully, there will be a small exhibit of Saudi silver jewelry in Atlanta's museum.

Sincerely,  
**Ann Rhea**

P.S. As for my family news—daughter Wendy is now a geologist working for Texaco in New Orleans.

Houston, Texas

The Shangri-la reunion was wonderful. Accommodations and food were of the best. Our sincere thanks to Milo and his committee and all others who helped. Thanks to Aramco for the digital clocks and other items they provided.

We feel fortunate in being able to see so many friends every two years. What a great feeling. Just like returning to Saudi Arabia after a long vacation. We also enjoyed the telephone conversations with Les and Betty Snyder and Mae Beckley who were home and could not make the reunion.

We look forward to seeing more of our friends at the next reunion.

Best of personal regards.

Sincerely,  
**Mabel and Ned Scardino**

Solana Beach, California

We had approximately 60 annuitants and seven young people who grew up in Saudi Arabia at a San Diego mini-reunion. While it looked as though rain might spoil the attendance, it cleared up and we were able to be outside. I believe a good time was had by all.

In due course a list of those

attending will be sent to *AAAJ* and hopefully there will be some pictures. Unfortunately, there was some confusion about picture-taking, and we neglected to get any group shots.

We are all proud of our annuitant association with Aramco.

Sincerely,  
**Don McLeod**

Escondido, California

Today we received and perused *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila* for Fall 1982. It is always a thrill to read it from cover to cover, to see pictures of people we used to know. Just wonderful!! A lot of work and time must go into the preparation of this magazine and we thank you all for it.

We retired at the end of 1973, and so far our life has been very good. Henry, who used to "run" radio and cable operations in Dhahran, is still active. At least five to six times during the year he will make trips to faraway places as radio officer, and he enjoys this very much. He gets to see quite a part of the world all over again, and even though we did a lot of traveling all those years with Aramco, he enjoys every minute of these trips. Two years ago he did a seven-and-one-half month stint on a Scripps (Institution of Oceanography) research vessel. His tales about that journey are very interesting.

Again our thanks for this lovely magazine.

Sincerely,  
**Petra Folkerts**  
(Mrs. Henry Folkerts)

# Retirements

## Jack and Mary Reardon



For many Aramcons, pride in a career is found more through working with Saudi Arabia's people than in working toward the requirements of a job description. This is true of Jack Reardon, who retired after 33 years of accomplishing more than his titles could imply.

At one point in his 19 years of managing the Electronic Data Processing (EDP) Department for Aramco, Jack nominated more Saudis to attend college in the United States than did any other department head.

"That's something I'm very proud of," Jack says. "The most important asset Aramco has is its employees. And certainly one of

the most important jobs we had was to train Saudis to be able to effectively operate Aramco. In this area, a most significant factor is the students we have in universities in the U.S. and abroad. Many of them, upon returning to the Kingdom, will eventually become managers of Aramco. Therefore, one of the most

important functions we have is to see that the Saudi students receive the best training possible."

Jack says he has observed that Saudi managers bring much more to the job than training.

"Saudi managers are very people-oriented," he explains. "It's their interest in and consideration for people that leads the Saudis to be excellent managers."

Jack's own track to management began in 1950 with Aramco's Comptroller's office in New York City. In 1955 he headed up the first computer task force assigned to study and recommend a system for Aramco, which resulted in the first large computer installation in Dhahran. Jack managed the EDP Department in the New York office until 1959, when he transferred to Aramco's EDP Department in Saudi Arabia. After 19 years, he transferred to Aramco Services Company (ASC) as vice-president—Finance & Relations, a position which included overseeing the diverse combination of the Industrial Relations, Saudi Career Development, Comptroller's, Treasurer's, Contracting, Foreign Service Employment and Public Affairs departments.

Until October 1982, when this department was split into Industrial Relations and Finance, Jack had to develop some managerial techniques of his own to handle the diversity.

"You learn how to allocate your time and devote it to the problem areas," he explains. "And you have a lot of faith in your managers."

While with ASC, Jack was also one of the first directors of the Aramco Associated Company (AAC), as well as an ASC board member during his last six months with the company.

Jack's career with Aramco began just five months before his 32-year marriage to Mary Kelly. Their daughter Maura was born in Saudi Arabia in 1960 and will graduate from Georgetown University in May with a degree in Nursing.

Before Jack and Mary left Houston in April for their home by the shore in Sea Bright, NJ, Jack said he would miss the friendships he'd developed and would always feel close to Saudi Arabia and its people.

"If I had it to do over again, the only thing I would do differently is go to Arabia sooner," he said.

