

BRAT news

The AramcoBrat Newsletter

Winter 1998

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Michael Crocker DH '65

Since the 1997 Reunion hosted by your ABI and the dedicated members of the reunion committee, more Brats have joined us. The Brat family includes most nationalities of various ages. We are truly blessed with the unique gift of Saudi Arabia as our common heritage. I have been particularly blessed by getting to know all of you and being able to serve you. I foresee a bright future for the AramcoBrats, Inc. and hope that all of you have a chance to see and talk with your past at the next reunion as I did.

As most of you know, the Kingdom and the AramcoBrats, Inc. have worked hard to gather thoughts, emotions, and memories for a book to be published by the Kingdom. The Saudi Government was extremely happy with the Brat stories, poems, and articles which will be published. Over 3,000,000 copies in English and Arabic will be made available. There is still time to submit a story or such. Contact Mike Crocker if you are interested. The book has a lot of photos and is progressing well.

At this point in time, it looks as if 150 Brats will be returning to Saudi Arabia as guests in 1999. No exact date has been set yet, but it is being worked on.

REUNION '97 – ONE BRAT'S EXPERIENCE

by Elizabeth Bowler Morley, DH '74

Most people who attend school reunions have to deal with misgivings about making the trip back, figuratively if not literally. There are the usual reunion issues: How much have you aged, what have you accomplished, who is actually going to be there. Personally, I am not the least bit self-conscious of how much I have aged, and found myself to be younger than many Brats involved in Brat Chat. But I always feel self-conscious at my college homecomings, seeing how others of my class have done in more promising career fields and job markets. And I had to wonder: would any of us know each other after twenty-three years or more?

For a short time I wasn't sure I'd make it. 1995 was the first time I seriously considered attending an AramcoBrat reunion, but the demise of our ancient refrigerator/freezer canceled any plans I had to go to Houston. Throughout 1996, my desire to attend the next reunion gathered steam. Interacting with other Brats through "Brat Chat" e-mail aroused my interest in meeting not only with childhood acquaintances, but with Brats from other eras. And attending family functions and seeing my Aramco-community relatives again helped encourage me to consider the next reunion.

"Most people who attend school reunions have to deal with misgivings about making the trip back, figuratively if not literally. There are the usual reunion issues: How much have you aged, what have you accomplished, who is actually going to be there..."

My chances of attending the 1997 reunion were jeopardized when we discovered that carpenter ants were killing a maple tree in my back yard and we would have to have it removed. But my sister and brother would be at the Chandler reunion, and as my sister was determined we would attend as a family, she shelled out for my plane tickets. We three split a hotel room, and my brother and I made the plane trip together.

We arrived on Friday, too late for the talent show, but not too late to meet old schoolmates before retiring to a large and comfortable room on the third floor of the Sheraton San Marcos. It wasn't until the next day that I found the balcony was immersed in the crest of a thick stand of oleanders, in bloom and filled with nests of mourning doves. I recalled my childhood hours spent hiding and playing in the oleanders around my Ras Tanura and Dhahran houses, stringing leis from the pink blossoms and carving playthings from the spalted twigs. The heady fragrance of the pink blossoms filled our room. Every morning during the Memorial Day weekend, I took advantage of this cozy retreat, sitting in the sun and writing journal entries while the mourning doves rustled about in the branches overhead.

The pool was a more social spot to hang out, and a chance to swim a few laps when I actually felt like exercising. Here ► *One Brat's Experience, Page 6*

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REUNION '97 REPORT

by Diane Knipfel-Adams AB '75 (Reunion Chair)

SIXTH BIENNIAL ARAMCOBRAT REUNION
MAY 22-26, 1997
SHERATON SAN MARCOS RESORT
CHANDLER, ARIZONA

The blast of hot desert air that greeted the Brats arriving at Phoenix's Sky Harbor Airport felt comfortingly familiar. So did driving past palm trees, bougainvillea, and stuccoed walls. By the time they pulled into the oleander-lined drive of the Sheraton San Marcos, they really felt at home.

Nearly 750 brats, teachers, parents, and guests attended the 1997 AramcoBrat Reunion just outside Phoenix, Arizona. The classes of 1950 through 1992 were represented. They came from as far away as Arabia and Australia and as near by as the homes that line the resort's golf course. We filled all of the 295 rooms at the San Marcos and overflowed into another 45 rooms at the Windmill Inn down the street.

