



# Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila

*" These Pleasant Days "*

For Aramco, A.O.C. and Tapline Annuitants

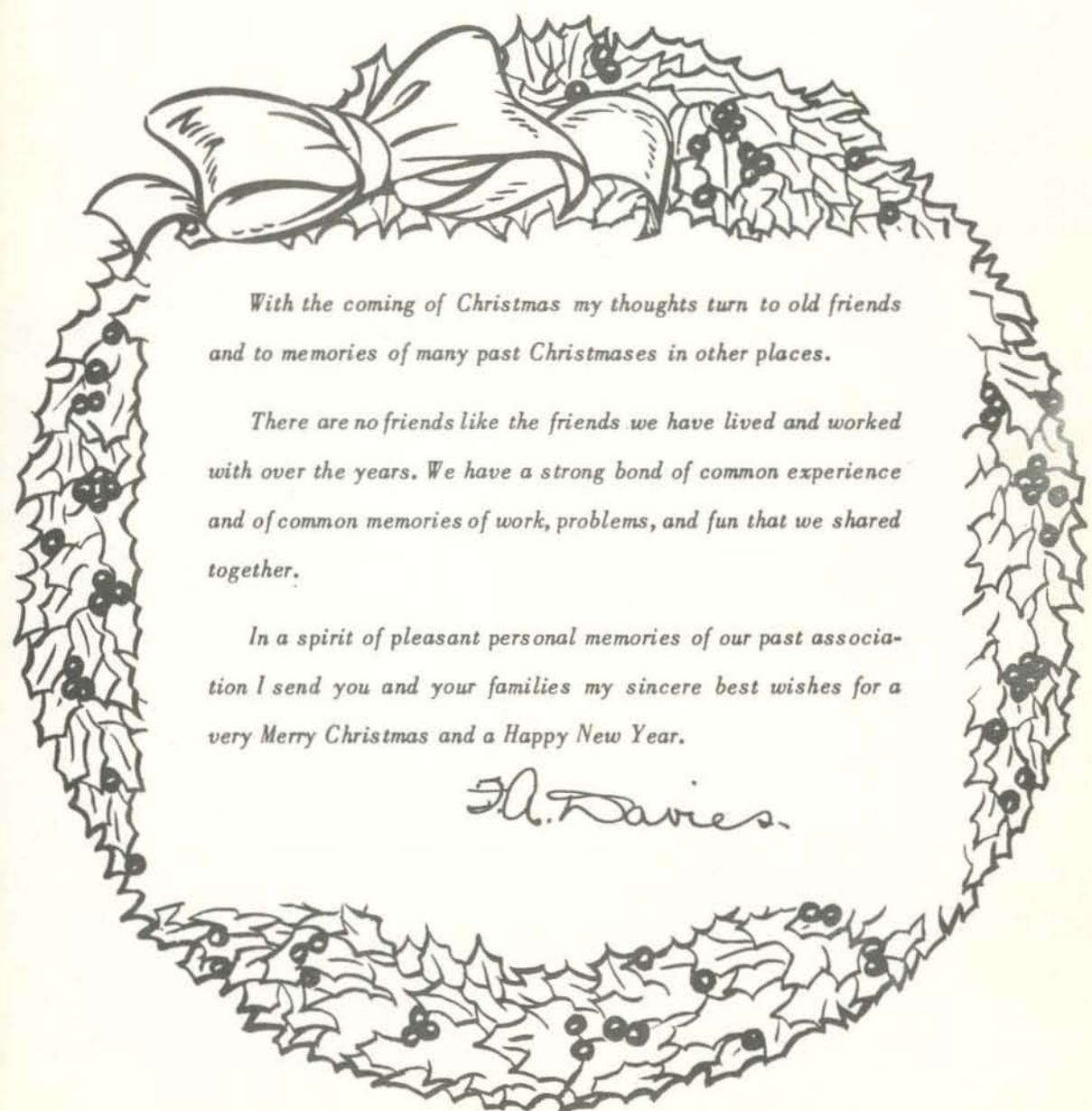


New York, N. Y.

December, 1957

Vol. 1, No. 5

## *Season's Greetings*



*With the coming of Christmas my thoughts turn to old friends and to memories of many past Christmases in other places.*

*There are no friends like the friends we have lived and worked with over the years. We have a strong bond of common experience and of common memories of work, problems, and fun that we shared together.*

*In a spirit of pleasant personal memories of our past association I send you and your families my sincere best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

*Ed. Davies.*



R. L. Keyes

BOB KEYES will retire as a Director and President of the Company effective December 31, 1957, according to an announcement by F. A. Davies. Cy Hardy, formerly Executive Vice President, has been elected a Director, President and Chief Administrative Officer, effective January 1, 1958. Tom Barger has been elected a Vice President of the Company effective January 1, 1958 and has been appointed Assistant to the President.

HERVEY BROWN has been with Aramco since August, 1943. He joined the fine ranks of our annuitants on November 1, 1957. Herv was among the first into Al Kharj and Abqaiq, being with the construction crew who set up these spots. More recently Herv has been a Consulting Engineer in the Arab Development Department. He and his wife, Betty, will be happy to hear from their old friends who may write to them at P. O. Box 842, Sebring, Florida.



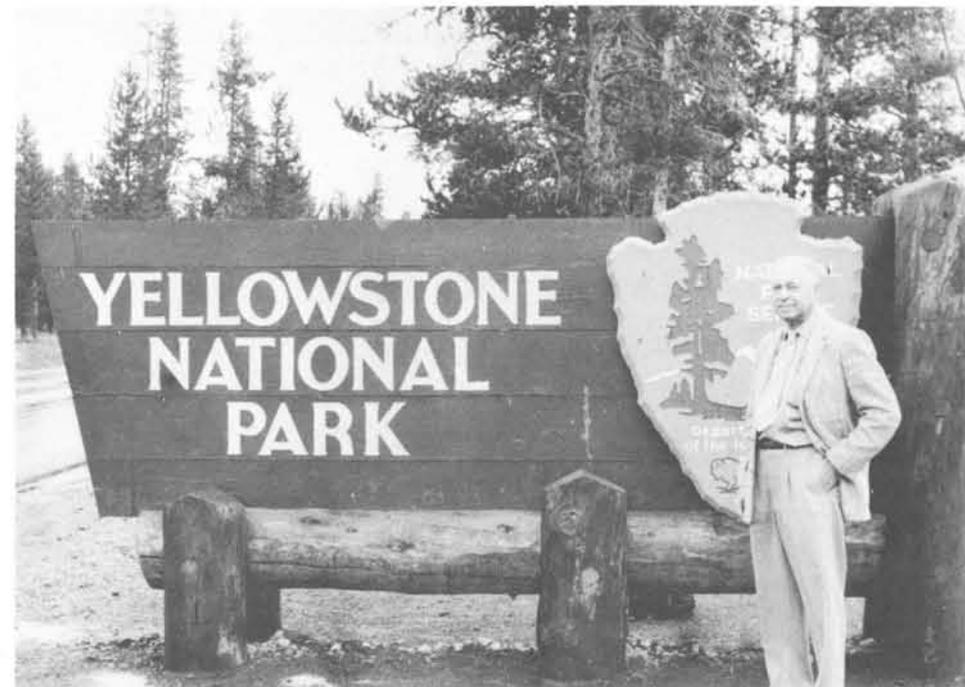
Art Stepney

Many of us will remember GRACE PRYOR who has been in Arabia for over eleven years. Grace came with Aramco in June, 1946 and has been working in the Industrial Relations Department as a Senior Fingerprint Classifier. She joins the register of lady annuitants on January 1, 1958. We hope to have her address in the next issue.