The Reardons recall frequent gatherings with friends in Dhahran, and because there were not the usual places to go, they say, "the art of conversation came back again. It was wonderful.

"What sticks out in my mind was the ability to travel," Jack says. "We have so many fond memories of Beirut, where we used to go for four or five-day weekends.

"At one point we got really tired of traveling," Jack says,

"And I guess I'd only been back in the States about 18 months when I made a trip back to Saudi Arabia and called up a friend of mine. His secretary told me he was in Copenhagen for the holidays, and I got jealous! It took only one year and a half before I missed that traveling again."

Jack is a former president of the Duplicate Bridge club in Dhahran, and Mary worked for a time in the Emergency room at the Dhahran Health Center. Many of the people she helped there still ask about her when Jack returns on a business trip.

Among retirement plans for Jack and Mary is deep sea fishing. "We plan to get maybe a 26-footer to go fishing on. We both love to go fishing during the warm months," Jack says. "During the cold months we'll probably go down south and visit our old Aramco friends."

Jack says he's also looking forward to taking some courses, relaxing, gardening and doing some charitable work, something where he "can help people."

"I'm not dreading at all leaving work," he says. "I've enjoyed it, but retirement is a new phase in my life, and I'm looking forward to it with enthusiasm."

The Reardons can be contacted at their home on the Atlantic: 25 Via Ripa, Sea Bright, NJ 07760.

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## Bill and Doris Grant

Edited from *The Arabian Sun*



Bill Grant, current expatriate American employee with the longest service, completed a 38-year Aramco career in January.

Bill joined the company in San Francisco in March 1945 and was assigned as a "refinery trainee" to work at the refinery then under construction in Ras Tanura. Getting from San Francisco to Ras Tanura took on the proportions of a modern-day odyssey. Bill spent four days riding the rails to New York where he waited two weeks for a ship assignment. He sailed on VE Day aboard the liberty ship *SS Robert Howe* in a convoy bound for the Middle East. He finally made it to the al-

Khobar pier from Bahrain after a slow trip in June and then continued to Ras Tanura by truck to end his 45-day saga.

Bill was assigned to the water treatment plant and lab in the power plant which was still under construction. He progressed through operator and senior operator positions in the steam and electric generating sides of the plant and held the position of acting shift foreman when he transferred to Abqaiq in April 1948. He was on hand during the construction phase of a new power plant and became shift foreman shortly after the plant went on line in 1949.

As operations in the Southern Area expanded, so did the need for support facilities and camps. Such places as Umm 'Unaiq, 'Uthmaniyah and al-Muhassain developed as small family camps, and Bill was assigned as assistant foreman to supervise utilities operations at these locations. He returned to Abqaiq as foreman of the power plant where he subsequently directed a training effort that eventually resulted in the plant being completely staffed by Saudi Arab employees. Bill advanced to assistant superintendent—Utilities in September 1974.

Later Bill transferred to the

Power Systems division of SCECO in 1977 and was a member of the Policy and Planning staff since that time.

Bill met Doris Philpot Webb while vacationing in San Francisco, a chance event that developed into a permanent arrangement when they were married in

New York on February 25, 1958. Doris joined him in Saudi Arabia a few months later.

An avid gardener with a flair for floral decorating, Doris has also been active in Jazzercise, aerobics and ballet. Computers are her most recent interest, one she plans to pursue when they are

settled in Sarasota, FL.

Bill is looking forward to continuing his leisure interests by playing a lot of golf and trying some boating. Following a brief stop in Stuttgart, the Grant address will be Apt. 18-A, 1111 N. Gulfstream Avenue, Sarasota, FL 33577.

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## Ramsey and Bobbie Madany



Being involved in the welfare of more than 46,000 employees of many nationalities in Saudi Arabia demands a broad understanding of people, planning and Aramco. For Ramsey Madany, who retired in November, attaining the job of coordinator—Employee Relations Plans and Programs in 1980 was simply the culmination of positions which made him a link between employee and management, policy proposal and implementation, cultures of the East and West.

Ramsey joined Aramco in 1956

with what might be considered an ideal background for the company. Having come from Syria, he knew Arabic and the Middle East; he had lived among Americans for nine years and had married American Barbara Kell; and he held a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Iowa. After Ramsey worked a year in the New York office and 12 more years in the Government Relations and Economics departments of Aramco, Ramsey's talents as a "link" were put to especially good use.

In the early 1970s, the Employee Relations Policy & Planning Department needed

someone who was bicultural and bilingual, someone with a special understanding of the Saudi culture. Policy & Planning chose Ramsey.

