



# FROM THE CHAIR

I am sure you will all join me in welcoming our new Ambassador William Patey CMG and his wife Vanessa back to Riyadh. We are most fortunate to have such an experienced Saudi hand taking over the position, as he was Deputy Head of Mission in Riyadh from 1995 to 1998 and has subsequently served as Her Majesty's Ambassador in Iraq & Sudan. (see interview with our intrepid reporter on page 10).

At the time of writing membership is just below 300 paid up members (19 of whom are ladies) and continues to climb. The Board are not resting on their laurels however and continue to explore ways the group can be more relevant to our members. In that context we have opened discussions on a membership-to-membership basis with the Riyadh Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Our first meeting took place in May, when Board member Nigel Astbury and I were invited to brief the Marketing Committee of the Riyadh Chamber on the structure & purpose of the RGBB and at the same time learn about the aims and objectives of the Marketing Committee. Whilst this session was very much an exploratory one, both parties agreed to consider to what extent there might be future scope to arrange events of interest to both memberships. If any RGBB members have suggestions of areas of mutual interest that we could explore please drop either Nigel (nigelastry@sabb.com) or myself (chairman@rgbb.org) an email.

Pages 6-9 record just two of our recent Special Briefings and the programme continues after the summer break on 10<sup>th</sup> September with a presentation by Dr Abdullah Dabbagh, CEO of Maaden Saudi Arabian Mining Company which we anticipate will be a 'sell out' so please respond to Adele as soon as the Email invitation to attend is sent out. We have two further briefings scheduled for the remainder of the year & speakers for briefings in the first half of 2008 are already being lined up.

Another date for your diary is 5<sup>th</sup> December 2007 when we will be holding the RGBB Festive Gala dinner. Please do remember that despite our growing membership, numbers will be limited, so once again, do respond quickly when the notice goes out.

And while I mentioned 'events' a huge thank you to all who made such a tremendous night for ICING in June. What a total... words fail me! (see page 18)

As a further benefit for our members, we have arranged a block membership with the Saudi British Society (SBS). The SBS was formed over 20 years ago to help in promoting friendship and understanding between the people of our two Kingdoms. The RGBB have now paid an annual subscription fee which will allow our members to attend any of the Society's meetings in the UK. (See page 13 for further details and forthcoming events.)

We are also delighted to be able to report that the "Village Fete" will be held again this year on 22<sup>nd</sup> of November. Anyone who attended this event two years ago will know what a fantastic day out this was for all the family. If you would like to lend a hand please send an email to [villagefete@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:villagefete@hotmail.co.uk) as more volunteers would be greatly appreciated.

With summer already upon us here in Riyadh, and daily temperatures in the low 40's our thoughts go out to those of you who may have experienced some difficulties in the UK with all the rain. I see that many parts of the UK have had their wettest June on record and July is starting out in similar vein.

Wherever your travels take you over the next few months, I trust your journeys will be safe ones. See you in the Autumn.

with best regards

Luke Bowen  
Chairman RGBB



Luke Bowen  
Chairman



Ian Crawford  
Deputy Chairman



Bill Nicholson



Nick Oakes



Owain Raw-Rees



Graeme Douglas



Nigel Astbury



Chris Maybury



Sharon Wardle