Upon arrival, attendees were directed to the Teen Canteen where they could register and pick up their ID badge and other reunion goodies. Inside the Canteen were several cases displaying Aramco and Saudi memorabilia. Since no canteen is complete without a juke box, one was available with music that appealed to Brats of all ages.

Because shopping at the Suq was a favorite part of being home, one was set up at the canteen. Brat vendors sold a variety of T-shirts, coffee cups, mouse pads, books, tapes, beach towels, hats, pins, and art work. The familiar insignias and colors made them highly coveted reunion souvenirs.



If brass, gold, fine Syrian cloth, or inlaid backgammon boards were more your style, there were two ABI fund-raisers that fulfilled those desires. A raffle and silent auction raised much-needed funds for ABI operations, while enabling a few lucky brats to go home with some real treasures.

Adjacent to the canteen was the pool hall, complete with pool and fooseball tables. It also was home to a PA system, guitar and drum set that lured old garage band members to jam throughout the weekend.

Thanks to an abundance of Arizona sunshine, the most popular day-time hangout was the sparkling pool right outside the canteen and pool hall. Small groups ventured beyond the hotel to visit an Arabian horse ranch, go on a desert ride, tube down the Salt River, and eat at the many Middle Eastern restaurants located near by. During the evenings, people could be found hanging out pool-side, in the canteen, pool hall, or in the hotel rooms and suites.

The reunion ran from Thursday to Monday, though many brats came a few days early and stayed a few days late. Four days just seems to fly by too quickly. Due to increasing numbers of early arrivals at recent reunions, the 1997 Reunion officially opened for business on Thursday evening. The atmosphere was electrified by shrieks of delight as old friends reunited. For some, the separation had only been since the last reunion; for others, it had been far longer.

Friday morning and afternoon were open for the new arrivals to register and get settled. The frequency of "Oh, my God" greetings gained momentum by the afternoon and was fever pitched by evening. The Tri-D talent shows were revived Friday night. The acts were as varied and creative as they were in the old days. The Tucson Brats performed a clever skit and song. The gutra-clad Riley sisters sang. Three abba-clothed brats did the macarena. The class of '73 performed a skit, and Mike Grimes performed a drum solo with a

► Reunion, Page 7

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Sarah Manwaring-Mitchell DH '77

Opening Balance (1993 Reunion Funds) \$419.13

Income:

| | |
|---|-------------|
| ABI Survey Fee | \$10,088.00 |
| ABI Proceeds (ABI Sales, Reunion Raffle, Non-ABI Board Donations) | \$4,735.28 |
| Reunion Registration/Merchandise | \$50,477.55 |
| Post-Reunion Merchandise | \$301.00 |

Total Income: \$65,601.83

Expenses:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| ABI Newsletters, Directory, Class Rep Mailings, etc. | \$12,702.71 |
| Reunion Start Up/Administration | \$72.48 |
| Reunion Expenses | \$43,356.88 |
| Bank Fees | \$102.40 |

Total Expenses: \$56,234.47

Closing Balance: \$9,786.49

The first ABI Board started out in May 1996 with just \$419.13 left over from the 1993 Reunion in San Diego and the determination to provide an organizational entity for all Brats and host a successful reunion in 1997. It was only through the generosity of key individuals that the Board was able to operate, do the requisite reunion planning, and send newsletters/reunion surveys out during those early months in 1996 when there was no income to offset the expenses. Through careful planning and budgeting, as well as a very successful reunion in Chandler last May, the ABI is now self-sufficient and operating in the black with \$9,786.49 in our account. However, as Mike Simms points out, the cost of newsletters, directories, class rep mailings, web site maintenance, initial reunion planning, etc. is not insignificant. We ask you to support the ABI by contributing what we have affectionately named "Administrative Baksheesh" of \$15 (U.S.) or \$20 (Overseas) to help us meet our goals and our budget. Details and a form can be found inside the back cover. Thank you!

BRATnews

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If you are interested in submitting an article or Letter to the Editor for publication, please contact Michael McCoy, 20 Paquawket Path, Groton, MA 01450 (mmccoy@tiac.net).

YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED

by Mike Simms AB '78

The ABI has struggled to put itself together over the past two years and the hard work and selfless contribution of many people is beginning to pay off. We now have a strong organization with a set of operating guidelines and bylaws that provide us with a framework for supporting all Brats and their interests. Through the efforts of two ABI boards, we put into place structure and accountability so that all Brats are served equally and no individual or group of individuals can ever threaten or control the existence of this organization and its membership.

As part of our original charter, we had to determine and define the criteria for membership. The originating board had the foresight to automatically include as members every Brat who ever attended school and/or lived with parents or guardians who worked for Aramco or its affiliated companies and contractors in Saudi Arabia. Membership in the ABI is automatic, free of charge, and bears no obligation. You are included in our family whether you know it or not. The ABI is more than happy to respect every Brat's right to privacy and is always willing to disassociate any Brat who so desires from the activities and communications of the organization. **However, you are a Brat, you will always be a Brat, and we say that you can always come home.**

Great, but so what? What do you get for your unsolicited membership in ABI? Well, the answer is some control, a lot of protection, and a structure that transcends individual Brats and binds the whole family together. Our numbers span 50 years of a shared experience that as individuals will always only exist as a dream time. As a group, it can and does live again for us. **Check out the web site, thumb through the latest Directory, read this newsletter, and you will get a sense of what it means to have the past of your exotic and unexplainable childhood be vivid and alive and shared again.** The ABI Charter is to ensure that this power and opportunity continues to be available to all Brats everywhere as long as there are at least two of us left breathing and uttering Arabic swear words.

We do this by maintaining and operating a web site, maintaining a current database of Brats and their addresses, publishing a biennial directory, publishing a biannual newsletter, maintaining and posting an e-mail list, maintaining a system of class representatives, and providing reunion oversight to protect the interests of the membership at the biennial reunions.

The ABI Board maintains contact with the Saudi government and with Aramco and its successors and affiliates. Through this conduit we have been able to provide, as a group, some very valuable historical data and information to the Ministry of Education, and the Brats have been presented to and acknowledged by the King and several Princes. We continue, as part of the fulfillment of our charter, to strengthen, enhance, and nurture this positive relationship with a people and culture that are such an integral part of our past experience.

The class representatives maintain even closer contact with Brats. Many of them publish additional newsletters and mailings directed towards Brats of the same class year or group of years at

their own expense. Class reps are an integral part of maintaining the network of Brats. Their hard work and dedication literally keep the wheels turning and the information flowing.

The reunion oversight function of the ABI is probably the most misunderstood part of our charter. The biennial reunions have always been and will continue to be chaired, organized, and run completely by an individual or group of individuals who live in the area where the reunion is being held. The budget for each reunion is funded by ABI until enough registration fees come in to develop a separate reunion budget. Leftover funds after the books close on a reunion revert to the ABI. Bear in mind the possibility that there is no way anyone can guarantee there will be any leftover funds after a reunion.

Once a reunion committee begins to get registration fees, there are no ABI funds involved and the reunion account is separate from the ABI account. The ABI's role is to provide oversight and security to this process. The ABI Reunion Oversight Officer is the primary interface between the current chair, once selected, and the ABI. We try to have the previous Reunion Chair become the ROO for the term following their reunion. This is how we ensure that future reunions continue to happen and continue to be of the quality that we have all come to expect.

Now for the sales pitch. The ABI provides all of the services outlined above and it has always been free to the membership. Some brats have been very generous with their time and money, and that generosity has allowed us to continue to provide the services we are charged with providing and to look out for the interests of all Brats. We are a non-profit organization. Our entire board is comprised of people who volunteer their time and energy. There are no salaries or compensation paid to any member.

The bottom line is that we need some way of funding our operating budget so that we can continue to provide for all Bratkind.

There are two avenues that we can take to fulfill this need. We can charge a membership fee and make some of our services privileged based on payment of the fee, and/or we can solicit donations from the membership. The Board has struggled over the last several months with this issue. Will we destroy the organization by implementing these policies or make it stronger, enabling it to continue? Will anyone pay the fees and donate to the organization? Can we continue to be viable as an organization dedicated to all Brats everywhere if enough people don't participate? The answer to the last question is a definite no.

The choice is really up to you as Brats and members of the ABI. On the inside of the back cover, you will find forms and instructions on how you can take a positive step in keeping this important part of your lives around. Whatever you decide to do, according to your ABI's bylaws you will continue to get up to two newsletters and other services each year for as long as we can continue to pay for them. Please consider helping us to do that and do more.