After working for several years with Policy & Planning and Employee Relations helping develop new policies, Ramsey headed a group of Industrial Relations professionals concerned with three major areas: personnel policy, compensation and benefits. "The organization acted as a two-directional sieve," Ramsey says. At times, Policy & Planning consulted Employee Relations Plans & Programs for tests on new policies. In turn, if Plans & Programs detected the need for a new policy, it made the suggestion to the Policy & Planning Department.

"We were on the front lines noting what people were pleased with or complaining about," Ramsey explains. "We had direct experience with their likes and dislikes." Ramsey says that this experience helped him in his position as a link. "I think I added momentum to Aramco's achievement of its goal to do away with any gap of understanding separating the Americans and the

Saudis," he relates. "I explained to the Saudis the intentions of the Americans. And when I felt they were misreading each other, I tried to let them know."

But it was his accomplishments as a link outside the formal organization of which Ramsey says he is most proud. His contribution to a greater understanding between Americans and Saudis was done through contacts on a daily basis, whether in the hallway, at a party or in a meeting. "My whole preoccupation was to bring those people closer together, because I thought it was a worthwhile goal," he says. "And I knew that changing attitudes had to be left to individuals."

Ramsey applied his concern for cross-cultural understanding to his family also, for several reasons. "I would often bring Saudis to my home instead of going to a meeting hall for a presentation," he says. "I wanted the Saudis to feel at home with my family, and I wanted Bobbie to feel at home in an Arab environment."

To accomplish the latter objective, Ramsey prepared Arabic lessons for Bobbie, and they studied almost every evening for three years—"until she spoke Arabic with less of an accent than I have in English," Ramsey says.

Ramsey retained his philosophy of individuals striving to bridge gaps between cultures when he came to the Public Affairs Department of ASC in Houston in 1980 on a temporary assignment. There he held the position of assistant director and headed up the orientation program for new-hires.

It is somewhat of a coincidence, in fact, that Ramsey spent his last two years before retirement with the department in which this publication is produced. While working in New York, in 1956, Ramsey was approached by John O'Hagen to help think of a name for a new annuitants' publication. Little did Ramsey know, when he suggested the title *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila*, that he and Bobbie would spend 23 years of "pleasant days" in Arabia. After all, they had planned to stay with Aramco only two years.

What changed their plans?

"It was so much fun!" Ramsey says. "If someone had told me there was another spot on this earth that is comparable to the Aramco environment in Saudi Arabia, I would honestly have thought he was out of his head. Saudi Arabia was an ideal place to raise a family, an ideal place to work, an ideal place for socializing and travel, an ideal place to plan for the future and set aside some security—an ideal place for anything."

In addition to Aramco work, travel and socializing, the Madanys cultivated other careers, interests and hobbies.

Bobbie, who was one of a group of nursing students Ramsey "bumped into" while working in the nurses cafeteria of the University of Iowa, put her nursing degree to work while in the Kingdom. She headed up the allergy clinic in the Dhahran Health Clinic for several years.

The Madanys both carried home many tennis tournament trophies, but Ramsey is quick to point out that Bobbie garnered many more than he did, having been a first-flight player during

their years in Saudi Arabia.

Camping was another joy the Madanys discovered there. "We had companions who knew the desert like the back of their hands, and they'd take us to the northern regions and the Empty Quarter," Ramsey says. "We'd camp there, build fires, eat and sing until the late hours of the night."

"The stillness of the Arabian desert at night is the most beautiful thing in the world. You can hear the rustle of the wind just blowing against the sand dunes, and that's the most beautiful music," Ramsey recalls. "Now you have to go a further distance to avoid civilization, but you can still go out to areas that have not been set foot on for years and years."

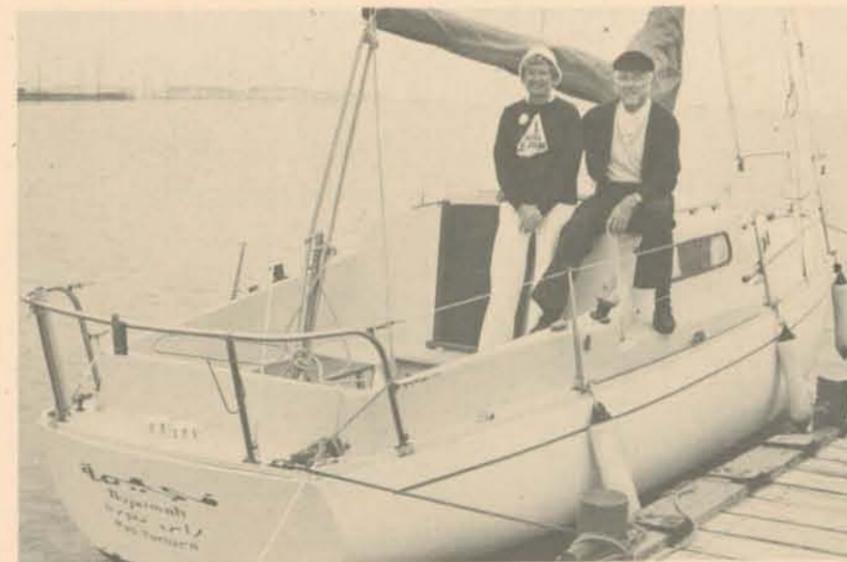
Ramsey and Bobbie have now set up permanent camp in Phoenix, AZ, a place they say is much like Dhahran. Both their daughters had settled in Phoenix before they did. Joni is a nurse in a local hospital. Lori works full time in a group home for the handicapped while studying for her master's in Speech Pathology.

