

For Six Month Period Ending Feb. 28, 1994
(Insert date)

Name of Registrant

AVISO, INC.

Registration No.

04220

Business Address of Registrant

1150 Marina Village Parkway, Ste. 104
Alameda, CA 94501

I—REGISTRANT

1. Has there been a change in the information previously furnished in connection with the following:

(a) If an individual:

- (1) Residence address
- (2) Citizenship
- (3) Occupation

Yes ☐	No ☐
Yes ☐	No ☐
Yes ☐	No ☐

(b) If an organization:

- (1) Name
- (2) Ownership or control
- (3) Branch offices

Yes ☐	No ☒
Yes ☐	No ☒
Yes ☐	No ☒

2. Explain fully all changes, if any, indicated in item 1.

N/A

IF THE REGISTRANT IS AN INDIVIDUAL, OMIT RESPONSE TO ITEMS 3, 4, and 5.

3. Have any persons ceased acting as partners, officers, directors or similar officials of the registrant during this 6 month reporting period? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, furnish the following information:

Name

Position

Date Connection
Ended

N/A

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INTERNAL SECURITY
SECTION
REGISTRATION UNIT

On the rocks

Story and photos by
Stanton H. Patty

From Sydney, Australia

They serve history
"on the Rocks" here. Mighty smooth.

The Rocks is the lively neighborhood in the heart of downtown Sydney where Australia was born.

It was here in Sydney Cove, on a January evening in 1788, that a fleet of convict ships from England delivered a cargo of human misery.

Aboard were 757 prisoners — ordered "transported for life" to a far-away penal colony that would be called Australia.

Before darkness, the convicts were clearing ground for shelters on the sandstone bluffs that gave The Rocks its name.

Logs of the 11 ships carefully listed the rest of the contingent: a military escort of 200 guards, plus 28 women, 14 children, 4 cattle, 6 horses, 44 sheep and sundry fowl and pigs.

And thus a nation was founded.

Today, many of Australia's famous families trace their beginnings to that grim event.

"And with a great deal of pride," says Joanna McDonald, a Rocks walking-tour guide.

"Oh, by the way, Yanks," McDonald adds with a grin, "your American Revolution had a part in making all this happen."

"How's that?"

It seems that when King George III lost the war to the "colonies," England had to find a new dumping ground for criminals and political agitators. Australia — 15,000 sea miles and eight months by sail from Britain — was the choice.

Another slice of irony: Capt. William Bligh, who lost the *Bounty* to a band of mutineers, was one of the early governors of the new

Daily Breeze
November 21, 1993

Bligh's run of bad luck followed him to The Rocks in 1805. Rum-swilling soldiers defied his strong-discipline methods and got him fired.

"Actually, Capt. Bligh was a much-maligned person," McDonald says. "He's very much a part of our history."

Now, hard by Bligh's scowling statue on the green by Sydney Cove, tourists board a full-scale replica of the *Bounty* for cruises around one of the world's most beautiful harbors.

The fare is \$20 (Australian) a pop, mate.

Maybe Bill Bligh should have considered a career as a sightseeing skipper.

Today's Rocks district is a place for strolling, with a charming mix of galleries, craft centers, restaurants and pubs along tangles of meandering streets decked with dozens of original buildings.

Visitors have no trouble getting their bearings. The Rocks is squeezed between two of the city's best-known landmarks — the Sydney Opera House, with its dramatic roofline of ceramic sails, and the 440-foot-high sweep of the Harbour Bridge.

Every Saturday and Sunday (from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) the area turns into The Rocks Market, with more than 100 vendors offering items from antiques to kitchen gadgets.

And in the evening The Rocks rocks to the beat of Freshly Squeezed Fanatics, Home Rule, the Murrumbidgee Rattles and other groups.

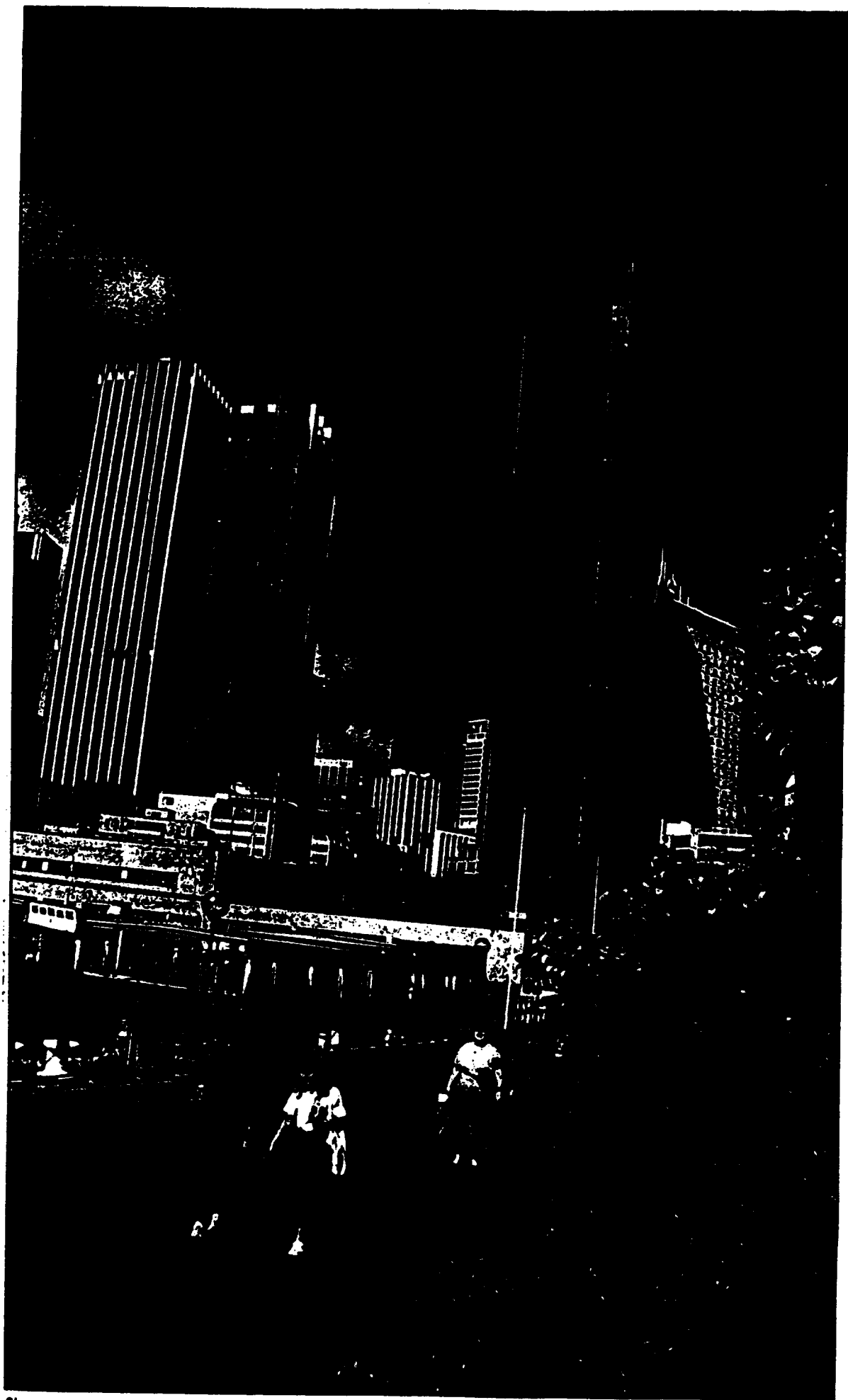
This is where Sydney's heart beats fastest.

"But we almost lost it all," says Joanna McDonald.

What happened was that as Sydney boomed, The Rocks fell into decay. By the 1960s, the historic district was a seedy and rowdy slum

SYDNEY/D2

Australia traces its
birth to a lively
Sydney
neighborhood



Skyscrapers tower over Sydney harbor as visitors stroll a promenade honoring writers who painted portraits of Australia.



Joanna McDonald, a guide in The Rocks, displays an early-day photograph of the historical district. From the sandstone bluffs grew the nation of Australia as we know it today.

November 23, 1993
Boston, MA

Ashland Tab

Boston Tab

Brookline Tab

Cambridge Tab

Framingham Tab

Holliston Tab

Natick Tab

Newton Tab

Sherborn Tab

Sudbury Tab

Wayland Tab

Wellesley Tab

Weston Tab

Travel Tips

Island deals

6675 law travel
By George Hobica
TAB Travel Editor

Here are some great deals for anyone looking for a nearby weekend getaway. Fly to Martha's Vineyard via Cape Air, stay in a water-view room for two nights (early birds get fireplaces), and enjoy one dinner and two continental breakfasts, all for \$175 per person, double occupancy.

If you take the ferry, it's even less: \$85 per person. This package is good until Dec. 9. Call (508) 428-5600.

Another idea: It's impossible to get hotel accommodations for Nantucket's Annual Christmas Stroll (held Dec. 7 this year); but why not fly over for the day? For \$150 per person, you'll get two nights at a cozy Cape Cod Inn, round trip from Hyannis to Nantucket, dinner and two breakfasts. Call the same number for information.

Business travel made easier

A number of firms are helping employees whose heavy travel schedules impact their personal lives, according to a report in The Wall St. Journal. Houston-based Tenneco reimburses child care expenses when workers travel and must leave little ones at home; management consultant Arthur D. Little gives time off before or after a long trip. Amoco Corp. pays up to \$750 a year for child care and dependent care costs incurred because of travel. And a firm in Weston gives road warriors every other Monday or Friday off to compensate

for heavy travel schedules. How does your company measure up?

Talk your way to a free ticket

If you haven't signed up for long distance service in conjunction with your airline frequent flyer program, it's never too late. American Airlines (1-800-284-0980) is offering a 5,000 mile enrollment bonus and will give you five frequent flyer miles for every dollar you spend on MCI long distance (residential service only). Northwest (1-800-999-0280) has a similar offer. And Continental Airlines (1-800-324-7370) will give you five miles for business, residential, and your company's 800 toll-free line, but only on calls in the U.S.

Greetings from Cairns

Highly recommended jumping off point for the Great Barrier Reef: the Cairns (pronounced "cans") Hilton in Queensland, Australia. Service is first-rate. The newly redecorated executive floor offers free breakfast and evening happy hour, plus phones and office equipment. Extra bonus: all executive floor guests can make free phone local phone calls. When it comes time to relax, the swimming pool is the nicest in the city, and it's just a short walk to the piers where boats to the Reef dock.

On that subject, think twice about taking a large, commercial day-trip to see the Reef (does "cattle car" mean anything to you)? Although they use the latest high-speed

catamarans and you'll be very comfortable, it may not be the intimate encounter with reef you were planning. Your travel agent should be able to arrange passage on a smaller ship.

British Airways offers

British Airways is giving away a one-year membership in the USAir Club (i.e., airport VIP lounge) if you fly transatlantic on BA between now and March 31 in business or first class. You'll also get 20,000 bonus frequent flyer miles, enough for a free ticket, and a \$500 credit on your Chase/BA Visa credit card. Fly in economy and you'll get 6,000 bonus miles. American Airlines has matched the 20,000 mile bonus on competing routes.

Seasonal hotel deals

As the holidays approach, especially between Dec. 15 and Jan. 15, hotels find they're not full and offer some great "theme" rates. Often paired with free parking, shopping discounts, free admission to a local department store's "Santa's Village," and even theater tickets, these deals are meant for leisure travelers but can be used by business people because they're valid during the week as well as on weekends. The usually sell for less than corporate rates, and even if you throw away the free parking or bedtime cookies, you'll save money. If history repeats itself, such local hostelrys as the Copley Plaza and the Swissotel will be offering these special deals. We'll keep you posted.

Don't go to China without it

The 13th and latest edition of *The China Guidebook* by Frederic Kaplan et al is in bookstores. The world's no. 1 bestseller for this region of the world, this is a comprehensive and well-organized volume — the only one you'll need. Available for \$19.95 in a Houghton-Mifflin paperback from the Globe Corner Bookstore (locations in Boston and Cambridge).

The gift of travel

As the holidays approach, a reminder that travel makes a great gift that's easy to wrap and customize. It's not a good idea to present someone with a non-refundable ticket, however, unless you're sure they're flexible with dates (otherwise you'll incur a change fee ranging from \$25-\$50). Some airlines offer gift coupons in smaller amounts, such as \$25 or \$50, as do hotels. In fact, Northwest Airlines is giving away a handy inflatable neck pillow to anyone who buys a certificate. Your travel agent can advise you on how to package a great travel gift.

A little good news

The House of Representatives recently voted to exempt frequent flyer tickets from paying passenger facility charges, which can add up to \$12 to the price of an air ticket. Next stop: the Senate. □

HIKING THROUGH AUSSIE COUNTRY

6/675

Just a few hours outside Melbourne, situated between two of Australia's national parks, lies Quamby Homestead—a place where miles of hiking trails help erase the tensions of a hectic week and put you back in step with nature.

I sometimes feel lost in Melbourne. It's not that I can't find my way back to my hotel, or that I'm not sure which tram to take. I just get so caught up in the city's frenetic pace that it's easy to lose one's realization that there's more to Australia than the banks and big businesses that so typify Melbourne.

However, at the end of the work week I head west, driving along the Princes Highway, through the port city of Geelong, and past golf-course-green paddocks dotted with sheep. In a few hours, I turn into the long driveway at Quamby Homestead in the Western District. This historic house is the ideal base for the consummate Australian weekend because it's located midway between Victoria's two most exciting national parks. This is just what I need: a reality check and a chance to stretch my legs.

After breakfast Saturday morning, I head for Grampians National Park, less than an hour to the north. The park is Victoria's largest: about 60 miles long and 30 miles wide. The southern entrance is at Dunkeld, and from here Mt. Abrupt Road leads to Halls Gap, the site of the Brambuk Living Cultural Centre and the Grampians National Park Visitor Centre. At the Cultural Centre, displays and videos tell the story of the aboriginal people in this area. Kooris, as they are known, have lived in this part of Victoria for at least 5,000 years.

While it is possible to visit ancient rock art sites in and around the park, I'm after exercise at this point—not cultural stimulation. The Grampians oblige. Miles of hiking trails lead to view points and waterfalls. My favorites are in the Wonderland area of the park. The walk to Clematis Falls is flat enough that I can walk briskly—and I do, except when



Many hiking trails lead to spectacular view points. One of the most popular, where superb views can be had from the Pinnacle, a 30-foot projection of rock jutting out from a plateau that drops nearly 2,000 feet to the valley floor.

I stop to listen for a koala. I recognize their deep, throaty grunt coming from a nearby eucalyptus tree.

It's positively liberating to don hiking shoes after pounding the pavement in heels all week. I also revel in the fact that I'm empty-handed: no briefcase. The few items I have with me (a water bottle,

a map, and some sunscreen) are stashed in my day pack.

I break into a jog—and a sweat. I relish the exercise for its own sake, so I'm not disappointed to find there's no water in the falls. The air is fresh, and the only sounds I hear are the wind blowing

through the gum trees, the cheerful "G'day" voiced by a fellow hiker, and the call of a currawong somewhere in the distance. I recognize the song. This cousin to a magpie is also my alarm clock back at Quamby.

The hike to The Pinnacle is much more difficult and not a good one for a hot summer (December to February) day. This trek is uphill all the way, including a stretch through the Grand Canyon where hikers cross Stoney Creek by jumping from rock to rock. At two places on this 5-kilometer trek, the Department of Conservation & Environment has installed steel ladders to help hikers climb to the next level.

The view from The Pinnacle—a 30-foot projection of rock jutting out from a plateau—drops nearly 2,000 feet to the valley floor below. I've never met anyone who wasn't impressed by this sight.

One of the nice things about hiking in Australia is that the country lacks the soaring peaks found on younger →

continents. Instead, summits can often be reached in a day or half-day trek. The Grampians, characterized by extraordinary sandstone land forms, have been eroded and sculpted by wind and rain into fanciful shapes.

Of all the view points in the park, the Boroka Lookout is my favorite. It is here that I enjoy the picnic-hamper repast of egg-and-bacon pie prepared by Quamby's hosts, and I sip champagne while contemplating the afternoon's options.

I watch kangaroos grazing near the Zumstein Recreation Area. These awkward creatures never cease to amaze me. I get close enough to one big mama to see her joey sticking out of the pouch.

The Mackenzie River Walk starts about 100 yards upstream from Zumstein and ends at Mackenzie Falls—the only cataract with water all year long. The round-trip takes about three hours.

I time my departure from the Grampians so I arrive back at Quamby in time to soak my well-exercised muscles in the Jacuzzi before dinner.

This spa is one of the few modern additions to the colonial homestead built by William Lindsay, an immigrant from Scotland. He grazed cattle and sheep here and made a fortune selling meat to the drove of miners who trekked past his property during the Victorian Gold Rush. By the 1870s, Quamby Homestead was the largest in the state, about 70,000 acres.

I've often heard the statement "Australia was founded on the sheep's back," but I never understood it until I learned about the Lindsays. Like other graziers in the country, they became very wealthy exporting wool all over the world. During their heyday, the Lindsays were known for lavish entertaining and extravagant house parties that would last for a week or more.

Today, Quamby Homestead consists of only 66 acres, but the house constructed by the Lindsays in 1888 is still



sound. More important for my purpose, hosts Rodger Stebbing and Edna Goldman continue to offer guests a warm welcome and a taste of genuine Australian country hospitality.

Before acquiring this property, the pair ran a catering business in Melbourne. Now Rodger is the chef, and Edna specializes in "looking after people." They're warm and gracious.

The white frame colonial homestead is trimmed with wrought-iron lace and surrounded by a verandah. Sheep—still an important aspect of the Australian economy—graze in paddocks just beyond the croquet lawn and the hen house.

Guests lodge in the mews facing the garden, in the carriage house, and in the schoolhouse where the Lindsay grandchildren were tutored. Incredible four-course dinners, such as baked fish with smoked trout mousse in puff pastry, are enjoyed in the dining room of the big house. Like every room, it has a fireplace, a high ceiling, and decorative plaster detailing.

By combining scenic nature hiking with an abundance of warm country hospitality, Quamby Homestead washes mind and body.



I sleep like a log at Quamby and wake to a chorus of native birds and the faint lowing of nearby dairy cattle. It's tempting to stay in bed—this is tranquility unlike any to be found in Melbourne—but the only scenery in Victoria more impressive than the Grampians beckons. Reluctantly, I start my gradual return to Melbourne.

The Great Ocean Road follows the shoreline of the rugged Southern Ocean from just east of Warrnambool to Torquay. In some places, the road skirts high cliffs well above the ocean; at others, it descends to sea level and curves along inviting sand beaches. The best known features are The Twelve Apostles—a row of great limestone pillars continuously battered by the surrounding sea. These sentinels are part of Port Campbell National Park.

With the weekend slipping away, and wanting to make the most of the time I have left, I stop at every view and admire the spectacular scenery from the edge of the bluffs. On one bluff, a cliff-top memorial tells the poignant tale of two survivors from the Loch Ard, an iron clipper ship carrying immigrants to Australia that went aground and sank off this craggy coast in 1878.

I still have time and energy left when I get to Lorne, a lovely little town sandwiched between the Great Ocean Road and the Orway Ranges, and I do a long hike to one of the waterfalls in Lorne Forest Park. The walk to Erskine Falls is lovely, but it takes six hours round-trip, so leave Quamby early if you plan to make this hike.

After this kind of weekend, I always return to Melbourne refreshed and ready to see the city in a new light. I see a financial center founded on the riches of the gold rush; I see the ethnic diversity of the most recent immigrants; and I see bluestone buildings—vestiges of the colonial period—juxtaposed with modern high-rise towers.

HEMISPHERES

GREENSBORO, NC
MONTHLY 437,699

DECEMBER 1993

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Continued from Page 50

I'm back in Melbourne again, but I've rekindled my connection to the country that lies beyond the city limits.

Details, Details, Details

The weekend rate at Quamby Homestead is A\$225 (U.S.\$157.50) per person. This includes two nights lodging in the mews, two dinners with wine, two breakfasts, a champagne picnic-hamper lunch, and afternoon tea. (Afternoon tea is only for those who arrive by 4 p.m. on Friday.)

Carriage house accommodation raises the price to A\$250 (U.S.\$175) per person. Single night stay costs A\$135 (U.S.\$94.50) per person in the mews and A\$160 (U.S.\$112) per person in the carriage house, including afternoon tea, lodging, dinner with wine, and breakfast. R.M.B. 9130, Caramut Rd., Woolsthorpe, VIC 3276; Tel. and Fax: 055-69-2395.

The Brambuk Living Cultural Centre is open daily, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is A\$3.50 (U.S.\$2.56) for

adults and A\$2.50 (U.S.\$1.83) for children. P. O. Box 43, Halls Gap, VIC 3381; Tel: 053-56-4452; Fax: 053-56-4455.

The Grampians National Park Visitors Centre is open daily, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is free. Dunkeld Road, Halls Gap, VIC 3381; Tel: 053-56-4381.

The Port Campbell National Park Information Centre is open daily, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is free. Tregear Street, Port Campbell, VIC 3269; Tel: 055-98-6382.

Australian Tourist Commission,
2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1200,
Los Angeles, CA 90067; Tel. 310-552-1988.

*Elizabeth Hansen is the author of
Frommer's Comprehensive Travel
Guide to Australia (Prentice Hall
Travel).*

Tour & Travel News
Manhasset, N.Y.
Dec. 1, 1993

Things Are Starting To Look Up Down Under

BY MARK ROBERT

(C6/S- A7C)
Since Australia celebrated the 20th anniversary of the arrival of the first European fleet in 1988, tourism officials in the South Pacific have been struggling to get arrivals back to the peak achieved that year. Now things are finally looking up Down Under.

Lower airfares, weak currencies and low occupancy rates at many hotels have combined to bring Australia and New Zealand within reach of even budget travelers—and the market has responded.

"Advance bookings for groups are two times what they were at this time last year," said Johnson Yip, senior vice president for Pacific Bestour of River Vale, N.J.

Australia and New Zealand saw an unexpected surge in demand for the peak season of November to February, which is

summer in the South Pacific. Airlines were left scrambling to add capacity (*Tour & Travel News*, Nov. 22). Travel agents and wholesalers believe the trend bodes well for 1994.

FLOODED WITH INQUIRIES

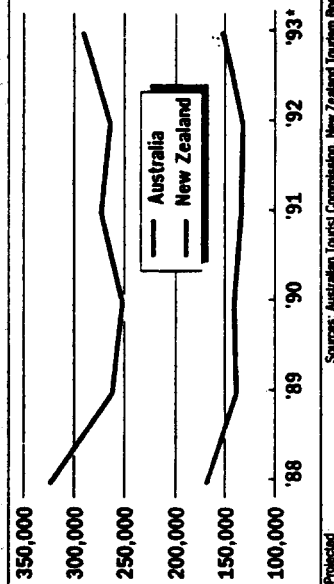
"It's incredible the number of inquiries we're getting," said Daryl Spiess, a certified "Aussie Specialist" at New Rochelle Travel in New Rochelle, N.Y. "We've already got 10 people booked for next year, which may not sound like a lot, but it is when compared to previous years."

"I'm expecting 1994 to be a good year, particularly for New Zealand," said Nicola Douglas, president of New York-based Australia travel Inc. "They've been out there promoting, and a lot of people who have done Australia are now going back to do New Zealand."

Ward Tillbrook, general manager/North America for AAT Kings of Burbank, Calif., said news surrounding Sydney's successful bid to

Competitive prices are a major factor in the resurgence of the South Pacific market, wholesalers said. This year, many tour operators

U.S. Arrivals Down Under



host the 2000 Summer Olympic Games will continue to stimulate interest in Australia, which will benefit New Zealand and the islands of the region.

advertised low-priced packages, such as six nights in Sydney for less than \$1,000, to get the message out that the region is affordable. The strategy is working.

"Bargains get people interested in the destination," said Kim Deitman, manager of Swain Australia Tours of Ardmore, Pa. "Once they are interested, price doesn't matter. They want to have a great vacation."

Airfares to the South Pacific rose by \$100 in September, and sources said several airlines planned to file with the Department of Transportation for another increase in February. But David Rowell, president of Abel Tasman Tours in Redmond, Wash., did not think that would have a severe impact on the market.

"About 18 months ago, airlines slashed their fares," he said. "Now they are rising to previous levels, so they are still better value for money than they have been for years."

Hotels and land costs also have come down.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36

Tourism Outlook Is Brightening In Australia

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

"Price competition among hotels in Australia, particularly in Sydney and Cairns, has brought rates down to where they are now competitive with Europe," said James Murphy, president of Brendan Tours of Van Nuys, Calif. "That has helped a lot."

Occupancy rates have hovered around 60 percent in Australia. Hotels throughout the region have suffered from a decline in Japanese arrivals due to the recession there. They are expected to remain soft because Europe and Japan are emerging from the recession more slowly than the United States.

"The extreme weakness of the Australian dollar, which is at a 10-year low, and the stable New Zealand dollar, mean prices will remain stable," Rowell said. "As the market better understands the possibility of taking short trips, as well as the once-in-a-lifetime vacation, we expect to see strong growth."

The Australian Tourist Commission is promoting the theme "Discover the Great Australian Outdoors" in 1994. It plans to announce new packages in January.

Most people are still visiting the South Pacific for the first time and want to see the main sights. But many are opting for exotic

excursions, according to Swain's Deitman.

"They are still buying the traditional Australia and New Zealand tours," she explained. "But they are looking to add on something more unique, such as upmarket island resorts in Fiji, or adventure packages to New Guinea."

FIJI PICKING UP

Ross Webster, president/North America of Jetset Tours Inc. in Los Angeles, said more people are stopping over in Fiji and other South Pacific islands.

"That's a key change that is occurring now," he said. "We have a new resort brochure that

will be out shortly that will focus on some of the great resorts that have opened in the South Pacific during the past five years."

Tahiti is likely to benefit from the trend. More aggressive promotion by the Tahiti Tourism Board and the publicity surrounding the opening of new resorts there have revitalized the destination (*Tour & Travel News*, March 22).

"The signs are that next year will be good from what is already on our books," said Alain Bernard, president of Islands in the Sun of Costa Mesa, Calif., one of the leading operators to Tahiti. He added that his company enjoyed the best year in its history this year.

December 3, 1993

Houston, TX

The Houston Post



'Waltzing' lesson to Aussie anthem

SYDNEY, Australia — Several years ago, when they ditched "God Save The Queen," and picked a new national anthem, Australians settled on "Advance Australia Fair."

Well, actually a few no-fun types in the government did the picking. "Advance Australia Fair" is a pompous melody with lots of brass instruments and hardly anybody knows all the words.

But, everybody knows the *real* national anthem of Australia is "Waltzing Matilda."

That's the song Australian soldiers marched to during World War II, Vietnam and the Gulf War. "Waltzing Matilda" is what they play at rugby and soccer games. And when Aussies get rip-roarin' drunk on Saturday night, you think they sing "Advance Australia Fair?" Heck, they can't sing it sober.

"Waltzing Matilda" is one of those songs that's in English but it's hard to tell.

So I visited Professor G. A. Wilkes at the University of Sydney. He's taught Australian literature for 40 years and wrote *The Dictionary of Australian Colloquialisms*.

"It's a very complicated song from around the turn of the century. A lot about 'Waltzing Matilda' is disputed. But I can tell you what I think," Wilkes said

*Once a jolly swagman camped
by a billabong,
Under the shade of a coolabah
tree.*

*And he sang as he watched and
waited till his billy boiled,
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda
with me?"*

Wilkes said, "A swagman was like your hobo or bum. He carried a swag, which was all his possessions rolled up on the end of a stick. A billabong is a small ditch of water that's left after a river dries up. A coolabah is an ordinary gum tree. A billy was a tin can in which the swagmen would boil their tea."

*Waltzing Matilda, waltzing Ma-
tilda,*

*You'll come a-waltzing Matilda
with me;*

*And he sang as he watched and
waited till his billy boiled,*

*"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda
with me?"*

After each verse, the chorus repeats the last two lines of the previous stanza.

"People have debated who Matilda is," Wilkes said. "In this case, Matilda is his swag. Waltzing is simply walking."

*Down came a jumbuck to drink
at that billabong,*

*Up jumped the swagman and
grabbed him with glee.*

*And he sang as he stowed that
jumbuck in his tucker bag,*

*"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda
with me."*

"It gets easier to understand now," Wilkes said. "A jumbuck is a young sheep. A tucker bag is a sack where you keep food. The swagman is stealing the sheep. Waltzing Matilda means he plans to eat it later."

*Up rode the squatter, mounted on
his thoroughbred;*

*Down came the troopers, one,
two, three.*

*"What's that jolly jumbuck
you've got in your tucker bag?"*

*"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda
with me."*

"A squatter was a rich farmer. He's called the police who are about to arrest the swagman. Waltzing Matilda means they're hauling him off to jail," Wilkes said.

*Up jumped the swagman and
sprang into the billabong,*

*"You'll never catch me alive,"
says he.*

*His ghost can be heard as you
pass by the billabong,*

*"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda
with me."*

"Our swagman chose to commit suicide rather than go to jail," Wilkes said. "This verse is sung softly and with sadness."

"Then you can resume drinking your beer."

December 4, 1993

Houston, TX

The Houston Post



Ken
Hoffman

Kangaroos are now fair game

SYDNEY, Australia — Could you eat a Lassie burger?

I mean a hamburger made from real collie meat. Or would every bite bring back guilty memories of Lassie rescuing Timmy from a burning house?

That's the dilemma facing yuppies in Australia's biggest cities. Since February, thanks to Article 17A of the Pure Food Act, restaurants have been allowed to serve kangaroo meat.

Yuppies can't stomach the idea.

Oh, it's not because the kangaroo is the national symbol of Australia. It's not because a kangaroo adorns every airplane of its national carrier, Qantas. It's not even because kangaroo meat traditionally has been used for dog food.