ABI E-Mail Connection

The AramcoBrat E-Mail Connection seeks to connect Brats through electronic mail. If you are interested in registering your e-mail address with the ABI, send a message to Eric Hill (emhill@prodigy.net) giving your name, your district at the time of 9th grade, and the year you graduated (or would have graduated) from 9th grade.

Brat Chat

Brat Chat is an electronic mail forum for friendly discourse, critical thinking, clever argument, and strolling down memory lane. It's an opportunity to discuss our lives in Saudi Arabia, our lives today, and anything else we want to "talk" about. More than 450 Brats are currently subscribed.

How does the Brat Chat work? Simply. After you subscribe, you receive copies of e-mail messages other subscribers send to the list., either individually (High Frequency) or compiled into a digest (Low Frequency). As one person responds to another, a "discussion" arises. On a given day, your e-mail box might contain messages about several Brat-related (or non-Brat-related) topics. You don't have to respond or even read everything. You can, as many do, just "lurk," reading messages but not saying anything. Or you can be more vocal, posting messages regularly. Feel free to do what you want.

To subscribe to Brat Chat (or to ask for more information), send an e-mail message to Selena Maranjian (tmfselena@aol.com) giving your name (including your maiden name), your district at the time of 9th grade (or where you last lived in Arabia), the year you graduated (or would have graduated) from 9th grade, and whether you want High or Low Frequency.

ABI Web Site (<http://www.aramco-brats.com>)

The ABI World Wide Web site consists of almost 50 individual pages. The web site offers a Photo Gallery, which contains over 1,000 images: pictures of Abqaiq, Dhahran, Ras Tanura, and Khobar as you may remember them and as they are now; pictures of Arab life; and pictures of past ABI reunions. It even has hundreds of pictures from the *Sun and Flare* (find yourself!). Other pages include a list of common Arabic phrases, an In Memory page to remember Brats who are no longer with us, a guestbook where you can read or enter messages for other Brats, and a list of links to Arab sites and boarding school alumni pages.

Developed and maintained by Mike Crocker, the ABI web site has won awards from *Arab World Magazine* and from the *Saudi Arabia Directory*. If you haven't seen the ABI web site, you're missing something special.

The General Meeting of the AramcoBrats, Inc. was held in the Teen Canteen ballroom on Sunday, May 26, 1997. About 40 brats attended the meeting to discuss the reunion and ABI business and talk about future plans.

- **Board Elections/Appointments** – The results of the election for the 1997-99 ABI Board of Directors were announced. The complete list of ABI Board members (elected and appointed) appears below.

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| President: | Mike Crocker (DH '65) |
| 1st VP, Reunion Oversight: | Diane Knipfel-Adams (AB '75) |
| 2nd VP, Publications: | Michael McCoy (RT '72) |
| Treasurer: | Sarah Manwaring-Mitchell (DH '77) |
| Secretary: | Lorelei Hern-Hillman (DH '73) |
| Directory Coordinator: | Mike Simms (AB '78) |
| Database Coordinator: | Sherri Dent-Moxley (DH '77) |
| Director at Large: | Mike Polhemus (DH '66) |
| Director at Large: | Diana Ryrholm-Geerdes (RT '62) |
| E-Mail Coordinator: | Eric Hill (DH '63) |
| Class Rep Coordinator: | Angela Fernandez (DH '82) |

- **1997 Reunion** – Diane Knipfel-Adams received high praise for chairing a tremendously successful reunion. See her report on Page 4 for a full description of everything that went on. The silent auction for Saudi-related items was very successful, but obtaining items for similar events at future reunions may be difficult to repeat.
- **1999 Reunion** – The location of the 1999 reunion (May 27-31) was discussed. The idea of holding it on a cruise ship was raised but deemed impractical: while a ship-based reunion would be fun, everyone would have to arrive at the departure point at the same time, which would exclude too many people. Another suggestion was to hold the reunion on the East Coast (Atlanta, New Orleans, and Memphis were all suggested.) Mike Crocker pointed out that past reunions have occurred on the West Coast because most Brats live in Texas, California, and Arizona.
- **Relationship with Saudi government** – Mike Crocker reported that the Saudi government has officially recognized the ABI and hopes to work on various events with us. Handmade Saudi flags were presented to the ABI officers as a gift from His Royal Highness Prince Salman Abdulaziz ibn Saud, the next Crown Prince.