For Ramsey, retirement might best be described with a phrase he suggested two years ago for a section of *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila*—*buna-wa-bunak*. In between consulting projects for ASC, Ramsey looks after his own business, which includes real estate, foreign trade and local tool marketing. In other words, *buna-wa-bunak*—"a little bit of everything."

The Madanys can be contacted at their new home: 13026 North Surrey Circle, Phoenix, AZ 85029.

## George and Sylvia Rader

Edited from *The Arabian Sun*



George and Sylvia Rader departed for retirement in California in December, taking more than 30 years of memories with them.

George originally planned to stay for only two years when he signed on with Aramco in 1947 as an assistant engineer, but he modified his two-year plan when Sylvia Harlow, his college sweetheart, agreed to become his wife. Unknown to both of them, those two years were to become 35. Sylvia joined him in Saudi Arabia in mid-1950 following their California wedding earlier that year.

A year later, daughter Diana was born in Dhahran. Over the next four years, daughters Pamela and Jennifer also joined the family. Today Diana lives in Denver, as does Pamela Pauwels; Jennifer Read is a Concord, CA, resident.

The Rader family moved to Ras

Tanura in the early 1950s when George, a graduate of the University of California with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, was assigned there as a project engineer. His subsequent positions there would include senior design engineer, senior inspection engineer and district engineer—Inspection. Throughout his career George was involved in many phases and technologies of oil refinery and pipeline design. He initiated the first on-stream inspection program in the Ras Tanura Refinery and presented a technical paper, "Pipelining the Desert," at the 1980 ASCE conference in New Orleans. He served as 1972 chairman of the Society of Petroleum Engineers of AIME and has held professional membership since about 1955.

Over the past 12 years George has been consulting on pipelines and piping for many new oil facilities projects as an engineering

consultant with the Technical Services Department.

Both George and Sylvia have always been active in their community, especially in tennis and sailing. George has shared in many doubles championships and twice took top honors in first-flight singles competition. He has also won his share of sailing trophies, racing in Tarut Bay over the years, sailing everything from dinghies to his 27-foot Vega sloop, *Nujaimab*.

Equestrian events held special attraction for Sylvia and the Rader daughters. Sylvia, who served terms as secretary, treasurer and president of the Ras Tanura Ranch Association, recalls a time in the early 1970s when Ras Tanura equestrian activities were temporarily consolidated with those in Dhahran.

"Jennifer and I, Kate Worthington and Diane Burge [now annuitants], each rode a horse from Ras Tanura to Dhahran on a memorable overnight ride, while George provided a haywagon of food and water by following in his car," she says.

When not on a horse, in a sailboat or on a tennis court, Sylvia, an accomplished pianist, could usually be found participating with the Ras Tanura Theater Group. In earlier years much of her time was spent with Brownie and Girl Scout activities.

Until the Raders find permanent mooring, their contact address is: c/o P.E. Harlow, 5212 Silva, Richmond, CA 94805.

## Albert and Georgette Porto

Edited from *The Arabian Sun*

Albert R. Porto, manager—Mechanical Services Special Projects Department, retired in December, concluding more than three decades of Aramco service.

A graduate of Pennsylvania State University with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, Al joined Aramco in August 1951. He held positions as an engineer with Loss Prevention and Engineering prior to transferring to the Maintenance Department in 1959. Al says a series of supervisory and superintendent assignments within that department during the 1960s provided "the most gratifying work" he has ever done. "A highly-motivated maintenance work force was developed at the Ras Tanura Refinery and Terminal," he recalls, "and my part as senior planning, testing and inspection execution engineer was personally very challenging."