It's because of Skippy, the bush kangaroo.

Back in the '50s and '60s, kids were captivated by Skippy, television's bravest and most lovable kangaroo. Each week, Skippy pulled children from raging rivers and brought no-good crooks to their knees. He also did commercials.

"I won't eat kangaroo because it would be like eating Skippy. I loved Skippy!" said Cynthia Rogers, who's digging into a beefsteak at Ribberies Taste Australia restaurant.

I do not suffer from Skippy nostalgia. To me, Skippy is peanut butter.

Waiter, I'll have the kangaroo fillet, with a side of french fries.

The taste test

I know what you're expecting—but, no, kangaroo does *not* taste like chicken.

"Tell them it tastes like emu," laughed Jean-Paul Bruneteau, chef and owner of Ribberies. "That should throw your readers in the States."

Actually, it tastes a little like venison, not that I'm fond of eating Bambi.

Bruneteau specializes in kangaroo, emu and many other exotic Aussie dishes. For dessert, how about some wattlesed ice cream?

Bruneteau is a booster of kangaroo meat. It's the most-ordered main course on his menu, and he's become a spokesman of sorts for the kangaroo meat industry.

He regularly goes on TV cooking shows and throws some kangaroo on the barbie.

"Pushing kangaroo meat is an easy job. It's high in polyunsaturated fats. It's a wonderful meat if you're watching your cholesterol. It's rich in iron and zinc. It's a clean meat with a very satisfying flavor," Bruneteau said.

"I'm going to advise our athletes to eat kangaroo meat when the Olympics come to Sydney in 2000. One thing's for sure, it will help our high jumpers."

Very funny.

Good for you

Bruneteau believes health-conscious Australians eventually will prefer kangaroo meat over beef.

"It's so low in fat, less than 2 percent, in fact, that if you want to make burgers with kangaroo meat you have to add in some fat."

Bruneteau suggests you eat kangaroo medium rare. Another kangaroo plus. There's plenty of 'em.

About 5 million people live in the Sydney area. So do about 11 million kangaroos.

"The harvesting of kangaroos is carefully administered by the Department of Parks and Wildlife. They authorize the killing of 3 million each year," Bruneteau said. "We're not endangering the species exactly."

Bruneteau knows he'll never win over a middle-aged Skippy-lover, but everyone else is fair game.

"Children are the easiest to convince," he said. "I go to the schools. You know what helps? Computer games. They tried to bring the Skippy show back a few years ago, but the kids didn't like it. Now they're into video games. They know Skippy ain't going to stop a ship from sinking."

THE POST-TRIP REPORT

TRAVEL

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Sunday, December 5,
1993

Down Under



AUSTRALIA'S GREAT BARRIER REEF, with its vibrant colors and varied marine life, is one of the wonders of the world. It stretches along the continent's eastern coast.

Kangaroo Island is way, way down under

■ Viewing the wildlife shows off Australia at its best

By Patrick Soran
Special to The Post-Crescent

After a year in South Africa, four years in college and three in the Australian Parks Service, Craig Wickham went home. That's really no surprise though, since home is Kangaroo Island, South Australia. It's a wildlife lover's paradise.

Wickham recounts his homeward tale as he steers his silver Land Cruiser with four nature-loving guests through a two-day wildlife-viewing itinerary. "In the park service we did a lot of weed and pest control," he says. "But that's not why I took a degree in wildlife management, so I bought this company three years ago." His business is Adventure Charters on Kangaroo Island and today Wickham stewards curious visitors on personalized discover tours. "People come here from all over because they want to see Australia at its best. Most have seen the Aussie icons — Ayers Rock, Sydney and the Great Barrier Reef — and many say Kangaroo Island is the real Australia."

Indeed, as the four-wheel-drive rolls along red gravel roads edged with gum trees, wallabee — sort of a poodle-size kangaroo — hops into the undergrowth. Suddenly weary travelers snap to attention. Nearby, black swans dawdle on mirror-calm blue rivers and koalas share shaggy eucalyptus trees with rainbow-feathered lorikeets and chattering pick galahs. Memories of 12-hour flights, delays and layovers melt away. This really is Australia.

When explorer Matthew Flinders first came ashore in 1802, dozens of wild kangaroos flocked around to take a peek, for no human had yet set foot on the island



Tourism South Australia photo

"TAME" KANGAROOS greet visitors at Flinders Chase National Park.

named the spot Kangaroo Island. Today, the bouncy marsupials share the island with 4,400 human residents and a million and a half sheep. But the kangaroos have learned to keep their distance.

Shaped a little like a blunt-nosed fish, the 1,700-square-mile island, off the south coast of the southern continent, appears to winnow its way into the Southern Ocean. In fact, it's one of the Down Under's most down under locales.

Especially at Flinders Chase National Park. The park's 190,000 acres, set aside more than a century ago, are pristine wilderness. Along the coast, a giant sandstone formation called Remarkable Rocks hovers on a cliff like an organically grown Stonehenge. Below New Zealand Fur Seals snooze on granite boulders, taking a break from fishing in the crashing waves. And nothing but 1,300 miles of wedge-wood-blue water separates this verdant isle from Australia.

The fur seals aren't the only crit-

overlooking American River. Dinner there, drawn from the ocean, includes crisp oysters, calamari in garlic, smoked salmon with dill, poached whiting and Southern rock lobster. But dessert is more land-based — apricots, brandy and toasted almonds garnishing vanilla ice cream.

The best way to work off dinner is a bit of an adventure," Craig winks, as he leads a hunt for Fairy Penguins. Among leafy bushes aglow with moonlight the alarmed birds emit a blood-curdling shriek as if horror movie monsters were slithering out of the water below. Wickham aims his flashlight under a rock. There, no larger than a human foot, huddles a pearl-gray bird with a voice big enough to curl the paint off buildings.

There's more on the island than wildlife, though, so the following day Wickham injects some local flavor. At Emu Ridge the car pulls into a eucalyptus oil factory. . . well, "still" might be a better word. Leaves are stripped from the trees

Reef

Off Australia lies a wonder of the ages

By Jeff Miller
Special to The Post-Crescent

In water as clear as a freshly washed window, orange-and-white striped clown fish duck in and out of swaying coral, a sea turtle glides by just out of reach, and bright, surreal colors dance across coral pal-ettes.

Viewing Australia's Great Barrier Reef, via snorkeling, diving or in a glass-bottomed boat — can be the experience of a lifetime. Unfortunately, it can take a lifetime to sort through all the reef-trip options available from Cairns, the major jumping off point for most visitors.

One of the newest, and most luxurious, options is a three- or four-

day cruise aboard Captain Cook Cruises' "Reef Escape." This ex-riverboat, now converted to ocean-going vessel, holds a maximum of 126 guests and offers those with limited time a way of experiencing the reef, sampling some of the reef's 600 islands, and enjoying an intimate cruise, all in one trip.

Because the Reef Escape was built for river cruising, it has a flat-bottom and the boxy, square-termed look of a riverboat, although it does have a pointed bow. While it's been refitted for ocean travel, the ship still does feel rough seas more than larger vessels, so be forewarned. Most times, however, the sea between the coast and the reef is relatively calm.

Please see REEF, F-2

MY BEST MEMORY

Eye to eye, that 'roo was one scary beast

■ **Appleton resident
Katherine Richardson
had a close call in
Australia**

By Katherine Richardson

In May, 1991, my husband and I went to Australia and New Zealand. While in Sydney, Australia, our group went to a game preserve to view and hold koalas and see hundreds of kangaroo in a huge wooded area.

We purchased bags of popcorn to feed the 'roo and discovered they like to eat the paper bag, too! As I fed a mother with her little joey in her pouch, a huge male kangaroo startled me by standing up and

my sweater and skin, and everyone shouted "Drop the bag, Kathy!" His huge tail was starting to whip around to knock me over when I dropped the bag, and he jumped down to eat it. My heart was pounding, and I decided not to feed any more 'roo.

There were no keepers in sight, and supposedly these animals were tame and not dangerous. As I give talks in schools and clubs I show my slides and tell this story.

■ Readers who wish to share the memories that made their trips something special — happy, sad, poignant, frightening, surprising — the events and experiences that are remembered after the sight-seeing fades, are invited to send their stories to Myrna Collins, Travel Editor, The Post-Crescent, Box 59. Ap-

The reef is a wonder of nature

From F-1

Rolling decks notwithstanding, the Reef Escape is a good way to gain an appreciation of the Great Barrier Reef, both the three-day Joseph Banks cruise and the four-day James Cook cruise stop at various islands as well as anchor near the reef for closer looks. Named after Cook, the famous English sailor/explorer, and Banks, his botanist, both cruises are roundtrip from Cairns and can be combined for a seven-day trip.

The Banks cruise goes south of Cairns and includes stops at Hinchinbrook Island, Australia's largest island national park, Dunk Island, a rainforest isle, and Fitzroy Island, a continental island close to the coast. Opportunities are given for island walks, snorkeling, diving and glass-bottomed boating.

The four-night James Cook cruise sails north of Cairns for a stop at Cooktown, where the famous captain spent more than a month repairing his ship, the Endeavor. Passengers of the Reef Escape can wander around the sleepy little village, take an hour and a half guided tour, or visit the fascinating history museum.

From Cooktown, the ship steams northwest to Lizard Island for a day and a half. One of the northernmost Great Barrier Reef islands,

Lizard is where Cook finally spotted a way out of the reef after climbing the island's highest hill. Today, Lizard is also home to a premier island resort, boasting a maximum of 64 guests, 35-45 staff and 23 private beaches.

While Reef Escape passengers aren't allowed in the resort they are treated to a full day on two different beaches that have wonderful coral and marine life. In the morning, the ship's crew sets up beach tents, a mini bar, water sports equipment and floats for swimmers on a fingernail strip of white sand. In the afternoon, they shift it all to a second spectacular beach.

The third day is spent anchored at Ribbon Reef Five on the outer fringe of the Great Barrier Reef. With no beach in sight, just the coral lying below the surface, the crew establishes snorkeling areas with floats and ropes, and runs continuous tours in a glass-bottomed boat. Even swimmers find the glass-bottomed boat worth it, both for the hypnotic gazing as the reef slides along beneath their feet, and for the excellent commentary by the ship's marine biologist.

The reef is truly one of the wonders of the world. Snaking along Australia's northeastern coast for more than 1,500 miles, is the largest structure created by living creatures. Six hundred islands and 2,900 individual reefs, some close to shore, others 150 miles away, are

home to 350 species of coral, 10,000 types of sponge, 4,000 kinds of mollusk and more than 1,500 varieties of fish.

These statistics translate into incredible experiences, touching the velvet smoothness of a giant clam's mantle, watching the bird-like motions of stingrays, or following the antics of black-and-white striped humbug fish (some no longer than a fingernail). Everywhere the reef dazzles, from the neon blue of starfish and the canary yellow of staghorn coral to the fire-engine red and forest green of parrot fish.

After a rewarding but tiring day on the reef, the ship is waiting. For a small vessel it's well-appointed, with an elegant piano lounge and dining room, large picture windows, a small stern-deck pool and a top-deck sunning area. Especially nice is a metal platform on the stern that can be raised and lowered into the ocean, allowing for easy and safe transfer from ship to glass-bottomed boat.

All accommodations on board are air-conditioned and open directly to outside decks, giving each room a light, airy look, but also making some passengers feel there's a lack of privacy. The food is plentiful and good, although not on a par with the fines cruise cuisine, while the fresh-faced, enthusiastic staff provides excellent service.

After sailing all night from Rib-

bon Reef Five, the Reef Escape glides into Cairns early the next morning. Passengers staying on for the three-night Joseph Banks cruise have a day to shop in Cairns. Those disembarking look back with a little regret, most will not only miss the luxury and service, but will envy those who are getting another look at the magnificent Great Barrier Reef.

■ Cairns International Airport has direct international service from North America and connecting service with major Australian cities through the two major domestic airlines, Australian Airlines and Ansett Airlines. If you want to start your Australian experience the moment you get on the plane, try Qantas.

Depending on the duration of the cruise and the level of accommodations, prices for the Joseph Banks and James Cook cruises range from \$792 to \$1,430, in Australian dollars. The fees include all meals, water sports equipment, glass-bottomed boat trips and some island walks.

For further information, contact the Australian Tourist Commission, Los Angeles, (310) 552-1988; Queensland Tourist & Travel Commission, Los Angeles (310) 788-0997; or International Cruise Connections, (800) 433-8747. For the free "Destination Australia" book, call (800) 333-0262.

December 10, 1993

Houston, TX

The Houston Post



Darwin's natural selection is beer

DARWIN, Australia — This town has "gone troppo." That's the Aussie way of saying Darwin's gone plain nuts.

It happens this time every year during "buildup," that sticky stretch leading to the wet season.

Each day gets hotter and more humid. The pressure builds. Tempers get frayed. Brains get fried. Beer bottles get opened.

Then Darwin goes kablooeey — the annual Hookers' Ball.

Three thousand uninhibited people, from teen-agers to city officials, cut loose at the Big Country Saloon last Sunday night.

The dress code was simple: lingerie for the ladies, underpants for men. Accessories optional.

I haven't seen this many whips and chains and tattoos since Cher's opening night at Caesar's Palace.

If you wore undies, admission was only \$15. Conservatively attired folks paid \$25.

A share of the funds went to the AIDS Council of Darwin.

The first Hookers' Ball was thrown 20 years ago by John Spellman, the owner of Darwin's most notorious gay bar. Soon straight people wanted in on the fun.

Now the Hookers' Ball is the highlight of Darwin's social season. It's Australia's most outrageous R-rated event, packed with straights, gays and people who can't seem to decide.

This year's edition was telecast nationally on Australia's largest satellite channel, Sky TV.

Jo Beth Taylor, host of *Australia's Funniest Home Videos*, was the host.

Rock bands played in two different sections of the Big Country Saloon. They performed in their underpants.

Ever the diligent newshound, I took lots of pictures. Forget "My close warm personal friend" in the Dec. 19 paper. I'm running photos from the Hookers' Ball.

To fully understand the craziness of the Hookers' Ball, you have to look at a map of Australia.

Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane and Adelaide are Australia's biggest and most sophisticated cities. They're all to the south, where an occasional cool breeze blows even in summer.

Now head north toward the equator. See that enormous blank space? That's the Northern Territory.

The Northern Territory is 2½ times the size of Texas. Yet only 156,000 people live there. That's a good day at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

It's considered a territory, not a state, because the population is too small.

When you can't go any farther north, you've hit Darwin, the "Top End." Population: 72,000.

It's the beer-drinking capital of Australia. Until recently, the Swan and Carlton breweries were the biggest industry in Darwin.

And still they had to import beer to the city.

In most cities, a "stubby" is a short can of beer holding about eight ounces.

A "Darwin Stubby" is two liters. "During 'buildup,' nobody in the world drinks more beer than us. It's so hot that you're always thirsty," said Ray Church, bouncer at the Victoria Hotel Pub, one of Darwin's rowdier drinking establishments.

No wonder Darwin is bottoms up. Geographically, it's closer to Malaysia and Singapore than any major city in Australia.

Darwin is Crocodile Dundee country. They have saltwater crocodiles in the Adelaide River that leap out of the water and grab birds.

A popular pub is The Hard Croc Cafe. Another bar has a caged "penalty box" in case of fights.

Next year, McDonald's arrives in Darwin. It should be "troppo" time again. When Burger King opened its first store in Darwin, it broke the Australian record for selling hamburgers.

December 11, 1993

Houston, TX

The Houston Post



Ken
Hoffman

Doctors over Down Under

ALICE SPRINGS, Australia — Deep in the middle of this vast continent-country, there is a medical institution uniquely Australian: The Royal Flying Doctors.

If there's an emergency, it doesn't matter how poor or how far out in the sticks you are, a competent doctor will make a house call.

And he'll do it 100 percent free.

"Our system is divided into seven stations with 13 bases throughout the inland. The goal is to be within two hours by air of every person in Australia," said Mary Marks, manager of the Flying Doctors base in Alice Springs.

The two-hour deadline isn't easy to meet sometimes. Australia's inland covers 2 million sparsely populated square miles, roughly the size of Western Europe.

The Alice Springs base alone is responsible for an area bigger than the British Isles.

"Ninety percent of the people we help are Aborigines," said Marks. "They have chronic problems with alcohol abuse and domestic violence. Just to make matters even more complicated, most of them are scared to death of flying.

"But our service is available to everybody, including tourists."

Est. 1912

The Rev. John Flynn, a Presbyterian minister, first preached the need for medical care in the outback in 1912. Flynn set up a ham radio system where bush people could talk to doctors in the city.

The first patient to receive treatment via radio was Jim Darcy, a ranch hand in Northwest Australia. He had a ruptured bladder. Using Morse code, a doctor 1,200 miles away told the local postmaster how to operate on Darcy. He died a few days later. But the idea of city doctors helping people in the bush was born.

A few years later, Flynn wondered, why can't we fly doctors out here in person?

Qantas Airlines supplied the first planes and the Flying Doctors took off in Alice Springs in 1928.

"We don't just provide emergency care. We also schedule regular visits to Aboriginal communities and mining towns. We transfer people to hospitals. We give inoculations to children," Marks said.

"We provide the area total health care service. We do it 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year."

Big caseload

The Flying Doctors treat 140,000 patients a year — more than any single hospital in Australia.

The Alice Springs base owns three airplanes and employs six doctors, six nurses and six pilots.

The doctors are first rate. Each has a minimum of five years postgraduate studies and three years of practice in obstetrics, pediatric work and surgery. Flying Doctors personnel are paid by the government. New equipment and airplanes are bought with private donations, which are matched by the government dollar for dollar.

"The typical call is a Code 2, an emergency evacuation. Somebody is hurt and we need to get them to a hospital fast," Marks said. "We round up a doctor and a pilot and we're off the ground within 45 minutes."

The days of summoning the Flying Doctors by ham radio are long gone. Now even the remotest town has touch-tone phones. The doctors and pilots wear beepers.

The pilots don't often land on safety-approved runways. Sometimes an unpaved road illuminated by car headlights has to do.

"It's a very rewarding job," said Peter Docking, a Flying Doctors pilot. "I could make more money giving flying lessons but it's a good feeling to help people."

Docking once flew a baby 1,000 miles to Brisbane for a liver transplant. The little girl is still alive.

"I get my share of dumb tourists, too," he said. With tourists, it's generally a heart attack from exerting themselves too much in our heat."

December 12, 1993
Houston, TX

"Even the Nighttime sky is different down under"

The Houston Post

AYERS ROCK, Australia —
This country's most breathtaking tourist attraction is free, and the directions are so simple, even "bloody Yanks" who drive on the wrong side can find it.

Just look up.

The pitch-black sky in the Southern Hemisphere is more than a starry, starry night. It's planets, satellites, shooting stars, the real-life zodiac and a moon you can read by.

This is the place to go stargazing. If you crisscrossed the Australian continent, you'd hit Ayers Rock in the center. It's a tiny village next to a national park surrounded by Aboriginal holy land, deep, deep into the outback.

In other words, there ain't a lot of people here.

You can go on a star voyage with a National Park ranger or take a guided tour with a profes-



Ken Hoffman

sional astronomer.

Shortly before sundown, we drove seven miles into the "bush," the geographic middle of nowhere.

In every direction there was only undisturbed horizon.

As night fell, the only sounds were our kerosene lanterns, slimy desert bugs, lizards and other disgusting creatures.

"I want you to close your eyes. I'm going to turn off the lamps. You should concentrate on the sounds," said astronomer Michael Lane.

"It will be the first time you've heard what nature sounds like without cars honking and TV sets in the background.

"Then open your eyes and look to the sky."

It was the most incredible thing I ever saw without Steven Spielberg being involved.

The sky was darker than I had ever seen. More twinkling stars than I had ever seen.

Lane explained the difference between Australia's spackled sky and what happens when you look up in Houston.

"The best place to look at stars is the Southern Hemisphere. This is not me being arrogant as an astronomer. This is a fact," he said.

"Because of the way the Earth is tilted, the Southern Hemisphere looks back into the middle of the Milky Way, our galaxy. The Northern Hemisphere looks

over the edge of the Milky Way."

So stars burn more brilliantly below the equator. But there's much more.

"I am guessing that Houston has air pollution and humidity. That cuts down on visibility. And does Houston have many lights, like neon advertising? That would make it harder, too," Lane said.

Does Houston have neon signs?

Until I met Lane, I thought the golden arches at McDonald's were a constellation.

"Central Australia doesn't have pollution and the atmosphere is thinner. I personally think this place, and the highlands of South America, are the best places in the world to look at stars," Lane said.

How many stars can you see?

"If you tried to count them, you will forget what number

December 12, 1993
Houston, TX

"Even the Nighttime sky is different down under" (continued)

The Houston Post

you're on before you finish. Even without a telescope, you can see thousands," Lane said.

It really gets interesting *with* a telescope, though.

We saw Saturn and its rings, clear as a bell.

"The image is so good that people always accuse me of having a photo slide in the telescope," Lane said. "But that's the real thing."

Except Saturn's rings ran top to bottom instead of around the middle.

"You're used to seeing pictures of Saturn taken in North America," Lane said.

The moon looked like a golf ball that's been whacked too many times, all pitted out and dented. We saw spy satellites and assorted "space junk" streaking across the sky.

With a telescope in Australia,

you can practically read the Space Shuttle's license plate.

One time in Houston, I thought, I saw Saturn's rings, but it was only Wayne Dolcefino eating doughnuts aboard the Channel 13 helicopter.

Using a pocket searchlight, Lane showed us Pisces, Aquarius, Capricorn and more horoscope signs. You can see only six zodiac formations at one time. The other six are in the northern sky.

The Southern Cross was up there.

Lane conducts stargazing tours six nights a week, yet he seemed as excited as the tourists.

"I'm always finding new things up there. I have the same reaction as you did tonight — awe. It's *supposed* to make you feel small. It should make people realize how small and fragile we are."

December 14, 1993

Salem, MA

Salem Evening News

A visit to koalas, kangaroos, kookaburras

By JANET CELESTA LOWE
Copley News Service

Sel Nichol pulled his six-wheel-drive Land Cruiser off to the side of the road in the forest, tipped his Akubra hat back on his head and gazed into the rooftop of eucalyptus.

"Listen," he whispered.

First we heard a clear, musical "ding," then another and another. Soon the forest rang like a carillon with the song of Australia's bellbirds. The bellbirds live in flocks of up to 300 members and make unbelievable music in the territory they've claimed for themselves.

The bellbirds are only one of thousands of animals, birds and water creatures that are found only on the isolated, ancient Australian continent. Long before I decided to visit Australia, I'd heard of the deserts, big rocks and sunny beaches. Even though I knew about kangaroos and koalas, I was not prepared for the amazing diversity and strangeness of plant and animal life in Australia.

ABUNDANCE OF WILDLIFE

Since Australia is approximately the size of the United States and its wildlife oddities come from many distant regions, it's not easy for the typical two-week visitor to see it all.

Fortunately, Aussies are justifiably proud of their natural riches and take pains to make the country as accessible as possible. Australia has more than 2,000 national parks, nature reserves and wildlife sanctuaries. They include tropical rain forests, deserts, snowcapped mountains, islands, coral reefs and glacial lakes.

Australia's birds, from the awkward emu to the frightful flying fox, are among its most unusual natural treasures. Happily, most of the birds are quite charming.

While driving through the village of Warrimoo in the Blue Mountains, I noticed a flock of what appeared to be pigeons flitting around a statue and onto the lawn. At second glance the birds turned out to be wild, pristine white cockatoos.

There are more parrots, and a greater variety of parrots, in Australia than anywhere else. There are 17 known species of cockatoos, and all but one are native to Australia. The most familiar native parrot is the budgerigar, once found only on Australia's plains, but now probably the world's most popular caged bird.

The best-loved Australian bird, however, is a kingfisher, the laughing kookaburra. The kookaburra is common throughout the country, even in the cities, and its cackling song is practically the Australian national anthem.

But even the kookaburra takes a back seat to the kangaroos and koalas, as far as tourists are concerned. Nichol, founder of G'Day Tours in Brisbane and the Gold Coast, tells about an American executive who called late at night, pleading for a custom tour for his wife and children. The family had been in Australia for two weeks but hadn't seen a kangaroo in its natural habitat. The man's family were in tears and refused to leave until they'd seen a 'roo running wild.

POCKET GEMS

They were fully justified, of course. Australia's most unique animal population is the marsupials — creatures that carry their young in a pouch. Because of millions of years of isolation, the Australian continent has been a sanctuary for archaic species such as the marsupial, which could not survive competition with higher life forms elsewhere in the world. Kangaroos, wallabies, koalas, wombats, platypuses, bandicoots, possums, bats and tasmanian devils are among the thriving species.

Nichol drove the family to an area near Lake Maroon, several hours from Surfer's Paradise, where he nearly always spots families of kangaroos — the male monarch, secondary males, females and their baby joeys. It helps to have an expert guide, since kangaroos easily fade into the tall, tan grass.

For extra measure, Nichol took the family to see sleepy little koalas living high in a eucalyptus grove on a nearby cattle station.

Speaking of eucalypts, as the Aussies call these tall gray-green gum trees, there are more than 800 species. At one time, all but 20 were found only in Australia. Ordinarily we don't think of rain forests as populated by gum trees, but that's the case Down Under. Staghorn ferns, orchids and a rare black bean that may contain a cure for AIDS are among the other exotic plants of the Australian rain forest.

Crocodiles in some rivers, dolphins and marlin near the beaches and hundreds of bright fish along the Great Barrier Reef complete the story of Australia's natural environment. Deciding what to see first can be perplexing.



**IN
THE
OUTBACK**

The Blue Mountains outside Sydney, Australia, get their name from the haze that rises from the eucalyptus groves found below.

Copley News Service photo/Australian Tourist Commission

Often visitors want to see plants, birds, animals and sea life in their natural setting, which means a trek to the outback. Even from Australia's largest city, Sydney, where most visitors either arrive or spend most of their time, the outback is easy to reach. Brisbane and the nearby Gold Coast also are good bases for exploring the country's natural wonders.

For those who don't have the time to get too far into the countryside, the fringes of the urban areas are great for exploring. Here are two favorites.

THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

The mountain range behind Sydney gets its name from a bluish haze that hangs in the air, the rising oil from the eucalypt groves. There are many attractions in the mountains, but there are two special spots: Leura and

Mount Tomah.

The village of Leura is known for its passionate gardeners, plant nurseries and garden shops. In the spring, summer and fall (remember the seasons are reversed south of the equator) the town is aflame with flowers and colored vegetation.

Allow at least half a day to see the Mount Tomah botanic gardens, New South Wales' center for cold-weather plants. This mountain sanctuary is lovely, peaceful and, at the same time, extremely instructive.

Stop at the cafeteria for lunch or tea with a superb view.

There are many guided tours to the Blue Mountains from Sydney, and the mountains are only one and a half to two hours from town. If you can handle driving on the left side of the road, it's worth renting a car for the trip.

For a cozy treat, consider spending the night at Cleopatra Country Guesthouse in Blackheath. Cleopatra is a historic Australian farmstead. Set in a mass of greenery and decorated with antiques, Cleopatra is known for the best French food in the country.

THE QUEENSLAND OUTBACK

Within easy reach of Brisbane and the Gold Coast are some of Australia's most intriguing cattle stations, beaches and rain forests. The southern tip of the Great Barrier Reef ends just off the coast of Brisbane, on Moreton Island. Most restaurants in this area serve Moreton Bay "bugs," a tasty crustacean similar to lobster.

At Lamington National Park, just 28 miles west of the Gold Coast, it's fascinating to hike through rugged mountains and junglelike rain forests of beech and gum trees. O'Reilly's guest house has been a favorite "rest and recreation" spot for Americans during several wars and remains a celebrated resort for dedicated bird-watchers.

Again, there are many special tours of the Gold Coast area and its western reaches, but plucky visitors may simply want to rent a car and strike out to meet some of Australia's cheery, kind citizens.

Explore the rich farming area of Darling Downs west of Brisbane, or head out to the cattle stations west of the Gold Coast.

The towns of Beaudesert and Boonah are in the heart of cow country. Where ever you drive, keep an eye on the grasslands and treetops for a glimpse at this country's quaint critters.

IF YOU GO

Passport and visa: A U.S. passport is required for re-entry into the United States, and a visitor's visa is necessary for admission to Australia. Like the rest of the world, Australia is plagued with illegal immigration, and even with a proper passport and visa you may face questioning and scrutiny at the port of entry.

Visas are free and can be obtained from the Australian Embassy in Washington or at the consulate in New York.

December 14, 1993

Salem, MA

Salem Evening News

Enjoying fun and sun in Sydney, Australia

GGTS cw trul

Mrs. Macquarie, the wife of one of Australia's earliest governors, enjoyed strolling for miles beside Sydney Harbor, out to the point beyond Farm Cove, and back along Woolloomooloo Bay. She was such a common sight that convict workers carved a chair out of a sandstone outcropping where she could sit. When her husband built a road through the area, in what was to become the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, it was named Mrs. Macquarie's Road.

Mrs. Macquarie's chair and her road remain landmarks today, and the governor's wife is still an inspiration to Sydney residents and visitors who love nature and love to walk. Sydney, with its temperate climate, charming historic and cultural neighborhoods and its safety is one of the most walkable cities in the world. It was also recently selected to host the Summer Olympics in the year 2000.

Because Sydney stretches around the world's largest harbor, most of its notable landmarks are along the water. The famous "flying-sails" Sydney Opera House and the Sydney Harbor "coat-hanger" bridge are landmarks that can be seen for many miles. They sit at the center of the city and serve as checkpoints for the walker who has any trouble reading a map.

