

THE ANGLO -AMERICAN ISHAM ANCESTRY ASSOCIATION

B.Arch.Dist'n.CT SIR NORMAN ISHAM Bart. OBE, – ARIBA

- father: Lt.Col. Vere Arthur Richard Isham MC, "Tiger" & "Edie", Edith Irene Brown: mother -
1930 – I was born in London to join Ian, who was then 7 years old.

1937 – we lived in rented 82 Exeter House, Putney Common; I was at school off Putney Hill.

1938 – I went to boarding prep. Summerfields School at St.Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex;
 got inner-ear infection from Public Swimming Baths; my drum had to be slit while being held down!

1939 – Summerfields was closed due to being on Luftwaffe bomber flight-path to London,
 so I was moved to similar school in southern England, well off that flight-path.

1940 – I was **evacuated** from Greenoch to the Argentine on Commodore's ship in large convoy
 going to USA via Icelandic waters; served as look-out for U-boats as 10-year old eyesight is good;
 we did not encounter U-boats but experienced depth charges and lifeboat alerts;
 our ship broke away from convoy to sail alone through south Atlantic to Buenos Aires.

1941-44 in small Buenos Aires flat; at St.George's School and at Estancia "La Marion" for vacs.

1944 – I **returned to UK** on frozen-meat ship to join vast supply convoy from USA, with ships
 to horizon on all sides, to see **Ian** as he had been badly wounded on D+5 in Caen tank offensive;
 I visited burns-unit of hospital in Wales, but I was considered too young to be allowed into the ward;
 I lived at Exeter House and spent many nights in the shelter with distant a/a guns and "V" bombs.

1944 – at Stowe School, Chandos House, passed Matric and gained House Colours for Fives, Prefect.
 Special school trains were laid on between London and Buckingham - no exeats or visits from School.

1947 – family **emigrated to Argentine** to live on our Estancia "La Maria"; but on our 3-week voyage
 out President Peron expropriated it to give to the "peons" because we had been absentee owners.

1948 – I was employed as a handy-man on Estancia "La Caledonia" near BA , for Mrs McClymont.

1949 – I joined Glaxo glucolin packing depot in BA as assistant to Personnel Manager, in Spanish!;
 as I could not stand upright in the crowded "Collectivos" buses I cycled to work through unruly traffic;
 I was not allowed at BA University so I studied Architecture in evenings at British Council Library.

1949 – On his way by sea to BA from "Yapame", Ceylon, **Dad** called in at Cape Town University
 Architectural School to see Prof. Thornton White to arrange to have me enrolled for the Degree Course.

1950 – I **sailed for Cape Town** to start 6-year Architectural Degree Course; lived in residential hotel
 in Rondebosch with room in annexe overlooking tennis club only 15 mins. walk up hill to School.

1951 - moved to better students hostel/hotel "Groote Schuur" on Rondebosch High Street;
 worked on site during vacs. with reputable local builder, Champions, on large house in Cape Town;
 there were 6 ex-service students then; I was elected Chairman of the Architectural Students Society;
 I took the lead part in student show "Aladdin" - a skit on life and staff at the School.

1952 – I **met Joan** who came to the hostel and was seated by the landlady at my table!

Joan was studying for the exacting task of "Teaching of Hard of Hearing and Speech for Children"
 she had the opportunity to meet the well-known remarkable Helen Keller, who was born deaf and blind.

1953 – I took Joan for short vac. to Aunt Toria and Pop at "Karree Kloof" farm in the Karroo,
 where at night she heard the spooky non-existent Boer War neighing horses at a drinking trough!

1954 – I worked for my "practical year" with John Vigour, and John Methuen, in Umtali, Rhodesia,
 where **Joan** was staying for a while with her parents at the British South Africa Police Camp,
 but then she was posted to a large school in Bulawayo at the extreme other side of Rhodesia!;

I went to Bulawayo Centenary Exhibition for London Philamonic Concerts and the shows.