In 1975 Al began a series of Maintenance manager assignments and a number of special projects which took him to all three Aramco areas. He was promoted to manager—Maintenance Resources Planning Department in 1978. During the past three years he has been manager of Equipment Services, Roads and Wellsites, Abqaiq Producing Maintenance and Mechanical Services Special Projects.

During a six-month personal education leave for graduate study at the University of Pittsburgh in 1955, Al met Georgette Commissaris from Antwerp, Belgium, who, at the time, was visiting her sister in Al's hometown of Ambridge, PA. Georgette



became Mrs. Al Porto in February 1956 and arrived in Saudi Arabia a few months later.

The three Porto children, Elizabeth, 23; James, 22; and Mary Ellen, 21; were born in Dhahran and graduated from Aramco schools. The young Portos helped the annuitants celebrate their retirement by joining them for a two-week ski holiday in Bavaria.

Elizabeth is now a doctoral candidate in American Literature at Columbia University where she earned an M.A. following the completion of her undergraduate studies at Barnard College. James, a 1982 graduate of the Rochester Institute of Technology, is a professional photographer in Manhattan and Mary Ellen is a senior working towards a degree in History and Film at Tufts University in Medford, MA.

The Portos have always been a family involved in sports and

community activities. Georgette was active with Girl Scouts, Women's Group and the Arabian Hoedowners. An avid reader, she enjoyed the Recreation Library and her work there as secretary to the library coordinator. Al was a member of the Rolling Hills Country Club and the Dhahran Bowling Association, and he also managed Little League baseball teams. He participated in softball and basketball throughout most of his Aramco career, and over the past five years he earned a number of age-group records in jogging. It was Al who coached and trained an undefeated, all-Saudi Arab Abqaiq track team for about four years in the early 1950s, a time when that team's semi-annual meets drew thousands of spectators.

Following a visit to Belgium and the completion of their Bavarian holiday, the Portos will head home to Pittsburgh. Their address: 661 Woodcrest Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15205.

## Driller remembers Exploration's early days

Edited from *The Arabian Sun*



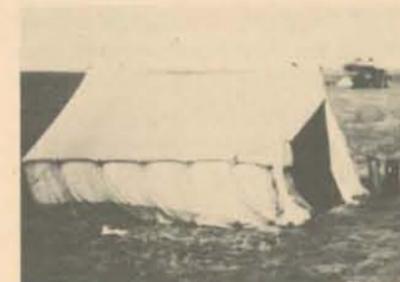
Things were different when Johnny O'Bryan first came to Saudi Arabia in 1949. The total work force numbered about 16,000. Oil production was less than 500,000 barrels a day. And exploration work could be described as nothing less than high adventure—which probably explains why Johnny O'Bryan loved the country then and why he loves it now.

"Saudi Arabia's always been my favorite place," says Johnny, who along with his wife Anne, returned to Saudi Arabia recently for the first time in 22 years. The

trip had several purposes: to visit daughter Suanne Keeley and her family; to revisit places he knew from the old days; and to reminisce about some of the things he accomplished during his 12 years with Aramco.

"I drilled the first water well in 'Uthmaniyah," he recalled proudly, referring to the early 1950s when 'Udhailiyah and 'Uthmaniyah were first being developed. "And I led the first convoy to the Sand Mountains."

The trip out, he remembered, took 72 days. There were about 250 people assigned to a caravan that included more than 100



pieces of rolling stock, among them the big Kenworth trucks (ancestors of the trucks still used today), rotary drilling rigs, specialized camp trailers, dollies, trailers, light cars, sedans, pickups, power wagons and many



more. "The trip set out from the old Exploration Toolhouse here in Dhahran. That's where they gathered all the vehicles," Johnny said, explaining that during the 1950s, Exploration annually sent caravans to the Rub' al-Khali for the nine months from September 1 through June 2 to avoid the heat of summer.

A geologist who accompanied Johnny noted the purpose of the Sand Mountains trip was to find "shallow marker beds that would mirror the structural irregularities of the deep, potential reservoir beds." But according to Johnny O'Bryan, drilling was only one of the duties assigned to the Exploration team.

"One of the first things we'd do was build an airstrip, so the DC3s and Beavers could land and bring in our supplies," he said. This was done by clearing the land of the bigger rocks, smoothing it with a drag and tractor and marking off the four corners with barrels.

The men were also expected to build their own water wells. As soon as the required number of Exploration structure holes were drilled—usually four—the camp moved to a new site, often requiring new airstrips, water wells and roads.

By the time the trip to the Sand Mountains came around, the men were living in relatively luxurious Dutch trailers. "But in the early days," said Johnny, "we lived in tents, which was never too good, but was especially bad when the *shamaals* blew the tents away." Showers were provided in a trailer hooked up to a water tank, "unless you forgot to haul water, and then you did without," he explained.