WANT TO BE A CLASS REP?

by Angela Fermendzin, ABI Class Rep Coordinator
3815 Columbus Street, # 22, Bakersfield, CA 93306 • (805) 872-9780 •
Fax (805) 366-0822 • E-mail: amfer@lightspeed.net

Class Reps are one of the keys to staying in touch with a group as large as ours. As Class Rep Coordinator, I have several responsibilities, but my main functions are to be the point of contact for the current class reps and to enlist class reps for the classes that need them. If you are in a class without a representative (listed below), I encourage you to volunteer. If you need to contact your class rep, if you want more information before you volunteer, or if you already are a class rep — I'm here to help.

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1951: AB / DH / RT | 1980: RT | 1988: AB / RT |
| 1958: AB / RT | 1982: AB | 1989-1991: AB/DH/RT/UD |
| 1961: AB | 1984: DH | 1992: AB / RT |
| 1962: AB / DH / RT | 1985: AB | 1993: AB / RT / UD |
| 1963: AB / RT | 1986: AB / UD | 1994-1997: AB/DH/RT/UD |
| 1964: RT | 1987: AB / DH / UD | |

► *One Brat's Experience (from Page \)*

I was greeted by several others of my graduating class. As I mentioned, I was initially self-conscious about what little I had achieved over the years. I was relieved to find nobody was interested in comparing resumes, wanting instead to talk about families and old friends. At first I asked around about others from my class. After a day at the San Marcos, when I realized what a big crowd was in attendance, I decided to stop playing "Where's Waldo," and simply enjoy chance encounters. Diane Christofferson and I visited the bowling alley to watch the competition and meet old friends. I spent a third of my time catching up with people I had known in Saudi. The rest was spent either relaxing alone or chatting with people I had never met before.

I didn't recognize some people right away. Everyone else was taller, and some wore sunglasses. Oddly enough, even after the reunion, I still visualize classmates like Marina Johnson, Carol Yeager and Annie Oskam as young girls, even though I think of them as grown-ups with kids of their own.

But all of the girls I remembered had grown up into charming and fascinating women. Among the boys of my class, I was astounded to run into Khaldoun Jallad, as I did not realize he had pursued a Western education and employment. That we all arose from the same common background awoke in me a sense of pride in my Brat identity.

Return to Chandler

May 22-25, 1998

If you enjoyed the 1997 reunion and can't wait to go back (or if you missed the reunion and wondered what everyone was raving about), THIS IS YOUR CHANCE!

An UNOFFICIAL reunion will be held at the Sheraton San Marcos in Chandler, Arizona this Memorial Day weekend, Friday, May 22 through Monday, May 25. Since this is an unofficial gathering, there are no scheduled activities. That doesn't mean we can't do lots of fun stuff, it just means there are no forms or fees to send in!

Call the Sheraton San Marcos at (602) 963-6655 to make your room reservation. Be sure to tell them you're a AramcoBrat so you get the special rate of \$70 per room per night.

Contact Diane Knipfel-Adams (602-938-8788 or knipfeldi@aol.com) if you have any questions.

Aside from Reunion bowling and golf tournaments, some groups of attendees had made arrangements for such outside activities as shopping and horseback riding. My brother and sister participated in a tube-rafting trip at a local river.

A generous registration packet included souvenirs, a Brat directory, a bulletin of scheduled activities and helpful hints, and the attendee's choice of door hangtags to help friends locate rooms. The funniest one stated something to the effect of, "I am not an Aramco brat, go away and leave me alone!"

The hotel offered excellent dining facilities, both indoors and out. I took advantage of the breakfast buffet, sharing a late breakfast on the patio with family and friends. Anytime I sat down to eat I made sure an extra chair was available, and sure enough I would be joined by an old friend I had hoped to see. The excellent service and variety of dishes would leave me too stuffed to bother with lunch. A variety of drinks were available at several mini-bars during the evening.