WHERE TO START

Perhaps the best place to begin a walking tour of Sydney is halfway between the bridge and the opera house, the downtown Circular Quay. The quay serves as a transportation hub for residents and visitors alike. Cruise ships dock there, tour buses depart from the quay for city and outlying tours, and best of all, Sydney Harbor cruises and ferries to spectacular Manley Beach and other parts of the harbor debark from there. Even an early morning walker can find coffee, juices or a snack at the Circular Quay.

The easiest way to get to Taronga Zoo — Australia's best collection of native animals

--and to Sydney Aquarium at Darling Harbor is by ferry from the quay. Because Australia is Earth's oldest land mass and because it is so isolated, the animals, sea life, and plants and trees are fascinating and unusual. Echidnas, dingos, koalas, kangaroos, platypuses and Tasmanian devils — they're all in residence at Taronga Zoo.

The Sydney Aquarium houses more than 5,000 marine critters in two massive floating oceanariums and 50 aquarium tanks. There is a crocodile pool, turtle pool and touch pool.

The zoo and the aquarium show off Australia's creatures, while the Botanic Gardens, just a short walk past the opera house, showcase a remarkable array of plant life. The flora and fauna there are gathered from all the tropical regions of the world and include a palm grove, fernery, roses, succulents and squares of grasses from the warmer climates. The trees, shrubs and flowers are labeled with the scientific name, common name and other scientific information.

Happily, many of Australia's colorful birds are attracted to the gardens and provide musical accompaniment for walks. Of course, any visitor would have to stroll to Mrs. Macquarie's chair to watch the bustling traffic of Sydney Harbor.

LUNCH AT THE GARDENS

The Botanic Gardens Restaurant, near the center of the park, is one of Sydney's most delightful luncheon venues. It is open from noon to 4 p.m., and a kiosk on the lower level is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A leisurely, circular walk through the gardens and back to the Circular Quay will take one to two hours, not counting a rest for coffee or lunch.

The next stop could be the Opera House for a tour or for a snack, but it may be just as well to simply buy tickets for an evening performance then press forward to other pleasant sights in the region of the Circular Quay.

Just steps from the Circular



The dramatic Sydney, Australia, skyline includes Sydney Harbor and the famous Sydney Opera House.

CNS photo/Australia Tourist Commission

Quay is Sydney's original village, settled 200 years ago by prisoners from England and their wardens. The area is called The Rocks because it is there that the sandstone shelf on which Sydney sits is most visible. The Rocks may have been a fine fortress position, but settlers had to find other places to grow food, and feeding themselves was a problem for decades.

Historic buildings at The Rocks have been restored to their original charm, and the area is now a center for arts and crafts, shopping, dining and coffeehouses. It is an excellent place to shop for Australia's romantic native stone, the opal.

HEEDING THE PAST

Australians increasingly value their history, and companies building new structures in The Rocks must heed the past. Not only did management of the new 36-story ANA Hotel at the top of The Rocks hire archaeologists to excavate the building site before construction, but three adjacent working-class houses were also preserved and have been converted to cozy restaurants and pubs.

The Rocks is at the north end of George Street, Sydney's main business and shopping boulevard. A quick walk, or a ride on the inexpensive Sydney Explorer bus, brings visitors into a downtown shopping area where a melange of native crafts and everyday items can be found. Perhaps Australia's best buys are woolen items, including colorful and fanciful sweaters.

Keep a look out for the Queen Victoria Building along George Street. Dating back to the late 19th century but charmingly restored, the QVB is considered one of the most beautiful shopping centers in the world.

Under magnificent copper domes, stained-glass windows and arches shoppers can scout out the trendiest of fashions.

Either a bus or a quick and reasonable taxi ride will take visitors to one of Sydney's most dazzling outdoor attractions. Bondi Beach. Muscle builders and bikini-clad Australian beauties gather there nearly year-round, though weekends are definitely the most entertaining time to go.

Other parts of town are something of a walk from the city center, but also are easily reached by public transportation. Kings Cross is known for its bawdy night life, and the arts community hangs out at Paddington.

Paddington, like its arty cousins around the world, is a dependable place to find a good cup of coffee, a reasonable meal and lots of off-beat Down Under characters.

IF YOU GO

Visitors to Australia must have a valid passport and a visitor's visa. A visa can be obtained free of charge by mail or in person from the nearest Australian Embassy or Consulate. There are consulates in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, Chicago, Honolulu and New York.

Destination Australia toll-free number: (800) 333-0262. Callers will receive a complimentary guide to Australia with practical information, weather conditions, etc. A visa application form and instructions are included.

For more information, contact the Australia Tourist Commission: 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1200, Los Angeles, CA 90067; (310) 552-1988.

Janet Celesta Lowe,
Copley News Service

December 14, 1993

Houston, TX

The Houston Post



Australia's most unlikely export

ALICE SPRINGS, Australia — That's the last time I take Clementine to an expensive restaurant.

We hadn't even reached our table, and she started burping. Seismic, gassy burps, like your grandfather makes.

She spit on the ground. She chewed with her mouth open and played with her food. Her breath stank. It was obvious that Clementine isn't an avid flosser. Her front teeth were missing.

No more; we're through. I'm never taking a camel to dinner again.

Camels in Australia?

Kangaroos and koala bears I expected. I knew I'd run into some crocodiles and wallabies, too.

But how did camels, hundreds of thousands of them, get here?

"Australia has the largest number of wild camels in the world. There's a quarter-million of them running out there free," said Nick Smail, owner of the Frontier Camel Farm in Alice Springs.

Every night, tourists saddle them up and caravan to an Aussie desert barbecue.

It's called "Take A Camel To Dinner."

If you fancy yourself Lawrence of Sugar Land, the camels are available for two- and five-day safaris, too.

"The camel is a fascinating bloke," Smail said. "They are truly unique. Once you get to know them, they're quite lovable, actually."

Smail keeps 45 dromedary (one-hump) camels on his 11-acre farm. When he needs more, it's "no worries," as they say. Thousands of stray, low-mileage camels roam free in his out-backyard.

So many, in fact, that most people in Alice Springs consider them a traffic nuisance. Hitting a camel is like hitting a brick wall.

Hardy breed

How camels got to Australia is a sad story, really.

Back in the 1800s, Australian explorers used camels to march across the blazing hot desert, where temperatures top 125 degrees and water holes can be hundreds of miles apart.

Horses weren't any good. They conked out before noon.

Camels were imported from India to do the job. They worked great. Not only could they travel vast distances over sand with little water, they were strong, uncomplaining beasts.

But like capable employees everywhere, ultimately they were driven to the unemployment line by a machine. Cars and trucks made them obsolete.

So in 1920, about 20,000 camels — the whole fleet — were set free in the bush. Pioneers figured they would run off and die.

They didn't.

"Not hardly. They are perfectly constructed for the desert," Smail said. "Their ability to go long stretches without water is legendary. During the winter, a camel simply does not need to drink water. Their digestive systems extract water from their food."

In the hot summer, they can go 10 days between gulps.

No, camels do not store water in their humps. Those are filled with energy-storing fat.

Water is retained throughout their bodies by a remarkable process of recycling urine.

Their feet are ideal for walking in the sand. They have see-through eyelids, so sandstorms don't stop them. Their long necks let them eat out of trees.

Smail has one camel, Sylvia, who's pushing 45. She still takes tourists to dinner.

Natural resource

Over the years, through "survival of the fittest," Australia has produced a super race of camels. Now Australia exports camels back to the Middle East.

"They use our camels for breeding purposes, to make their camels stronger," Smail said. "We also export camels to zoos around the world. Two years ago, we sold 120 camels to America."

The Toronto Star
Dec. 18, 1993

Exploring the
desolate Outback
of Australia in a
four-wheel-drive
landcruiser . . .
from Ayers Rock
to Palm Valley,
with aboriginal
rock carvings
along the way

BY JEFF MILLER
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

ALICE SPRINGS, Australia — Clambering up into the huge 4-wheel-drive on the first day of our Australian self-drive desert exploration, we felt like characters in a Mel Gibson road warrior movie — nothing between us and the harsh Outback but our machine. With a turn of the key the diesel throbbed to life, vibrating me and my wife like a magic fingers bed.

The vehicle would get five grunts on TV's *Home Improvement*. They don't call it a "landcruiser" for nothing: giant tractors have smaller tires, earthmovers have fewer levers. We were told the "bull bar" bolted to the front was in case we hit any water buffalos. Any what?

We named it "Tonka" (said in two grunts).

Later, deep in the Outback, the jokes died as we grew to appreciate our substantial, hard-working friend. But on the dry, paved roads of Alice Springs, it was hard to imagine we'd ever need such an all-terrain monster.

When we decided on a self-drive 4WD adventure into Australia's Red Centre, it was obvious Alice Springs (population: 25,000) in the Northern Territory was the perfect jumping off point. Located near the exact centre of the country and the only major town for 800 km in any direction, Alice not only offered a good base for day trips but a major tourist attraction — Ayers Rock — within a day's drive.

While Ayers (aboriginal name: Uluru) and its companion the Olgas (Kata Tjuta) lived up to their advertising, it was our "discovery" of three special places accessible only by 4WD — the lush and prehistoric Palm Valley, the peaceful and sacred Ewaninga Aboriginal rock carvings, and the astounding formations and dramatic cliffs of Kings Canyon — that made our trip memorable.

We started our 4WD adventure with a bold first stop, Alice's visitors centre. It's a must for self-drivers, not just for detailed maps but to learn the current road conditions, which can change quickly and spell disaster for the uninformed.

Our initial foray into the Outback was a day trip to Palm Valley, 160 km southwest of Alice. Starting on pavement — Aussies call it bitumen (pronounced bitch-a-men) — we soon got the hang of driving on the left and shifting with the left hand.

The countryside, with its scrub trees and bushes, distant buttes and multicolored mesas, reminded us of New Mexico and Arizona, but here the palette was a fiery red soil, forged

☞ Please see B13

TO THE TOP: The climb to the top of Kings Canyon can be difficult at times, but with average fitness and a relaxed pace it can be done. Inset: Palm Valley and its red cabbage palms are the remnants of a prehistoric rain forest.

BIG WHEELS CROSS the Outback

By Jeff Miller

in a landscape furnace that can reach 45 Celsius. About 100 km from Alice the pavement faded to a wide, relatively smooth dirt road. At Hermannsburg, an aboriginal community with traveller facilities, a sign warned "4WDs only." The road narrowed to what looked like an abandoned animal track and Tonka rarely got out of first or second gear. As he clawed his way over boulders, we hung on rather helplessly, being tossed from side to side like balls in a fierce pinball game.

At one point we came to a narrow, fast-moving stream where a rock ledge submerged in knee-high water was the only way across. Deep water on both sides of this natural bridge made it a tightrope fording. As I slowly pulled out on to the ledge, the water grabbed for the tires. One careless move and Tonka would be a houseboat. I laughed at the thought of the rental car company trying to bill my credit card \$50,000.

When we reached Palm Valley in Finke Gorge National Park we found it startling — a tropical oasis in the heart of a desert. Permanent underground water and protecting cliffs have nurtured and sheltered remnants of a prehistoric rain forest, most notably the Red Cabbage Palm (the seedlings resemble cabbages) and the palm-like Cycad plant.

A trail with periodic interpretative signs led into the valley. Flat riverbed rock, worn smooth by eons of seasonal flooding, offered natural pathways past reflective pools and through thick stands of palms, ferns and wild grasses. We hiked until we were tired, had a picnic beside the stream, then drove leisurely back to Alice.

The next day we headed southeast on another 4WD-only track. This time there were no boulders to climb, no rivers to ford, just a wide dirt swath of washboard ruts and mud holes. Forty kilometres down the line we found the Ewaninga rock carvings, one of the best surprises of the entire trip.

For at least 10,000 years the Anangu aborigines have revered Uluru — the largest monolith in the world. The rock is so sacred, in fact, that the aboriginal caretakers now ask that visitors not climb it.

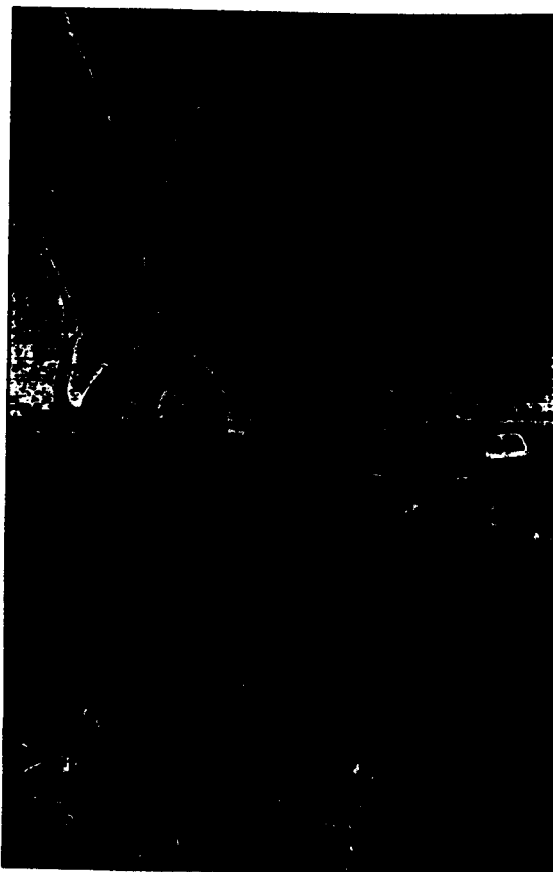
Here, the flat desert was broken by a ring of rock outcroppings looking like tired old giants hunched around a fire. Nearby a small pond in a "claypan" (a natural water preserver) had become a haven for life. Maroon and yellow wildflowers danced nimbly around tufts of prickly spinifex grass. Blue mallee bushes and pine-tree-like desert oaks shaded small rodents and lizards.

We were greeted by the chattering of swallows, wrens and martins; welcomed by the throb of crickets. Imaginative listeners could have heard the light breeze whisper tales of 300 generations of nomadic aborigines who had lived and died here. And wrapped around everything was a sense of ageless peace, as solid as the rocks, as ethereal as the clouds.

Scattered among the outcroppings were well-preserved works of ancient artists. Abstract rather than narrative, the carvings included concentric circles, wavy lines, and animal tracks. Thousands of years old, these haunting symbols, and their peaceful home, held us in their magic for nearly half a day.

Back in Alice we decided that now, as "experienced" 4WDers, it was time for a longer trip — a two-day journey to Uluru via Kings Canyon. While the 4WDing — half highway, half dirt road — wasn't as dramatic as the previous two days, Kings Canyon made up for it.

Only about four hours drive from



GRIM REMINDER Old tires beside a lonely road in the Outback

Alice, the canyon is part of Watarrka National Park and needs at least a day to see (just one resort is nearby, but offers various levels of accommodation). A scenic and easy hour's walk winds through the canyon, while a truly spectacular but much harder four-hour hike goes to the top and around the rim.

For the longer trek, we heeded numerous warning signs and took hats,

sun block, food and water. The hike was difficult at times (it's not for the old at heart), but needs only average fitness and a relaxed pace. It helps that the rock is in layered formations, which create natural stepping stones.

The hardest going is at the beginning, when the trail snakes up a rugged, rubble-strewn hillside at the top of the canyon. This climb not only gave us great views of the surrounding des-

ert, but constant reminders that we're 40 years old.

At the top we found the trail well marked by unobtrusive blue arrows and enhanced with good interpretative signs. After catching our breath, we headed off into the eerie "Lost City," with its post-holocaust-like sandstone "buildings."

The trail then headed toward the cliff rim, where the canyon walls are so sheer they look as if they've been sliced apart by a giant cleaver. With no guard rails and a playful breeze, most people lie on their stomachs and inch to the edge for a peer over. An added benefit to this method is that you're already prone when you faint from fright.

We could have spent an entire day wandering around the canyon's sandstone domes or just sitting near the rim and staring ourselves to death, but it was time to head to Uluru, a half day's drive south in Uluru National Park.

For at least 10,000 years the Anangu aborigines have revered Uluru — the largest monolith in the world. The rock is so sacred, in fact, that the aboriginal caretakers now ask that visitors not climb it.

A SPECTACULAR WALK

After learning this at the ranger station, we chose not to be a part of what we now knew was a ribbon of disrespect inching up the rock. Instead, we took the road less travelled — walking around the base in about three hours — and discovered what Robert Frost knew all along: we were better for the choice; few saw the sights we saw that day.

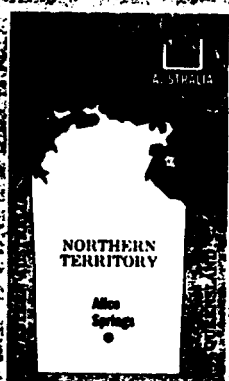
Kata Tjuta, with its 36 giant rock domes, was just as spectacular as Uluru and deserves as much time, although few visitors give it.

A few days later, a four- to five-hour drive on bitumen brought us back to Alice Springs and a farewell to Tonka. We had grown fond of our muscular friend. Initially, he had been intimidating, but was actually easy to handle and a joy to drive.

We knew that without such a big, tough "road warrior," we would have worried constantly. For such peace of mind, it seemed a small price to pay that for weeks after the trip we talked in manly grunts and dreamed about torque, rpm and gear ratios.

Jeff Miller is an American freelance travel writer temporarily based in Australia.

Guidepost



NORTHERN TERRITORY

Alice Springs

...with 100% Australian-made furniture and fittings. The hotel is a perfect base for exploring the Northern Territory. It is a perfect base for exploring the Northern Territory. It is a perfect base for exploring the Northern Territory.

...with 100% Australian-made furniture and fittings. The hotel is a perfect base for exploring the Northern Territory. It is a perfect base for exploring the Northern Territory. It is a perfect base for exploring the Northern Territory.

from campsites to motel and hotel units (three to five stars). Prices per room, per night can range from around \$100 to well over \$200.

Further information: Australian Tourist Commission, 1150 Marina Village Parkway, Suite 104 Alameda, Calif. 94501, phone (510) 865-5126/5100; for a copy of the Australian Tourist Commission's free 130-page Destination Australia guide, call 1-800-333-0198. For the name of the nearest Aussie Specialist travel agent, call 1-800-333-4305.

Down Under



December 19, 1993
Oklahoma City, OK

"Take a Stroll on Scenic Sydney Harbor"
The Sunday Oklahoman

By Janet Lowe

Copley News Service

Mrs. Macquarie, the wife of one of Australia's earliest governors, enjoyed strolling for miles beside Sydney Harbor, out to the point beyond Farm Cove, and back along Woolloomooloo Bay.

She was such a common sight that convict workers carved a chair out of a sandstone outcropping where she could sit. When her husband built a road through the area, in what was to become the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, it was named Mrs. Macquarie's Road.

Mrs. Macquarie's chair and her road remain landmarks today, and the governor's wife is still an inspiration to Sydney residents and visitors who love nature and love to walk. Sydney, with its temperate climate, charming historic and cultural neighborhoods and its safety, is one of the most walkable cities in the world.

Because Sydney stretches around the world's largest harbor, most of its notable landmarks are along the water. The famous "flying-sails" Sydney Opera House and the Sydney Harbor "coat-hanger" bridge are landmarks that can be seen for many miles. They sit at the center of the city and serve as checkpoints for the walker who has any trouble reading a map.

Perhaps the best place to begin a walking tour of Sydney is halfway between the bridge and the opera house, the downtown Circular Quay. The quay serves as a transportation hub for residents and visitors alike. Cruise ships dock there, tour buses depart from the quay for city and outlying tours, and best of all, Sydney Harbor cruises and ferries to spectacular Manley Beach and other parts of the harbor debark from there. Even an early morning walker can find coffee, juices or a snack at the Circular Quay.

The easiest way to get to Taronga Zoo — Australia's best collection of native animals

— and to Sydney Aquarium at Darling Harbor is by ferry from the quay. Because Australia is Earth's oldest land mass and because it is so isolated, the animals, sea life, and plants and trees are fascinating and unusual. Echidnas, dingos, koalas, kangaroos, platypuses and Tasmanian devils — they're all in residence at Taronga Zoo.

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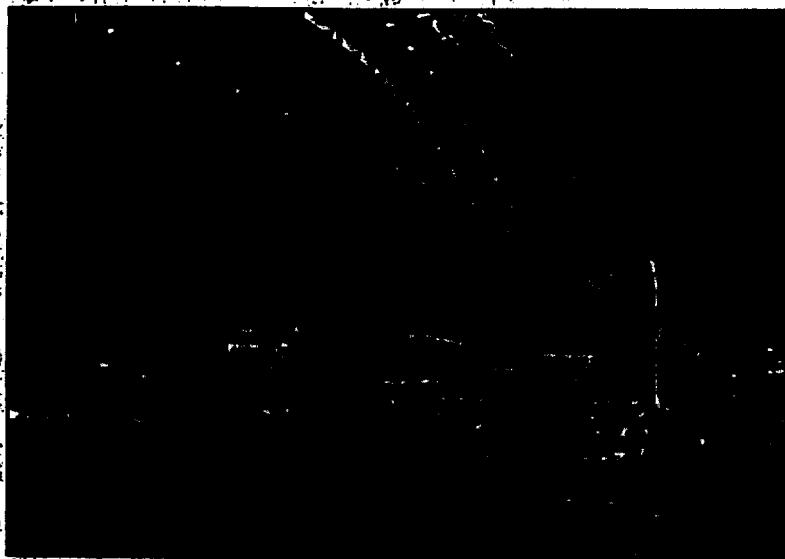
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then press forward to other pleasant sights in the region of the Circular Quay.

Just steps from the Circular Quay is Sydney's original village, settled 200 years ago by prisoners from England and their wardens. The area is called The Rocks because it is there that the sandstone shelf on which Sydney sits is most visible.

Australians increasingly value their history, and companies building new structures in The Rocks must heed the past. Not only did manage-



The night lights of Sydney, Australia illuminate the city's beauty.



Among Sydney's landmarks is the famous "flying-sails" Sydney Opera House.

ment of the new 36-story ANA Hotel at the top of The Rocks hire archaeologists to excavate the building site before construc-

tion, but three adjacent working-class houses were also preserved and have been converted to cozy restaurants and pubs.

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Under magnificent copper domes, stained-glass windows and arches shoppers can scout out the trendiest of fashions.

Janet Celesta Lowe's most recent book is *"The Secret Empire"* (Business One Irwin).

AUSTRALIA



THE GHAN travels through Australia's Northern Territory, a region of striking landscapes (left); the logo on the Ghan's locomotive shows a camel. The animals, with their Afghan handlers, helped build the railway (below); the Ghan's first-class Oasis lounge car (bottom)



JEFF MILLER
Special to The Sun

**"ABOARD THE
INDIAN-PACIFIC
"Climb aboard,
Mate," the loco-**

**otive driver calls
down and I clamber up into the cab of the Indi-
an-Pacific — Australia's great transcontinent-
tal train.**

In the unadorned cab, far from the luxury of the first-class carriages, the driver and his co-driver sit staring at an approaching freight train that has temporarily sidelined us in the middle of the bleak and flat desert of the Nullarbor Plain.

I take the jump seat behind them, still wind- ed from the jog along the tracks from the passenger cars. I'm surprised, at first glance, to find no steering wheel. In its place is a small speed throttle, looking far too simple to run the giant engine.

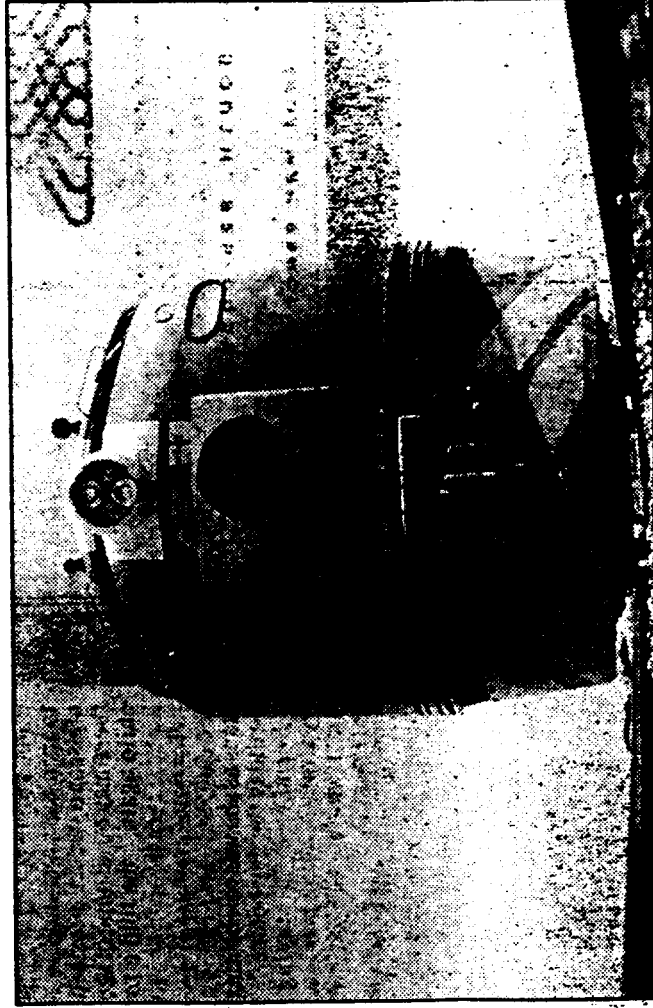
The driver seems to read my thoughts. "Most people think anyone can drive a train. I say: Bloody right ... but we're the only ones who can stop it!"

On any train trip it's always the people you meet and the scenery that make the journey special, make getting there more important than the final destination.

No where is the marriage between making new friends and seeing dramatic scenery bet- ter than in Australia — especially when trav- elling on either of the country's two premier trains: the Indian-Pacific or the outback-cross- ing Ghan. They both traverse some of the world's most striking landscapes and offer the chance to meet "fair dinkum" (genuine) Aussies.

The Indian-Pacific crosses the southern part of Australia in an epic journey that eats up 3,800 kilometres, three days and connects Syd- ney on the east coast to Perth on the west coast.

The Ghan is a 22-hour, 1,550-kilometre ride



from Alice Springs through the Simpson Desert to Ade- laide on the southern coast. All the Ghan's cars are new or refurbished and have good service, while the Indi- an-Pacific is undergoing its own multi-million-dollar refurbishment and service- plan upgrade. It's expected to be in place in 1985.

Back in the cab of the Indi- an-Pacific, the two drivers swap tales and jokes easi- ly. To them the flat, feature- less countryside is filled with life. They see — and sometimes hit — emus, kangaroos and even wild camels. They both grimaced. "I hate hitting camels," the dri-



ver says.
Back in the lounge car, passengers read, knit or gaze out the window. The scenery inspires

AUSTRALIA: A train that races through a land of extremes

each traveller differently.

Sister Mary, a nun from Perth with a bubbly disposition, talks in time to the clatter of her knitting needles. In the little tufts of desert grass and shrubs struggling to survive she sees God's proclamation of life's glory.

Ann from Adelaide, travelling with her grown daughter, is on the Indian-Pacific as a memorial of sorts to her late husband. "We always thought we'd have time for this," she says quietly. She seems to see him, and the last years, scattered among the rocks at an old railway ties that lie abandoned beside the tracks.

At dinner, jovial people are tossed together at tables of four. The food is very good. Friendly conversation lights up the dining car. Beyond our air-conditioned carriage, the Nullarbor Plain is a vast skillet that fries from dawn until dark. The sky is immense, overpowering, rich blue and married to a flat, desolate plain of red dirt. The scenery is beautiful and mesmerizing.

The countryside along the route isn't always so severe. When the train pulls out of Sydney, it heads northwest through the rugged gum-tree-covered Blue Mountains to the mining town of Broken Hill. Continuing south west to Adelaide, it runs through fertile farmland and rolling hills. Retracing its tracks back up north to Port Augusta, the train then strikes out west across the desolate Nullarbor, where it glides along the world's longest stretch of straight railway track (nearly 500 kilometres). Busting out of the Nullarbor ready for some excitement, the Indian-Pacific lands in the wild west town of Kalgoorlie before heading toward its final destination, the sparkling city of Perth.

While the Ghan doesn't have such a grand itinerary, it still boasts marvelous outback scenery. The ever-present red desert soil dominates the landscape.

inates the landscape, a visual expression of the tremendous heat. But you'll also see a surprising number of gum trees, desert oaks, large shrubs and clumps of spinifex grass that make the landscape much more than a desert.

In places, mesas, buttes and distant mountain ranges evoke parts of Arizona and New Mexico. Elsewhere, gigantic shadow pools of water shimmer to the horizon — remnants of recent flooding during a short, but intense, wet season.

Defiantly racing through this country — and rarely bothered by the land's extremes — is the regular gauge "new" Ghan, begun in 1980. The narrow-gauge "old" Ghan (east of the present tracks) wasn't so lucky. Termite ate the rail ties while floods sometimes washed away the line or trapped the train in inland seas. Summer heat curled the tracks like a slithering snake. The train was unreliable and delays could last a month. In one case, an engineer shot goats to feed passengers.

But comfort wasn't the goal of the new Ghan. Its job was to link the Red Centre with the rest of Australia, carrying life-sustaining supplies to bush outposts.

Before the train, camels walked the route, in temperatures that can soar above 48 C during the day and plummet to nearly freezing at night.

The camels and their Afghan handlers helped build the railway and, indirectly, name the train. Supposedly, in 1923, when the train ran only

from Adelaide to Oodnadatta (430 kilometres short of Alice), a sleeper car was added and many smaller stops were dropped. On this first "express," an Afghan was the only passenger, so the train was jokingly dubbed the "Afghan Express." The name, in shortened form, stuck.

When the line was finally finished to Alice Springs on Aug. 6, 1929, passenger comfort was still not a great concern. Before air-conditioning, the Ghan roared through the sweltering heat with all its windows and doors open — letting in the wind as well as the powdery red dust, which stuck to everything.

Today, the Ghan strives to pamper its passengers. All the cars are renovated in a 1920s art deco motif that uses desert browns, reds, greens and purples with stunning results.