ART STEPNEY joined us on October 1, as you will recall from our last issue. We are happy to be able to print this photograph of him taken during his retirement dinner at the Haagsche Golf and Country Club in Wassenaar.

"Step" has arrived in the United States and headed for the West Coast, naturally. We expect to hear more of his activities out there, and we will pass on his permanent address when we get it.

# Andy's Travels



The end of the trail.... of many pleasant visits

ANDY and EVELYN ANDERSON had a real summer vacation during their automobile trip to Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks. Three

weeks long and very enjoyable, reports Andy. Even more important than the sights of our famous national parks were the visits to friends of Arabian days.



Man with power saw

One of their first targets was the home of friends in Klamath River. Long before they reached the post office there, they started making inquiries. The folks were friendly and knowing. At the first stop, Andy inquired of an elderly woman if she knew anyone living along the river by the name of Robert L. King. This question brought her question, "Do you mean the people that just moved in?" Andy agreed and added that the Kings were from Arabia. That did it! The woman knew exactly who they were and described in detail where their place was. It was just a quarter of a mile beyond the post office. Incidentally, comments Andy, anyone looking for the post office will find it in the general store, the principal place of business, if not the only store, in Klamath River.

Proof that Andy and Evelyn found Bob at home is also photographic proof that they found him working. Naturally, with the power saw Bob described so enjoyably in a previous issue of Al Ayyam.

Bob and Pauline are in good health and looked it. The Andersons spent a delightful



The Fitzpatricks in business

afternoon and evening with the Kings, particularly taking in the beautiful view of the Klamath River and the surrounding mountains from the "Kastle on the Klamath."

On and on went the Andersons until they reached Williams, Oregon. Who else to visit here but the Fitzpatricks and, of course, their General Store. Again it seems that the only store in town is Fitzpatrick's General Store. The beauty of the wooded country sprinkled with fields, meadows and mountains is exceeded only by the friendliness of the neighbors and customers, according to Fitz. Both Lucy and Fitz were in the best of health and happiness, mostly because they are glad to be out of the big city and deep in the woods of southern Oregon.



The general managers and guest, Evelyn Anderson

After less than an hour's drive from Williams the Andersons found themselves in Grants Pass. When they telephoned Mace Freeland's home in Gold Hill twenty miles up the Rogue River, Edith answered that Mace just happened to be in Grants Pass acting like a good citizen by building a float for the Gladiola Fiesta Parade. Edith thought that Mace could be found helping the local jeweler but Andy was unable to locate either Mace or the jeweler. Later that afternoon Andy talked with Mace on the telephone and arranged to take advantage of Mace's promise of a mess of fish whenever Andy would stop by.

The next visit was to "CQ" Charlie Beck. Both Charlie and his wife are hale and happy. By the time Andy had his camera ready Charlie was busy spading up the front lawn. But he finally broke down and admitted that he had been lying on the grass when Andy called to see if someone was home.



Charlie Beck after the phone rang

Naturally, Charlie's radio shack came in for some close inspection. Charlie carries on conversation with Australia, Japan and many other far away places. Some of his best contacts are with a few former employees on the Pacific



Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Beck

Coast. As we know, Charlie is another community spirited alumnus, using his radio to help out in disaster work and such things as election reporting. He also teaches a telegraphic code class. It seems that Charlie's hobby stirred a bit of reminiscence in Andy who used to be a radio amateur from 1906 to 1912 and a radio engineer from 1916 to 1920. These memories inspired Andy to comment that maybe he'll become a ham someday.

The following afternoon and evening the Merle Moores were the hosts for Andy and Evelyn on their ranch about 12 miles southeast of Cottage Grove, Oregon. The Moores also are fine and have been working hard. Major improvements have been the order of the day on Merle's ranch for he had added to the barn, built a silo as well as many other things necessary for the operation of the ranch. Andy had hopes of getting a picture of Merle lassoing one of his Black Angus bulls but Merle was publicity shy and therefore no pictures.

The Moores were the last of the Refugees, as Phil McConnell calls them, to be visited on this trip. However, the Andersons did run across the trail of Mr. Refugee himself at West Glacier.

They had stopped overnight and struck up a conversation with a Mr. and Mrs. Hagen who had met one of the gang at Lake Crescent, Washington, a few weeks before. While the Hagens were trying to recall the name, the Andersons suggested Phil from the description. The Hagens replied, "That's the name," adding, "He sure was full of pep and vim." As luck would have it, when Andy and Evelyn got home there was a note under the door that the McConnells had stopped by.

The rest of the journey took the Andersons north to Eugene, east up the Mackenzie River Pass to Redmond then northeast to Spokane and Coeur D'Alene. Onward to Spirit Lake and Glacier National Park and then down to Yellowstone by way of Great Falls, Montana. They also drove through the Grand Teton National Park and then home through southern Idaho and Nevada.

In late September Andy and Evelyn again hopped into the car for a trip up to Napa to visit Lu and Tibbie Weber in their new home. The Webers are nicely settled in a very attractive spot on the northeastern side of Napa a mile or two in the country, almost against the eastern hills.



The Webers and new home



"The Enchanted Barn,"

We have a few pictures of Lu and Tibbie's estate and we can see why they are well pleased with their new home. Note the name plate, designating their spot "The Enchanted Barn." The name is easily explained: "Enchanted" because they are very happy with their new home and "Barn" because it is painted red. Andy reports that the Webers have done wonders in landscaping. The patio also looks as though it earned a good bit of their attention.

The national parks, Andy reports, are very beautiful and extremely interesting. However, a stop at Lake Tahoe over the Labor Day holiday was somewhat disappointing because of the "tens of thousands of people." Andy joins with others in saying that California is getting too crowded and thus he realizes why all the friends he visited have moved into north California and lower Oregon.

We all join in a big "thanks" to Andy and Evelyn for this all-inclusive report, both narrative and photographic. It helps make this issue seem like Old Home Week.