1955 - qualified as Architect with B.Arch. (with Distiction) CT - an RIBA-approved degree;
 I moved up to Salisbury, Rhodesia to join Montgomery and Oldfield architects; with 3 other architects;
 opportunity to design houses, flats, Reps Theatre, Peterhouse School Chapel, offices and factory.

1956 – I married Joan Elizabeth Genet in Avondale Church, Salisbury, Rhodesia

with lovely reception in the attractive grounds of a Minister's House next to Government House
 with many guests, Mum, Vere Ogilvie as stand-in for Dad and John Drake as my Best Man.

1957 – Elizabeth Angela, "Libby", born in Salisbury, Rhodesia.

1957 – we bought " The Chequers", 5 Orchard Close, Avondale; did alterations with African builder;

I was appointed Rhodesia correspondent for "Architect and Builder" Magazine from South Africa;
 awarded an "**Honourable Mention**" in International Design Competition for Dublin University Library,
 I designed and drew-up the scheme in evenings and w/e's in cleared tiny larder at "The Chequers".

1958 –I was awarded **Italian Gov't 1-year Study Bursary**; we sailed from Beira to Venice on "Europa",
 the only air-conditioned line from Africa, to live in Rome; **Joan** travelled with Libby in the Sanatorium,
 as Rick was on the way; I was in a 4-berth cabin; we stayed in Venice for 3 days as Libby was not well:

took slow "rapido" train to Rome and found smart bachelor flat in fashionable Parioli; **Joan** cooked
 in the bathroom; visited by Ernst Chain, of penicillin fame, bringing tea from Joan's uncle Mac in England;
 invited to Chain's apartment for tea with German & Russian friends; he was head of Italian NH Service.

I prepared a pocket personal guide to the architectural gems of Rome from the Forum to the Olympics
 with photo and write-up for each – publisher required me to undertake a series in other cities, so no go!

1958 - Richard Leonard Vere, "Rick", born at Salvador Mundi Hospital, Rome.

Mum and Ian came over; we moved to larger flat near Vatican with Mum; went with **Ian** by train to book
 lodging in Florence; I caught mumps and taken to Italian State Hospital in ward with a Vatican Guard.

Joan returned by air with Libby and Ricky to Salisbury, Rhodesia to stay with her parents in Umtali.

1959 – from Venice by “Europa” to Beira; lived in the Vicar's house in Umtali opposite Joan's parents

1959 - **Dad** arrived from Cape Town on the “Klipfontein” which sank in 15 mins. near Beira;

I went by overnight train down to Beira to collect him, standing in all he possessed, but he was all right;

Fortunately he was with us for 10 days and then left for Beira to continue his voyage to Ceylon.

We returned to 5 Orchard Close, Salisbury as the tenants, architect Pereira, had left.

1959 – Vere Murray Gyles “Vee” born in Salisbury, Rhodesia.

1959 – I joined Fredk.Sage Shopfitters on shop interiors for off-licence & florist premises.

The Federation of Southern & Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland collapsed, so work slumped badly.

1961 – I left for UK via Elizabethville to stay with **Ian** at Vincent House, London, to seek work;

met helpful architect Eric Lyons; joined Booth, Ledebouer & Pinckheard in their London office

and then in Oxford office on Army housing in Warminster; rented an old and very cold terrace house in Victoria Road, Oxford ; then moved to modern bungalow in Marsden village; children not well.

1965 – I found it with **Ian** and we moved into rented house at 3 Hillary Road, Farnham.

1965 - I **joined Building Design Partnership**, the then largest multi-dicipline practice in Europe, as project architect for Browning Barracks, Parachute Regiment Depot, Aldershot Military Camp, which received a

Concrete Society Award and **Civic Trust Award** presented by the Duke of Edinburgh as an exemplary project for the Government's experimental building programme involving on-site pre-cast concrete panels by contractors Gilbert Ash; BDP office was in old Military Hospital building.

I joined our local Bourne Players amateur dramatic society for several play productions.

1966 –I was **appointed an “Associate Partner”** in Building Design Partnership.

1968 – we bought Weybourne Cottage, Weybourne, Farnham; did alteration work & refurbishment.