This steel-wheeled caravan stretching for nearly half a kilometre is impressive — two mighty engines, sporting the distinctive green and gold of the Australian National railway, pull 20-plus cars, many of them shiny aluminium-sided passenger cars displaying the Ghan's camel emblem.

Besides numerous coach and first-class sleeper cars, the train has a first-class dining car, a coach buffet car and two lounge cars.

At night, both the Ghan and the Indian-Pacific rush through a darkened landscape that melds into a twinkling black sky. Gliding along at 110 kilometres an hour, the trains can take nearly 1½ kilometres to stop while the headlights only illuminate a few hundred metres ahead. As the Indian-Pacific driver explains, "That's when you live by your memory."

A ride on either train will leave you with memories to last a lifetime.

IF YOU GO:

Schedules, prices and accommodation: The Indian-Pacific departs Sydney Monday and Thursday, arriving in Adelaide Tuesday and Friday, and in Perth Thursday and Sunday. It departs Perth on Monday and Friday, arriving in Adelaide Wednesday and Sunday, and in Sydney Thursday and Monday.

The Ghan departs Adelaide Thursday and Monday, arriving in Alice Springs Friday and Tuesday. It departs Alice Springs Friday and Tuesday and arrives in Adelaide Saturday and Wednesday.

Prices: First-class tickets include all meals (sans liquor); Holiday Class does not include meals. Some examples of prices (in Australian dollars) for a one-way fare, per person: Indian-Pacific, first-class, \$883; Holiday class, \$598. The Ghan, first-class, \$435; Holiday class, \$229. See a travel agent for more price information.

For further information, phone the Australian Tourist Commission in Perth 333-0262.

It's a Bungle Out There

6675 JACOB L. RAYMOND
*An Outback Odyssey Into the Bungle Bungle,
 A Strange and Mystical Parkland in Northwest Australia*

By David Yeardon
 Special to The Washington Post

The whine, roar and wind-blast of the helicopter blades made conversation impossible. "Where're the doors?" I shouted into the maelstrom. The young pilot, Colin, turned, smiled and mouthed a big Australian "Whaddya say, mate?" I bawled out the question again. Colin continued smiling. "No doors, mate. Fasten the belt and stick your foot outside on the skid."

No bloody doors? Foot outside on the skid? A seat belt that looked like an old piece of frayed rope? He had to be joking. It must be some weird form of Outback initiation rite—right?

Apparently not. Colin's voice was lost in the screech of rotors and tornadoes of red dust that whirled around us as we lifted—no, that's not the right word—catapulted into the air, at a force that placed my stomach somewhere between my feet.

And then the turn—well, somersault, really, as he banked the tiny doorless glass bubble and sent us, virtually at right angles to the ground, skimming over the scraggy tops of the eucalyptus trees, the dry creek beds, the spotty desert spinifex scrub grass and the thorn trees . . .

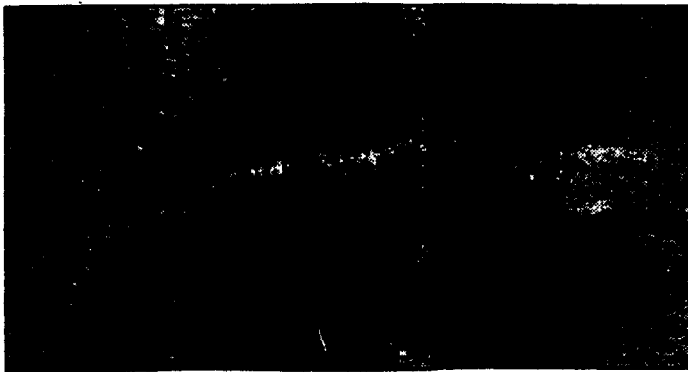
My legs (one resting outside on the skid) went to jelly as the wind roared past, trying to disengage my tenuous toe-hold on a hollow tube of metal less than an inch in diameter.

I saw my body tumbling, spinning rapidly earthward, leaving behind a frayed seat belt and a grinning pilot.

Ten minutes later the fear was gone. I felt as if I'd been riding helicopters all my life. Colin—who spends much of his chopper time rounding up steers on Australia's vast cattle stations, skimming the scrub-tops, going under the lower branches of trees and missing desert boulders by heart-stopping inches (or so he said)—had given me a comprehensive display of his acrobatic skills. And I was still in tact, leg on the skid, seat belt miraculously still fastened and stomach comfortably back in its appropriate position. So I relaxed and began to enjoy the scenery.

Although "scenery" hardly does justice to the Bungle Bungle—a unique, little-known region of Western Australia that contains some of the most remarkable and other-worldly rock formations on earth. We dalled over the western flanks of an enormous 20-by-15-mile red sandstone massif somewhere on the outer eastern edge of the Kim-

See BUNGLE BUNGLE, E&S, Col. 1



BY DAVID YEARDON
 One of the Bungle Bungle's huge bloated baobab trees.

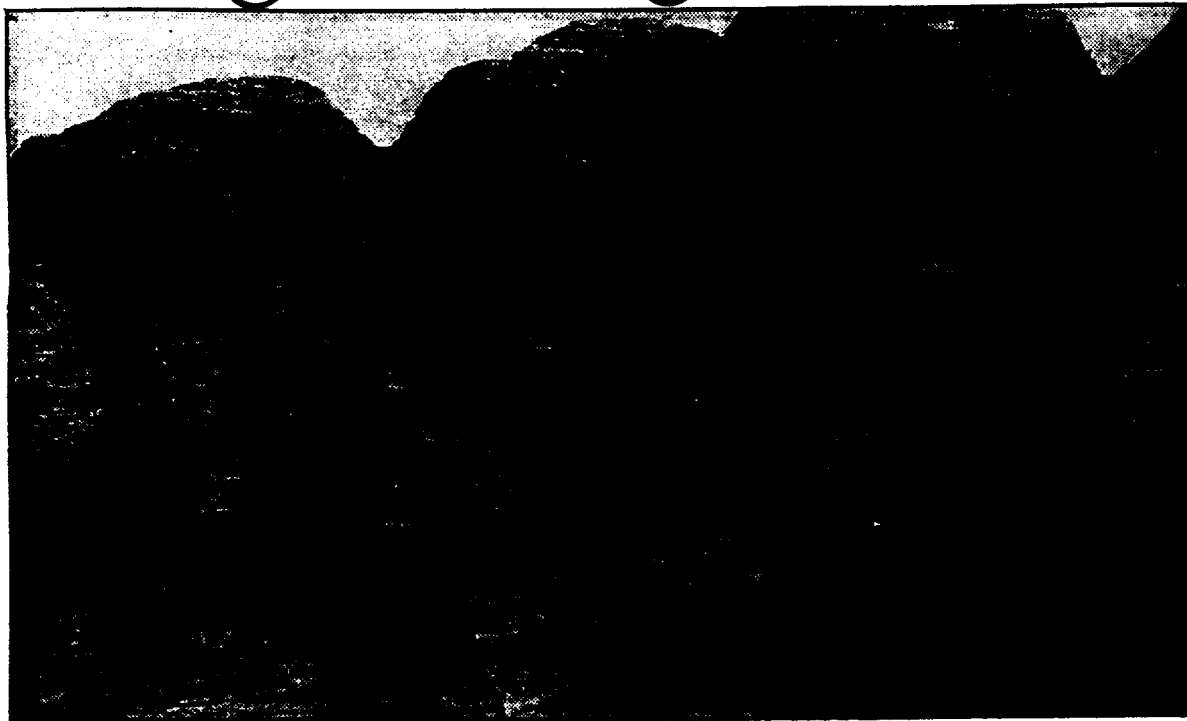
December 20, 1993
Washington D.C.

"It's a Bungle Out There"
Washington Post



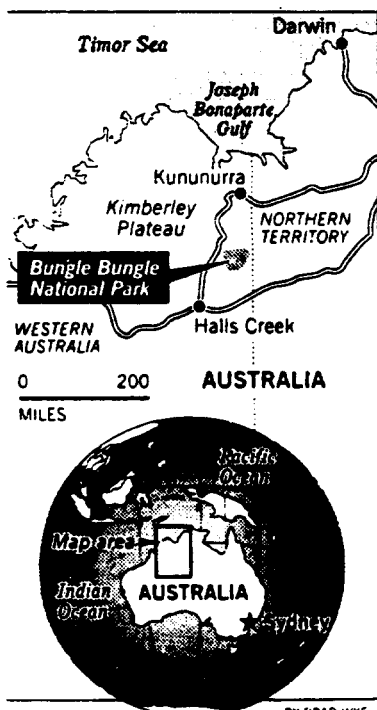
COURTESY AUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION
The "Beehives" of Australia's Bungle Bungle—hundreds of interlocking pinnacles, pillars, ridges and domes, rounded and smoothed to beehive shape.

Bungle Bungle



PHOTOS BY DAVID YEADON

Other-worldly rock formations in the Bungle Bungle, above, and a track into the park, below right.



BY BRAD WYE—
THE WASHINGTON POST

BUNGLE BUNGLE, From E1

I peered down into canyons, hundreds of feet deep, incised in the soft red rock. In some places they were a quarter of a mile wide with palm trees and small spring-fed ponds reflecting the purpling evening sky. Elsewhere they were mere cracks, maybe a couple of yards across, that vanished into deep shadowy depths.

The top of the massif was basically a worn plateau, undulating in places, scoured and etched by the storms that scream across the barren plains of northwestern Australia. In crevasses and wind-carved bowls, a few hardy trees and bushes grew, their roots radiating like restless serpents seeking hidden pockets of moisture. Elsewhere was just more rock, rust-red sandstone, easing out in all directions before ending abruptly in enormous cliffs and crags where birds circled on the updrafts and the summit dropped away suddenly to the dun-colored desert floor far below.

Turning, Colin grinned, winked and veered off abruptly to the eastern edges of the massif, where eroded formations, previously hidden, slowly emerged in the dusk.

"They call 'em the Beehives," he said nonchalantly as we hovered above a most amazing sight—hundreds upon hundreds of interlocking pinnacles and ridges and domes, perfectly rounded and smoothed to beehive shape, rising from gently curling streambeds that gave a jigsaw puzzle appearance to their intricate patterning. Each pinnacle was striated with evenly layered horizontal strata ranging in color from the lightest ochre to the darkest of bronzes and blood reds, as if a master had carefully painted every one with exacting precision.

I was entranced by the swirling complexity of the shapes and the unity and colors of the grouped forms. We floated over and between them like an eagle buoyed by thermals. I was no longer aware of Colin's clever looping antics. The magic and mystery of this place—which started to be publicized only in 1983, was named a national park in 1987 and still is not accurately mapped—enveloped me. I had come a long, long way to be here, and it was everything that the world-wanderer's grapevine had said it would be: a true "lost world" offering its power and its beauty to only a fortunate few.

The Bungle Bungle—known by the Aborigines as *Purnululu*—had been known to only a few outbackers in the late 1800s and the first three-quarters of the 20th century. But in 1981, the Western Australian Department of Tourism sought out "places of interest around the Kimberley region" and in 1983 a TV documentary featured this vast maze of multihued sandstone domes and incised canyons as "one of the most fascinating sights in the undiscovered northwest."

The fringes of the Bungle Bungle have been occupied by the Purnululu Aborigines for more than 20,000 years, although the region emerged initially more than 350 million years ago as the Kimberley ranges to the west were eroded by streams that carried the sand and quartz sediment eastward into the vast Hardman Basin. What began as a huge depository plateau was gradually striated by sudden

dissoled the bonding quartz and quickly cut down through the soft sandstone. Had it not been for the coating action of quartz, iron ore grains and lichen that created a protective "skin" over the soft sandstone, the region might have been eroded down to an ignominious peneplain.

The vicious scouring action of sudden floods created canyons, some of them more than 300 feet deep, some less than four feet wide. Hundreds of rounded "beehive" pillars were left as the canyons in the southern and eastern reaches were broadened to form today's enticing jigsaw shapes, ribbed with bands of gray and iron-red strata.

It is by far one of the most unusual landscapes in the world.

At the outset of my journey to this remote region two days ago, a long day of hop-scotch flights from Sydney via Alice Springs and Darwin had brought me late on a storm-thrashed night to the little town of Kununurra at the northern tip of Australia's northwestern Outback.

My plan was to join Outback entrepreneur Graeme Macarthur's last journey into the Bungle Bungle before the appalling heat and torrential "wets" of summer (November through March) sealed the area off.

I would prefer to forget my 250-mile night drive from Kununurra to Graeme's base in Halls Creek, with its incessant rain, flooded creeks, mud-bound earth roads, and suicidal cows and kangaroos. But Halls Creek—with its straggly street of gas stations, small stores, a bakery, bungalows shaded by verandas and a sun-scorched park with somnolent groups of Aborigines sitting in the shade of stunted eucalyptus trees—felt like a metropolis after 250 miles of nothingness.

"Well, g'day, Dave." A smiling, bespectacled face atop a small wiry frame addressed me through my mud-splattered window. "Name's Graeme Macarthur—cattle dealer, station manager, gold speculator, windmill agent, cattle-trough designer, tour operator and general all-round nice bloke. And this is Murray, my camp manager."

Murray was all outbacker—a broad-shouldered bulk of a man with a sun-bleached straggly mass of hair tumbling from a large sweat-stained leather hat, big bushy beard, big beer belly, big earth-grained hands and a big beery grin.

"Good t'meet ya. Y'ready to move?"

That's all I needed—more rough driving.

Graeme's land-cruiser carried us across desert plains littered with thousands of red-earth termite mounds and huge bloated boab trees and then into African savannah-like scenery full of thorn and spinifex clumps. We banged and clattered for hours through dry creeks and over low eroded ridges of red sandstone.

I was curious about the few Aborigines I'd seen in Halls Creek.

"Y'know, we really messed 'em around," said Graeme with a gentleness I hadn't noticed before. "It was their country. For over 40,000 years—who knows—maybe much, much longer if you believe some of them Sydney anthropologists. And then we come along . . . hell, our Australia was nothing but crooks and shysters from Britain and penal colony governors and guards who were as bad as the riff-raff they carried here in convict ships. Mot much of a way to start a country, eh?"

"I mean, they [the Aborigines] had the whole thing all set, all organized. Maybe just like Europe was in the Middle Ages when everything was all laid out nice and neat—y'know, you had your kings and barons and lords and bishops and priests, you had your workers, your serfs, and then you had God—right on top of the pile—God telling you what to do and how to keep things straight. A nice neat system . . ." He suddenly seemed a little embarrassed by revealing that he'd done some reading and some thinking. "Well, that's how it seems to me, anyway."

"So, you think the Aborigines got a rough deal, then?" I asked.

"No kiddin' they did," said Graeme. "Down in Tasmania they wiped out the lot of them in less than a hundred years. Up here we shot

pusned 'em back turner and turner into the Outback just like the Americans did with the Indians. Plowed up the sacred sites, built towns over their graves, gave 'em a few hand-outs to keep 'em happy, gave 'em booze to mess up their minds . . . We really did a job on them."

Finally we arrived at Graeme's camp, a cluster of army tents, shaded by ghost-gum trees at the base of the Bungle Bungle massif.

I slept well that first night in my "Kimberley Swag" sleeping bag under unfamiliar constellations.

December 20, 1993
Washington D.C.

"It's a Bungle Out There" (continued)
Washington Post

After that magnificent helicopter flight on the second day, Graeme lent me his land-cruiser, a rough hand-drawn map and set me off to explore the gorges and crevasses on the western flanks of the massif.

The next few days were all mine.

The wonders of this strange, sometimes eerie place have merged in my memory. Recollections return in sprinklings of color, form, shape and sound. To be alone in these strange clefts and canyons made me rejoice in the comforts of solitude. I could imagine—I did imagine—that I'd discovered this place myself, just come across it on some long Out-back odyssey. Entered its passages, learned its secrets, after days on the bright brittle plains.

The Bungle took me in and enveloped me. For hours I sat in the shade of canyon walls, 300 or 400 feet high, listening to the soft prattle of palm fronds, watching the shadows move with the sun across the smooth striped and tiered walls, welcoming the occasional cool breezes

years—and that there may be hundreds, thousands of such places, still unknown.

To know that our world still remains a thing of mystery, silence and secrets—this I find one of the greatest joys of all. It gives me a shiver of pure *duende*, a cleansing of the spirit, a sense of being propelled into far broader spaces . . . and yet a sense of coming home to a place that, somehow, deep, deep down, you knew was always there.

Oh, yes. There was magic in that place.

And in other places of the Bungle Bungle—in the clefts of Echidna Chasm, in Frog Hole, in the long, winding corridor of Piccaninny Gorge, which ended once again in a crystal pool filled with dazzling reflections of the red domed canyon walls.

Every day brought fresh discoveries and new sensations. Each evening I would return to camp worn out but, as Graeme noted, "charged."

Then the last day came. Graeme's work was done, and the camp was gone . . . leaving a few worn patches of boot-marked earth between the straggly gum trees and explosions of spinifex.

David Yeadon is author and illustrator of many travel books, including "The Back of Beyond—Travels to the Wild Places of the Earth" (HarperCollins), "New York's Nooks and Crannies" (Scribner's) and "Lost Worlds—Exploring the Earth's Remotest Places" (HarperCollins).



WAYS & MEANS

GETTING THERE: While Australia's Bungle Bungle National Park is one of the world's most intriguing wilderness areas, getting there is rather complex, requiring flights from Sydney to Darwin and then on to Kununurra. Tours into the Bungle Bungle and other areas of the Kimberley Plateau are available in Kununurra and in Halls Creek, 220 miles south of Kununurra (see below). Or you can rent a four-wheel-drive vehicle for the 165-mile drive from Kununurra to the park (see below).

Through February, Qantas and United are offering a round-trip fare from Washington to Sydney of \$1,578, with restrictions. A four-coupon pass for in-country flights on either Ansett or Qantas Airlines is available for \$444 and includes the Sydney to Darwin run. Flights between Darwin and Kununurra, offered by Ansett, are not included and are \$182 round-trip.

TOURS: If you decide to venture into the Bungle Bungle alone with camping equipment and supplies, a four-wheel-drive vehicle from Avis in Kununurra will cost about \$70 a day and 25 cents a kilometer. It is advisable and cheaper to join a tour group that carries all essential equipment. Among the tour operators:

- *East Kimberley Tours* (P.O. Box 537, Kununurra, West Australia 6743, Australia, phone 011-61-91-68-2213) offers two- and four-day tours of the area starting at \$160 per person, with children under 12 at half-price, and can also arrange day trips that include a flight over the Bungle Bungle.

- *The Bungle Bungle Experience* (P.O. Box 833, Kununurra, West Australia 6743, Australia, phone 011-61-91-614-322) has four- to nine-day safaris starting at \$400 per person plus flight-only trips starting at \$100 per person.

- *Halls Creek and Bungle Bungle Tours* (P.O. Box 58, Halls Creek, West Australia 6770, Australia, phone 011-61-91-686-217) offers a one-day fly-drive tour of Bungle Bungle starting at \$190 and two- and three-day excursions from \$260 per person.

Some tours include helicopter flights, but they also are available in the Bungle Bungle area starting at about \$70 per person.

WHEN TO GO: The Bungle Bungle National Park is open from April 1 to Dec. 1. Our winter months—Australia's summer—are too hot.

VISAS: U.S. visitors to Australia must have a valid passport and a free entry visa from the Australian Embassy, 1601 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, 202-797-3000. If you mail your request, allow three weeks for processing; or you can apply in person at the embassy Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

WHERE TO STAY: Kununurra has a wide range of hotels and motels from backpackers' accommodations (\$10 at the Desert Inn) to the Country Club Hotel (from \$30 double) and the Quality Inn (from \$70 double). The best of Halls Creek's limited accommodations is the Kimberley Hotel, with rooms from \$60 double, pool, air conditioning, restaurant and bars.

INFORMATION: For more information, contact the Australian Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067, 310-557-1987, or Bungle Bungle, Department of Conservation and Land Management, P.O. Box 242, Kununurra, Western Australia 6743, Australia, phone 011-61-91-68-0200.

—David Yeadon

To hear the Aussies tell it,
it was the Yanks who
came to their rescue,
especially during the
Battle of the Coral Sea.



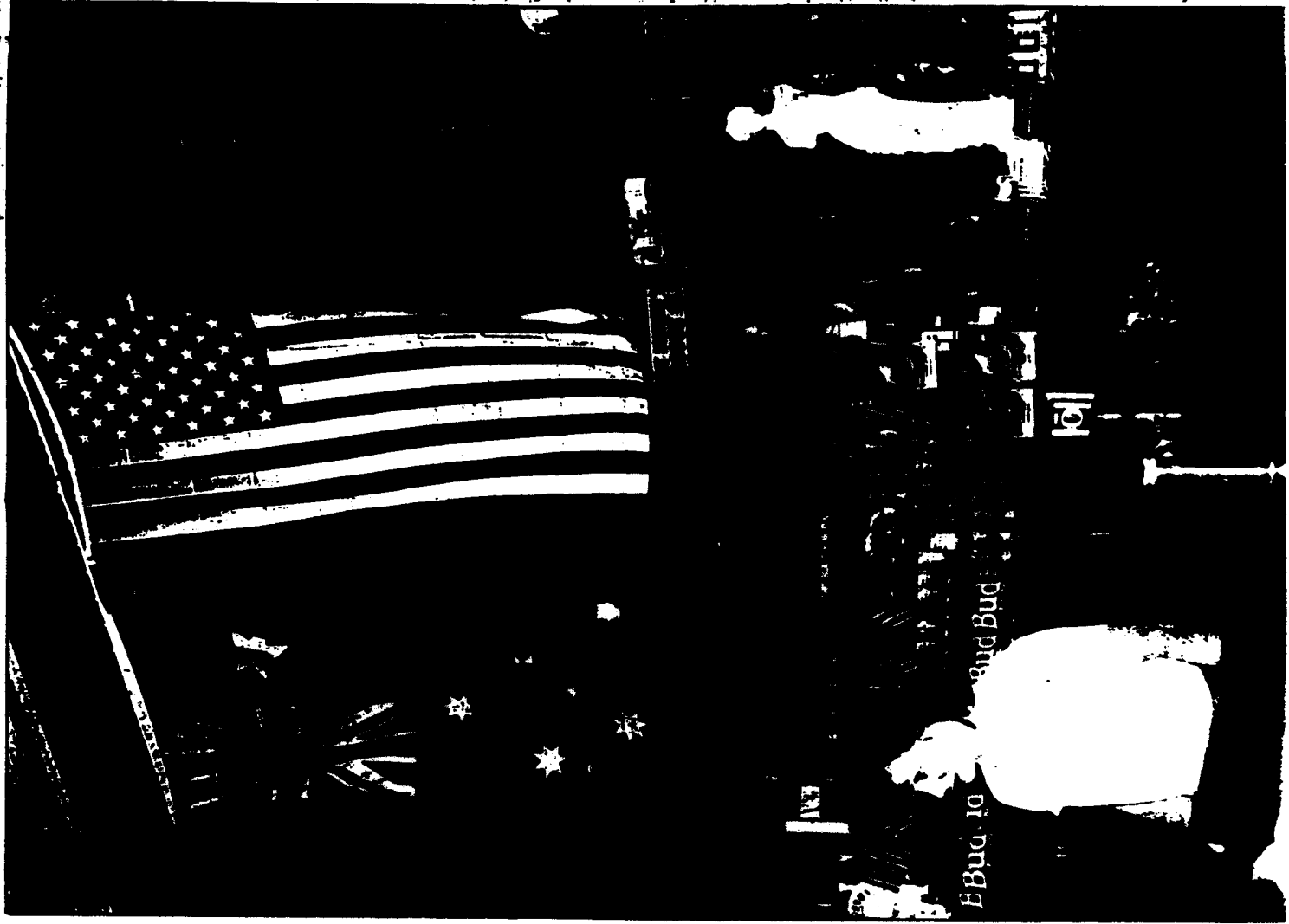
Kosia Park, near Townsville, is a popular spot

A NEW

GI

INVASION

Aussie town welcomes Yanks
who helped them out in WWII



ARIZONA STAR

DEC 24 1945

Americans feel at home with the U.S. flag and American beer brands behind the bar at Great Northern pub

Nevertheless, even if it doesn't rain much, things can get hot and heavy in Townsville during the height of the Down Under summer. (Australians from more temperate zones advise avoiding the area in February, when temperatures can rise to 100 degrees, with high humidity to boot.)

Cities in Australia seem to become competitive with each other, the traditional antipathy between Melbourne and Sydney a case in point. Townsville's antagonist is Cairns.

As foreign investment and tourism have increased, some Townsville folks say that Cairns has become "too Japanese." (One story told is about a shop in Cairns that supposedly deals only in yen, refusing to take Australian dollars. Other Australians say these stories are highly exaggerated.)

It's true that you don't see many Japanese tourists in Townsville, in contrast with many other cities. In Sydney, for example, they take things Japanese in stride. An exhibit of a Japanese midget submarine that shelled that city one day during the war has opened at the Maritime Museum. It was against this submarine backdrop that Mazda choose to hold its own unveiling of the latest car models to the Australian public.

Back in Townsville, this community is again counting on the Americans to rescue it, this time by becoming the backbone of its developing tourist industry. With her groups, Liston honors veteran requests to take them to places with special memories and meanings to older Americans.

Incidentally, the area also boasts one of the finest aquariums around.

still hang from many buildings in town.

At Townsville and at nearby small settlements, the United States built major airfields during the war. These sent hundreds of bombing missions over New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Townsville was bombed three times by the Japanese before the Allies began to get the upper hand in the South Pacific.

Today's Townsville Airport has been built on the installation many GIs knew as Garbutt Field. Ironically, the city is only a domestic air destination now. Many Americans are more acquainted with Cairns, 200 miles north, or the state capital of Brisbane, 800 miles south.

Both those cities launch frequent flights to Townsville via Ansett Airlines and Australian Airlines. There is also regular bus and train service, the latter over the same tracks that many Americans rode in troop trains during the 1940s.

If you drive up Castle Hill, the 990-foot promontory ("just 10 feet short of a mountain, mate"), which is now surrounded by the city, you can make out major streets and newer highways that evolved from wartime runways and taxiways at Garbutt.

Many other landmarks are recognized around the city by Americans. Gen. Douglas MacArthur's headquarters, a bunker so tough it couldn't be razed, is now a commercial building.

The Great Northern, a century-old pub near the railroad station, was the first or last watering hole for many a Yank soldier, sailor or Marine. It is essentially unchanged. But behind the bar today you'll see an incongruous pyramid of Budweiser cans, a display in honor of American drinkers. Although just like the locals, knowledgeable Yanks nearly always order Castlemaine XXXX (pronounced "4-cx"), Queensland's famous brew.

Townsville folks say they are blessed with the "dry tropics," as opposed to unfortunates who live up in Cairns, Darwin and other more northern communities that bear up under a stifling Down Under summer monsoon season from November to March.

become the famous "Rats of Tobruk" and other distinguished units.

Then Japan entered the war, and by early 1942 it was aiming a blow at Australia, a country whose young men were already fighting far from home. Also, more than 15,000 Australians were captured when Singapore fell in February 1942. That month Americans began to pour into Townsville. The community grew from 30,000 to 100,000 virtually overnight.

To hear the Aussies tell it, it was the Yanks who came to their rescue, especially during the Battle of the Coral Sea. It was the first decisive naval engagement between the United States and Japan, and it took place about 750 miles off Townsville in 1942.

"It's known here as the battle that saved Australia," Liston said. "Although it was mostly a naval engagement, of course, it also included ground-based American aircraft from right here in Townsville."

The 50th anniversary of that victory was celebrated all over the country in 1992, but nowhere with more fanfare than at Townsville. It laid on parades, wreaths, a new 5th U.S. Air Force Memorial, an outdoor "Red, White and Blue Ball," and a dramatic air show and fireworks display. Today the Stars and Stripes

6015
TOWNSVILLE, Australia - You might call this the most American town in Australia.

That may be an exaggeration, but there is no other community in this vast nation currently welcoming visitors from the United States more enthusiastically, especially the World War II veterans stationed here between 1942 and 1945.

"About 15 of my Americans got off the coach, after traveling all day," said Bev Liston. Liston specializes in traveling back groups of ex-GIs or their families for a nostalgic look at a place that was once so much a part of their lives.

"I don't think these boys right over there - although it's changed its name and decor a bit since they were here before," she said.

A half-century has gone by since American GIs formed an important part of this city. These men, now in their 70s, have been coming back to visit the area as individuals or in platoon-sized groups.

At around 120,000, Townsville is now the second-largest city in the state of Queensland. Much of its character began as a result of its special role during World War II.

In the early 1940s, Australia was a struggling country of only 7 million people. World War II had called the



The Village of Charters Towers is near a WWII American air base

Great Barrier Reef Wonderland at Townsville

called the Great Barrier Reef Wonderland, and an excellent Australian animal park, the Billabong Sanctuary, where you can see just about all the kangaroos, wallabies, wombats, platypuses and other strange creatures that only Australia produces.

"But the best thing about this project is that I learn more about the history of this area from each group of Americans we bring in," Liston said. "Then we simply pass it all on to the next one."