Those of us who subscribe to Brat Chat had the option of affixing an identifying sticker to our nametags. After posting countless entries to Brat Chat, ranging from Aramco memories to current movie reviews, I was flattered to be approached by a dozen Brat Chatters who recognized my name. Some asked me to review more movies. I resolved to oblige them when I got home by spending more time goofing off at the Ridge Cinema and dabbling with the computer. Those household chores will just have to ► *One Brat's Experience, Page A*

Saudi Arabia and Aramco Videos

The ABI is pleased to be able to offer the following videos to you:

- **Brats # 1** – Over 2,000 photos and film of us as kids.
- **Brats # 2** – Almost 3,000 additional photos and film of us as kids and sights/places in Saudi Arabia/ARAMCO.
- **Dhahran 1996** – Video of five hours(3 tape set) of Dhahran filmed by a Brat.
- **Island of Allah** – A color version of the famous Aramco film showing the history of oil and Saudi Arabia. This film has not been available since the 1950's.
- **All Arabia** – Almost 3,000 photos of the sights, places, markets, people, history, Aramco history, schools, desert, camels, horses, dhows, and more. Very wide variety of all Arabia.
- **King Abdulazziz's Saudi Arabia** – A two hour documentary made of original photographs, film footage, captioned and set to Arab music. Very rare historical video and one of a kind. Approx. 2,000 photos and multiple film footage never before seen.

Each video costs \$25.00, which includes S&H. Send your order and check to:*

Mike Crocker DH '65
315 Ellington Street
Nacogdoches, Texas 75961

**The cost is \$14.00 production of each film + \$4.00 postage and handling + \$2.00 for the AramcoBrats web site upkeep and \$5.00 donated to the ABI fund for use towards mailings and reunion items.*

guitar intro by Tor Hermansson. All participants were declared winners and were awarded a variety of highly-coveted Aramco Loss Prevention doo dads.



A Tri-D without a bowling tournament? No way! There were so many bowlers (nearly 300) that they had to bowl in two sessions on Saturday. The bowling alley was filled with laughter and excitement all day long. Irene Pappas (DH '75) took top female honors with a high game of 204 and high series of 523. Art Singelyn (DH '78) was the top male performer with high game of 254 and high series of 653. The team competition was

dominated by Chris, Ken and Kevin Crocker, Steve Hood and Jim Congleton with a score of 947. Low team score went to Chuck Guyon and the Owen Family (David, Paula, Davy, and Steven).

Saturday night was set aside as a time for individual class parties. Some went out for dinner, and others just hung out and looked at old yearbooks. The best-represented class from the '50's was '57 with 16 members. The class of '66 was tops for their decade with 28 members. The 70's classes were well represented, with 36 members each from the classes of '73 and '79. The class of '83 beat out the 80's crowd with 16. The best turn out was by the class of '77 with 40 class members present!

Sunday's events began too bright and too early for everyone except the golfers. The 7 a.m. shotgun start was a challenge for most attendees, but golfing with old friends on Arizona's first grass course was worth it to those who participated. Winning team: Tavi Sandin (DH '61), Gene Buxton (RT '57), Chris Weathers (DH '58), Bruce Allen (spouse). Second place went to Brian McMillin (DH '59), Mark Lameier (DH '68), Maad Abu Ghazalah (DH '77), Travis Dowell (RT '79). Boobie prize for highest team score: Maureen McKeegan-Lansing (DH '52), David Winters (spouse), David Foust (spouse), David Hayes (spouse). Winners of "closest to the pin" were Mark Lameier (DH '68), Bill Yaeger (DH '71), Terry McMullen (DH '57), Travis Dowell (RT '79).



Sunday afternoon, while the golfers were recuperating from their early morning, an ABI business meeting was held and preparations for the culminating event, the Tri-D Dinner/Dance went into high gear. By six o'clock, the buffet tables outside the bedouin-style tent were filled with an array of tasty Mexican dishes. As diners enjoyed their meal, thank yous were made and gifts presented to the ABI Board and reunion committee members, bowling and golf winners were announced and prizes awarded, and the raffle drawings were held.

Once everyone was thanked and awarded, it was time to head back to the canteen for the rest of the party. A DJ provided the dance tunes, and the "prize patrol" roamed the crowds awarding hundreds of door prizes. A sumptuous dessert buffet featured Mexican pastries, fresh fruit, and an amazing margarita cheesecake.

The DJ may have left at 2 a.m., but in true brat style, the party continued until sunrise.

On Monday, the atmosphere had changed. Not only was everyone tired from a long night of merry-making, but they were sad that the weekend had so quickly slipped away. Teary goodbyes were taking place as often as the "Oh, my God" greetings of only four days earlier. "See you in '99" was the catch phrase this time.