It looks like an enchanted patio, too.

## Happy Holidays From Thelma and Bob

BOB LOUGHBORO recently visited Phil McConnell and in a follow-up letter to Phil, asks that we pass on to all the annuitants a great big wish for a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year," from Thelma and Bob.

Bob, not too long ago, got together with a few of his old Middle East cronies. Ernie Smith and Alex Zoll are back from Africa but are headed out to Jordan on another jaunt. Heinie Snyder has been in the states on Home Leave. Chuck Davis, Carl Nemcomb, Claude Enyart, Francis Stone, Elmer Preston, Bill Forker, and Turk Evinger from the retired Bapco list, all were present.

Bob also reports that Johnny and Ida Ramirez have joined the trailer dwellers along with Chief and Carrie Meyer. The Meyers have sold their ranch in Atwood and, for the moment, have their trailer hooked up in Orange. No mention of trailer life is possible without ringing in "Scribby" Scribner's name who, as Bob says, is a veteran of trailer life and moves with the seasons. Bob and Elmer Preston stopped in to see J. D. and Olive Tucker who are getting well settled in their new home in Huntington Beach. Bob gives us the glad news that J. D. is coming along fine after his operation.

Thelma and Bob also made a trip to Oregon and dropped in to see Leila and Bill Eyre. Bill has gone back to the hospital for a check-up so the Loughboros didn't get to visit him.

A reference to the little old gophers of the McConnell estate came into Bob's letter after he had complimented Phil on the lovely home he and Gertrude have. Bob had extended an invitation to the McConnells to drop by sometime and in giving some helpful directions, Bob pinpointed his home, "just north of the San Fernando Valley airport where the jets keep the gophers scared out."

Bob and Thelma closed their letter just as they opened it, with best wishes to all for a Happy Holiday.

## The Fritzie Dollhouse

HERB and ALMA FRITZIE have given us the news about their extremely interesting hobby of collecting dolls dressed in the costumes of foreign countries. Alma really is the one who wrote the letter, but she gives Herb so much credit for helping with the hobby, that we probably should say that he helped out with the letter also.

Alma and Herb made good use of their long vacations to cover the world, apparently for the chief reason of collecting dolls. Their collection now totals over four hundred! Now, why do they have all these lovely dolls? Well, Alma reports that they have great fun displaying their treasures to various groups of people. Last year 650 Girl Scouts, Brownies, Bluebirds and Campfire Girls gleefully trekked their way through the Fritzie home to admire the exhibit.

It seems Herb has taken on the chef and baker chores and Alma readily confesses that he does all the baking. Thus, after all the little ones have had their fill of looking at the dolls, Herb passes around his homemade cookies or cake with ice cream. The children's joyous visit is not yet finished, for Alma then entertains them with stories of how, when and where she and Herb collected the dolls. Sometimes, the stories will include traditions or folklore of the country depicted by a particular doll.

Alma and Herb, however, do not restrict their exhibits to their own home, but last year presented forty-two programs before church groups, women's clubs and other organizations. Apparently, since Herb need not bake for these affairs, he puts on his expressman's uniform and handles the packing of the dolls and their arrangement at the place of exhibition. One thing we're sure of, Herb will certainly be careful handling these dolls for they are, according to Alma, his hobby as much as they are hers.

Beautiful, petite and unusual dolls are not the only work of the Fritzies. Any child who has seen their exhibit is only too happy to turn over to Alma all broken and castoff dolls. When Alma

and Herb find time, they repair these worn out dolls. You can bet that they make a real effort to find plenty of time to work in their repair shop. Then, with the help of the San Francisco Doll Club, the newly repaired and painted toys are given out to the children at the Youth Guidance Center in San Francisco, the Receiving Home at San Mateo or the State Hospital at Sonoma. Well, we can see that the Fritzies perform wonders as Santa Claus' helpers.

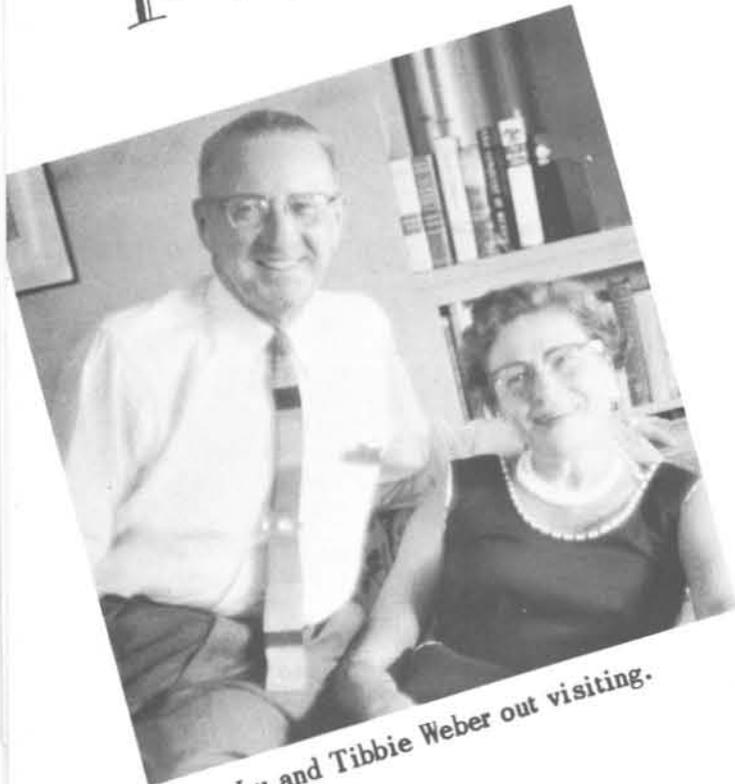
Dolls are still a major factor in deciding where Alma and Herb will go on vacation. They go where the Doll Club Conventions are being held. In 1955 it was Boston, in 1956 it was Louisville. That trip took over a month and included New Orleans and a visit to El Paso, Texas to see Mrs. Elmer Hoffman. This year the convention was in San Francisco. Next year there will be a convention in New York, and we suspect that Alma and Herb are already making plans for the trip east. At any rate, we hope to hear more from them about this particularly interesting hobby which must bring a tremendous amount of pleasure to great numbers of little girls..... and their Mommies too.

## Santa Barbara Revisited

HARRY W. FINSTER, otherwise known as WALLY, is certainly enjoying the retired life, so writes his wife Florence. Temporarily, they have located in Santa Barbara and thoroughly enjoyed a wonderful Indian summer there. Apparently, all this goes without saying, since Florence comments, "Of course, Santa Barbara is always beautiful and the weather is just right all year round."

The Finsters are also enjoying the Company publications they have been receiving and thus plan to keep up on the activities of their friends among the alumni and those still overseas. Their friends can reach them at 1736 Clearview Road, Santa Barbara, California.