Touring Townsville

Those who want more information on touring Townsville can contact Bev Liston, Manager, Australian Explorer Tours, P.O. Box 1530, Townsville, Queensland 4810, Australia. (Callers from the United States can reach Liston by dialing

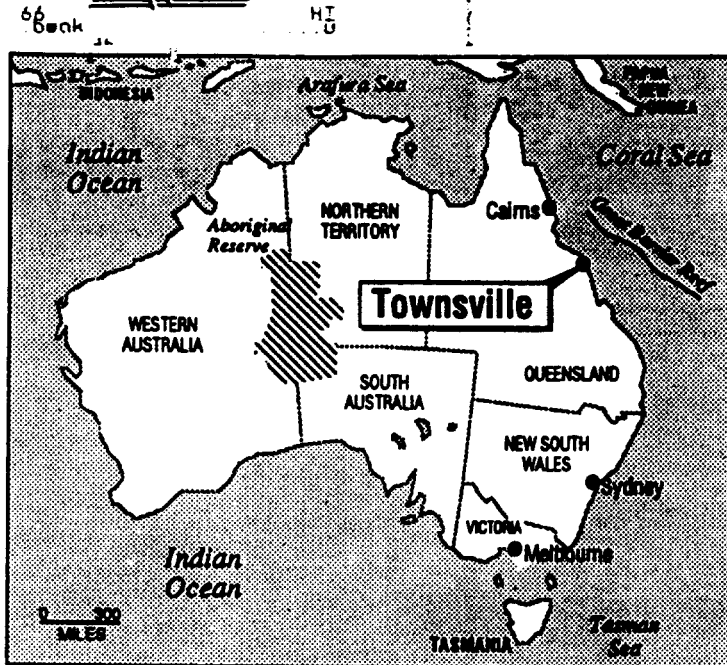
See TOWNSVILLE, Page 3

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

TUCSON, AZ
SUNDAY 175,000

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BURRELLE'S



Townsville

Continued from Page 1F

011-61-77-71-3986.)

Tour operators in the United States specializing in group trips for veterans to Australia include the following (all 800 numbers are toll-free):

Valor Tours, (415) 332-7850; Galaxy Tours, (800) 523-7287; Town and Country Travel, (800) 423-6418; Adventure in Travel, (800)

348-4253; Mount Cook Line, (800) 468-2665; Down Under Connections, (404) 565-8600; and Frangipani Tours, (800) 458-1130.

A free, magazine-format guide to all of Australia is available from the Australian Tourist Commission by phoning (800) 333-0262.

Honolulu-based correspondent Robert W. Bone, a member of the Society of American Travel Writers, has written several guidebooks.

TRAVEL

Experience beauty of the wilderness in northwest Australia

By JEFF MILLER
For The Press

The Kimberley, Australia's last frontier — where men are tough, women tougher, and crocs eat both.

Many Americans see the entire Australian continent as a last frontier, but the influx of international tourists and the Aussies' own love of travel have "settled" many places. Today, few



Photo by Susan Burdick

In the Bungle Bungle, 30- to 50-foot livistona palm trees grow out of the sides of cliffs.

spots Down Under can boast such untouched, harshly spectacular wilderness as that found in the Kimberley.

This sprawling, arid 135,000-square-mile region in the northwestern part of Australia (at the top end of the state of Western Australia) is home to only 25,000 people. It's also home to the bountiful, croc-infested Ord River, the magical, 350 million-year-old sand castles of the Bungle Bungle Range, and the lush, waterfall-draped Emma Gorge.

For the adventurous, those who walk roads less traveled, these places can be experienced in a three- to five-day trip

that includes three different "soft" camping adventures. Each tour operator supplies shelter, cots, bedding, toilet facilities and food (at Emma Gorge food is extra), while offering a unique chance to see abundant wildlife, one-of-a-kind scenery, and meet "regular" Aussies as fellow campmates. Physical exertion is self-regulated, so all are welcome.

Using the small town of Kununurra (a short plane ride southwest of Darwin) as a base, two of the camps are an hour's drive away, while the third is only a half-hour's drive.

During the monsoon season (November through April) the Kimberley can see 18 to 22 inches of rain in one day. In the past this meant the Ord River would roar to life, become miles wide and rush headlong to the sea. In the dry season it would shrivel up like a raisin.

In 1963 all that changed with the Lake Argyle water project. Through a series of dams and gates the wet season's water was corralled to cultivate land during the dry. Now the sixth largest man-made lake in the world, Lake Argyle permanently feeds the Ord River and keeps it at a constant manageable flow.

Ord River, life's flow

What this has done to the countryside and wildlife is astounding. Winding, weaving and cutting back on itself, the Ord carves a bright green swath through the burnt orange Outback. Now offering a permanent water supply, the Ord has cultivated a profusion of wildlife, from colorful parrots, giant pelicans and the Aborigines sacred, majestic Jabiru stork, to wallabies (small kangaroos), game fish and salt-water crocodiles (salties).

To see such a parade of nature, only two small tour operators have been allowed to establish campsites, as well as boat and fish on the river.

The better known and more comfortable is the Bush Camp. Guests are picked up at Kununurra for the hour's drive northwest. The camp is run by Bruce and Robin Ellison with Pat Martin (outdoor chef extraordinaire) and two river guides, Jim and BJ (Black Jack). They all make visitors feel as if they're camping with favorite relatives.

The campsite, which can host up to 12 people, is perched on a bluff overlooking the river, and offers some of Australia's finest landscape views. A no-walls, thatched-roofed communal area serves as dining room, bar and, after sunset, gathering place for fire-watching and lively conversation.

Bedrooms are 10- by 15-foot concrete pads, roofed but exposed on three sides to the wild. The fourth side is a wall of stretched burlap. As you sink into a thick mattress on a metal cot draped with mosquito netting, Pat's warning of harmless wallaby wanderings or a visit by the resident 5-foot goanna (lizard) keeps you up for only a moment — you're too comfortable to worry.

The next morning you're awakened by the playful arguing of kookaburras. At the foot of the bed is the bush and the river beyond; the smell

☐ See Travel, Page G10

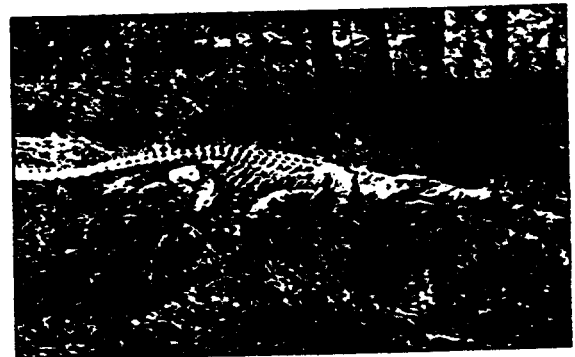
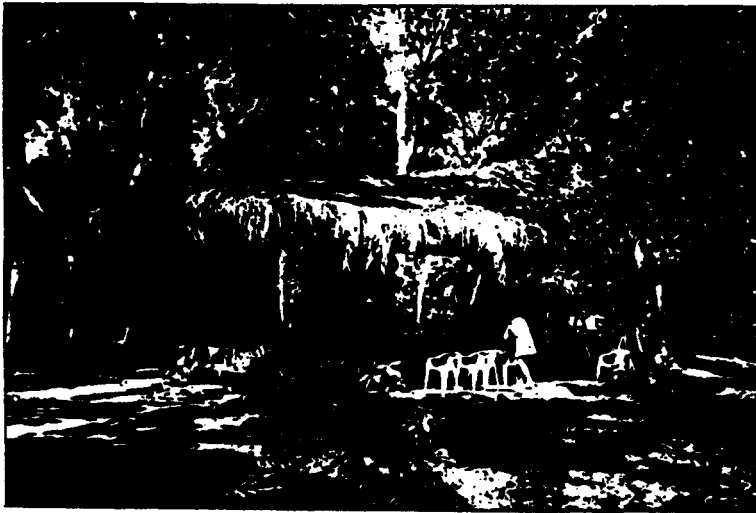


Photo by Jeff Miller

One of the aggressive saltwater crocodiles that inhabits the Ord River. This one is about 15 feet long.



The Bush Camp on the Ord River has a communal area for dining, drinking or just contemplating an evening's fire.

Travel: Australia, a different destination

(Continued from Page G1)

of coffee wafts by. The communal hot showers and flush toilets are appreciated — almost as much as the freshly baked muffins.

A leisurely day is spent meandering up and down the river, watching thousands of birds strutting their colors, seeing 15-foot crocs sunning themselves, fishing for the tasty barramundi, hearing Aboriginal stories, or getting to know your Aussie boatmates. This is the way Australia should be seen, but rarely is.

Bungle Bungle

A half day's drive south of Kununurra, through rugged New Mexico-like country, is the tiny town of Halls Creek — jumping off point for the overnight fly/camp Bungle Bungle tour.

The Bungle Bungle is a 350-million-year-old range that thrusts dramatically 700 feet up from the surrounding lowland desert. Its striking beauty lies in the deep gorges etched by time and the "wet" in the sheer chasms jolted apart, and in among the dome towers standing proudly on their own.

Made of delicate sandstone, the formations have been protected for eons by a tiger-striped skin of orange (silica) and black (lichen). For more than 20,000 years Aborigines have called the area home and have used the Bungle Bungle for burials and for rock paintings.

Today, the range is part of Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) National Park, which was declared a park in 1987 and covers more than 450,000 acres. The name Purnululu means sandstone in the local Kija language. Bungle Bungle is a corruption of this, or a misspelling of the common Kimberley grass, bundle bundle.

For years the only way to see the Bungle Bungle was to fly over or make an arduous four-wheel-drive trek to camp nearby. Last year only 12,000 hardy souls made such a trip. Recently, however, the government has allowed three tour operators to land a combined 30 people a day at an airstrip next to the formation.

Only two tours are now running, one of which is Graham MacArthur's Halls Creek and Bungle Bungle Tours. Guests on his fly/camp are first treated to

an extensive flight over the range. Visitors are then taken on a walking tour of the beehives, Cathedral Gorge and Echidna Chasm by knowledgeable and friendly John Burns.

An ancient creek bed of petrified mud leads past the impressive beehives — Australian versions of Egyptian pyramids — which glow golden in the morning sun. Further on is Cathedral Gorge, formed as the sandstone cliffs come together into a magnificent rounded area that narrows as it goes up — like the inside of a giant bell. At the bottom is a little pond that reflects the blue sky 700 feet above. Echidna Chasm, with an entirely different geological makeup, twists, turns and narrows like a snake negotiating a cactus garden. Everywhere 50-foot tall Livistona palms cling precariously to the walls high above the gorges and chasms. The grandeur of it all is humbling as well as inspiring.

Evening is spent at the special tour operators camp, which includes a communal "long drop" toilet (no flushing needed), hot shower, and comfortable metal cots and swags (bedrolls) in individual tents for up to 40 people (although there's always one guide to every 12 people). Maxine, John's wife, serves up the fine lunch, dinner and next morning's breakfast before the flight back.

Emma Gorge

Tucked away in the fiery red landscape of the Cockburn Range and part of the million-acre El Questro Station (ranch), Emma Gorge is less than an hour's drive northwest of Kununurra.

By far the most upscale of the three camping sites, Emma Gorge boasts platformed tent cabins, modern bathroom facilities in a central location, and a "headquarters" that features a restaurant, bar and swimming pool.

An athletic 40-minute walk from the campsite, up the gorge that's filled with pandanus and palms, a waterfall feeds numerous natural pools that offer good swimming with no threat of crocodiles.

Further field visitors can get a one-hour guided tour of Chamberlain Gorge by small boat, stopping to walk around and view the Aboriginal rock paintings — including ones called "Bradshaws" that are thought to be pre-Aboriginal. For those who want the "big" picture of the area, helicopter rides are offered that include both gorges.

If you go

Weather: The seasons are re-

versed Down Under, our summer is their winter, etc. In the Kimberley region there are two distinct seasons — wet and dry. The wet is from November to April, when roads can become impassable, numerous places are inaccessible, and temperatures can soar well above 100. The best time to go is between May and October, during the dry season, when the maximum temperatures are in the 80s and 90s.

Getting there

The most direct route from North America to the Kimberley is to first fly into Cairns on Australia's northeastern coast. Numerous international carriers service the Cairns. If you want to start your Australian vacation the moment you board your plane, Qantas has direct flights into Cairns. There are numerous flights from Cairns to Darwin, then on to Kununurra via Ansett Airlines.

Rates

The Bush Camp, \$160 per person, per day, minimum 2 people, includes transfers from Kununurra, all meals (bring your own liquor), fishing trips, tackle and camping equipment. Specials: One night, departs 4 p.m., returns 9 a.m., includes dinner and breakfast, \$100, and a weekend getaway, departs 4:30 p.m. Friday, returns 5:30 p.m. Sunday, \$320, non-fishing \$200. The Bush camp is open from April to November. Contact: Travel agent or directly to Bruce Ellison, P.O. Box 901, Kununurra, Western Australia 6743, phone, 011-61-091-69-1214, fax, 011-61-091-69-1371.

Bungle Bungle one day fly/drive tour, per person, from Halls Creek, \$285, from Kununurra, \$385, includes all meals and camping equipment. Bungle Bungle Park is closed from Jan. 1 through March 31 during the wet season. Contact: Travel agent or directly to Halls Creek and Bungle Bungle Tours, P.O. Box 58, Halls Creek, Western Australia 6770, Australia. Phone, 011-61-091-68-6217, fax 011-61-091-68-6222.

Emma Gorge Twin tent-cabins per night, \$70, singles, \$40 includes all camping equipment but no meals or drinks. Contact: Travel agent or directly to P.O. Box 909 Kununurra, Western Australia 6743, Australia, phone ax 011-61-091-61-4320.

For further information, contact the Australian Tourist Commission, Los Angeles, Calif., at (310) 552-1988, or the Western Australian Tourism Commission at (310) 557-1987.

(Jeff Miller is a freelance writer living in Denver, Colo.)

Longwood display

KENNETT SQUARE, Pa. — The holiday displays at Longwood Gardens, Route 1, celebrate "Nature's Christmas" and make a fine family day-trip during the holidays.

Crafted animals made from grapevines, dried flowers and other natural materials make up some of the indoor displays while lighted trees and reindeer can be found outside the conservatories.

A special addition this year is a mini-history display of sleds from the late 19th century through the 1930s. More than a dozen "Flexible Flyers" are from the collection of Joan Palicia of Wayne.

"Nature's Christmas" runs from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. through Jan. 3. Admission is \$10 for adults (\$6 on Tuesdays), \$6 for those between 16 and 20 years, \$2 for children between 6 and 15 years. Kids less than 6 years are admitted free. Call 215-388-6741.

Holiday hours

PHILADELPHIA — If you're planning a visit to the City of Brotherly Love, you may want to know that Independence National Historical Park will be open during its regular winter schedule, (from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) this week.

On New Year's Day, Independence Hall and Liberty Bell Pavilion will be open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Other park buildings and the Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site will be closed on the holiday.

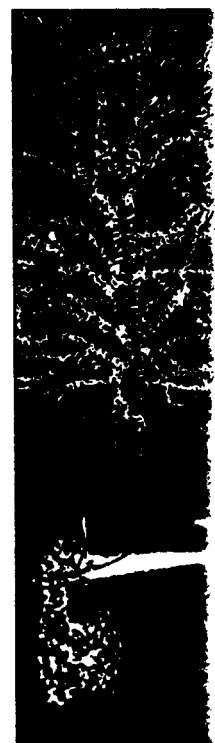
For information on events at the park, call the Visitor Center at 215-597-8974 or 215-627-1776.

Maryland hotline

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Another quick get-away thought for the holidays is nearby Maryland.

In Ocean City for example, the median strip down the main drag is decorated with beautiful light displays, as are the many hotels and attractions. And over in Berlin, visitors can enjoy old-fashioned horse and carriage rides.

For more information, call the



Lighted trees and reindeer Longwood Gardens.

toll-free hotline at 800-2. The message is updated and lets callers know going on in what section, state.

Franklin demo

PHILADELPHIA — If from the Independence National Historical Park will demonstrate the experiments of Ben Franklin, Franklin's Under Museum.

The programs will be

TRAVEL TIP

Free skiing

ROCKY HILL, Conn. — Five hundred free "Learn to Ski" packages will be given out by advance reservation on a first-come, first-served basis at five Connecticut ski areas.

The areas and phone numbers are Mohawk Mountain (203-672-6100), Ski Sundown (203-628-0954), Mt. Southington (203-628-0954), Powder Ridge (203-349-3454) and Woodbury Ski Area (203-263-2203).

The deal is good for Jan. 11 only and reservations will be accepted Jan. 3-8. Participants must call the ski area directly (numbers above) and may make reservations for up to three people. The day includes lift ticket, rental equipment and lessons.

101 tips

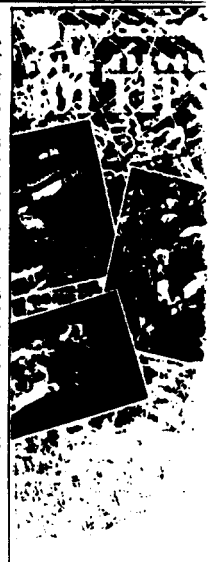
BOSTON — Grand Circle Travel is offering its revised "Going Abroad 101 Tips for Mature Travelers" booklet free.

The pamphlet, packed with useful information, features a new section on health and fitness. It also addresses safety and tipping issues, packing, trip planning, helpful terminology and a special section for cruise travelers.

Call 800-248-3737.

Butterfly migration

MEXICO CITY, Mexico — Each year some 100 million Monarch butterflies migrate some 2,500 miles from Canada and the eastern United States to winter at the remote mountainside town of Mi-



"Going Abroad: 101 Tips for Mature Travelers" booklet

choacan and Remarkah neys has put together a site Feb. 26-March 4.

Cost is \$985 per person includes round trip to Houston, Texas, ground transportation, accommodation, lingual guides and side trips. Now, if you're leaving to

At home and abroad, keep your eyes on El Niño

NONSTOP 157



AIR MAIL

In touch with Australia's far Outback

By MIKE NICHOLS *6675*
Sentinel correspondent

Cape York, Australia — Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor crocodiles, nor giant termite mounds, nor kangaroos on the runway shall stay John Ramsden from the swift completion of his appointed rounds.

Ramsden is a postman, Outback style. He flies the mail to isolated small towns and vast cattle stations, what we call ranches, on the Cape York peninsula — one of the remotest corners of a remote land.

The peninsula forms the northeast corner of Australia and lies closer to New Guinea (less than 100 miles) than to Sydney and the rest of the country.

Seven such mail runs are made each week over Cape York and are billed as the world's longest. Passengers can tag along at fares starting at about \$100.

Ramsden's route begins at Cairns, a coastal town of 100,000. He tosses some canvas mail bags into the rear of the mail plane at the airport and climbs into the cramped cockpit. The plane is small — two

engines, 10 seats. Inside it seems like a Volkswagen with wings.

Ramsden, wearing khaki shirt and shorts, has the face of Sam Waterston and the soul of a Wright brother. His is grass-roots, tree-top flying. There's no copilot, no lavatory, no pre-flight demonstration of emergency procedures. Before taking off, Ramsden merely hands out ear plugs to passengers. In the seat pockets are sacks for air sickness. The sacks are not needed. The ear plugs are.

As Ramsden coaxes the plane up over the Great Dividing Range — the Australian Rockies that crowd Cairns against the sea — the engines bite into cotton-candy clouds. After he reaches his cruising altitude he steers with one hand's while admiring the scenery with the other. If seeing it all for the first time. He drinks a cup of coffee, eats an apple, peels a banana. Below, the jagged peaks are blunted by thick green rain forest. Waterfalls drain the mountains to the Coral Sea.

His first stop as he zig-zags up the cape is Laura, a town of 100 people near the Aboriginal reserve.

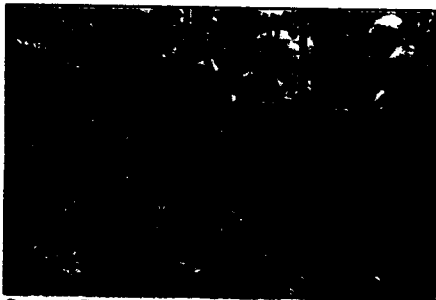
The air strip is typical. Its only improvements are a wind sock and some whitewashed tires that mark the edges of the dirt runway. An Aboriginal woman named Topsy meets the plane. She smiles shyly as she talks with Ramsden.

Ramsden may be the first "outsider" the people on his mail route have seen since his last delivery a week ago. Such isolation is a way of life in the Outback. To compensate, the Royal Flying Doctor Service provides medical care, and the School of the Air teaches the three Rs by two-way radio to chil-



MIKE NICHOLS Photos

Mail call: Mailboxes on John Ramsden's airmail route are few and far between. He has to cover hundreds of miles in a day to reach all his customers.



Bugged: Termite hills are a common sight at Rokeby National Park on Cape York.

See Australia / 2C

Mailman delivers the outside to the Outback

Australia

From 1C

dren, some of whom live hundreds of miles from the nearest school.

Australia has only 17 million people spread over a land the size of the contiguous United States. Thus Ramsden's plane passes over few towns, fewer roads and still fewer vehicles on those roads.

In the Outback there are more sheep, more cattle, more kangaroos than people. And more termites than all the above. Termite mounds cover the outback, dozens to an acre. Pointed and thin-edged and often taller than a man, from the air they resemble stalagmites or shark's teeth.

As Ramsden and Topsy chat, a nurse from the area's small clinic arrives with pathology samples to be flown back to the hospital lab at Cairns.

After only five minutes on the ground, Ramsden is back in the air.

Much of the time he flies at an altitude of 1,000 feet, but sometimes he dips lower. Much lower.

As he heads north to the next stop, he skims the seashore, giving passengers a gulls-eye view of the beach, startling cranes and pelicans below. Now and then he

points out saltwater crocodiles. Australians, with their penchant for the diminutive, call them "salties."

Thirty minutes later he lands at Silver Plains cattle station — 1,000 square miles of coastal savannah. At the homestead, or ranch house, the flight is joined by Jim, an amateur prospector who is returning to Cairns after a month on the station digging for gold with pick and shovel.

Did he find any? he is asked.

"A bit," he says, offering no details.

Back in the air, Ramsden heads west, away from the coast. He shouts above the roar of the engines, pointing out coffee plantations, sugar and tobacco fields. Soon the terrain changes. The vast Outback becomes a flat tangle of embroiled with green rivers.

The plane passes over billabongs (water holes) that shimmer in the sunlight like emerald eyes. Passengers look out the window to see kangaroos, wallabies or emu drinking.

The next stop is the Archer River Roadhouse. The humble road house provides food and beverage and — just important — the last-chance gas pump for anyone driving north toward the tip of the cape on the unpaved Developmental Road.

If you go

For information on the Cape York mail run, contact the Australian Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1200, Los Angeles, Calif., 90067, or call (310) 552-1988.

This part of Australia is tropical. It has just two seasons — wet and the dry.

During the wet, rain is relentless on the cape. Rivers such as the Anchor River flow out of their banks, flooding the lowlands, rendering the few roads impassable. Even during the best of conditions, the recommended way to drive north up the cape is with two four-wheel-drives — one in tow to pull the other out if it gets stuck.

During the dry, the only problem is the scarcity of rain. And the abundance of dust. Every vehicle moving on the dirt roads is trailed by a rolling comet tail of dust. Bull dust, it is called.

Heading back south now, Ramsden lands at remote Rokeby National Park at noon — just in time for tea. He is greeted, as he is each Tuesday, by Jean Shaw, wife of the park ranger.

"The lone ranger," she jokes of

her husband's solitary post.

Shaw is waiting with hot water, tea bags and cookies in the back of her four-wheel-drive truck.

The next stop is the Kendall River cattle station — a ranch of 1,200 square miles. It is fenced to keep the cattle safe from crocodiles.

No one meets the plane, so Ramsden stuffs the mail into a rusty 5-gallon tin bucket mounted on a fence post beside the air strip.

Then comes Strathgordon cattle station, near Mistake Creek. A woman in cutoff shorts greets the plane. Like all the Outback cattle stations, Strathgordon is unassuming, betraying no hint of the wealth that such vast holdings require. The homestead is small, modest, surrounded by cannibalized vehicles, a satellite dish, a few fruit trees.

Another takeoff, another land-

ing. Southwell cattle station is a 520-square-mile spread that is 250 miles from the nearest town. Before Ramsden lands, he buzzes the homestead to let those on the ground know that the mail has come. Sometimes he also has to buzz an air strip to frighten off kangaroos before he lands.

Southwell's Richard Price drives out to the plane in a well-worn Land Rover. On the dash a rifle is mounted and on the front bumper a bull catcher, a platform that stockmen stand in from which they can round up cattle.

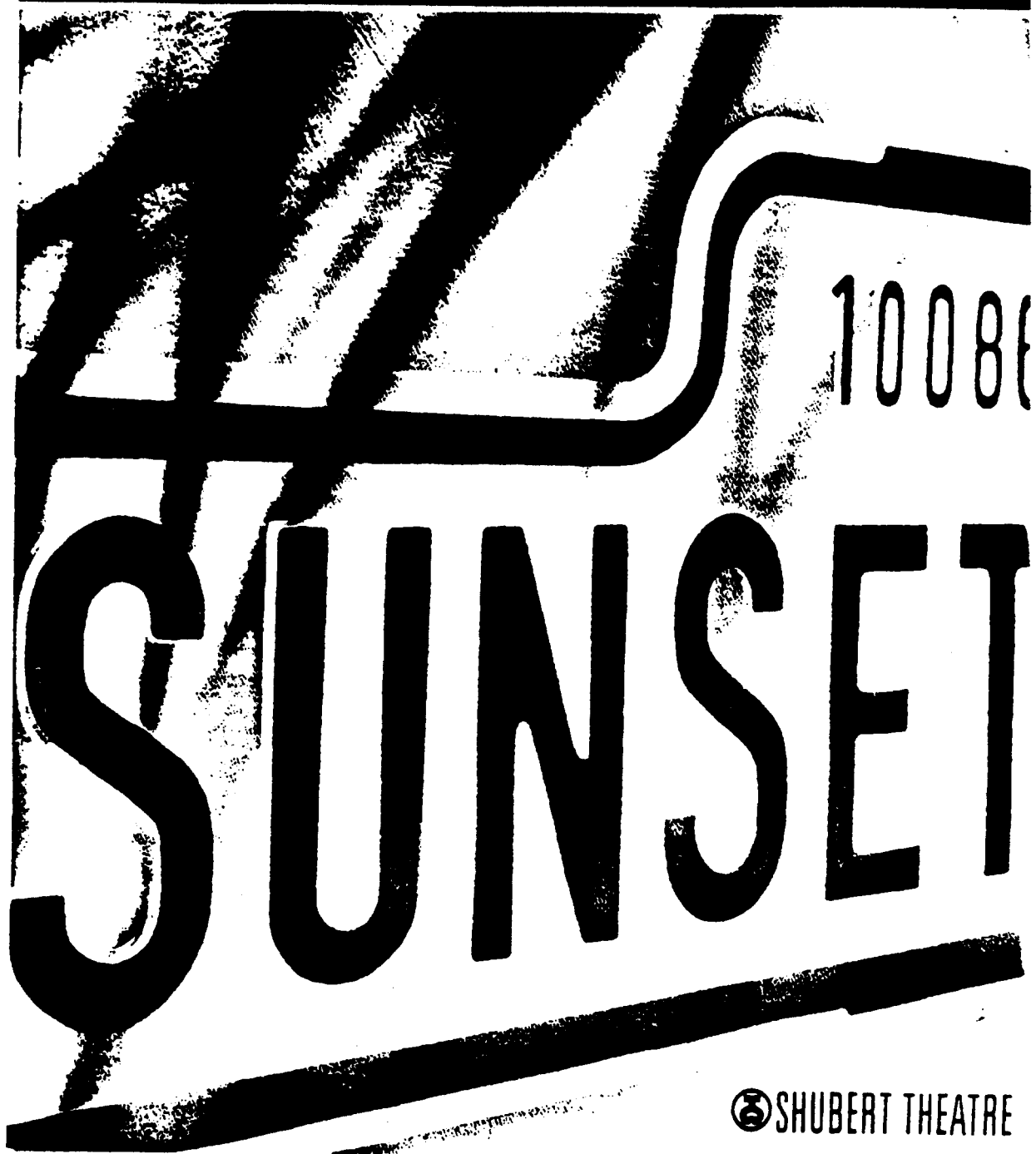
Price is a typical Outback stockman. His hands are calloused and tanned, his fingers thick. His face is a relief map of crow's feet and creases. He wears a brown beard under a sweat-stained Akubra hat (the Australian answer to the Stetson).

Price hugs his mail bag to his chest possessively as he talks with Ramsden. For those who live on cattle stations Ramsden is their weekly link with the outside world, bringing newspaper bills, birthday cards, letters and, yes, junk mail.

But mail pilots bring more than the mail to the cattle stations — they bring brief diversion and companionship. They also check on the health of the isolated people, sometimes finding them sick or injured.

