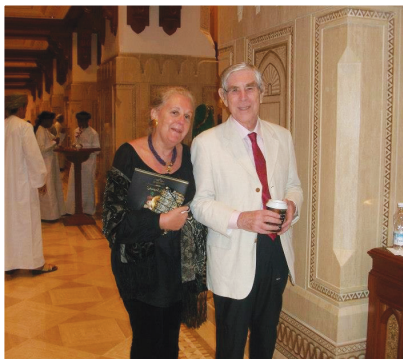


'Back 2 Business' With Maggie Jeans

Maggie Jeans, Owner and Director of Al Manahil International LLC and Coordinator at the British Business Forum (BBF) talks about her enduring ties with Oman

A former English teacher turned business coordinator, Maggie Jeans' began her long tryst with Oman in January 1990, as an Education Officer in the College of Medicine at Sultan Qaboos University. She'd arrived from Bristol in the UK, with her husband, Dr. William Jeans, Professor of Radiology, who'd taken up a posting at SQU. She worked at SQU for six 'very enjoyable years' before initiating

of the British Business Forum in Oman and is a member of the British Ambassador's Business Group. She serves as Chargé de Mission for the Muscat Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, the worldwide gastronomic association. "The purpose of bringing the society to Oman is to stimulate fine cuisine and encourage young professionals working in the hospitality sector," she says. Besides, she is the managing agent in the Gulf for three international artists and is an experienced fundraiser for various organisations including Ras Al Hamra Archaeological Dig, Young Musicians of Muscat and British Embassy 40 for 40 project; she also raises sponsorship for the monthly BBF meeting. Explaining her role as the coordinator of the British Business Forum (BBF) in Oman, which began about 20 years ago, she maintains that it is an important focal point for British nationals doing business in Oman. Describing its objectives, she adds: "It is a particularly useful networking forum for



her pet project, Al Manahil International LLC & Educational Consultancy (www.almanahil-books.com). As its Owner and Director, she specialises in importing ELT books and representing Oxford and Cambridge University Press and other publishers throughout Oman. William joined her venture in 2000, after retiring from SQU, and the company now specialises in the wholesale import of books for the government and private sector. Maggie Jeans is also the coordinator

newcomers to Oman. We work very closely with UK Trade and Investment, which is part of the British Embassy, and often entertain visiting trade missions from the UK. We work as a small team, finding sponsors and venues for each monthly meeting. We are also a point of contact for British business people visiting Oman."

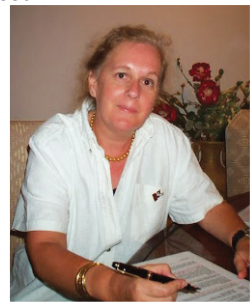
She, however, admits that sometimes it's a struggle to find sponsors, particularly during the long hot months of summer when meetings are probably most appreciated by the members.

BBF is part of a network of similar groups throughout the Gulf Region and, according to Maggie Jeans, there is a need to capitalise more on these connections. "We are also working on a series of recommendations based on suggestions from members exploring ways of making business in Oman easier, particularly for SMEs," she maintains. Unlike other business groups in Oman, the BBF meet regularly - usually on the first Sunday of each month and the details of the meetings are posted on the website www.bbfooman.org. As the committee member of Back2Business Oman (www.back2businessoman.com), she is also involved in connecting like-minded business people in a friendly environment that is conducive to exploring and developing new

business leads. Back2Business is organised by a joint effort of representatives of some of the business councils here in Oman.

Talking about her enduring connect with Oman, she points out that the Sultanate was a very different place in 1990. "It's been fascinating to witness the steady development of the country but the people remain the same - always gentle and friendly. Like many people who have 'stayed on' in Oman we also appreciate Oman's natural beauty, particularly the coastline and Muscat is now very much our home," she describes.

With interests ranging from music to swimming, Maggie and William Jeans lead a very contented life in Oman. They are season ticket holders of Royal Opera House, which, they say, has added another dimension to their life in Muscat. They love 'reading, gardening, entertaining, walking with our saluki, boating and swimming in the sea'.



Up Close & Personal with Maggie Jeans

The home I grew up in...

Was in Wiltshire, UK.

When I was a child I wanted to...

Be an actress!

My greatest inspiration...

My husband.

If I could change one thing about myself...

I'd like to be more patient.

I dream of...

Completing the Fahal Island swim!

What I see when I look in the mirror...

An eternal optimist - persistent and outgoing!

My greatest regret...

Not working harder at school when I was young.