# PHIL'S PHOTOS



Lu and Tibbie Weber out visiting.



Fitz and Lucy Fitzpatrick on their lawn.

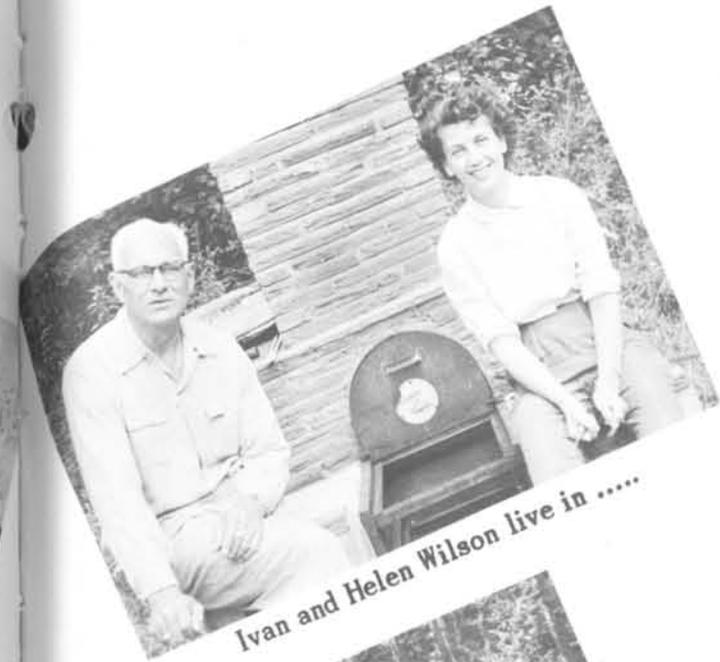
In the September SAND PILE, PHIL McCONNELL gave us a good rundown on his summer trip through the northwestern states and Canada. We now have some pictures to show that Phil was busy with his camera during this trip. Phil's description of the photographs make it pretty clear that he and Gertrude did some very pleasant visiting.



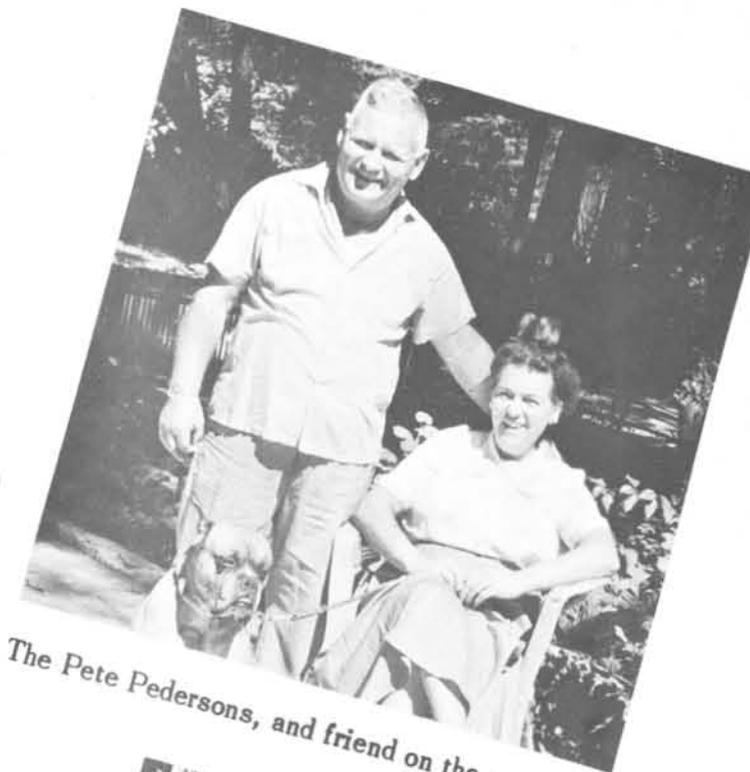
Bob and Pauline King at home.



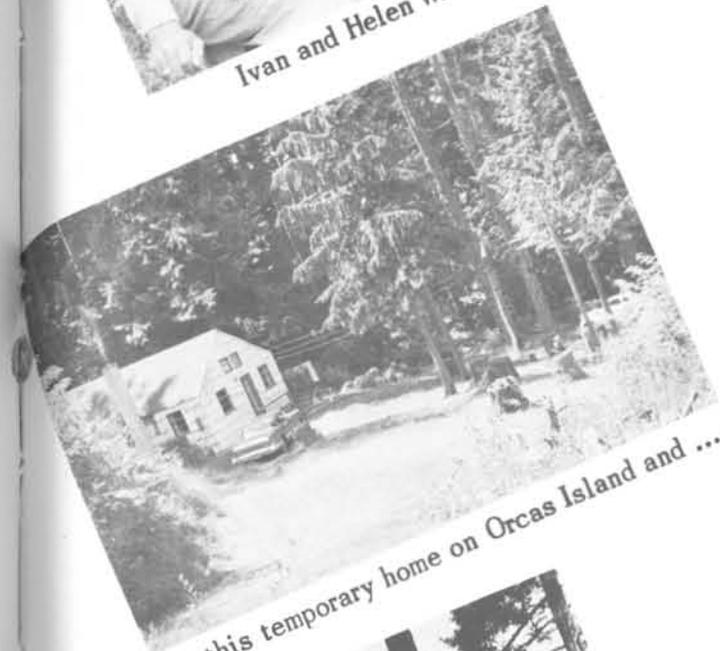
Mace Freeland with Rogue River in background



Ivan and Helen Wilson live in .....



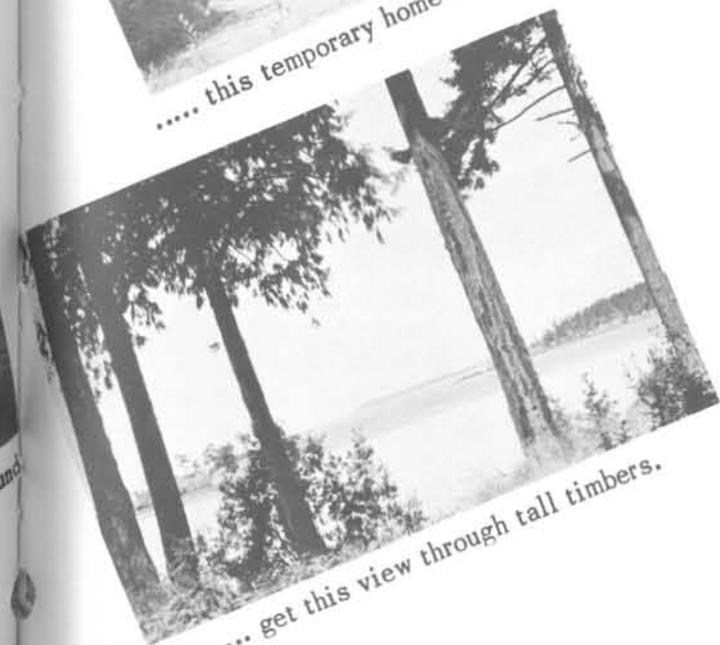
The Pete Pedersons, and friend on the patio .....