The illusion of being a returning student at a Tri-D is what the reunion committee worked hard to create. Enthusiastic feedback received during and since the reunion clearly indicates we were successful.

I sincerely thank the committee members whose hard work made this reunion the successful event that we hoped it would be. Without their help, it could not have happened. SHUKRAN TO: Dave and Eileen Wilson-Hayes (RT '59), Michelle Fink (DH '73), Maureen McKeegan-Lansing (DH '52), and Chris Crocker (DH '67). Special thanks to Lorelei Hern-Hillman (DH '73), Mary Singelyn-Littlejohn (DH '72), Karen Bradshaw-Brooks (DH '60), my three right hands, and to former reunion chairs Diana Ryrholm-Geerdes and Erica Ryrholm-Martin for their guidance. Hugs and thanks to impromptu committee members Don (AB '75) and Gretchen Richards for their help throughout the reunion. Many others helped in the year leading up to the reunion and during the reunion itself. I don't know what I would have done without you. There were so many that I fear if I tried to list you all I would forget some, and you're all too important to be overlooked. Please accept my gratitude.

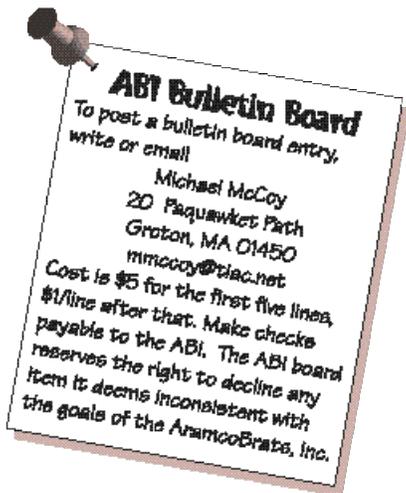
Finally, a huge debt is owed to the first AramcoBrats, Inc. Board, whose perseverance in the face of controversy made the 1997 Reunion possible.

7th Biennial AramcoBrat Reunion Atlanta, GA • May 27-31, 1999

Rumors that the 1999 reunion will be held east of the Mississippi for the first time in BratHistory are true! All of you East-Coasters who have been waiting for a reunion closer to home, now's your chance to see what everyone's been raving about. All of you reunion regulars, just think of all the new faces we'll get to see!

It is very important that you respond promptly to the reunion attendance survey that you will be receiving later this year. It allows the committee to adequately plan the next best reunion ever. Only those who pay the administrative baksheesh and return the reunion survey will receive the registration materials next January.

Anyone in the Atlanta area interested in serving on the Atlanta Reunion Committee should contact Diane Knipfel Adams at (602) 938-8788 or knipfeldi@aol.com.



Aramco, Saudi, and Middle-Eastern stuff for sale. Check out the web site at <http://www.teleport.com/~christo/>. Make an offer and it could be yours! christo@teleport.com.

Arabic Fonts: Ever wanted to print something in Arabic on your Macintosh? You can download Arabic fonts from <ftp://ftp.apple.com/dts/mac/sys.soft.intl/arabic.7.0.1/>.

Saudi Arabia is a collection of articles and photos on Saudi Arabia, including changes in Dhahran, Al-Khobar and Dammam, articles on Suqs and shopping malls, and King Abdul Aziz' philosophies and vision. For a free subscription, write: Information Office, Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, 601 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20037.

AramcoBrat Directory

The 1997 AramcoBrat Directory lists nearly 4,000 brats, parents, and teachers. Also included are hundreds of e-mail addresses and web sites. If you don't already have your own copy, it's easier than ever to order one. Use the Directory order line on the Administrative Baksheesh form (below). Simply tell us how many you want and add the appropriate floos (\$10 or \$14 each, depending on where you live) to your ABI check. Supplies are limited, so hommie hommie!

CHANGE OF ADDRESS CARD – LET US KNOW YOU'VE MOVED

We want to make sure Brats everywhere can stay in touch. Please help us accomplish this by letting us know if your address information has changed. Please print!



Name: _____
First Middle Maiden Last

District/Year:* _____
District (DH, RT, AB, or UD) Year of 9th Grade Graduation

Address: _____
Street/Post Office Box

City State/Country ZIP+4

Telephone: _____
Area Code/Country Code Telephone Number

Mail to: AramcoBrats Inc., c/o Sherri Dent-Moxley, 675 Cypress Tree Drive, Rock Hill, SC 29730-9271 U.S.A.