PERFORMING ARTS

JANUARY 1994



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SUNSET

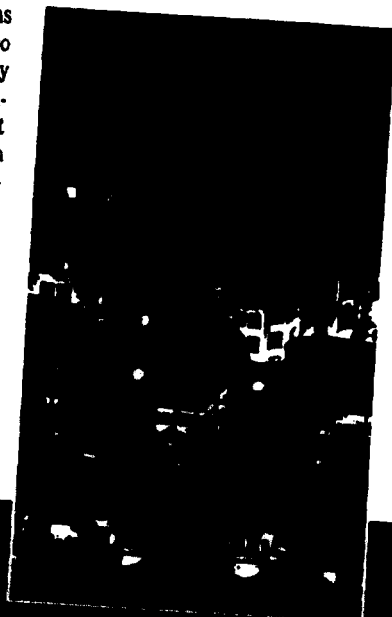
SHUBERT THEATRE

On Tour

What's Up, Down Under

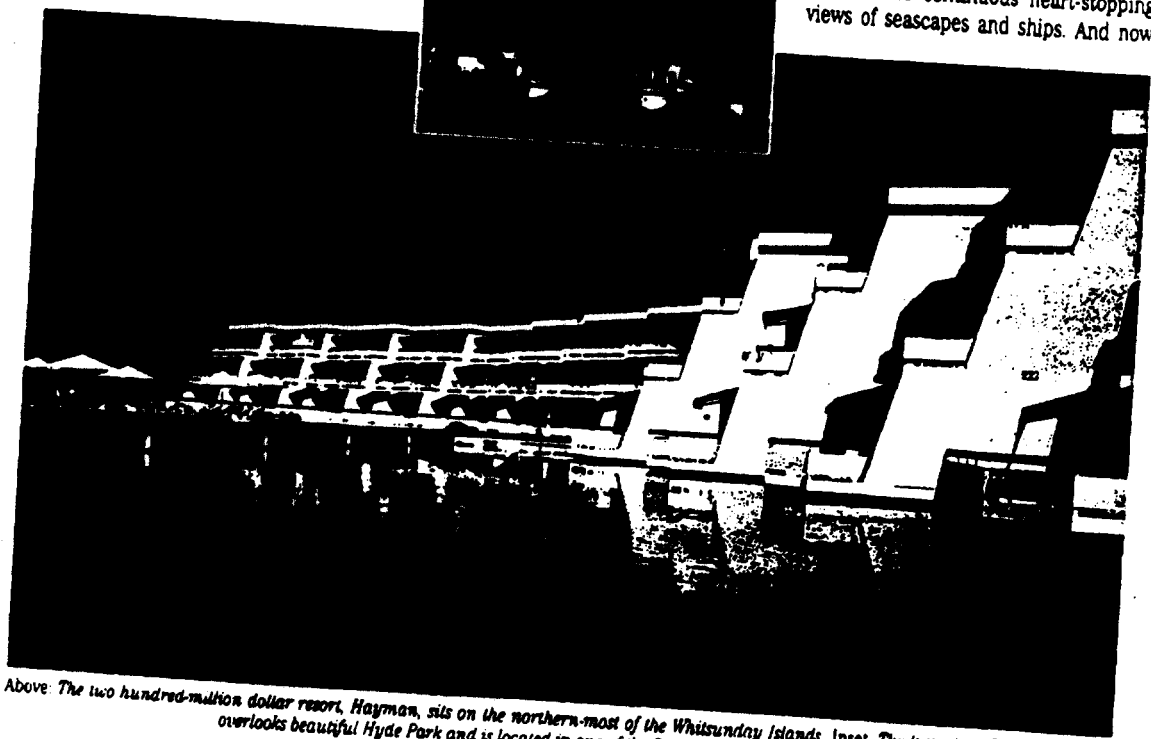
During our winter months when it's not always so sunny in California, my thoughts stray to Australia where summer is now in full swing. I made my first trip Down Under fifteen years ago when Australia was not the popular destination that it is now. In those days, the population of Sydney appeared to be all white, and while physically attractive, the city felt very provincial. Having returned recently, I was knocked out by the changes. Sydney is now among the most sophisticated and worldly of cities

Norm Chandler Fox is the Performing Arts Magazine Restaurant critic.



with a polyglot mix of many races and cultures. There are more Aboriginal people seen in town along with whole neighborhoods of Vietnamese, Malaysians, Indonesians, South Pacific islanders, and East Indians. So, instead of snacking on the ubiquitous fish and chips, you can now indulge in nasi goreng as well.

Some people compare Sydney to San Francisco because both have hills and extraordinary harbors. Unfortunately, this does a disservice to both cities since each has unique qualities very much tied to its own geography. Sydney's corrugated shoreline with its various bays and inlets offers continuous heart-stopping views of seascapes and ships. And now



Above: The two hundred-million dollar resort, Hayman, sits on the northern-most of the Whitsunday Islands. Inset: The luxurious Park Lane Hotel overlooks beautiful Hyde Park and is located in one of the Sydney's toniest shopping areas.

by Norm Chandler Fox

JANUARY 1994

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The Park Lane Hotel's superb restaurant, Gekko, is named after a giant native lizard.

that the city has been chosen as the site for the summer Olympics in the year 2000, Sydneysiders are very proud to show off their scrubbed-up and sparkling metropolis.

Qantas Airlines offers the most non-stop flights to Sydney, and they've recently inaugurated three additional weekly non-stops that are entirely non-smoking. Once aboard, the warm Australian hospitality is abundant, and while enjoying the flight attendants' Aussie wit, I sample some unusual wines from the states of Victoria and South Australia. Because flying time lasts fourteen and a half hours, I like to take the Qantas flight which leaves Los Angeles at 12:50 p.m., crossing the International Date-Line and arriving in Sydney the following night at 10:30 p.m. which permits me to get a good night's sleep before exploring the city.

The Park Lane Hotel (double rooms average \$250 per night) is a new high-rise hotel overlooking beautiful Hyde Park and located in one of the city's tidiest shopping areas. The guest rooms are gigantic, filled with contemporary indigenous art, and feature luxurious black granite bathrooms (which even include a rubber duck for the bath tub just in case you forgot to bring your own). There's a rooftop health center with a pool and outstanding gym with computerized equipment, and I'm amazed to find the place jammed to capacity at 6:15 a.m. with fitness-crazed Australians who are evidently passionate about exercise of any kind.

The hotel's superb restaurant, Gekko,

PERFORMING ARTS



Overlooking the magnificent Sydney waterfront is the intimate Observatory Hotel.

named after a giant native lizard with silver replicas throughout, has a kitchen that opens on the dining area without even a glass wall divider, permitting diners to see every aspect of their meal's preparation. There's also a walk-in wine library where you can discuss various wines before picking out your bottle. Try the oysters in Pernod sauce, rock lobster roasted with fennel, and a mango napoleon.

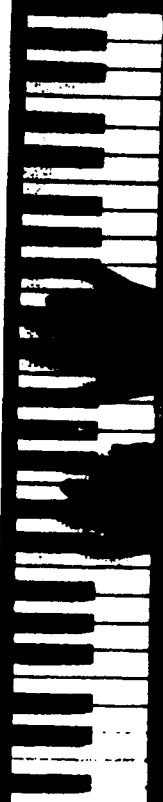
A fine place to stay overlooking the waterfront is the year-old Observatory Hotel (double rooms average \$260) which is more intimate and part of that lustrous Orient-Express Group of hotels and luxury trains. Located in the most historic section of town, The Rocks, where the city was founded, this hotel has a commanding view of those two harbor staples: the bridge (which wise-cracking citizens refer to as "the coat hanger") and the opera house (also called "the oyster's mating dance"). Comfortable rooms come equipped with old-fashioned amenities like windows that can actually open to let in sea breezes as well as state-of-the-art CD players and VCRs (the software can be rented from the hotel's library). There's also a fine



Hayrack on the Whitsunday Islands

JANUARY 1994

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The Observatory Hotel's candle-lit Galileo restaurant offers Venetian specialties.

candle-lit restaurant, Galileo, where you can enjoy Venetian specialties like garlicky shrimp pasta, Adriatic fish stew, and homemade biscotti with vin santo.

To get a real sense of Sydney, I suggest starting off your morning by arranging through your concierge for an historic guided jaunt through The Rocks. I like Joanna McDonald of The Rocks Walking Tours who makes the history of the city and nation come alive at each corner, dock and alleyway. Settled by British convicts in the late eighteenth century, Sydney offered its original immigrants a new lease on life, often in conditions that were unspeakable.

Next, take a lunch cruise on the square rigged, topsail, ninety-year-old schooner, The Solway Lass, which is booked through Matilda Cruises. There's a nice buffet, open bar, and one of the best tours of the vast harbor. Afterwards, take a ferry over to the Taronga Zoo where all your favorite marsupials will extract "oohs and aahhs" even from people who don't relate to animals. I could spend hours just watching the tiny and playful platypuses.

The balance of the day can be spent in the neighborhood known as Paddington which has some architecturally significant townhouses, fun flea markets, and boisterous old pubs. I also enjoy visiting the fascinating art galleries in Darlinghurst and Woolloomooloo. At twilight, I walk through Kings Cross, allegedly the most sinful district in town, but it appears almost wholesome compared to Bangkok's Patpong or New York's Times Square.

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More Fun Lunch from Hollywood

The evening's entertainment is an early curtain at the opera house since it's practically against the law to visit here without seeing a performance in Sydney's most beloved yet controversial building. There are usually two operas and an operetta offered in repertory during the summer season. Afterwards, walk over to Bilson's on Circular Quay for an al fresco supper of contemporary fare like cold crayfish bisque, barramundi fish cooked in a banana leaf with chutney sauce, and a loquat tart accompanied by a late harvest Riesling from Tasmania.

Among my other restaurant finds are Tetsuya's in Rozelle where the Japanese chef-owner produces such creative dishes as sautéed shiitake mushrooms with parsley pesto and mousse of crab with a sea urchin sauce. I'm also fond of Rockpool in The Rocks where the local rock oysters are prepared in wondrous ways as are the giant prawns. And if you're in town on a Sunday, you must go over to Watsons Bay and have lunch on the broad patio of Doyles On The Beach; the grilled and fried seafood is secondary to the hundred-year-old setting where locals loudly cavort in the quiet surf.

After enjoying the urbane delights of Sydney, you should experience Australia's fascinating countryside where life moves at a much more leisurely pace. Drive two hours northwest of town to the rolling hills of the Hunter Valley—New South Wales' answer to our Napa. Here, some of Australia's award-winning wines are produced in such well-known wineries as Wyndham Estate, Tyrells, and Lindemans.

Peppers Guest House (doubles average \$135) looks and feels like a country retreat from an earlier, gentler age with antique-filled rooms, cozy lounges, and wide verandas. There's a new indoor pool, tennis courts, and mountain bikes to utilize between winery tours. The staff couldn't be friendlier, and the buffet breakfast is a winner with tropical fruits, just-baked breads and pastries, porridge,

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(March 26-April 4, 1994)

SALZBURG — BORIS GODUNOV (Lipossek; Kotcherga/Abbedo); MISSA SOLEMNUS (Berlin Philharmonic/Solti); BERLIN PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS (Solti & Abbedo); VIENNA-BERLIN ENSEMBLE CONCERT.

VIENNA — CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA & PAGLIACCI (Meier, Gustafson; Cacciamini, Campanella); ANDREA CHENIERE (Mills; Johansson, Brunsen); HOLLANDER (Barckhaus; Rydhewski).

MUNICH — TRAVIATA (Pillpay, Zaccaria; O'Neill/Staiberg) & Handel's GIULIO CESARE (Murray, Kuhlmann; Zindler/Mackerras).

SPRING IN ITALY
TURIN-MILAN-FLORENCE-VENICE
(May 20-June 4, 1994)

TURIN — L'ELISIR D'AMORE (Nocentini; Aronica, Nucci, Olingieri).

MILAN — RIGOLETTO (Lyngby; Alagna, Nucci/Mun); ELEKTRA (Martin, Hana/Singoli); LA SCALA PHIL. CHORALE CONCERT.

VENICE — Monteverdi's L'ORFEO (Domus; Thue).

FLORENCE — VERDI REQUIEM (Molina); SALOME (Maffei/Molina); & OSLO PHILHARMONIC CONCERT.

FRANCE SUMMER FESTIVALS
PARIS-AVIGNON/ORANGE-AIX EN PROVENCE
(July 1994-2 Weeks)

PARIS — Bizet's CARMEN (Urie/Manson, Ferrarini, Shicoff, Tina/Bardo); Gounod's ROMEO ET JULIETTE (Rocci; Alagna/Plasson); BALLET.

AVIGNON/ORANGE FESTIVAL — Verdi's NABUCCO (Connell, Popescu; Brunsen, Estes, Polacco/Senti); and BEETHOVEN CONCERT.

AIX EN PROVENCE — To Be Announced.

EUROPEAN HEARTLAND FESTIVALS
SALZBURG-MUNICH-BREGENZ
(July 26-August 8, 1994)

SALZBURG FESTIVAL — DON GIOVANNI (Furlanetto, Cuperli/Maffisano, Bartoli; Seiffert/Barenboim); RAKE'S PROGRESS (McNair, Hadley, Rose/Cambreling); BORIS GODUNOV (Lipossek; Ramsey/Abbedo); SOLTU/LONDON PHILHARMONIC CONCERT; and MOZARTEUM CONCERT.

MUNICH FESTIVAL — TRAVIATA (Studer; Nodder, Allen); ROSENKAVALLER (Schneider); MEISTERSINGER (Gustafson; Winkl, Garrison); and NUTCRACKER BALLET.

BREGENZ — FRANCESCA DA RIMINI (Zampieri, Rouillon); NABUCCO-On Lake (Plouright, Leifman); & VIENNA SYMPHONY CONCERT.

BAYREUTH WAGNER FESTIVAL
(August 6-17; or August 17-28)

New RING (Levine); PARISFAL (Singoli); TRISTAN UND ISOLDE (Barenboim); & HOLLANDER.

ITALIAN SUMMER FESTIVALS
VERONA - VENICE - PESARO (Rusconi Festival)
(August 16 - 28, 1994)

VERONA — OTELLO (Milla/Ricciardi; Domingo/Atlantes, Nucci/Zaccaria); LA BOHEME (Ferrarini; Hadley); NORMA (Connell; O'Neill/Merritt); & Pizzetti's CABBIA BALLET.

VENICE — Verdi's NABUCCO (Rask-Stummer; Zaccaria; Scandivone/Lambert).

PESARO ROSSINI FESTIVAL — ITALIANI IN ALGERIA (Lemore; Kinde); SEMIRAMIDE (Caccia; Blais, Perna); & STABAT MATER (Della, Scatchi; Gloriano, Scandivone).

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EDINBURGH — GYNDENBOURNE — LONDON THEATRE
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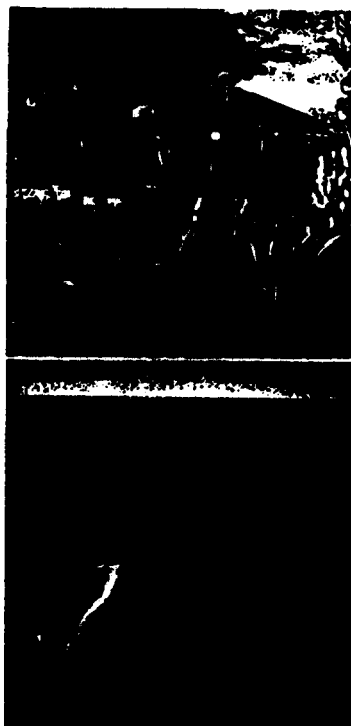
* PERFORMANCES TO BE ANNOUNCED

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you with specialties like rock-salt crusted salmon, braised quail with grapes, herb-stuffed saddle of lamb, unusual local cheeses and flambéed berries.

Another excellent restaurant nearby is Robert's where chef-owner Robert Molines serves giant crawfish (called "yabbies") in Pernod, game hens smoked over vine cuttings, pork loin with brandied prunes, and passion-fruit sorbet.

Early risers may want to partake in a hot-air balloon ride at dawn where you may see herds of kangaroos loping across the landscape. The return to terra



Top: Peppers Guest House in the rolling hills of Hunter Valley, New South Wales. Above: The White Sunday Islands, five square miles of paradise just off the Great Barrier Reef.

irma is celebrated with a champagne breakfast. My favorite excursion is with the Hunter Valley Four-Wheel Drive Tours, comprising a rugged drive up to an Aboriginal site at Wollombi. Here, I go bushwalking to explore ancient caves filled with primitive paintings and learn about early Aborigine culture. There's also another half-day drive through the eucalyptus forests and wild rock forma-

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tions of the Wattagan Mountains where the knowledgeable guide teaches me all about survival in the bush.

To fully appreciate the Australian summer, take a few more days and go way up north to the tropics. Ansett Airlines makes the two hour daily flight from Sydney to Hamilton Island off the Queensland coast. A luxurious yacht then transports you to Hayman (doubles average \$420), a two hundred-million dollar resort that sits on the northernmost of the Whitsunday islands, five square miles of paradise just off the Great Barrier Reef.

On thirty acres of formal, oriental and rainforest gardens, the art-filled resort has commodious rooms with large ocean-viewing terraces, a superb staff that anticipates what you want before you do, and a phenomenal health spa. There are the expected facilities for swimming, tennis, and golf, and catering to the Australian passion for sports, you can indulge in beach volleyball, lawn croquet, badminton, rifle target shooting, snorkeling, sailboarding, Hobie-cat sailing, windsurfing, scuba diving, water skiing and parasailing. You could also cast your line from private launches to fish for tuna, marlin and sailfish at this time of year. If you need more exercise, there are rustic hiking trails that wind around and across the island where colorful lizards and birds abound.

Executive chef Jean-Marie Pougnet oversees the resort's six restaurants with my favorites being La Trattoria for memorable pasta and veal dishes and Planters which features Queensland cuisine like mud crabs, loin of tender buffalo, and pumpkin soufflé.

No one can leave Australia without harboring warm feelings towards the Aussie people. Although it's impossible to generalize about an entire nation, I can say that I've always experienced these people to be amongst the most likable as any folks I've ever met. They genuinely like (and usually emulate) Americans, and their birthright seems to include a gigantic and outrageous sense of humor. Despite the urban, rural and seaside magnificence of this country, the greatest wonders Down Under are the Australians. □

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JAN 2 1994

BURRELLE'S

By Mary Ellen Botter,
The Denver Post

MAYBE it's the snow outside, or that I grew up a desert rat in West Texas. But when I dream, I dream of Australia's "Top End," that sunny, still-wild territory stretching from Cairns on the east coast to Broome on the west.

I'd start near Cairns at Silky Oaks Lodge on the edge of the Daintree rain forest. The food is fine; the serenity, a balm for the jet-lagged.

I'd wend my way to Kakadu National Park and torrid-but-friendly Darwin, after a dogleg to Ross River Homestead 50 miles east of Alice Springs. At the easygoing guest ranch, I'd sample both the outback and station life.

Other wild west echoes the tread of tough pioneers



My deepest pleasure would be drawn from the glorious open spaces of the Kimberly in far western Australia: land not unlike the American West before it was fenced and tamed. The Yank and Aussie regions share a common history of cattle drives and pioneer treks, but the mantle of civilization rests more lightly on the vastness down under.

I'd end my dreamtime in Broome, walking the wide and water-scrubbed sands of 13-mile-long Cable Beach to the soothing cadence of the Indian Ocean.

No big cities, bright lights or crowded tourist attractions for me. Let me hear only Nature's voice — or the hearty laughter of those scant few Aussies who inhabit these reaches.

TRAVEL

Industry has good news for travelers in '94

In 1993, droves of Northeast Ohioans took advantage of \$49 airfares to Washington, D.C., saw Cleveland become a true airline hub as Continental emerged from bankruptcy and enjoyed a slew of inexpensive tropical getaways from charter operators flying from Cleveland Hopkins International Airport.

Recession-driven changes begun in the year just past will reverberate through 1994.

Shifts by the travel industry will put greater emphasis on vacationers as the number of convention and business travelers declines. Although business travel was the industry's bread and butter through the '80s, that's good news for independent travelers, especially those who are careful shoppers.

Borrowing from the no-frills, low fare successes of profitable Southwest Airlines, small regional carriers like Branson, Morris and Kiwi began in 1993. The latter, operated by pilots from defunct Eastern and Pan Am airlines, now feeds Chicago passengers to London flights from Newark by Virgin Atlantic airline.

Similar agreements between KLM and Northwest, British Airways and USAir, and Lufthansa and United have made international travel easier than ever while helping to bail out the financially troubled airline industry.

The world is getting smaller with these agreements, which allow airlines to pool their resources and create economies of scale. And Continental's alliance with Air France, which has its own alliance with Vietnam Airlines, puts Cleveland passengers closer to Southeast Asia when the U.S. lifts its trade embargo against Vietnam.

the dawning of an



Travel
Janet Podolak

Information Age as technology moves us toward a global computer network means wider travel shopping options through CD-ROM and interactive TV. But families seeking good value for their hard-earned leisure dollars will need the services of a travel agent as never before. A conscientious, well-trained agent will be needed to interpret, locate and verify the burgeoning choices and make the arrangements.

With a week's Disney World vacation for a family of four costing around \$3,000 and a week's Caribbean cruise starting at about \$2,000 a couple, travel is no small-ticket item. But just as yesterday's modest house costs what a car does today, yesterday's dream vacation is now part of many families' rites of passage. Major trips now celebrate milestone birthdays, anniversaries and even junior high school graduations while family reunions are scheduled at resorts or on cruises at sea.

Cruising continues to grow in popularity by leaps and bounds as baby boomers try it, like it and want to do it again. A cruise industry that's grown by 10 percent a year since 1980, has helped keep many

travel agents afloat during recent hard times.

Among the 10 new ships launched in 1993 were several larger ones that assure that the strong buyer's market will continue. There's Carnival's 2,000-passenger Sensation, Costa's 1,300-passenger CostaRomantica, Holland America's 1,200-passenger Maasdam and American Family Cruises' 1,500-passenger American Adventurer.

Family cruises, with deck space, facilities and shore excursions aimed at different age groups, is just one new niche among ever-expanding cruise choices. Expedition-style cruises to Southeast Asia and Australia are among exotic itineraries and new, lesser-used ports, like Boston, Tampa and New Orleans, are finding fans. One cruise line's western Caribbean itinerary will travel between New Orleans and Tampa this year with stops at Cozumel, Grand Cayman and Jamaica.

The spectre of new port taxes assessed by Caribbean islands is fading as cruise lines deal with island hoteliers' claims that their passengers leave their wallets on board when they come ashore. It appears that islands will form a consortium to share the taxes, rather than each charging its own.

Look for hotels and large resorts to expand their weekend getaway packages as they move away from a dependency on convention and business travelers. Travel agents also will be the first line of information on these, although local packages might be better arranged individually.

Business travelers can expect to see more hotel amenities well beyond shampoo and shoeshine mitts as hotels go

after a larger slice of the shrinking corporate travel pie. Look for hotel room desks furnished with staplers and paper clips, fax machines and even personal computers.

Diversity also will be the 1994 byword for escorted tours packaging ground transportation with lodging, sightseeing and meals. Volume buying power of large tour operators that can't be matched by individuals, is irresistible when dollars are tight.

And those who shun the sociability and itineraries of group motor coach tours will discover an industry that has them in mind. They'll find packages with transportation by four-wheel drive vehicles, small vans, train and ship. They'll take fly/drive tours with the convenience of a rental car and spontaneity that allows sleeping in or lingering longer with a tour guide's services as needed.

Car rentals now average \$40 a day and up to \$175 a week from major rental companies, but weekend deals will be found more often than ever. Typical is a recent \$49 rental from Enterprise in Mentor — good value for a weekend jaunt to Columbus when my own car was in the shop.

Ohio is one state where car rental companies are checking driving records before handing over the keys. It's a move made necessary by increasing insurance rates and made possible by computerized records from the Department of Motor Vehicles. Other states where you can expect to encounter a check of your driving record are Pennsylvania, Florida, New York and Maryland.

Janet Podolak is travel editor of The News-Herald.

MIAMI HERALD
JAN 2 1983



A REAL WALKABOUT

*Visiting Australia's
rain forests, red center*

By MARY ELLEN BOTTER
Denver Post

I dream of Australia's "Top End," that sunny, still-wild territory stretching from Cairns on the east coast to Broome on the west. Few Aussies inhabit these reaches, and their hearty laughter harmonizes with nature's voice.

My walkabout would begin in the rain-forest area near Cairns, tracking onward to Kakadu National Park and torrid-but-friendly Darwin, with a dogleg to Alice Springs in the continent's Red Center.

My deepest pleasure would be drawn from the glorious open spaces of the Kimberly in far western Australia: a land not unlike the American West before it was fenced and tamed. The Yank and Aussie regions share a common history of cattle drives and pioneer treks, but the mantle of civilization rests more lightly on the vastness Down Under.

I'd end my dream time in Broome, walking the wide and water-scrubbed sands of 13-mile-long Cable Beach to the soothing cadence of the Indian Ocean.

JUN 24 1994

DREAM TRIPS

■ Travel is one of the world's largest industries, driven by everyday consumers like you. Your whims and wishes can level jungles, drive tunnels through mountains – even create friendships and enhance understanding. Here are essays on the experience for all of us, from armchair travelers to trailblazers, to consider. The story at left takes a look at the difference between a "tourist" and a "traveler." Below, more than a dozen newspaper travel editors from around the nation offer brief views of their "dream trips."

The wilds of Australia

By MARY ELLEN BOTTER
Travel Editor/Denver Post

Maybe it's the snow outside or that I grew up a desert rat in West Texas. But when I dream, I dream of Australia's "Top End," that sunny, still-wild territory stretching from Cairns on the east coast to Broome on the west.

I'd start near Cairns at Silky Oaks Lodge on the edge of the Daintree rain forest. The food is fine; the serenity, a balm for the jet-lagged.

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Please see **DREAM 3E**

Dreams from 1E

easygoing guest ranch, I'd sample both the outback and station life.

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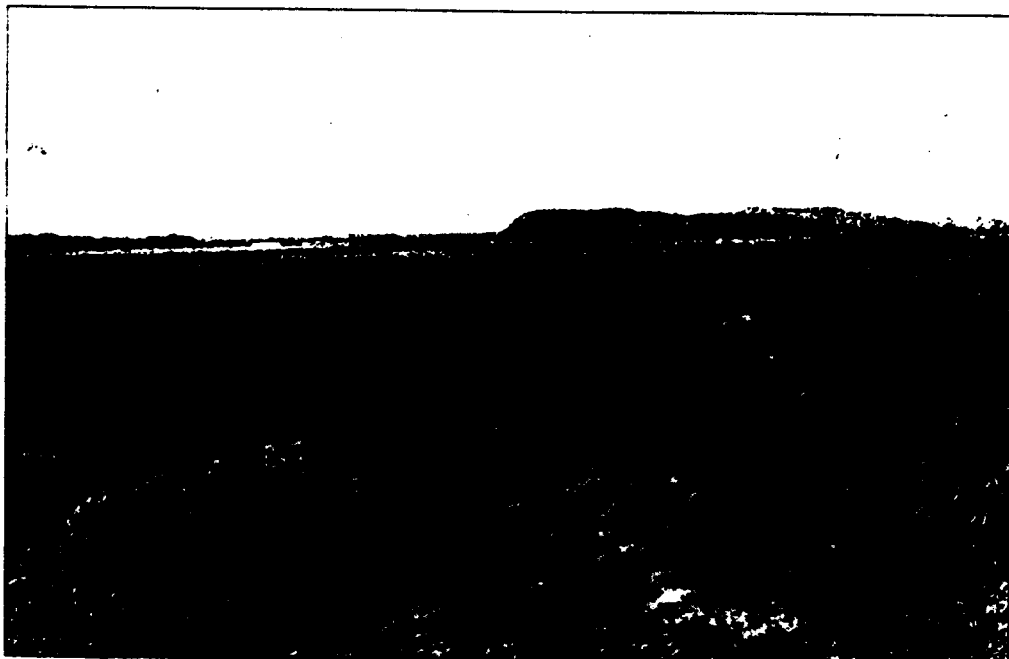


Photo by PETER BENESH

ON A CLEAR DAY: Survey Australia's Kakadu National Park from a rock sacred to the

Track Australia's beauty on transcontinental train

By Jeff Miller

"Climb aboard, mate," the engineer called down and I quickly clambered up into the cab of the Indian-Pacific — Australia's great transcontinental train.

In the unadorned space, far from the luxury of the first-class carriages, L.D. and his co-driver John sat staring at the approaching freight train that had temporarily sidelined us in the middle of the bleak and flat desert of the Nullarbor Plain.

I took the jump seat behind them, still winded from the jog along the tracks from the passenger cars. It was surprising to see that control of this locomotive was done via a small speed-throttle that looked far too simple to run such a giant machine.

L.D. seemed to read my thoughts. "Most people think anyone can drive a train. I say, 'Bloody right... but we're the only ones who can stop it!'"

On a train trip — any train trip — it's always the people you meet and the scenery you spy that makes the journey special, makes the getting there more important than the final destination.

Fast friendships

Nowhere is the marriage between making new friends and seeing dramatic scenery better than in Australia — especially when traveling on either of the country's two premier trains: the Indian-Pacific or the Outback-crossing Ghan. They both traverse some of the world's most striking landscapes and offer the chance to meet "fair dinkum" (genuine) Aussies.

The Indian-Pacific crosses the southern part of Australia on an epic journey that eats up 2,400 miles, three days and connects Sydney on the east coast to Perth on the west. The Ghan is a 22-hour, 965-mile ride from Alice Springs in the Red Center through the Simpson Desert to Adelaide on the southern coast. All of the Ghan's cars are new or refurbished and have correspondingly good service, while the Indian-Pacific is currently undergoing its own multimillion-dollar refurbishing and upgraded-service plan. That work is due for completion in 1995.

Back in the Indian-Pacific cab, the engineers swap tales and jokes as the train rolls on. To these natives of the continent, the flat, featureless countryside is filled with life. They see — and sometimes hit — emus, kangaroos and even camels. They both grimaced at that last possibility: "I hate hitting camels," L.D. said.

John points out a few eagle nests in the telephone poles running beside the tracks. A majestic eagle in flight is part of the train's logo, but plans call for removing the poles and burying the lines. With nary a tree nor shrub in sight, John asks sadly, "Where will they nest then?"

Sights seen differently

Back in the lounge car, passengers are reading, knitting or staring out the window. Everyone appears ready to talk, to share the train experience. And they each seem to get something different from the scenery, as if seeing with their memories.

Sister Mary, without the traditional habit, is a bubbly Perth woman in her 50s who talks in time with her clattering knitting needles. In the little tufts of desert grass and shrubs struggling to survive, she sees God's proclamation of life's glory.

Ann from Adelaide, traveling with her grown daughter, is on the Indian-Pacific as a kind of memorial to her late husband. "We always thought we'd have time for this," she says quietly. She seems to see him and their



PHOTO:JEFF MILLER

The Ghan is one of two long-distance Australian rail experiences.

lost years scattered among the rocks and old railway ties that lay abandoned beside the tracks.