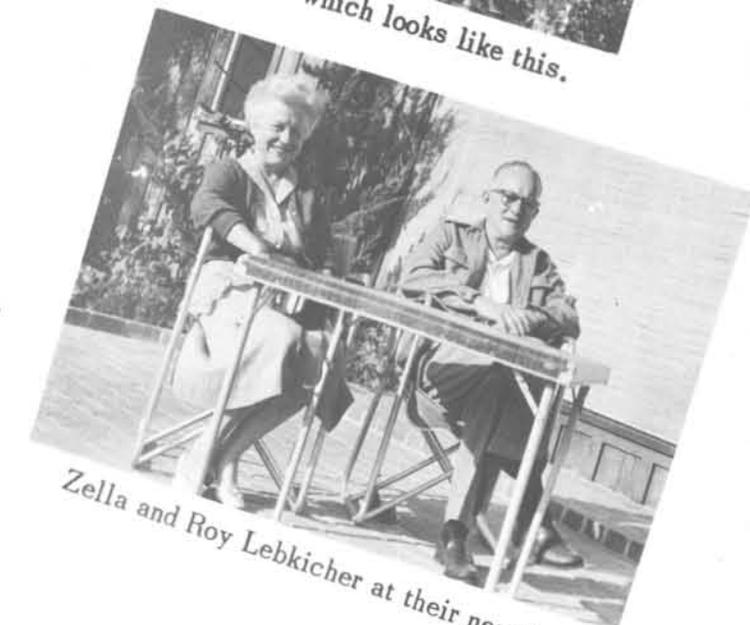
..... this temporary home on Orcas Island and .....



..... of their home which looks like this.



.... get this view through tall timbers.



Zella and Roy Lebkicher at their new home.

Ever the newsman, JACK MAHONEY has put his initial thoughts about retirement into print and we are happy to present them so that his fellow alumni can compare his feelings with their own.

# How Does It Feel To Retire?

That question has been repeatedly asked by Aramcons I have met all along the way from Saudi Arabia since August 1. One well-meaning employee pointedly asked "Just how does it feel to sever the shackles?" Never, to my dying day, will I ever think I was shackled to anything in connection with working for Aramco. I am not too far removed from what some (who do not really know us) call the pig-headed Irish; well, in that connection I definitely would renege at ever thinking I was shackled to anything!

To retire at 52 is an early age. But let me reach up to the jumping-off point and "think" I have reached the age of 60. Is a man of "retirement age" supposed to withdraw to a cloistered spot and quietly say to himself "This is it! Now, for all the things I had always planned to do; yes, those I will do, when I have the time. But first I must take it easy and say to myself in the evening of life there is that rest that is due me from my long years of labor." Those are all figments of one's imagination. For when one eligible to retire reaches that "cut-off" point from labor's daily chores, there seems to be that elusiveness about plans, and the planning of those plans that keeps them going . . . and going great guns.

Along the way several Aramcons have chidingly said "You look well enough to go on another 52 years." But they were just being kind. Still others pointedly said "I wish I could retire right now. My aches and pains need some rest." That latter remark strictly indicates they have

been nurturing those aches and pains before their great day of retirement is ready to set in. Is a person who has retired supposed to stick out his hand occasionally and watch if tremors have caught up with him yet; is he supposed to watch his gait to notice any slowing up in the process of getting along without a cane?

No, absolutely no! Retirement is one of those periods in our lives where there is merely an adjustment to another way of living. A good number of those on Aramco's retirement rolls have become lucratively engaged in selling real estate (I want to meet one such who can offer a house with a wee spot of land for \$5,000 cash, no questions asked); many have entered the insurance business and other enterprises. Hardly have any just plunged themselves into that old rocking chair and figure they could just clap their hands and a little Jinni or two would pop out at their beck and call and grant their minutest wishes.

The days of servants are gone, let's face it. Whenever a dinner party is given by one of the retired clan in California (and there are scads of them out there), we can rest assured that after the dinner is served and every last guest has been SATED, an assembly-line is formed and men even find themselves drying dishes and are far more careful not to break any. Personally, I can just see Mr. So-and-so hanging out wash that has gone through a washing machine (that needed no detergent from that AWFUL HARD WATER); I

can see Mr. So-and-so busily dusting, although his chores throughout the day are spent in or near a real estate office awaiting bait.

Truthfully retirement is that period in our lives that is given to pondering on what has passed coupled with a strong, firm hope of what is to be. Actually it doesn't matter that Abigail has to keep after Earl to see that the walk is cleared of fallen leaves; or that Evelyn has to keep after Andy to be more safe around the house. All those quirks are embodied in the scheme of living. And perhaps no one knows better than a retiree just how well life can be lived to its fullest.

During the past three months I have been busily occupied "pondering" on the past and the ultimate results may come out in book form. That problematical "may" depends on what one or two publishers have to say about the efforts. It is about the Aramco Working Family and their relations with the Saudi Arabs, as well as relations between themselves. It will not be an expose, and that is on advice from a good lawyer. Rather, it will be an actual story of our achievements, and our mistakes; but the latter are tenderly handled by delegating Mr. and Mrs. Well-meaning Soul to bear the brunt. Recently I completed a re-write of the O-PUSS and right now I am re-reading, correcting and re-writing perhaps even entire chapters if I feel they need it.

For a month now I have been basking in the lovely warm sunshine of Monte Estoril, Portugal. Mighty fine hide-away, this. But some day soon I may get itchy feet and move on to that horrible city of Gotham (New York to you Californians) where I will do the final typing of the manuscript. The title? It could be "Americans in Saudi Arabia," but readers of Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila will have to be patient... and wait for a further announcement.

To prove that one's plans often change, I refer to the June issue of Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila, wherein it was stated I planned to hop around to Hong Kong first then back-track through the Orient up to Europe. But those plans were quickly changed when I heard that Asian flu was running rampant in the area; en route (to be fashionable, I suppose) Asian flu caught up with me in Madrid. It was then I quickly learned that Dr. Haig makes the finest medicine to combat flu in any shade or shape!

## From Lahore To San Diego

BOB and FLORENCE FARMER have just about finished up their service in Pakistan. In mid-November Florence reported that they were leaving Karachi on November 27 for Rangoon. After a few days here and there, including Hong Kong, Japan and Honolulu they expected to be in California for Christmas.

It seems that getting clearance to leave Pakistan entailed quite a bit of waiting in various offices for customs authorities, police authorities and movers. But at any rate, they undoubtedly were able to get off the shipment of their personal effects and to depart on schedule.