1970 – I **joined Ministry of Works** with the Overseas Division at Elizabeth House in London, for Army accommodation in Hong Kong with housing, mess overlooking distant views, equipment storage depot and a design-breakthrough large Barracks complex which was cancelled.

1972 – I moved with now the Property Services Agency to offices in the Whitgift Centre, Croydon;

1974 – **Joan** joined prestigious Cambridge Tutors in Croydon as English teacher to foreigners.

1974 – we bought 5 Copping Close, Croydon, a Wates 2-level 4-bed terrace house with court.

1976 – bought 5 Langhton Way, Croydon, a Wates 7-split-level 4-bed terrace-house with roof garden; we both walked to work for about 35 years with the car at home when needed, which was wonderful!

1978 – I was **promoted to “Superintending Architect”** in the Property Services Agency.

I worked on new Embassy projects for FCO, including at Warsaw, Helsinki with model at R.A., Lisbon, Madrid, Bonn, Moscow and Kingston, Jamaica, which sadly was the only one built; this work involved much travelling.

1979 – transferred to new Prison projects for Home Office, including several repeat-design Prisons, an experimental extensively glazed Prison at Milton Keynes and a very high security Prison in London, which is linked to an adjacent Crown Court to avoid risky and costly cross-London inmate travel.

1986 – Elizabeth married Richard Brayshaw at Lampport Church and Hall..

1988 – I was awarded the OBE, Order of the British Empire, for Services to Architecture presented by the Queen at Buckingham Palace followed by a family lunch at Rules Restaurant.

I was sent to the Caribbean to advise on new prison projects at several Island locations.

1990 – I was compulsorily retired at the normal age of 60, with a Civil Service pension.

1990 – Richard married Julia Pilkington; (Angus - 1992 and Charles – 1996).

1991 – Vere married Lynne Armitage; (Max - 1991 and Oscar – 1993).

1992 – we went to Zimbabwe to join architect Rob Evans, a friend and School colleague, in Mutare for large international paper-making industrial project which was cancelled due to exceptional drought.

1993 – I joined architect Mike Clinton in Harare, another friend and School colleague, as the project co-ordinator for a new office block, the refurbishment of the British High Commission offices

and Meikles Hotel in Harare, which was awarded a World Class Hotel status similar to the Mount Nelson Hotel in Cape Town; we lived in several rented houses around Harare.

1995 – we returned to UK at 5 Langton Way; I devised a Compendium of 50 Designs for Houses.

1999 – visited Riki & Bob Mitchell at “Dogham”, James River, Virginia, USA,- our Henry Isham relatives.

2000 – visited Barbara in Canada on trip to Seattle, Victoria, Vancouver, Lake Louise, Banff, Calgary.

2007 – we moved home to be near Libby to 22 Whitedown, Alton; did major refurbishment works.

2008 – I joined the Alton Society and became a Committee Member; introduced the campaigns for “Improving the Appearance of Alton” and “Tree Planting in Alton Town Centre”.

2009 – **Ian** died after 3 years at 50 Willow Court, Alton - near us at 22 Whitedown, Alton, Hampshire.

2010 – I established contact with Jon & Libby Isham & family in Middlebury, USA; launched “AAIAA”.

I was invited to be President of The Orton Trust, Northamptonshire to maintain long family connection.

2010 – I was entered on the Roll of the Baronetage as 14th Baronet of Lampport since 1627.

A PERSONAL STATEMENT

I consider myself to be fortunate in the chance of my date of birth as I was not aware of the dreadful UK national slumps of the '20's/'30's and was under 10 at the outbreak of WWII, so missed being called-up. I experienced two N.Atlantic supply convoys. I was accepted by Stowe School and University of Cape Town.

I married Joan and have a lovely daughter and two splendid sons. I had good years in Rhodesia in 1960's.

I gained experience of the modern and classical world from an Italian Government Bursary in 1958-59.

I benefitted from the prosperous 1960, '70 & '80's in England. I was awarded the OBE from the HM Queen.

I retired on a good Civil Service pension. I was able to extend my working life for 3 years in Zimbabwe.

I was able to continue the family Baronetcy since 1627 and assure it for many generations in the future.