At dinner people are jovial as they're tossed together at tables for four. The food is surprisingly good and conversations light up the dining car like fireworks. Tasmanian-born Mark and his Malaysian wife, with their 1-year-old daughter, are excited about a new life they're going to, with no thought for his lost job in Sydney. "We wanted to see what the country was really like," he says. "It's beautiful."

To Anna, a German woman in her 70s who fled from the Russians as they swept across East Germany in 1945, the scenery takes on a different meaning. After spending her life in social work, she's been staring at the red desert and studying the waves and smiles of the occasional Outback dwellers. "What must life be like out there?" she wonders aloud.

Outback scenery outstanding

Beyond the air-conditioned carriage, the Nullarbor Plain is a vast skillet that sizzles from dawn till dark. The sky is immense, overpowering, rich-blue — and married to a flat, desolate plain of red dirt. Red and blue go on forever, hand in hand: the scenery is bleak, beautiful and mesmerizing.

The countryside along the route isn't always so severe. When the train pulls out of Sydney, it heads northwest through the rugged, gum tree-covered Blue Mountains to the old mining town of Broken Hill. Continuing southwest to Adelaide, it runs through fertile farmland and rolling hills. Retracing its tracks back up north to Port Augusta, the train then strikes out west across the desolate Nullarbor, where it glides over the world's longest stretch of straight track (nearly 300 miles).

Busting out of the Nullarbor ready for some excitement, the Indian-Pacific lands in the wild west town of Kalgoorlie before heading toward its final destination, the sparkling city of Perth.

While the Ghan doesn't have such a grand itinerary, it still boasts some of the best Outback scenery. What many people remember most about their trip on the Ghan is the ever-present red desert dust. It's true the rusting soil does dominate the landscape, giving visual expression to the tremendous heat, but there are a surprising number of gum trees, desert oaks, large shrubs and clumps of spinifex grass that make it much more than a desert.

In places, mesas, buttes and distant mountain ranges evoke parts of Arizona and New Mexico. Elsewhere, gigantic shallow pools of water shimmer to the horizon — remnants of flooding during the short but intense wet season.

Defiantly racing through such country — and rarely bothered by the land's extremes — is today's regular-gauge "New" (1980) Ghan. The narrow-gauge "Old" Ghan (east of the present tracks) wasn't so lucky — it was reliably unreliable. Termites ate the wooden ties (called "sleepers") while floods washed away the line or trapped the train in inland seas. Summer heat curled the tracks like a slithering snake. Delays could last a month. In one case, an engineer shot goats to feed passengers.

Comfort, though, was never the primary goal of the early Ghan. Its main job was to link the Red Center with the rest of Australia, carrying life-giving supplies to bush outposts. And before the train, camels walked the route, their slow, swaying gait reflecting incredible endurance in temperatures that can soar above

120 during the day and plummet to nearly freezing at night. Brought to Australia in the 1860s for the ill-fated Burke & Wills expedition, camels flourished like desert grass.

When the line was finally finished to Alice Springs on Aug. 6, 1929, passenger comfort was still not a great concern.

Before air conditioning, the Ghan roared through the sweltering heat with all its windows and doors open.

Today, that's all changed as the Ghan strives only to pamper its passengers. All the cars have been renovated in a 1920s Art Deco motif that uses desert browns, reds, greens and purples with stunning results.

This steel-wheeled caravan, stretching for nearly a third of a mile, is impressive — two mighty engines, sporting the distinctive green and gold livery of Australian National, pull 20-plus cars, many of them shiny, aluminum-sided passenger cars displaying the Ghan's picturesque camel emblem. Besides numerous coach and first-class sleeper cars, the train has a first-class dining car, a coach buffet car, and two lounge cars.

At night, both the Ghan and the Indian-Pacific rush through a darkened landscape that melds into a twinkling black sky. Gliding along at 110 kilometers an hour (66 mph), the trains can take nearly a mile to stop, while the headlights only illuminate a few hundred yards ahead. As L.D., the Indian-Pacific driver, explains, "That's when you live by your memory."

After traveling on either train, most people will have a wealth of memories to last a lifetime.

Jeff Miller is a free-lance travel writer and photographer based in Denver.

GRAND RAPIDS FREE

JAN 9 1994

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

CHICAGO, IL
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JAN 9 1994

BURRELLE'S

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Australia's Wild Side

BY MARY ELLEN BOTTER

6675 DENVER POST *and travel*

Maybe it's the snow outside, or the fact that I grew up a desert rat in West Texas. But when I dream, I dream of Australia's "Top End," that sunny, still-wild territory stretching from Cairns on the east coast to Broome on the west.

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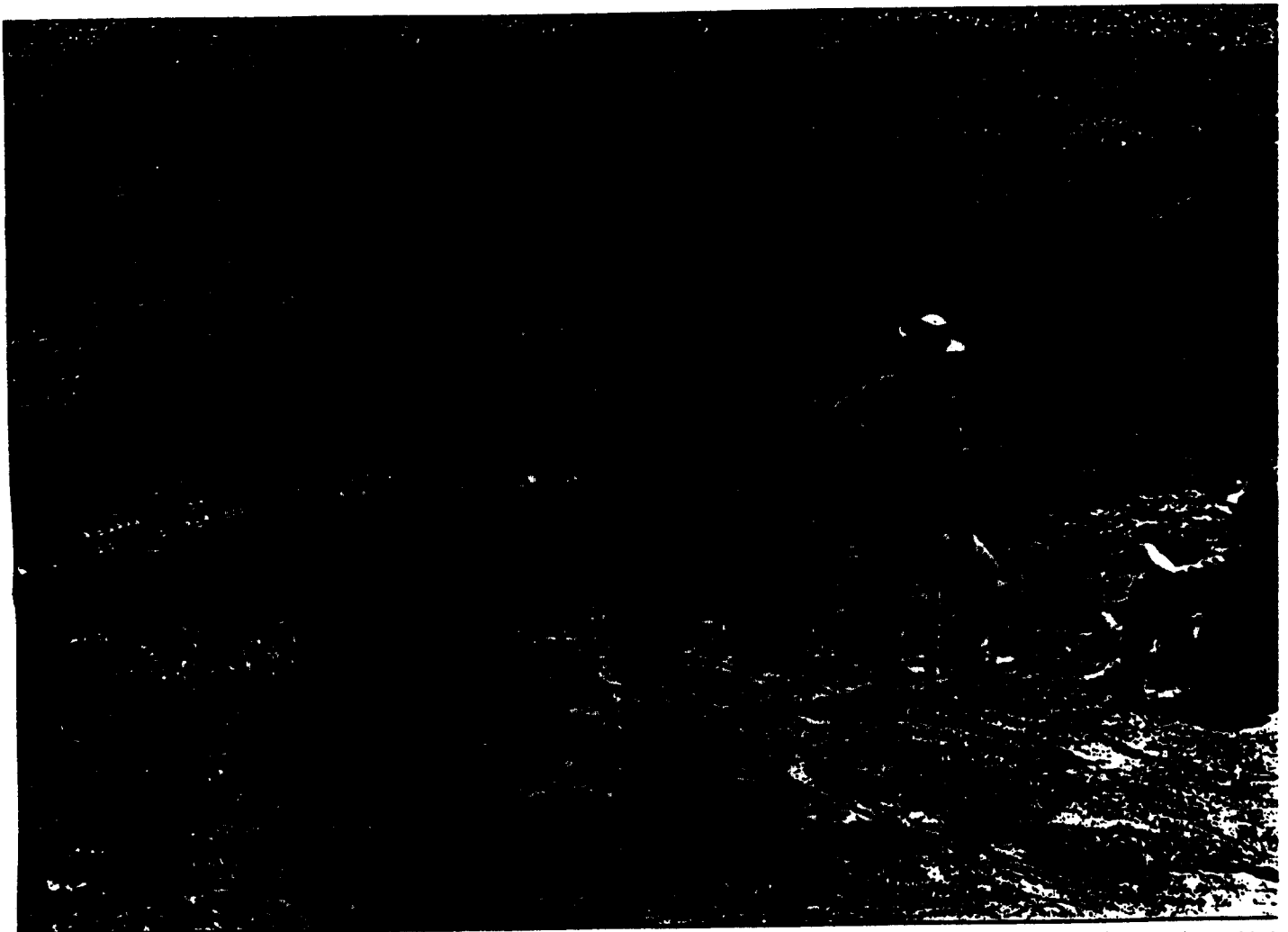
DAILY BEGGEE
JAN 9, 1994

**Go
climb
a rock**



Sunset paints a glorious picture at Ayers Rock, rising serenely from the vast floor of the desert outback, miles from any water.

Australian adventure



Perhaps the single greatest adventure at Ayers Rock is "The Climb" up the monolith itself. The adventurous enjoy magnificent views of the desert floor stretching out to the horizon.

Adventurous spirits find nuptial hideaways off the beaten path

THE TIMES DISKING
JAN 9 1990

By James B. Gaffney
Special Sections staff writer

Writer George Apley once noted that "Marriage is a damnably serious business."

Thus nowhere is the credo "business before pleasure" more important than in choosing a honeymoon hideaway for you and Cuddle-anookums. Rest assured, though, that your prudent planning will in years to come reward you with many moist-eyed reminiscences, not to mention shoeboxes full of slides and souvenir jewelry.

But it will require initiative.

Recently, while trekking through the coastal rainforest of Far North Queensland in Australia, I was surprised to come across a pair of newlyweds from Atlanta, who were obviously enjoying their other-worldly surroundings: An evergreen, sun-dappled mountainside of fairly tale-like waterfalls, exotic eucalyptus trees and mangroves and towering ferns, and roaming wallabies with young peering from their pouch.

"So what's a pair of Southern accents doing so far from home," I asked.

They looked at each other and grinned. "We wanted something unique, sort of off the beaten path for our honeymoon," said Ruth. Husband Greg laughed. "Truth is we wanted to be as far away as possible from the heart-shaped bathtub crowd," he said, "and you can't get much farther away than halfway round the world."

Something unique

Granted, not everyone's idea of honeymoon heaven includes spear-fishing for barramundi in the Daintree River with an aboriginal guide, while keeping a watchful eye out for patrolling crocodiles. But, travel experts say, the couple of the 90s is going beyond searching merely for the best value in a honeymoon package. A small but growing breed are desperately seeking uniqueness. This may include going to Athens during concert season for the black-tie symphony performances at the Acropolis, or getting pampered at a resort spa in the Finnish Laplands.

Still, some prenuptialities complain, it can be problematic finding reliable information on destinations that don't require visitors to wear mouse-ear hats.

One couple I know who recently tied the knot were leery of relying too heavily on national bridal magazines, whose travel

sections typically feature "good-words only" destination pieces on the usual plethora of honeymoon hot spots: Hawaii, the Caribbean, Disney World, the Poconos.

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Maine in particular literally snaps with honeymoon magic thanks to succulent, tabby cat-sized lobsters — a virtual national treasure — hauled from its chilly coastal waters. And it sets the Maine table: From whole-lobster buffets at ritzy seaside resorts to the lowly lobster roll (mixed with mayo and stuffed into a hotdog bun) served hot wrapped in wax paper at any wharf shack worth its claws.

The Pine Tree State's other biggest attraction — its mercifully quaint, calendar-pretty harbor towns, strung like pearls along Route 1 from Kennebunkport to Bar Harbor, are still intimate after all these years, making the drive from nouveau trendy Portland well worth the rental car rate.

Especially at Boothbay Harbor, the coast's magnum opus. On a recent visit I parked my car and browsed the town's clackety, gas-lanterned cobblestone streets, a setting as romantic as they come in these parts. A door chime announced my curiosity at every dusky bric-a-brac shop between the parking meter and a hill-framed cove of fishing boats, tinted gold by a glorious New England sunset that lasted as long as my six quarters.

But, regardless of whether your champagne wishes and honeymoon dreams lure you to Europe or your mama's fishing camp in Grand Isle, don't despair. Truth is, true love will conquer all honeymoon glitches.

Adventurous spirits find nuptial hideaways off the beaten path

THE TIMES PICAYUNE

JAN 9 1994

By James B. Gaffney
Special Sections staff writer

Writer George Apley once noted that "Marriage is a damnably serious business."

Thus nowhere is the credo "business before pleasure" more important than in choosing a honeymoon hideaway for you and Cuddle-snookums. Rest assured, though, that your prudent planning will in years to come reward you with many moist-eyed reminiscences, not to mention shoeboxes full of slides and souvenir jewelry.

But it will require initiative.

Recently, while trekking through the coastal rainforest of Far North Queensland in Australia, I was surprised to come across a pair of newlyweds from Atlanta, who were obviously enjoying their other-worldly surroundings: An evergreen, sun-dappled mountainside of fairy tale-like waterfalls, exotic eucalyptus trees and mangroves and towering ferns, and roaming wallabies with young peering from their pouch.

"So what's a pair of Southern accents doing so far from home," I asked.

They looked at each other and grinned. "We wanted something unique, sort of off the beaten path for our honeymoon," said Ruth. Husband Greg laughed. "Truth is we wanted to be as far away as possible from the heart-shaped bathtub crowd," he said, "and you can't get much farther away than halfway round the world."

Something unique

Granted, not everyone's idea of honeymoon heaven includes spear-fishing for barramundi in the Daintree River with an aboriginal guide, while keeping a watchful eye out for patrolling crocodiles. But, travel experts say, the couple of the 90s is going beyond searching merely for the best value in a honeymoon package. A small but growing breed are desperately seeking uniqueness. This may include going to Athens during concert season for the black-tie symphony performances at the Acropolis, or getting pampered at a resort spa in the Finnish Laplands.

Still, some prenuptialites complain, it can be problematic finding reliable information on destinations that don't require visitors to wear mouse-ear hats.

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sections typically feature "good-words only" destination pieces on the usual plethora of honeymoon hot spots: Hawaii, the Caribbean, Disney World, the Poconos.

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Australia in easy steps

Unless you have time, don't try to see it all in one trip

By Robert W. Howe

SPECIAL TO THE GLOBE

SYDNEY, Australia—For more than 200 years, Australia was only a theory. Terra Australis Incognita ("unknown land of the south") first appeared as a mysterious blob on globes in the 15th and 16th centuries. European cartographers felt that the known world must be "balanced" by something big and impressive in the Southern Hemisphere.

Although the reasoning was faulty, the conclusion was correct. But when the real Australia began to be explored in the 17th and 18th centuries, many of the biggest and most impressive discoveries were denounced back home as hoaxes.

Descriptions and drawings of kangaroos, koalas, platypuses, wombats and goannas simply were not to be believed. Ditto for feathered creatures like the emu, the cassowary, the lyrebird and the kookabura. ("Come, now! A bird that laughs like a jackass?")

A stone-age society of aborigines, proficient in throwing boomerangs and playing an instrument called the didgeridoo, completed this unbelievable, crazy-quilt picture.

What made Australia unique still makes it one of the most exciting travel destinations: This massive island continent, about the size of the continental United States without Alaska, became separated from Asia about 60 million years ago—time enough for many animals and plants there to have evolved in ways previously unimaginable.

As a nation, Australia owes its beginnings directly to the American Revolution. When Britain could no longer punish its miscreants by banishing them to places like Maryland or Georgia, it turned to the new land "down under," establishing a penal colony first at Sydney, and then at other places in Australia.

Thus the groundwork was laid for a laid-back, antiauthoritarian society reflected today in such breezy Cockney-like expressions as "no

worries" or "she'll be right, mate!" Although the country had no revolution of its own, the Aussies seem to identify more with us "Yanks" than with the British, who are sometimes referred to as "the bloody Poms."

The Eastern Cities

Unless you have a month or two, don't try to visit all six states and two territories of Australia on your first trip. Because of the distances involved, most Americans concentrate first on two or three East Coast cities. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake not to include at least a brief foray into the Outback (More on that in a moment.)

There is no more pleasant way to begin an Australian adventure than a visit to Sydney, the capital of the state of New South Wales. This is also the city which has just won the bid for the Summer Olympics in 2000, the final year of the 20th century. Here, on one of the world's most beautiful harbors, is where the country began. In the shadow of some massive outcroppings of sandstone called the Rocks and next to a large natural cove, a community of about 1,500 convicts, soldiers and settlers backed out the beginnings of a city in 1788.

Today, the narrow streets and lanes in the Rocks district of Sydney impart a musty, old-time charm to its shops, pubs and cafes. The adjoining cove is now called Circular Quay, and there scores of ferry boats come and go throughout the day connecting downtown Sydney to suburban areas. (One of these boats is a wonderful way to get to Sydney's largest zoo.)

Near the quay, the dramatic Sydney Opera House, one of the world's most recognized buildings, breaks the horizon with its saillike roof. Elsewhere, Sydney has grown into a city of tomorrow with architecturally daring structures springing up among carefully preserved older buildings. Be sure to take the monorail to Darling Harbor, an attractive waterfront redevelopment project.

About 500 miles to the south, the

city of Melbourne, capital of the state of Victoria, is Sydney's perennial rival for dominance of the country's commercial and cultural scene. A dignified metropolis as much of parks and gardens as of steel, stone and glass, Melbourne is bisected by the meandering Yarra River.

To some, its dominant characteristic is a transportation system composed of hundreds of old-fashioned trams clattering along through peaceful, tree-lined avenues. One of these trams has even become a rolling restaurant in recent years.

Australians usually identify Melbourne with elegant shops, high fashion, art galleries and theaters. I recently saw an excellent production of the Phantom of the Opera at the refurbished 1886 Princess Theatre. And many in Melbourne are still talking about the new, conical-roofed shopping complex called Melbourne Central that has now opened in the city center.

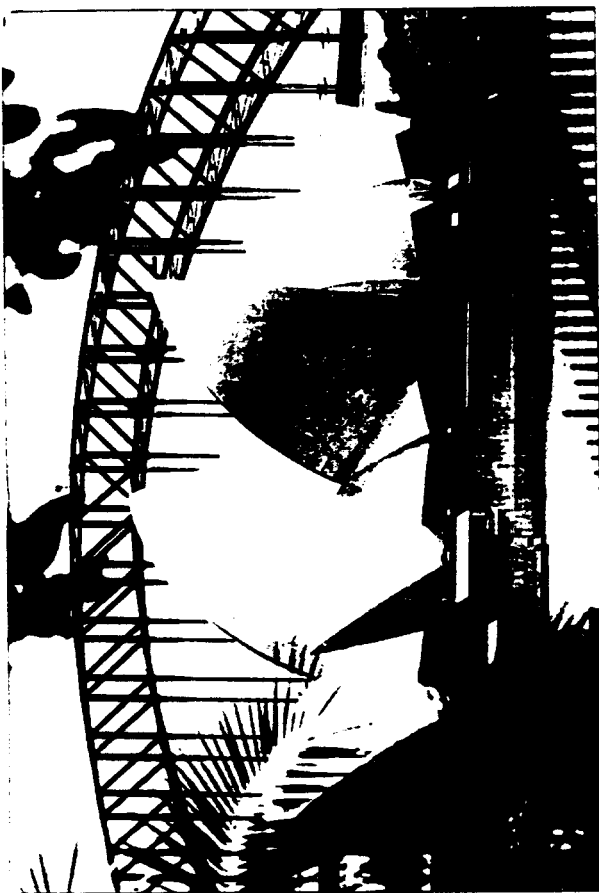
Out of town, you won't want to miss a tour to Phillip Island to watch hundreds of fairy penguins return from the sea each evening just like so many faithful Melbourne commuters.

In between the two rival cities, Australians built their capital of Canberra, a totally planned lakeside community. It was designed by an American, Walter Burley Griffin, an architect whose name is better known in Australia than it is in the United States.

The city features one of the world's most unusual and dramatic buildings, the national Parliament House. Completed in 1988, it was built almost entirely within a natural hill and then topped off with a 270-foot stainless-steel flagpole. (Tours are free.) Also in Canberra be sure to see the battle relics and dramatic tableaux at the Australian War Memorial.

Northern Australia

In the Southern Hemisphere, of course, the warmer areas are in the north, and so Brisbane is the capital of Australia's tropical state of



The Sydney Opera House is one of Australia's landmarks.



Another landmark is Ayers Rock.

Queensland. It is a land of sugar cane, pineapples, bananas and some less familiar fruits and veggies.

Near Cairns, it is also the home of the palm-shaded resort islands along the Great Barrier Reef, head

quarters for some of the world's best snorkeling and hard watching. South

5/3 continued on next page

BOSTON SUNDAY AL-BE
JAN 16, 1994

DOWN UNDER

THE HEART **OF** AUSTRALIABy MIKE NICHOLS
SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM*Ayers Rock is a place for tourists to ponder and natives to worship*

AYERS ROCK, Australia — It is a sound seldom heard in the desert: the rush of a waterfall.

Several waterfalls, in fact. Because this morning a low cloud hangs over Ayers Rock, as if the towering monolith has snagged it, punctured it and is draining it of rain.

Rain. Whereas in most places the mere word sends tourists scurrying indoors, here it sends them scurrying outdoors — to see Ayers Rock. Because rain — and its effects — is a real rarity here on the western edge of the Simpson Desert, where the annual average rainfall is only 5 inches, where only one day in 35 is even cloudy.

Even though in the rain the surface of Ayers Rock is muted from its normal rich red to a dull gray, even though in the rain the rock is closed to would-be climbers, people still come — to witness the waterfalls.

In the rain, the dome-shaped rock sheds water like a giant umbrella. Water gathers on top in depressions, is funneled down ribbed crevasses in the sides in long, thin cascades. The biggest waterfall rushes into a recess of the rock that the Aborigines call *Mutitjulu*, where a spring forms a modest pool much of the year. Today the pool is swollen by the waterfall.

In the desert, rain is a minor miracle. To bring forth instant life here, just add water. Overnight, dry stream beds flow, long-dormant seeds germinate, wildflowers bloom. Frogs that have hibernated underground for as long as five years awaken and claw their way to the surface to breed. Eggs of shield shrimp, which may have been dormant for 25 years, hatch in shallow rainwater, mature, mate and lay more eggs. Life comes full circle.

Early the next morning, as quickly as the rain and the waterfalls came, they are gone. The desert and Ayers Rock are back to business as usual. Before dawn, the rock is a hulking blank silhouette against the dark sky. Gradually, a crowd gathers to watch



A recess of Ayers Rock called *Mutitjulu*, where rain collects at the top and becomes a waterfall.

the sunrise illuminate the eastern face of the rock. A daily ritual. As the sun rises, the desert floor, covered with nettly spinifex plants, glistens like a frost field in the dew. As the sunlight hits the face of the rock, it bursts into color, blooming red like a stone rose.

Before you come to Ayers Rock

More on AYERS ROCK on Page 5

By MIKE NICHOLS
SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM

AUSTRALIA

There's much, much more on the desert floor

From the top of Ayers Rock it might appear that after you do the climb, there's not much else left to do in this seemingly empty desert.

Not so. This desert is far from empty.

Walk these dunes and you will see Australia's unique fauna: emu, wallaby, kangaroo and perentie — a lizard that grows as long as the kangaroo grows tall: 6 feet. Shy dingo dogs flit like shadows, as quiet as the cockatoos and magpies are noisy. Colorful parrots fly by like rainbows with wings.

There are even herds of feral camels — descendants of those imported from India in the 1800s. You might not see the camels, but you might see their tracks in the sand — hoofprints the size of saucers.

And then there are the flies. Tireless, tiresome flies. Thanks to them, in no time you'll be doing the Outback Wave as you swat them with an open hand.

Walk these dunes and you will see Australia's flora. There are acacia and eucalyptus trees, bush coconuts, thistles and the ubiquitous spinifex. There are even wildflowers — blue pincushions, pink desert rose, yellow saltspoon daisies.

If you want some company as you walk, there are several guided tours of the desert. Such as the Edible Desert tour. A guide demonstrates that when you know where to look — as the Aborigines did — the desert is a veritable supermarket. Aborigines used the fruit of the mulgong tree to make flour and cooking oil, the caustic vine to remove warts. They ground the seeds of the acacia tree into an edible paste, chewed the leaves of the desert tobacco plant for the narcotic effect.

Other walks, such as the Liru Walk near Ayers Rock, are led by

Aborigines used a stick to dig the witchetty grub out of the roots of the acacia tree. The witchetty grub is fat and white and, to Aborigines, delicious. Personally, you might be reluctant to put salt and pepper on anything that you'd put malathion and diazinon on back home.

The ranger station and visitors center near Ayers Rock has displays on Aboriginal culture and beliefs, and sells Aboriginal arts and crafts such as their distinctive dot painting — the pontillism of the Outback.

You might even be serenaded on the didgeridoo — the traditional wooden horn of the Aborigines. In the shadow of the huge monolith, the didgeridoo's deep drone is haunting. Now that's rock music.

Most people who visit the rock stay at Ayers Rock Resort, which hunkers in the dunes 12 miles away. The resort is a self-contained village — it has a school, police station, library, supermarket, post office, movie theater, amphitheater, bike rental, bank and 800 employees.

The resort, with six hotels, 10 restaurants and two campgrounds, is a handy base for exploring the desert.

Still hanker to hike? Then wander among the Olgas — 36 huge rounded red monoliths that lie scattered over the desert floor like the marbles of a giant.

If Ayers Rock had children, they would be the Olgas. In fact, the Olgas are indeed like the stepdaughters of Ayers Rock — less famous and less visited, even though they are only 20 miles away, even though

times mistaken for Ayers Rock. In fact, its area is greater, its height only a few feet shorter than Ayers Rock. Only its flat top (imagine Ayers Rock with a crewcut) betrays it.

Mount Conner rises from the level expanse of the Curtin Springs cattle station — a cozy little spread of 2,500 square miles (larger than Delaware).

Formed 700 million years ago, Mount Conner was 150 million years old when Ayers Rock and the Olgas were still in sandstone diapers.

After seeing Mount Conner (sunset is the best time), stop at the Curtin Springs Roadhouse. An old cook named Paddy who looks as if he fell off a chuck wagon will feed you on

unfancy tables right there in his kitchen. Serve yourself from big tureens on Paddy's wood-burning stove. Ladle up soup or stew or sometimes — for the adventurous — alligator, camel or kangaroo.

And be sure to try some Vegemite — a spread that looks like axle grease but isn't as tasty. Nonetheless, Australians swear by it. More likely you will swear at it.

Paddy cooks all you can eat for about \$12 ("don't be shy about seconds"). But he also expects you to wash your own dishes.

For dessert, step outside and look up at the night sky. Away from air pollution and city lights, you can see clearly the Southern Cross and other constellations, Alpha Centauri and the Milky Way — more stars than you can shake a telescope at. And in the clear desert air, the stars really do twinkle.

Oh, and the next morning, if you haven't quite been able to climb to the top of Ayers Rock, you can see the top from an airplane or a helicopter for about \$40. Not as personal, perhaps, but a lot less painful.

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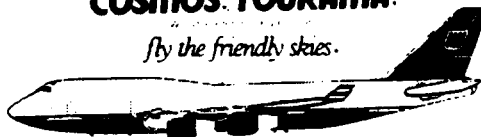
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Preparing for a ceremonial dance, a Yirrkala Aborigine has his face painted with his personal clan design.

Aborigines who demonstrate their traditional uses of the plants and animals of the desert. An infinitely old Aborigine woman sits cross-legged on the ground in front of a campfire and shows how nettles of the spinifex plant were winnowed with wooden tools and burned to make *kiti* — the waxy resin that Aborigines used to fasten stone points to their tools and weapons.

A younger Aborigine woman shows how Aborigines used the wood of the mulga tree to make bowls, tools and weapons such as the boomerang, how they tracked and killed lizards and small mammals and, yes, even insects.

they cover a larger area than Ayers Rock, even though Mount Olga — tallest of the 36 — is almost 500 feet taller than Ayers Rock.

Because the Olgas are, like Ayers Rock, sacred to Aborigines, visitors are not allowed to climb ON them, but visitors can climb *between* them — through their maze of canyons and trails. The Valley of the Winds walk, for example, is 5 miles long. Allow four hours, heed the signs that warn you to carry plenty of drinking water.

Even lesser known than the lesser-known Olgas is Mount Conner, 60 miles east of Ayers Rock. Red and immense, Mount Conner is some-

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FEB/MARCH 1991



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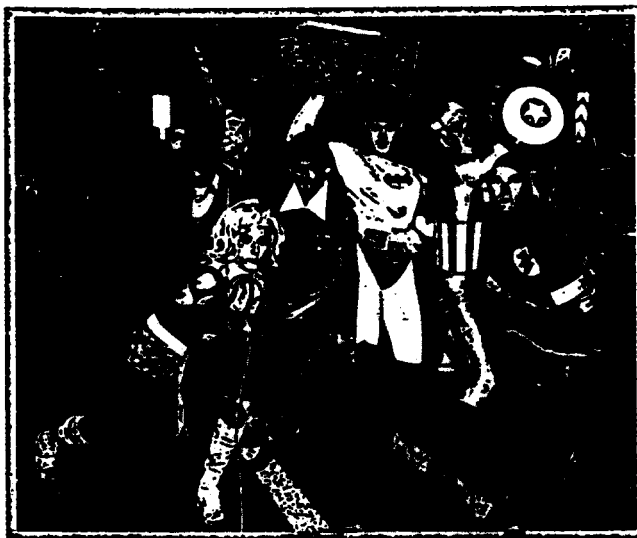
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Nonoxonyl-9
Is It Really Safer?

The Dalai Lama

Melrose Place (C) Ce Peniston/Jeffrey Edwards

PERHAPS MORE THAN any other single event, Sydney's Mardi Gras has jettisoned gay and lesbian Australia into the 21st century. Begun in 1978 as a protest march with dozens of arrests, it's now a monthlong celebration of community and pride. A half-million awestruck onlookers view the parade, and 18,000 revelers attend the frenzied gay and lesbian dance party, billed as the world's largest. Here are some highlights, plus five Sydney must-dos that apply virtually year-round.