After they get in San Diego, they will be temporarily living at 8018 West Thorn Street until they pick the spot where they really want to settle down for a while.



Bob and Florence Farmer while still in Pakistan.



The hosts, Earl and Abigail Duncan

## Like Old Times

It was like old times in Arabia when EARL DUNCAN threw a big party October 20 at his hilltop home in Walnut Creek. Twenty Aramco annuitants and their wives plus some long vacationers and former Aramco employees joined with a group of Standard Oilers in a real get-together, which ran from three in the afternoon until eight in the evening.

Old acquaintances were happily renewed and the conversation never slowed down even for a minute. Naturally, the refreshments were delightful, says Andy Anderson, and then he adds the food was delicious. We guess this means that



Josie and George Vivian



Herb and Alma Fritzie



Andy and Evelyn Anderson



Maurine and Lester Jorgenson

the "delightful refreshments" were mostly of a liquid nature.

Although the day was a bit cool and cloudy, Andy corralled most of the annuitants as they arrived and snapped their pictures. He sent along a good many of the snapshots so that the rest of us could see how healthy our fellow alumni and their wives are looking these days. It was a little too dark when Lu and Tibbie Weber arrived, but we have some shots of them in another article in this issue. There were also a few long vacationers of note who came in time to be photographed.

Not only did Andy indulge in some fine reporting but he also performed very well as photographer. He has thus set a good example, together with Phil McConnell in this issue, for the rest of the gang. From now on, when any of us meet with other ex-sand-duners, please be sure to take along a camera and then send copies of your snapshots to Al-Ayyam.



Lucky and Lois Luckenbaugh.



Ed and Elsie Christiansen



Jessie and Jim Duncan.



Robie and Hazel Robinson, Loma McMullen, Earl Duncan and Carter McMullen.



Al and Alice Haskell

# King's Kolossal Klamath Kastle



McConnell's view of the Kastle

Many invitations have been extended to Aramcons and Alumni, but no invitation has stated that the hosts could take care of all comers regardless of how many arrive at one time. BOB KING now offers just such an invitation and from the pictures we have seen, it sure seems that the "Klamath Kastle" could do just that. Bob and Pauline say that the latch string is out to all who care to drop by. In case you missed the directions in other articles, the "Kastle" can be found seventeen miles downriver from where US Highway No. 99 crosses the river.

Bob says that one of his chief outdoor activities has been the cultivation of a garden area in what looked like nothing but rock but which developed into a pretty fertile area after a lot of exploration and bulldozing. The hard



World's view of the Kastle

labor of the first season resulted in a deep freezer packed full of supplies for many weeks.

Moreover, Bob, who modestly denies great success at hunting and fishing, also casually mentions that the freezer has a goodly quantity of steelhead trout, venison and bear meat. He has hopes of adding wild duck, geese, pheasants and some mountain quail in the very near future. The Kings apparently not only have the room to handle all comers, but certainly also have the foodstuffs to do so.

Bob was happy to report, and you will be pleased to hear, that Pauline is enjoying better health than at any time since two years before they left Arabia. Soon after they joined the Refugee group, Pauline had some surgery at Vanderbilt University Hospital and it now looks as though that operation has been very successful. This is sure good news and we know that the Kings' friends will be glad to hear this report.

Bob's most important reason for dropping a line was to say that he and Pauline were deeply grieved to learn of Lawrie Rushmer's death. Bob expressed it very well when he said that he and Pauline grieve with and for Elisabeth who, with Lawrie, were among their dearest and closest friends in Arabia. He pointed out that while the Rushmers had not yet retired, they would have been among the alumni in a short time. He, therefore, suggested that Elisabeth would get a great deal of pleasure from the Al Ayyam items about her Arabian friends, and to know that we all are thinking of her. We were happy to use Bob's idea and will send the Company publications to her. Especially at this season, old friends from Arabia may wish to write to Elisabeth at her present address, 3601 Durango Street, Coral Gables, Florida.

# The SAND BILGE

I must remind you people that you are making things pretty tough for yourselves. You've had your chance and didn't do much about it. You could have written me something to use in this column, something faintly resembling human interest. You could have discussed your bad dreams, your sciatica, the last time you cheated the grocer, your opinion of Elvis Presley, cold weather and Sputnik. You could have done this, I say, and thereby could have avoided what you're going to get now: the vapors given off by a fever-ridden brain - fever-ridden because it had to fill this column. So, you get no sympathy from me as you flounder disgustedly through my efforts to make something out of nothing. (Actually, this sort of stuff is easier than reporting on the Refugees. Here, I'm not handicapped by facts.)

I'll admit that I wasn't deprived of all letters from you during the past three months. Andy Anderson wrote from Saratoga (and just after he'd contributed so effectively to the previous issue) expressing his sorrow that Evelyn and he were absent when the McConnells called last summer. The Andersons also had been wandering at the time, had travelled to Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks, visited friends (a Refugee habit), and returned home after three enjoyable weeks. Which might be taken as further proof that no matter how pleasant your home may be, an occasional trip away from it gives you a new viewpoint and adds to your pleasure in returning.

Charlie Beck sent a message from Grant's Pass, Oregon, also expressing regret that the Becks were off on a trip when we stopped to see them. He reported that on the very day of our visit, he was chasing a salmon through the

Georgia Strait near Vancouver -- and added casually that he "got 'im." There is the most amazing evidence of energy that has been reported by any Refugee to date. Chasing a salmon! I thought you hid around a corner and tried to hook them as they shot by. But that's not for Dynamo Charlie. He simply takes after them -- and gets them. Tell me, Charlie. How much head start do you give a salmon? What do you consider a sporting distance? Do you walk, fly, run, tread water, or have you a built-in Evenrude in your anatomy?

This trip of the Becks that reached to Vancouver, B. C., included a Ham picnic at Tillamook, Oregon (Ham referring to the picnickers, not the food), a loop trip around the scenic Olympic Peninsula, and a trip to Bonneville Dam. Back home, Charlie's been at it again: digging up the front yard after all manner of improvements to the back one. There's a paint job on the house and garage coming up; but Charlie thinks he'll put it off until next summer. I don't get it. What's a man with all his energy waiting for? Could he still be a little tired from chasing that fish?

But he ends his letter with the tallest tale of all. He claims that about thirty minutes before he sent his message to me, he had heard some of those strange noises listened to by all confirmed hams on their radio receivers -- and this particular noise was the call of a radio station with HZ as the first two call letters. Now, if you ever worked with Communications in the Persian Gulf area, you know that HZ is the prefix for Arabia. So Charlie promptly hopped on the air to learn who was talking - and it proved to be Prince

Talal of the royal family in Riyadh. He and Charlie had a pleasant chat.