Fortunately, there were compensations. "Some of the best winter weather in the world is in the Rub' al-Khali," said Johnny, adding that he considers the Sand Mountains to be "one of the most beautiful places in Saudi Arabia."

In later years Johnny spent much of his time in northern Saudi Arabia, his favorite place in the Kingdom. "There's a lot of



history up there," he said. "There's a road there, left over from the days of Queen Zenobia, so flat and solid you'd think it was put down yesterday."

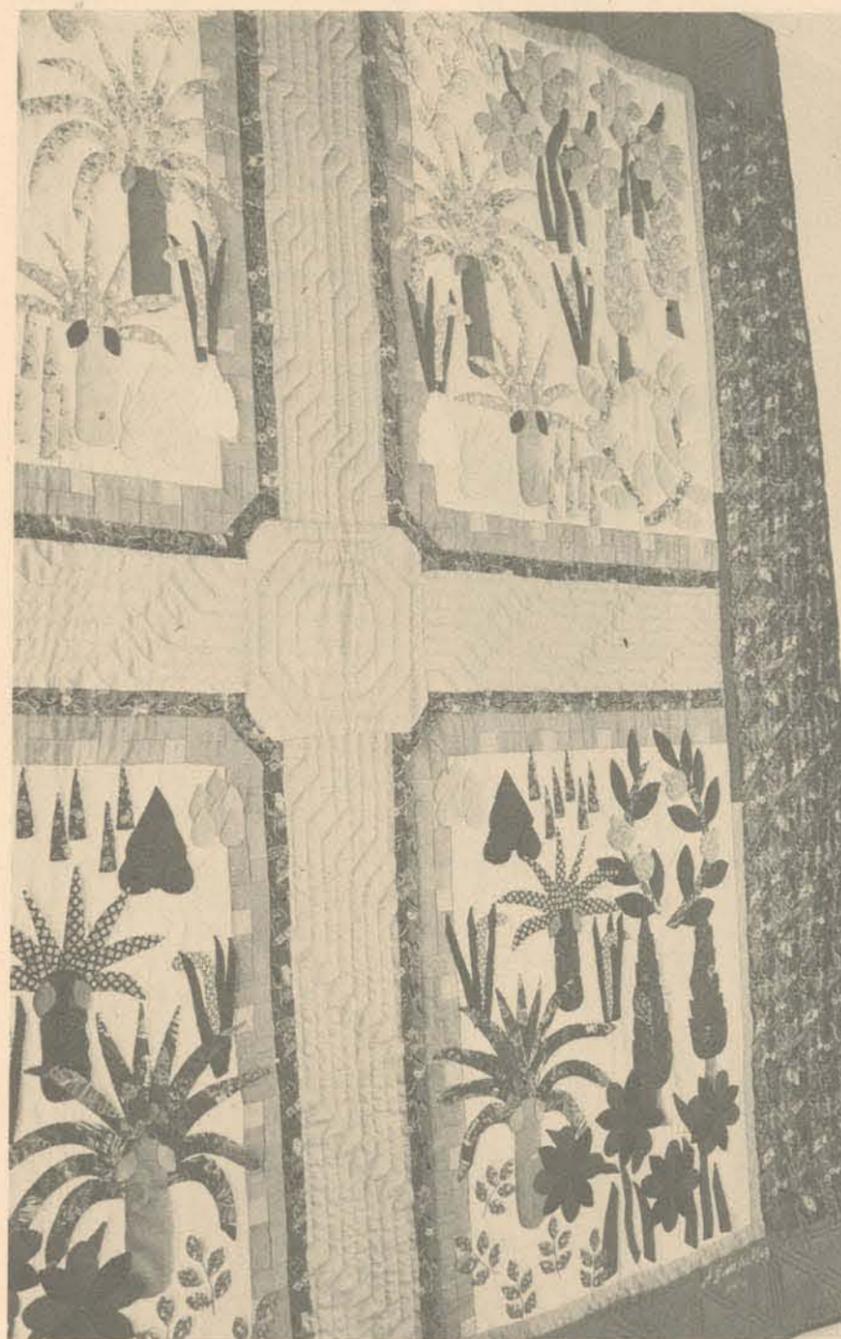
Except for the first two years with the company, Johnny always made his home base in Dhahran, his last home being in the Seventh Street Circle. "I could hardly even find it when I came back," said Johnny, amazed at all the changes that had taken place since he left 22 years ago.

