

JUST PUTTING THIS OUT THERE (from ALJ)

. IN THE HOPE THAT YOU TOO WILL ALL
JUST PUT THIS OUT THERE!

When Trish Burt first mused on the notion that maybe there should be an EO bash in Nepal I seriously wondered how realistic that would be. After all we've all moved on; sure there is much to remember, much to feel good about but we all live in a busy present and we all have stuff down the track to focus on. Who is to say that time and earnings aren't to be better spent?

None-the-less Trish has already been proved right; there is already a lot of real interest and folks already 'signed-up'. As I trust you already know, October this year has been fixed as the time as good as any.

I have wondered about specifically naming some names here - but I have anyway. And not to do so would make scant sense. The real sense of it all however is brought about only by the inclusion of all of us - that surely is the real given.

There is clearly a strong and special kinship and fraternity among all who have been part of EO. And then, within that, there are era-like periods and maybe to some extent continent-based associations, specific camaraderie and unschooled mentors to a next-gen to whom the baton would be passed.

I was musing on this and then found I was also laughing at the iconic and antiquated material bits that equipped our org. The truck of course. The trailer too. But also The telex and its effects when it began chattering. The Hot-line. Each trip's clip-board of procedural ERR's as well as the more high-octane telexes and hotline summaries. The gas-ax. Tool-box. Africa's brilliant 1/4,000,000 Michelin maps etc etc. And, iconic in its way I suppose, The Hitchin House (!) Some of us well remember ENFLASH; cranked out by JCC on a knackered 2nd-hand Gestetner in the basement of 267 and somehow still 'hot' despite languishing, as often as not, in a remote 'post restante' for a month plus.

A shag was often a brag but less bragged about was how love was always in the air. Whether eternal or 'for the duration' isn't the point, nor really is whether it was more part of the solution or more part of the problem. It just was. Funny that! And anyway Moira was more than likely to get to the bottom of it.

And I suppose this takes us to our EM's. What on Earth was it had them for the most part put their faith in us or allowed us to win it, and what chemistry helped justify that trust? You were not merely impacting your own lives. One could take it further and surmise about EO epitomizing adventure travel and adventure travel encapsulating the spirit of a new age. (A good case for getting pissed that - an October rumination on what has become of it!?!?)

Different eras might be simplified into tenures of larger-than-life Work-shop Managers. Rob. Bill (W). Tony. Jerry. Bill (P) and others and there surely isn't a L/D without a fund of stories about formative times at Wren Park. Tim English, in his book Overlanding, captures the essence of life there to a 'T'. The Hot Seat too wielded a rare type of dynamic did it not? Rich in stories told differently from both ends? Hot Seat occupants have a lot to answer for. . . show up in October (Mr. Burton et all) and plead your case at the bar!!!!

I for one thank heaven we did not have social media and IT in general to contend with - but decades later it's got its up-side. It's driving these preps for this gathering for starters. There is also such as power-point and it seems to me that great opportunities would be missed if we did not consider what tales of derring-do etc. could thus be revisited. Give that some thought would you?

And thus. . . this here is a bit of a ruse to get us all to 'just put it out there', un-apologetically to suggest we can network with ex-colleagues to fuel the flame of memory and - for just a few days - to celebrate the way we were. No more and no less than that.

As always, yours,

ALJ