* Year you graduated from 9th grade and district where you lived at graduation
 If you did not graduate from an ARAMCO school, year you would have graduated and last district where you lived.

ADMINISTRATIVE BAKSHEESH – I WANT TO SUPPORT THE ABI

Yes, I want to help support the ABI and keep Brathood alive! I'm enclosing my contribution today!

Name: _____
Please print! First Middle Maiden Last

District/Year:* _____
District (DH, RT, AB, or UD) Year of 9th Grade Graduation

Address: _____
Street/Post Office Box

City State/Country ZIP+4

Telephone: _____
Area Code/Country Code Telephone Number

This is New Address Information — Please Update ABI Records

1997-1999 Administrative Baksheesh: _____
 (\$15 U.S./ \$20 International)

Additional Donation: _____
 Anonymous contribution – Please do not include my name in list of donors

 1997 ABI Directories: _____
 (\$10 U.S./ \$14 International each)

Total : _____

Please make checks payable to AramcoBrats Inc.

Mail to: AramcoBrats Inc., c/o Sarah Manwaring-Mitchell, 5923 Fairview Woods Drive, Fairfax Station, VA 22039 U.S.A.

* Year you graduated from 9th grade and district where you lived at graduation
 If you did not graduate from an ARAMCO school, year you would have graduated and last district where you lived.

wait... In addition I met several "old friends" from Brat Chat for the first time in person, several of whom were on the ABI committee. Despite their reunion responsibilities, they made time to talk with me. The members of the ABI team kept the whole event going smoothly, from registration through departure.

A unique feature of the biennial Brat reunion is that it encompasses all schools and all classes. It includes people who may have been enrolled in Aramco schools for all or any of their first ten school years. You might meet a friend who left in fifth grade or one who enrolled in seventh and graduated with you. And you might meet people who hung out with your younger or older siblings, your former babysitter, or a scouting or Little League buddy. I appreciated the fact that some brothers and sisters attended together, as I remember so many people in the context of a family. I'm sure a lot of Brats think of us as "the Bowlers" as much as individuals. I also enjoy talking to older Brats (and there ARE some older than me) who can give me a clearer perspective of events I might have been too young to understand.

Some classes hosted their own dinners. My brother attended a dinner with his class at a local restaurant. I located several members of my class, but also enjoyed reminiscing with my brother's and sister's classmates. Mike Crocker's room held a stack of old yearbooks for perusing. There were photo albums set up in some class convention rooms. Quite a few photos, yearbooks and photo albums were passed around.

The center of reunion activity was a large ballroom and adjacent lobby. In the lobby, Brats would sign in, read and post

messages on the bulletin board, post e-mail messages on the computer, watch an ongoing video of old and new photos from Saudi, and shop for souvenirs. Comfortable seating made this an ideal rendezvous point. A row of display cases in the ballroom held Aramco and Saudi mementos, from valuable artifacts to items common and familiar. (Remember those old safety-slogan pencils, and laminated employee badges?)

The banquet was the highlight of the weekend. It was preceded by a reception to which several Brats wore traditional Middle Eastern dress, though most of us simply went semi-formal. Banquet seating was by class, but not too rigid to allow some shuffling around. Tournament winners were announced and awards were presented to recognize those who had worked so hard to bring us all together. Afterwards, an elegant dessert buffet was served in the ballroom lobby, followed by a dance in the ballroom at which door prizes were awarded. The dance music had been preselected through a pre-registration survey, assuring a variety suited to the tastes of Brats in attendance. After a big meal I preferred chatting to dancing, and the music was at a reasonable level. I enjoyed meeting the wives, husbands and children of other Brats, and even an Aramco parent or two.

I left for home with a resolved sense of identity as an Aramco Brat. I would urge other Brats to consider attending Brat reunions, for a day or for a weekend. Plan to attend with friends and family, and make plans with other members of your class for side activities. Be sure to allow yourself plenty of time to relax. Hope I'll see you there!

FORWARDING ADDRESS
REQUESTED
POSTAGE GUARANTEED

AramcoBrats, Inc.
% Sherri Dent-Moxley
Database Coordinator
675 Cypress Tree Drive
Rock Hill, SC 29730-9271