The new Aramco impressed Johnny in every way, but he said his best times were spent sharing memories with Bob Gooch, Ray Walls and the geologists he worked with in the 1950s—Syd Bowers, Jim Kline, Dick Maise, Harry McAlister and John McCue.

"I've worked in a lot of places since I left—Argentina, Venezuela, Africa and Sumatra—but I always tell people I'm from Aramco," said Johnny. "Saudi Arabia's always been my favorite place."

## Ruth Myers' quilt depicts beauty of Islamic gardens

Edited from *The Arabian Sun*



(photo by Rose Batato)

Like ancient Persian carpet weavers before her, annuitant Ruth Myers has taken the inspiration of traditional Islamic garden designs and applied them to her quilt-making. Her handiwork, a gift for Mary Norton of Dhahran, was recently displayed in the Dhahran Library.

The earliest Islamic gardens were created within or adjacent to a building, often a mosque, school or private house. Almost always the garden would be enclosed by high walls. These served to offer shade and protection from the desert winds and also meant that the basic shape of the garden was usually square or at least rectangular. Superimposed on this would be the inevitable streams of water, crossing at the center and dividing the area into four squares.

The Holy Quran emphasizes that the reward for true believers would be to dwell forever in the Garden of Paradise, which was to set the Islamic garden apart. There are many references to Paradise in the Holy Quran and the descriptions are rich and beautiful. Repeated references are



(photo by Rose Batata)

made to such things as "spreading shade, fountains of running water and cool pavilions" and "fruits and fountains and pomegranates." Obviously the oasis image came first and most naturally to mind; two factors which remain constant throughout almost all Islamic gardens are the elements of water and shade. In these simple gardens, fruits and flowers are encouraged to grow under the shade of tall palms.

A history of the world's gardens, *The Quest for Paradise*, by Ronald King, devotes a chapter to Islamic gardens and their development. It includes an illustration of a Persian carpet showing the standard design of the Persian garden and explaining the symbolic designs.

The message that Ruth sent to Mary along with the quilt is applicable to all who view it: "Although this quilt is not the Paradise on Earth, I do hope that you will enjoy it."

## Huna-wa-Hunak

**T**ranslated literally from Arabic, huna-wa-hunak means "here and there." In everyday usage, it's a term for items gathered from here and there; things that might have been temporarily set aside or forgotten, now regrouped; a hodgepodge.

Send your contributions to:

Huna-wa-Hunak  
ASC Public Affairs  
1800 Augusta Drive, Suite 300  
Houston, TX 77057

Another reunion is in the works, this time for Aramco junior high graduates, class of '74.

1974 graduates from all Aramco communities are invited to celebrate a 10-year reunion in Houston, TX, in April or May of 1984. If anyone in your family falls into this category, please pass the word along.

Suggestions and inquiries should be sent to:

Carrie Comfort Taylor  
c/o Aramco Services Company  
500 Dallas, Suite 1700  
Houston, TX 77002  
(713) 750-6000



Aramco "Brat" Lisa Eilbacher as Madeline in "The Winds of War."

If you were among the millions of Americans who watched the tv mini-series "The Winds of War," you might not have realized there was another Aramcon in the room.

Lisa Eilbacher, who played Commander Henry's daughter Madeline, comes from a long line of Aramcons and was born in Aramco's Dhahran community. Her grandparents are Dorothy and Cornelius McCann, who joined the company in 1944. Her mother is Beverly McCann

Eilbacher, also a former Aramcon.

According to an ABC Public Relations press release, Lisa, who left Arabia at age 5, began her acting career as a child, first appearing on "Wagon Train." She continued her work in television

and during that time was nominated for an Emmy as Best Supporting Actress in a dramatic role for an episode of "Alias Smith and Jones."

Lisa made the transition from teenage roles in such tv series as "The Hardy Boys," to playing adult leading roles in "The Patty Hearst Story," "Going Home Again" and a number of other television and theatrical films.

Most recently, Lisa has had starring roles in "An Officer and a Gentleman" and the new Charles Bronson film, "Ten to Midnight." She currently plays Dr. Ingrid Sorenson in the ABC series "Ryan's Four."

Annuitant Sonia Orseth of Fargo, ND, has been busy speaking to community and university groups about the Middle East and Saudi Arabia. Apparently one talk leads to another, because Sonia is almost booked up for the spring.

On a recent campus visit, Sonia took with her a display of Middle Eastern artifacts, copies of *Aramco World Magazine* and posters from Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Information—all of which were quickly grabbed up by her audience.

After her speech, Sonia was

asked to participate in the school's International Day and to bring along another display.

Sonia now has six more talks scheduled for the spring and has been invited to be interviewed on a live, call-in campus radio program. Sonia says this is just her way of trying to "strengthen relations between peoples of different countries."