There is something exciting to me in that casual talk, chiefly because it was casual, unforeseen, and without particular effort or plan. I walk down to the post office and nod to a neighbor whom I pass on the street. Charlie Beck slips into a chair, flips a key, and for a few minutes, chats informally with an Arab prince on the opposite side of the world. There's nothing new in the fact that such a contact can be made -- but isn't it an exhilarating thought, that an American in America can and does talk to an Arab in Arabia as easily, as casually, and with as little justification as I need when I nod to my neighbor passing on the street? Suppose people all over the world (not just the hams, God bless 'em, but millions of people) could and would talk to each other as easily? Perhaps we could pull ourselves out of the world mess we're in.

I have another communication for this issue: a letter sent me by Florence Farmer from the plains of Pakistan, near Lahore. Florence has three problems that worry her: buffaloes, Mynah birds, sweet-toothed children. With encouragement of their herder, the buffaloes invade what the Farmers would like to call their front yard. Florence throws pebbles at the buffaloes and remonstrates with the herder who makes a point of understanding no English. So far, Florence feels that she is making no headway with either animals or man.

The Mynah birds are a pair that adopted the Farmers when they, the Farmers, came to live in their trailer. These boarders expect to be fed early and plentifully (primarily on American crackers that are scarce in Pakistan), and object violently to food being wasted on the Farmers' two dogs, and on the Farmers, too, for that matter. The Mynahs figure that the way to get action is to put on a screaming session -- and they usually want action. As they see the situation, things are in a sad state, with the Farmers and even their dogs, trying to eat first. Something ought to be done about it.

And then there are the children who form a patient, watchful line outside the trailer -- children who wait for candy. Florence can't feed candy to all, and from time to time, she resolves not to try. But they come with flowers in their hands, poor stemless flowers torn from the Rest

House garden. They stretch forth their hands, silently entreating. So, Florence pops more corn or finds more candy -- for a while, and has the trailer decorated with saucers of stemless flowers.

There you are, Refugees. Any suggestions, worth while or otherwise, regarding the treatment of buffaloes, Mynah birds, and children, will be passed to the Farmers free of charge.

A few remnants from last summer's vacation come to mind. When I was investigating routes and places, I came across a few notes on the behavior of tourists. As most of you descend into that class from time to time, you may be interested in learning how some of your fellow travellers behave.

Take the motorist who struggled up Tioga Pass in Yosemite, pulling a house trailer. As he approached the entrance station, he called to the ranger, "How's my trailer doing?" The ranger glanced back and asked, "What trailer?"

And the woman listening to a ranger explaining how the water was run through the turbo-generators at Hoover Dam, to produce electric power. "But isn't the government ruining the water?" she asked. And when the ranger disagreed, she exclaimed indignantly, "But you're taking all the electricity out of it!"

But one woman was thinking for herself. When a ranger emphasized the high level of culture enjoyed by the prehistoric cliff dwellers in New Mexico, this lady argued, "If those Indians were so intelligent, why did they build so far from the railroad?"

Have you visited the Luray Caverns in Virginia? If you have, you've never said a word about it to me. I'm told that these caverns are about ninety miles from Washington and that they feature stalactites and stalagmites. Which isn't so unusual, except that these stalactites are different. They produce music.

According to the story that came to me, this idea of a musical cavern started with an electronics expert who also was an excellent musician. When he and his four-year-old son visited the caves, the son bumped his head on a stalactite that promptly gave out a musical ping. The father got to thinking. (He may have done this before, but I can't prove it.) He discussed

his idea with the owners of the cave and gained their approval. Then he collected thirteen tuning forks, a hammer, a high speed disc grinder, and a supply of aluminum oxide to use as a grinding agent. His job was to grind and hone a given stalactite until it gave off a perfectly pitched note, then proceed to another stalactite and hone it to the perfect pitch of another note -- and so on and on. Well, he did it -- and he could roam around the cave, producing perfectly pitched notes from the various parts of a three acre underground musical instrument.

"Beautiful!" said everyone. But it was difficult to play a scale in three-four time with the c and d notes separated by a hundred yards. There just weren't enough hundred-yard men to run around hitting the right stalactites in time. So the electronics expert got to thinking again. He attached an electrically operated hammer to each stalactite and connected the hammers with wires brought to a common point where he installed the modern equivalent of the old player piano. He made music rolls perforated in accordance with certain musical scores, so that when the rolls were run over suitable cylinders, the electric hammers were energized and at the proper time took a husky swipe at the proper stalactite. So, the cave has become a perfectly pitched organ that plays stuff like THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S, SILENT NIGHT, and possibly DON'T FENCE ME IN.

Now don't tell me that you've been there and that the reports about this wonderful music are grossly exaggerated. This is one story that I want to find true. I want to descend into this great well of blackness and stand silent and humble, enveloped by resonant melody wrought from the earth itself, reverberating, mingling the harmonies of nature into a vast symphony of sound. I want the lights to grow gradually, first dim and wavering, then rising even as the music rises -- and dies into silence. And as I stand wrapped in the wonder of this great experience, I expect to hear a nasal voice announce, "That's all, folks. Luscious hot dogs on your right as you pass out."

Last month when I had no letters to read from Refugees, I became mildly interested in a few articles concerning persons of advanced years (old codgers such as you and I). Much of it was the same stuff that you've probably read before; but a few points appealed to me and might

interest some of you, particularly if you hadn't been aware that elderly people had problems. (You must remember that one of the problems of our age is to find problems for everyone.) These points are presented as questions.

Question: Are my finances in satisfactory shape? (Whose are?) Have I checked on my status under Social Security?

Question: What do I want to do with the remainder of my life; and what sort of a world would this be if everyone lived as I do?

Question: Do I still live in an atmosphere of hurry, worry, and tension?

Question: Do I have too many things?

Question: Are my relations with other people improving?

Question: Am I joining in community activities?

You don't have to take this quiz if you don't want to; and you don't have to tell the answers to anyone but yourself, if you do. And here was a small prayer: "Lord, give me the serenity to accept what I cannot change, the courage to change what I believe should and can be changed, and the wisdom to know one from the other."

This seems the place to tell you about the Scotchman and his wife (not Jim and Jessie Duncan) who dickered for hours with a pilot to give them their first ride in an airplane. The pilot became so exasperated that he offered to give the couple a free ride if they'd keep their mouths shut; otherwise, the price would be twenty dollars. So, the three took off; and the pilot gave everything in the book: loops, dives, steep banks, rolls. But never a peep did he drag from his passengers. After they landed, the pilot turned to the Scotchman and admitted with disgust, "You win. I didn't hear a sound from either of you." "Ay," replied the Scotchman, "But t'was close for a minute there when my wife fell out."