You may not know it but I'm no good at...

Taking 'no' for an answer!

You may not know it but I'm very good at....

Improvisation.

If I have time to myself...

I like to read.

My house is...

By the sea.

My favourite haunt/holiday destination...

Islands...

My favourite weekend spot in

Oman...

The drive to Sur.

Five things I like about Oman...

People, landscape, coastline, the constant progress and pleasant climate during winter.

A book that changed me...

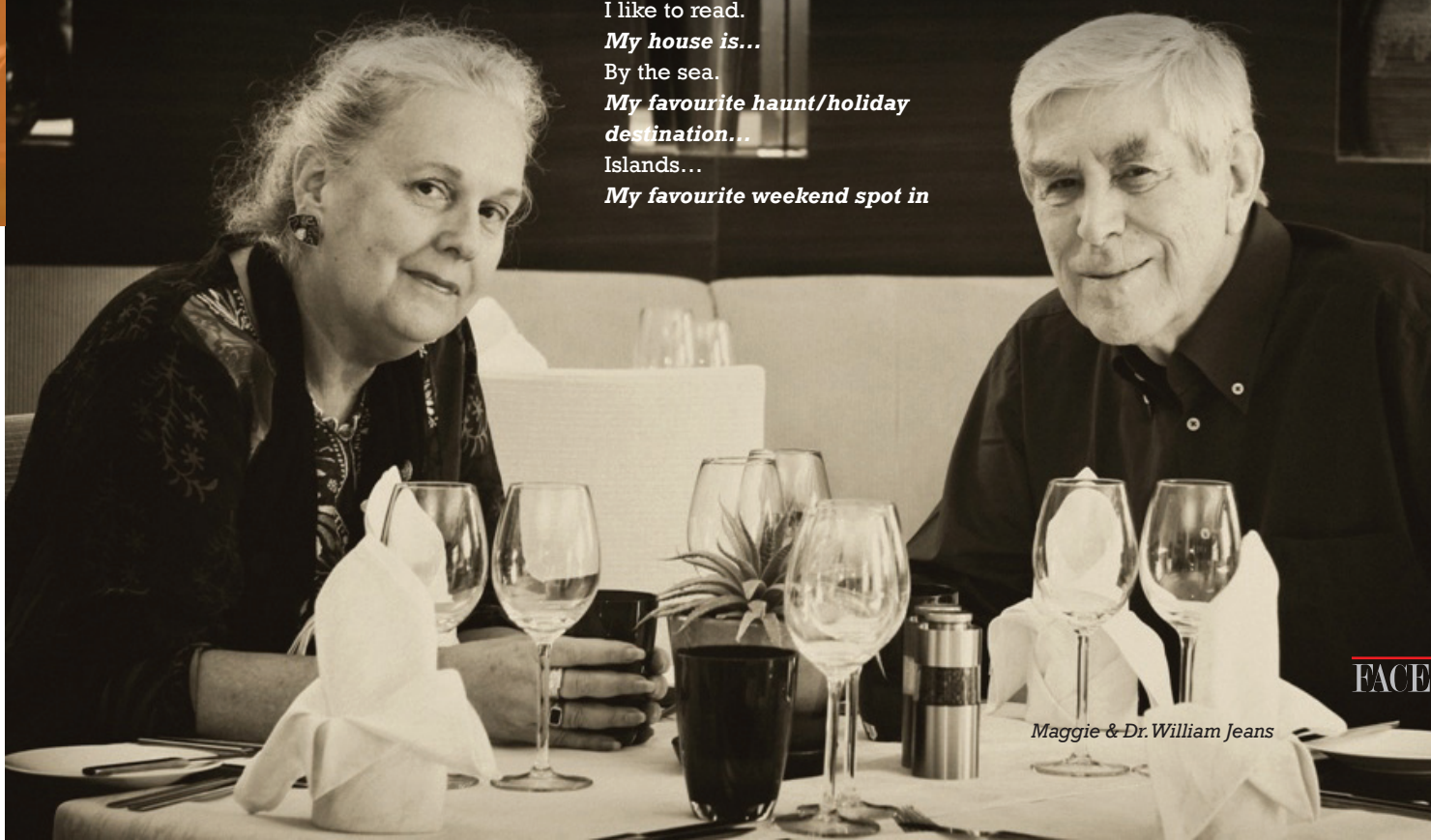
All of Paulo Coelho's books.

My success mantra is...

Never give up.

In 10 years' time, I hope to be...

Still working!



Maggie & Dr. William Jeans