Mr. Joseph A. Montin of Northvale, NJ, a retired Aramco employee, and Antonietta Fusco were united in marriage in a private ceremony on October 23, 1982. A reception followed, held at the home of Mr. Montin's grandchildren, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Tietjen.

A pre-nuptial party and reception for family and friends was given on October 16, 1982 by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Minshillo, children of Mrs. Fusco.

The couple plans to reside in Florida in the near future.

Still waiting in lines to deposit your Social Security check? Why not have it deposited directly to your account?

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Gainesville, FL 32605

**E.H. Betancourt**  
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Spring Hill, FL 33526

**Stewart F. Booth\***  
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(Continued on next page)

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Kern City, CA 93309

**George R. Zimmerman**  
P.O. Box 5432  
Indian Rocks Beach, FL 33535

# In Memoriam

**T.C. Alexander—February 1, 1983**  
*survived by Loia Alexander*  
1848 E. 9th Street, Okmulgee, OK 74447

**Ernest Bowman—March 2, 1983**  
*survived by Barbara Bowman*  
108 Dutch Cove Circle, Ocean Pines, Box 855, Berlin, MD 21811

**Rosamond Crampton—December 27, 1982**  
*survived by Walter Crampton*  
263 Beach Pines Drive, Aptos, CA 95003

**Frances Wilson DeVine—February 13, 1983**  
*survived by Ollie DeVine*  
Box 3600, Stateline, NV 89449

**Viola Helen Drowley—December 19, 1982**  
*survived by Gil Drowley*  
2402 Ecuadorian Way, Apt. 52, Clearwater, FL 33515

**Claudine Agnes Furman—December 12, 1982**  
*survived by Stephan Thomas Furman (son)*  
Dhabran, Saudi Arabia

**James C. Gray—February 28, 1983**  
*survived by Mabel Gray*  
113 Longview Drive, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**Kenneth R. Hockett—December 29, 1982**  
*survived by three children—Catherine (daughter)*  
Route 1 Box 25, Quarryville, PA 17566

**Paul H. Klett, III—December 6, 1982**  
*survived by Paul and Francesca Klett (parents)*  
8110 E. Cambridge Avenue, Scottsdale, AZ 85257

**Henriette (Mimi) Johnson—January 11, 1983**  
*survived by George V. Johnson*  
6512 Meadow Green Place, Santa Rosa, CA 95405

**Emmett J. Lyon—January 13, 1983**  
*survived by Sybil H. Lyon*  
1010 Emerald Isle, Apt. 117, Dallas, TX 75218

(Continued on next page)

# In Memoriam

**Shirley MacKenzie—November 21, 1982**

*survived by A.C. MacKenzie*

*13009 Riverside Drive, Apt. #3, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423*

**R.F. Mambourg—February 11, 1983**

*survived by Dorothea Mambourg*

*90 Blue Sky Lane, Oceanside, CA 92056*

**Marshall L. Miller—February 9, 1983**

*survived by Carmelitia Miller*

*6 N. Century Street, Memphis, TN 38111*

**Dale Nix—January 30, 1983**

*survived by Nellie Nix*

*2520 Ptarmigan Drive, Walnut Creek, CA 94595*

**Robert C. Page—January 3, 1983**

*survived by Barbara Miller Page*

*4632 Chalmers, Nashville, TN 37215*

**Ruth I. Pastermack—October 4, 1982**

*survived by Monroe H. Pastermack*

*124 May Street West, Port Orchard, WA 98366*

**James J. Ralston—February 7, 1983**

*survived by Isabella Ralston*

*2083 Envoy Court, Clearwater, FL 33516*

**Veronica Sandin—December 11, 1982**

*survived by Herlin L. "Sandy" Sandin*

*181 Los Arcos, Green Valley, AZ 85614*

**Solveig Svecz—February 25, 1983**

*survived by Michael J. Svecz*

*8648 Merrimore Boulevard, Seminole, FL 33542*

**Beverly Edward Trewin—February 16, 1983**

*survived by Kathleen Frances Trewin*

*16 La Cuesta Drive, Greenbrae, CA 94904*

**Bruce Trimble**

*survived by Katie Trimble*

*4216 Woodside Circle, Lake Oswego, OR 97034*



Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila

Published four times a year by  
Aramco Services Company  
Public Affairs Department  
1800 Augusta Drive, Suite 300, Houston, Texas 77057

For annuitants of Aramco, Aramco  
Overseas Company, Aramco Services  
Company and Tapline, their families  
and friends.

Pat Dougherty, *Editor*  
Donna Drake, *Assistant Editor*