We've had a number of Aramco contacts during the past few months. Fred and Pat Hilton, Edna Brown, Les and Betty Snyder, Harold and Maye Beckley, Fred and Jeanne Abbott, either struggled up to Ojai or caused us to travel down to Los Angeles. Within the last couple of weeks, we've had visits from old timers Bobby Loughboro and the Art Osborns, and from three new

members, Jean Burch and the Stepneys. Business seems to be picking up.

A week before Thanksgiving, I found the streets of Santa Barbara decorated with the tallest artificial Christmas trees that I remember seeing -- which started me to thinking about Christmas (as the merchants intended), and what I ought to buy for Aunt Emma and Old Mrs. Glotz, and when we should start mailing Christmas cards. And I also remembered that contrary to the general assumption, Christmas is not a happy time for many people, not because they are cold or hungry or ill, but just because they are lonely with a loneliness made greater by the bustle around them. Loneliness is a sickness to which people of advanced years, retired people, are more than normally vulnerable. Many of us have slipped out of the stream of activity that once made Christmas sociability easy. The business contacts are gone; we aren't in the midst of a string of parties; the feeling of being left out is easy to catch. And because this is so, we should take due precautions against the disease. If you are blessed with much family and close friends around you, be thankful -- for they will not irritate you at this season as they may have earlier in the year. And while you are surrounded by them, you might consider briefly what you could do to make the Christmas season a happier time for those elderly neighbors who don't get around much. They don't need a present that can be wrapped -- just the present of an evening around the fireplace.

And if you, yourself, are in the group of the lonely ones, you can ward that off, too, by finding someone else who could stand a little cheer for the evening. Wipe out your loneliness by removing another's.

Sounds like the same old line of platitudes, doesn't it. But it might work.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!

*Phil McConnell*

## A Modern Program

AL HASKELL has expanded his business activities and in addition to representing the Oakland Title Insurance Company, Al will also be a consultant with the Mutual Fund Associates, Inc. Based on his experience, as well as experience of others now enjoying retirement, Al is seeking to pass on some hints about the finances of retirement. The key to his work is found in the title of a special report, "A Modern Program Designed for Successful Executives Preparing for Retirement."

Certainly, Al should be in a good position to discuss with others preparing for retirement, all aspects of this new life. The business, of course, centers on mutual funds and Al wants to build up a list of clients both at home and abroad. Al-Ayyam Al-Jamila always wants to help out, so we suggest that anyone interested in getting Al's advice and assistance on Mutual Fund, write to him in care of his company at 506 Montgomery Street, San Francisco 11, California. Indeed, you can be sure Al would not feel hurt if anyone wrote to him at his home address, 1076 Serrano Court, Lafayette, California.

Al and his wife, Alice, were among those who attended the party at Earl and Abigail Duncan's home in mid-October, and Al reports a good time was had by all at that gathering.

## We Await His Next Letter

HAROLD BAKER, alias ROUGHHOUSE, dropped us a short note which would arouse anyone's curiosity about his plans for early '58. All Roughhouse mentioned was that on January 15, he and Effie will join Wally Byam's Caravaneers for a trip to Mexico City. From there the whole group will head on to Acapulco where the Caravan will disband. Moreover, we have Roughhouse's promise to give us a good report on this safari. Who knows, we may even get some snapshots of his adventures with the fishing pole.

## Settling Down in Lafayette

GEORGE WOOD brings us up-to-date on his travels since he arrived in Houston last fall. The winter in that city, says George, was very pleasant and, not only did he enjoy the weather, but also got to see many of his old friends.

However, despite the pleasant weather, George found the city has spread out too much and he expected that summers there would mean being cooped up in air-conditioned rooms. Since these thoughts knocked out living in the city they looked to the surrounding country but decided that this was too flat and unattractive. The result was that they packed up and moved back to the mountains of northern Alabama in June for some delightful summer living.

Wanderlust still held George and Florence in its grip, for in September he spoke of settling in eastern Tennessee, northern Alabama or northern Georgia, but before they settled down they expected to take a look at Arkansas.

A November letter from George points out that the settling problem has ceased to be perplexing, at least for a good while. As we know, George has two boys in college in Lafayette, Louisiana so he and Florence took a good long look at that town and decided that they'll stay there, at least while the boys are in college. This keeps the family together and enables the Woods to settle down in pleasant and friendly surroundings. We hope we will hear more from George and Florence because their letters are always sociable and newsy.



## Amateur Archaeology and a Museum Piece

CASPER and SOPHIE GEE have been regularly speaking on the customs and traditions of Saudi Arabia. They have recently made their presentation for the Claremont Business and Professional Women's Club and the West Covina Rotary Club, so we feel sure that Aramco is getting a lot of good publicity in the Pomona area. They have, however, taken time out to welcome another granddaughter into the family. This makes two grandsons and three granddaughters, so we are sure that the Gees are looking forward to some gay family affairs during the Christmas holidays.

Casper has been working on a hobby which he had not mentioned before. While in Arabia he was doing some exploration on his own. His adventures were not in oil but in archaeology. In 1945 he did some digging in an abandoned Al Hasa village and his work paid off, for he built up a nice collection of glassware, coins, jewelry and pottery.

One of the prizes of Casper's work is a tombstone which he believes is written in the language of Saba, or also known as Sheba, the ancient country of Southern Arabia. Casper has very generously offered his collection, including the tombstone, to the Los Angeles County Museum. Indeed, it looks as though this may be a very fine contribution to the Museum's exhibits. The Museum's Chief Curator of Art has replied that he and the Curator of Far Eastern and Near Eastern Art will make the trip to Pomona very soon to look over the material Casper has. We hope to hear that it has been accepted so that many more people will benefit from Casper's hobby.

Very many names and a lot of good pictures make this a pretty stout issue. So, if your name-- or your picture-- is not here, please attend to this friendly little matter as soon as possible. Everyone should be mentioned and, for old times sake, everyone should have his photograph published fairly regularly. A way back, about a year ago, in our first issue, we mentioned that this magazine would help you keep up with your Aramco associations. To do this, everybody should hear about everybody else so let's EVERYBODY get his story into print and a picture, too.

After we mailed the latest list of Annuitants' addresses in early December, we received notice of a few more address changes. Here they are:

Jim Duncan	8100 Stobridge Avenue, Castro Valley, California
Cap Jones	782 Highere Street, San Luis Obispo, California
Homer Keith	20 South Meteor Avenue, Clearwater, Florida
Tom Marr	984 Thomasson Lane, Paradise, California
Alex Nordling	Peace River, Alberta, Canada
Warren Powell	41909 22nd Street West, Lancaster, California
Cal Ross	General Delivery, Paradise, California
Len Saulman	Box 304, Grenada, Mississippi

Walt Ismer will be at the address in the list we mailed, until February 1, 1958. After that, his address will be Mar Egeo #122, Guadalajara, Jal, Mexico.