Mardi Gras

1 The Festival. This four-week cultural extravaganza encompasses films, plays, exhibits, music, and other attractions. (An illustrated program is available from local bars and bookstores.) Of special interest: a Shop Till You Drop Saturday along Oxford Street, the city's main gay drag, and gay and lesbian harbor cruises during the warm summer evenings. February 4 through March 6.

2 The Fair Day. This is an old-fashioned Australian country fair with modern midway twists such as the Chocolate Wheel, with prizes good enough to eat; a booth at which players throw latex dildos into the mouths of photo blowups of local antigay politicians; and a dog show, complete with an owner/pet look-alike contest. February 13. Jubilee Park.

3 The Swimming Carnival. Cross Halloween with a swim meet and you get the picture. Held near the harbor in Sydney's open-air Andrew Charlton pool, this half-serious athletic event attracts contestants dressed as nuns, drag queens, and geese—or in sensible skin-tight bikinis. Spectator space is as tight as a lifeguard's Speedo, so arrive early. March 4.

4 The Parade. This 120-float spectacular begins near Hyde Park and winds down Oxford Street for two hours. Biggest draws: the Dancing

Party Down Under

10 Musts for Sydney's Mardi Gras

Boys, 60 G-stringed hunks with Rockette-like precision, and the bare-breasted Dykes on Bikes. Kickoff at 8 p.m. March 5.

5 The Party. Think gay Disneyland—an explosion of tribal energy so huge and pulsing it's held in four hangar-like buildings and several smaller tents on the Sydney Showgrounds. You must see the midnight Costume Parade, and other surprises may also pop up—literally—without warning throughout the night and next morning (the fun continues until 10 a.m.). A stage might rise from the middle of the dance floor, for example, lifting skyward 40 nude, body-painted men and women. There are even grandstands for non-dancers. Admission for overseas visitors will likely be at least \$50 U.S., in addition to the cost of an associate Mardi Gras membership (available through organized tours). March 5-6.

Sydney Attractions

6 The Opera House. Joern Utzon's once controversial, now emblematic masterpiece is Sydney. Try to get a backstage tour, available only on Sundays, and make sure you attend an event—many have gay themes during the Festival. A good plan: Watch the

sunset before the show, and enjoy oysters and champagne afterward as the harbor's lights twinkle on one by one. Circular Quay: 205-7111 for tours and other info, 250-7777 for event tickets.

7 Harbor Cruises. Sydney's harbor is deeply ingrained in the city's psyche. After all, this is where colonial Australia began, when the first convict-laden ships landed in 1788. Seeing the harbor from the water is essential. Consider buying a SydneyPass, a three-, five-, or seven-day ticket that's good for unlimited travel on city, sightseeing, and airport buses and most ferries plying the harbor. 231-4444 for SydneyPass info.

8 Featherdale Wildlife Park. You've seen koalas for years on those Qantas commercials, now you can pet one. The park is full of native Aussie animals, all suitable for petting and picture-taking. 217-229 Kildare Road, Doonside: 622-1644.

9 Hyde Park Barracks. What's it like to be "transported"—sentenced to the Fatal Shore, manacled and destitute? Find out by doing Convict Night at this historical facility. You'll sleep in a hammock in the original prisoners' dorm, muster at dawn for convict continental breakfast, then sail away to nowhere in particular on the *Solway Lass*, the oldest tall ship on the harbor. Macquarie Street; 223-8922.

10 Beaches. Sun and sand are as pivotal to Sydney as to Rio or L.A., but Sydney is unusual in that pristine beaches are just a 20-minute ride away. The most famous gay sun spot is Tamarama, but you might want to see and be seen at Lady Jane and Obelisk Bay beaches, both clothing-optional and accessible by ferry and bus. **GEORGE HOBICA**

George Hobica is a nationally syndicated columnist and travel editor for Boston's TAB newspapers.

CANADIAN
VISITING JOURNALISTS PROGRAM



by Arthur Proudfoot

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Going To Disneyland

The Disneyland Resort was one of the first to offer 750 agents from around the world the recent "AG Days" (American Travel Agents' Conference) in Anaheim, California. The resort is a major attraction for tourists from all over the world. The resort is a major attraction for tourists from all over the world.

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Going To Disneyland

The Disneyland Resort was one of the stops for 750 Agents from all over the world on the recent TAG Days tour to southern California. Participants are from all over the world. Rick Ruescher of Disneyland Travel Inc., San Jose, California, and his wife, Maria, were also on the tour. Other participants included: Thomas, Ontario, and John, Ontario, and Disneyland Travel Inc., San Jose, California.

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TRAVEL

SUN

Jan. 23, 1994

ALL ABOARD!

Ridin' the rails in Australia

Beach
in Brazil

TRAVEL

Get aboard The Ghan and take a ride through the O ON TRACK I

By STEVE PAYNE
Toronto Sun

ABOARD THE GHAN, Australia's first class passengers tuck into the latest of their gourmet meals, train driver John Simmons takes a doorstopping cheese sandwich from his tupperware lunch box. He washes it down liberally with a coke, wipes his mouth with the sleeve of his green railway issue shirt and throws the empty can into a garbage pail.

"It's just another train to me," says Simmons, 43, a 27-year Australian railroad veteran, "it's only the passengers who get excited."

His driving partner, Ray Smith, 34, agrees.

"It was only about five years ago they put air conditioning in the engine cabs," he quips.

"Temperatures in here could reach 55C (130F). You'd have to put your bed sheet in the shower, wrap yourself in it and hope to get to sleep before it dried."

Smith and Simmons' nonchalance, bordering on boredom, is understandable. The days when they fulfilled boyhood dreams to be train drivers are long gone. They've seen it all now.

On the other hand, it's equally easy to see why the passengers they expertly guide get excited.

This is the foreboding Australian Outback, an unspoiled wilderness where the railway track is the only tangible sign that man has ever set foot here.

On either side stretches hundreds of miles of unforgiving, unexpectedly picturesque landscape on which the sun rises and sets in spectacular fashion and where occasional rain crams months of growth into a speedy few minutes.

One can only look in wonder at the endless sun-baked hills, rocky outposts, and trees and bush, surprisingly abundant, but too low to the ground to provide lifesaving shade.

Even as I stare and chat with the drivers, a handful of startled kangaroos bounce away into the bush and several hawks ride thermals as a prelude to dropping

silently on unsuspecting prey.

Out here, only animals and Australia's aborigines know enough to survive unaided.

The Ghan, one of the world's most famous trains, runs from Adelaide on the south Australian coast to Alice Springs in the country's "red centre," 1,555 km away.

It's name is a tribute to the Afghan cameleers who supplied the vast Outback's pioneers for 50 years prior to the railroad. The hardy surefooted ships of the desert were the difference between life and death for homesteaders, prospectors and workers who bravely opened up an area so vast that one farm can be the size of Belgium.

And even when the train replaced the camels in 1929, the journey was not without its hazards.

Where the ride to Alice Springs now takes 22 hours, there was a time when it could take up to three months of mind-boggling adventure.

Flash flooding sometimes left the train marooned for days amid



PHOENIX THE CAMEL ... Go for a ride through the Outback at the Frontier Camel Farm near Alice Springs.

a small inland lake. On one occasion it was stuck for two weeks and the driver shot wild animals to feed the passengers.

Finally, in 1980, a new line was laid to pass around the notorious flood area. As a result, the only

discomfort now is deciding which course to choose for dinner, or whether you want the conductor to wake you early with a morning cuppa and cookies in your climate controlled cabin.

The Ghan, half-a-kilometre long



DIFFERENT ROUTE ... The Queenslander, left, travels through the lush greenery of Australia's northeast along the Great Barrier Reef from Cairns to Brisbane. Ray Smith, far left, drives the Ghan.

Travel Tip

If doing any shopping, make a point of looking at children's books. Australia's unique wildlife and its aboriginal people and their legends lend themselves to wonderful illustrated stories and they make great gifts.

and needing 4.5 km to pull up, has a choice of sleeping arrangements with many compartments having their own shower and fold-away sink and toilet.

There's carriages for dining, drinking, gambling and watching films, and 24-hour complimentary coffee and tea-making facilities.

Vacationers are flocking aboard as a splendid alternative to flying to Alice Springs, and as a chance to get an unobstructed armchair view of the land.

As a result it can get a little crowded - there were three meal sittings for my particular journey - and some of the passengers might not be to everyone's liking.

One large contingent from a non-English speaking European country were particularly demanding, one of them screaming that her cabin radio did not work even before the train had pulled out.

As it turned out the radio's volume switch was at zero. Pity hers wasn't.

In Alice Springs, the original Ghan train has been preserved and can be taken for short rides.

And for those wanting a taste of the original Outback ride, the Frontier Camel Farm offers treks of varying duration using its 42 camels.

I took a one-hour ride along the dried-up Todd River bed on a camel named Phoenix who had truly risen from the ashes after being set on fire by a previous owner.

The beast recovered physically and psychologically and is now one of the farm's favorites.

Camels generally are thriving in Australia and there are an estimated 70,000 scattered across the country.

A number are caught and exported. Toronto Zoo's camels are from central Australia and some have just been sent to a New York zoo.

Camel is also increasingly turning up on restaurant menus alongside kangaroo, emu and crocodile.

Flying from Alice Springs to the rainforest-cloaked town of Cairns provides the opportunity to take another famed train cruise, this time on The Queenslander down the coast to Brisbane.

The greenery of Australia's tropical northeast fringed by the nautical wonders of the Great Barrier Reef is in complete con-

trast to the "red centre" scrub and scorching desert.

And the less crowded train offered more chance to find empty sightseeing seats and make friends with other passengers.

I met an Australian Vietnam War veteran who used to be in the air force, a racehorse owner who consumed vast quantities of beer and mysteriously panicked whenever I got out my camera, and a retired prison guard from the days when, as he put it, "convicts did time instead of walling about in holiday camps."

Queensland's premier train runs 1,681 km along the "sunshine route" and takes 34 hours to reach Brisbane.

As with the Ghan, the interior matches that of a good class hotel and a wide range of food, wines, liquors and beers are available.

The dinner menu of the Brisbane-bound train, for example, included lamb cutlets, seafood platter, turkey or beef.

The Queenslander also had a few touches of its own, including a complimentary toiletries bag, an on-board entertainer on keyboards and a gift package that included a highlighted map of the route.

At a time when travel emphasis is on speed, there are few chances to sit back, relax, kick off the shoes and properly digest the passing world.

The Ghan and the Queenslander offer such windows of bountiful opportunity.

Those who can should not fail to look through them.

Bottom LINE

GETTING THERE: Economy fare Toronto to Sydney return with Qantas, \$1,648 to \$2,098 depending on time of year with some purchase conditions. Air fares within Australia are heavily discounted for international travellers. Sydney to Adelaide, one way, is about \$210, Alice Springs to Cairns, \$250. Combined airfare packages are available.

MORE INFO: For info on trains and other trips call 1-800-333-0262 or the Australian Tourist Commission at (212) 687-6300.



LANDSCAPE ... The Ghan travels through the harsh, but beautiful Australian Outback. One of the most famous trains, it runs from Adelaide on the south coast to Alice Springs in the 'red centre.'

U.S.
PRESS RELEASES / INTERVIEWS

AUSTRALIA REPORT

Ed Rampell

The Australian Tourist Commission has officially designated 1994 as the year to "Discover the Great Australian Outdoors." Ecotourism and adventure travel are definitely in Down Under.

One little-known aspect of Australia are its small tropical islands near the Great Barrier Reef. Agents can sell them like they sell the islands of other South Pacific destinations—especially during North American winters. Hamilton Island is one example. (800)426-4753.

Lodging. Tourism is such a high-growth industry that five-star hotels are multiplying in Australia at a high rate, especially

in Sydney. In the last year or so, not less than five deluxe hotels have opened in Sydney alone. Since Australia's recession, five-stars like the Park Lane offer rooms below deluxe rates.

The French hotel firm Accor owns Novitel, Sofitel, Ibis, and more, and has brought about 40 hotels in Australia under its umbrella in the last 18 months or so.

Melbourne's conveniently located three-star Hotel Ibis has affordable rooms and apartments downtown. (800) 763-4835.

Victoria's most upscale getaway is Eucalypt Ridge, a B&B for the bourgeoisie. Ninety minutes from Melbourne, Eucalypt

Ridge rests atop a mountain, overlooking tranquil Lake Eildon. The weekend-only sanctuary has four bedrooms. Each elegant room has a balcony with vistas of unbroken greenery and serenity. Eagles, koala, and kangaroo are nearby and there's tennis, cruises, water-skiing, gourmet dining, fine wines, and solitude. Select Hotels markets Eucalypt Ridge as an ecotourist accommodation at about \$280 per person double. 011-657-742033; fax: 011-657-742610.

Fun. The Lucky Country has a good sense of humor and is an active part of the international comedy scene. Melbourne, considered the capital of comedy, puts on an annual comedy festival and clubs include Le Joke and Last Laugh.

Clients who have dreamt of winning the Grand Prix or cruising at 200 mph have an opportunity at Fastrack Racing, a driving school taught by racetrack pros at Calder Park Raceway's Thunderdome in Victoria. Teachers sit beside pupils at the wheel, communicating via helmet intercoms. Prices range from about \$50 for passengers accompanying drivers for three laps to a three-day super-speedway course for those who want to be pro racers. The price tag is about \$1,750. (011) 613-390-3122; fax: (011)613-390-2406.

Ethnotourism. Clients can hit the bush in the Northern Territory with Desert Tracks' Pitjantjatjara Tours. Native guides teach Aboriginal living, including song, dance, religious sites, bush tucker (food) and Uluru (Ayers Rock) trips. (011) 689-528984; fax: (011) 689-523117.

Tjapukai Dance Theatre presents a Dreamtime legend via dance and didgeridoo (blow horn) at a village in Queensland's rain forest. More than 30 day-tour companies offer trips via a scenic train trip on the Cairns-Kuranda Railway. It's the top-selling day-trip destination in Cairns after the Great Barrier Reef. (011)670-937544; fax: (011)670-937667.

Jankangyina Tours goes to "The Land of the Lightning Brothers." Clients can also visit ancient art sites with Aboriginal rock painting by earth's earliest artists, as native guides share legends. And they can overnight at a bush camp, eat damper and billy tea. (011)689-410744; fax: (011) 689-813173.

For Australia information, (800) 231-4381.

SYDNEY CHOSEN FOR OLYMPICS

Needless to say, Aussies are jubilant about their country being chosen the site of the Summer Olympics for the year 2000 (keep in mind, that the mid-September event will be in the winter Down Under). Along with an expected \$12 billion economic boost, they look forward to new attention focused on their country—a destination where visitors can cuddle a koala and have kangaroos eat from your hand, take a camel safari, and dig in the dirt for topaz and sapphire.

Aboriginals Share Their Country's History, And Uniqueness Today

6675
For more than 60,000 years
Aborigines have populated the
Australian continent. When
~~Europeans first came to~~
Australia there were 126 tribal
groups that spoke more than
300 different languages.

Today, Aboriginals share
their country with visitors to
build an understanding and
appreciation for their culture
and maintain contact with the
spirits of the region. In the
process, they are building and
renewing legends for their
children, who will inherit their
traditions.

A variety of tours, cultural
performances and accommoda-
tions offer visitors the
opportunity to experience the
variety of authentic Aboriginal
lifestyles. The indigenous
people of Australia reside in
towns, cities, pastoral stations
and homeland communities.
Visits with these people offer a
look at a world that combines
ancient traditions and the 21st
century.

Long-Standing Aboriginal
traditions of Australia include
Dreamtime—a sophisticated and
interconnected mosaic of
knowledge, beliefs and
practices concerning the
creation of Ancestral Beings
and the continuity and values of
Aboriginal life.

"An Aboriginal tour is the
perfect choice for the well-
travelled person looking for
something out of the ordinary.
Opportunity to travel out bush
with an Aboriginal guide, to see
rock painting 20,000 years old
or to hear some of the creation
stories is an exciting option
during an Australian visit," said
Bill Baker, regional director,
the Americas of the Australian
Tourist Commission.

Some programs concentrate
on locating and sampling native
foods that are known as bush
tucker, and others offers visits
to remote Aboriginal communities
to see the world's oldest art galleries
painted on sandstone rock cliffs.

Visitors who want to spend time
experiencing Aboriginal cultures
can take short tours or extensive,
multi-day journeys into the
Outback. Some of the tours offer
camping and provide visitors the
opportunity to see the stars, while
other journeys cater to travelers
who seek a combination of luxury
with their exploration.

Land of the Lightning Brothers
Safari offers journeys to view
rock art and the natural
bushland. Aboriginal guide,
Bill Harney tells about the
history, Dreamtime, bush
tucker, medicines and the

cultural significance of the
land. Day and overning tours
are available. Participants may
purchase traditionally made
paintings, didgeridus and other
artifacts. Daily airs and coach
connections from Darwin
connect with tour departures
from Katherine, 180 miles
south.

Manyallatuk Tours offers
day and extended tours that
provide visitors with direct
exposure to Aboriginal culture.
Programs include basket
weaving, didgeridu playing,
spear throwing, fire lighting
using a "drill," bark painting
techniques, billy teas, damper,
spring-fed rockhole swimming
and othe activities.

Odyssey Safaris offers small
group, eco-adventure, camping
and accommodated safaris
throughout Northern Australia.
Each itinerary is desinged to
suit traveller's specific need.
Departure date, tour lenght and
content can be customized. The
tours visit Kakadu and
Litchfield Parks, the Gulf of
Carpentaria and the Kimberley
region of Western Australia.
Bushwalking, birdwatching
and swimming are available,
along with jeep and cultural
heritage tours.

Dance companies offer more
than performances. They
afford visitors and insight into

cultural traditions that are as
old as time.

Gikul Wilderness Dancers is
a traditional Aboriginal dance
company based in Darwin,
Northern Territory, Australia.
They present the traditional
dances and songs of the Galpu
people of the Arnhem Land
region of Australia. The Gikul
homeland has both mythological
and sociological relevance to the
Aboriginal people of the region.
In legend, it is the place where
the Rainbow Serpent struck the
ground creating a river that
flows fresh water to the Coast.

pajinka wilderness Lodge,
owned and operated by the
Injinoo Aboriginal Community
is located in a area with
magnificent beaches and lush
rainforests. Sportfishing,
wildlife and historical
interpretation are available.

Peppimenarti, an Aboriginal
community and cattle station in
the Northern Territory, is
unique combination of people
who have autonomy over their
land and continud ancient
cultural traditions. Visits to
Peppi menarti are available
from Aussie Safaris and
Australian Safari Expeditions
and Tours.

Recently several Aboriginal
Tours promotes were in Atlanta
promoting their country
including two Gikul Wilderness
dancers who performed at the
Fernbank Museum. For more
information about Aboriginal
tourism in Australia, contact
the Australian Tourist
Commission at (800) 333-0262.

ATLANTA DAILY WORLD
NOV. 11, 1993

FAIRBANKS
DAILY-NEWS-MINER

FAIRBANKS, AK
DAILY 17.000

SATURDAY
NOV 27 1993

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Australian Christmas 6675

Because Christmas falls during their summer season, the Australians have their own way of celebrating. It's not unusual to find caroling side by side with surfing championships; it's also the season of Santa and cricket matches.

In Derby, Boxing Day (Dec. 26) celebrations include the Cockroach Crawl, and in Daylesford, there are the Scottish Highland Heavy Games just before Christmas.

If, however, your Australian vacation isn't scheduled until June or July—their winter—you can always catch their second celebration: Yulefest. That's when Aussies take advantage of the brisk weather to serve up their hot roast meals and heavy Christmas puddings.

• FYI: Australian Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1200, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067; (310) 552-1988.

VALLEY MORNING STAR

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DAILY 28,346

SUNDAY

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Option offered

By ALISON ASHTON

Copley News Service 6675

Because Christmas falls during their summer season, the Australians have their own way of celebrating. It's not unusual to find caroling side by side with surfing championships; it's also the season of Santa and cricket matches.

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Australian Tourist Commission, (310) 552-1988.

TRAVELAGE WEST

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Victoria Joins Partnership To Cut Costs

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SAN FRANCISCO — Tourism Victoria, the Australian state's promotional arm, has followed the example of other regional tourist boards by restructuring its operation. The group will cut costs by taking part in the Partnership Australia umbrella campaign run by the Australian Tourist Commission.

Margaret Sparrow will oversee Tourism Victoria's marketing with the ATC as product development manager, based in Los Angeles.

Tourism Victoria said it soon will give details on the reorganization of its operations, which in the U.S. had been headed by Regional Director Cait Falck for the last three years.

MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

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DECEMBER 1993

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BURRELLE'S

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CULTURAL TOURISM COMES OF AGE IN THE OUTBACK

6/6/75
Although most U.S. incentive groups limit their Australian trips to the pubs of Sydney and the underwater splendor of the Great Barrier Reef, a small but growing band of winners are taking a more substantial taste of the continent.

"There is now a dramatic division in the incentive market," explained Chris Burchett, manager, Aboriginal tourism, for the Northern Territory Tourist Commission. "Cultural forms of tourism are appealing to the crème de la crème of winners. They want to get away from the cityscape and see the real Australia, but in four- or five-star comfort."

nating oral tradition, the stories of Dreamtime, which tell how the world came to be — including specific features of the Australian landscape — and how to live in it. The Dreamtime myths are also the subject of rich Aboriginal visual art.

This art is now highly prized in Australia, with works by indigenous artists hanging in such shrines to high culture as Melbourne's National Gallery. But tourism officials want the Aboriginals themselves to benefit more from this interest, while, at the same time, encouraging them to maintain their traditional culture. A key factor in this effort is making sure that Aboriginals are not just the objects of tourism but active participants in developing the visitor industry. There are currently about



Although artwork by Aboriginals can be seen in museums and galleries throughout Australia, rock paintings, like the one pictured above, are best viewed on site, at the remote places where Aboriginals have traditionally lived.

The "real Australia" Burchett was talking about is the country of the Aboriginals, the dark-skinned people who arrived on the continent some 60,000 years ago. The Aboriginals are the creators of a fasci-

20 tourism-related companies that are Aboriginal-owned, including those offering tours of Aboriginal art sites and dance troupes that perform for visitors to Queensland and the Northern Territory. ■

lounge by the Renaissance style swimming pool, soaking up the atmosphere, but the resort offers plenty to do.

DEC 1 1993

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Australia Debuts Tourism Plan That Simplifies U.S. Promotion

BY MARK ROBERTI

SYDNEY — The Australian Tourist Commission last week unveiled its long-awaited Partnership Australia program, under which the tourism organizations of the states and federal government will cooperate in overseas promotion.

After months of political haggling to ensure that each state was satisfied with the arrangements, all of the states have agreed to bring Australia's overseas marketing under one umbrella as of Jan. 1.

The government has budgeted \$1.3 million for the program worldwide from January to June. The states are expected to put up a similar amount, though budgets have not been finalized.

The system will operate on three levels. First, the states and the ATC will work together to provide consumer and trade telephone services.

A consumer information service will be introduced on Feb. 28. The ATC already has a toll-free information service for agents, but it will be upgraded to handle calls that previously went directly to the states' offices.

ONE-STOP SERVICE

"It's an improved service for the travel agents in that it is one-stop shopping," said Lyndell Gray, marketing manager/trade for the ATC in New York.

On the second level, the ATC and states will coordinate the distribution of information and promotional materials through the telephone service lines. Agents requesting information on any state can call the help-line to acquire brochures. They will also handle direct-mail campaigns in conjunction with the retail and wholesale travel community.

On the third level, ATC and

the states will put up funds to be combined with money from wholesalers to do tactical consumer advertising.

Some 40 campaigns worldwide are already planned, and some of the money budgeted by the government will be used for them. The ATC's Gray said the states were still making proposals for campaigns in the U.S., but they plan to have them ready by February, when the ATC will launch a general campaign.

"By centralizing fulfillment and telephone services, we're taking the burden off the states and freeing them up to do more tactical advertising campaigns," said Gray.

New South Wales and Queensland will maintain separate representative offices in the United States. South Australia and the Northern Territory have hired consulting firms to represent them, and Victoria will have a person working out of L.A.

BURRELLE'S

Staying connected overseas

6675
Do you use a fax or computer modem when you travel in foreign lands? If so, you've probably struggled to find adaptors that connect U.S. modular phone plugs to foreign phone jacks. A company called TeleAdapt, (407) 370-5105, offers solutions for international connectivity, including convertors and other tools. There are 37 different jack types worldwide, and TeleAdapt has them all. With prices starting at \$29.99, the adaptors allow you to plug in the phone and your computer/fax simultaneously. If the phone is hard-wired, an "executive telekit" will probably do the trick. Call for more information or to request a catalog.

Frequent Flyer Program News

Here's a round-up of what's happening in the airline frequent flyer programs:

- Northwest. Stay at a participating Holiday Inn or Crowne Plaza and earn 2.5 miles for every dollar spent on lodging. Purchase a WorldVacation package for Asia, Australia/New Zealand, or Europe, and earn 2,500 bonus miles. Change your trip to World-Perks Bank One Visa and earn an additional 2,500 miles (1,000 miles enrollment bonus if you haven't already signed up), USA Today and Inside Flyer, a newsletter, have joined forces to offer an information hotline about airline frequent flyer programs. Messages are up-to-the minute and include information on mileage bonus opportunities, industry news, and award highlights. Calls cost 95 cents per minute by calling 1-900-555-5555.

- American AAdvantage members can earn a 12,000-mile bonus

Hugh
Stroube



Trip Tips

when they fly Cathay Pacific to Hong Kong in business or first class, and 5,000 miles each time someone they refer does so (maximum 50,000 miles). Call (800) 348-3339 to sign up for this program. This is a limited time offer, so act now if you're interested.

- Donating Miles An Award Donation Center Hotline, (800) 333-5937, matches frequent flyer miles with worthy causes needing airline transportation.

Coming soon: The Virtual Office

First virtual reality. Then virtual memory. Now say hello to the virtual office: the office without walls. An increasing number of employers—still a small minority—are allowing, even encouraging, staffers to work at home, on a train, at a client's office, or on the road. With cellular phones and fax-equipped laptops, it's easier than ever to work anywhere. Some trends: Amtrak offers a much sought-after conference room on its Metroliners between New York and Washington, which business people use to meet while en route; and business people hold meetings and perform other duties in hotel lobbies, airline clubs, and restaurants. At Dallas' Mansion on Turtle Creek, one gentleman has used a table in the

restaurant as his office for several years, taking lunch at his "desk" and leaving just before dinner. Not a bad idea, considering it's the town's best dining spot.

New Windstar Southeast Asia Cruise

Windstar Cruises, which operates wind-powered luxury sailing vessels around the world, has introduced a 14-day southeast Asia air/sea/land package to Bangkok and Singapore, with an optional three-day extension to Hong Kong. Price is \$3,795 per person double, or \$4,995 single occupancy, which the line says represents a savings of \$3,420 per couple over the brochure rate. Included: air from Los Angeles, seven-day cruise aboard the Wind Spirit, three pre-cruise nights at the Bangkok Shangri-La Hotel, and three nights at the Singapore Shangri-La. Your travel agent has details.

See New York with a native

Two Manhattanites, Mimi Dalva and Barbara Raynor, offer an off-beat, two-hour "Walking with a New Yorker" stroll, with visits to the island's only 18th century house and the meadows of Roosevelt Island, just a four-minute tram ride away from the city's bustle. The tour meets at 61st Street and Fifth Avenue on Fridays at 10 a.m.—fee is \$15. Call (212) 861-1876 to book.

Destination Australia

A free info-packed magazine about Australia is available by calling (800) 333-0262. The guide tells you what to do and see, and includes practical information on visa requirements, weather, and tours.



Associated Press

With all the trimmings:

Hats off (or should it be a drum roll?) to Jack Pelton of Manhattan Beach, Calif., who stood out among the throngs of travelers at Los Angeles International Airport eager to get away for the Thanksgiving holiday. Pelton, who was en route to Portland, Ore., on Nov. 24, seemed nonchalant about his turkey tiara prior to his flight.

A taste of Christmas: If you can stand the heat, you might want to consider going on the Mendocino Celebrity Cooks & Kitchens Tour noon to 4 p.m. Dec. 12. For \$12 per person, participants will rove around six different Mendocino Coast homes — with kitchen furnishings that range from Victorian to a "llama farmhouse" — sampling holiday appetizers by local chefs. Phone: (800) 726-2780.

There oughta be a law: What's worse than a party full of lawyers? How about a hotel full of them? The Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza in New Delhi, India, is catering to legal eagles with an "Attorneys' Club" floor. Amenities include a lounge with a legal library (including Supreme Court digests, a volume or two of Halsbury Law of England and American Jurisprudence, and tomes on tax, trademark and patent law), a conference room, and a business center. The hotel is just a few miles from the Indian Supreme Court and High Court.

Messiah at the Mission: The Mission San

Luis Obispo de Tolosa in San Luis Obispo invites visitors to a "sing-along" concert of Handel's "Messiah" with the San Luis Obispo Vocal Arts Ensemble on Dec. 19. The ensemble is also staging two concerts Saturday.

Other yuletide events include a Victorian-style celebration 6-8 p.m. Thursday at the Dallidet Adobe and a performance of "The Nutcracker" by San Luis Obispo's Civic Ballet Thursday-Dec. 12. For more information, call the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce at (805) 781-2777.

Old leaders never die:

Answers: a. Next to his mother; b. Forest Lawn-Hollywood Hills; c. Anywhere but Moscow.

Question: Where should Lenin be buried? The leader regarded as the father of the Soviet Union has been on public view for decades in Moscow's Red Square. But as the 70th anniversary of his death approaches on Jan. 21, the Russian government, eager to part with symbols of its communist past, is struggling to find an appropriate spot for him. The mayor of St. Petersburg, Mayor Anatoly Sobchak, suggested that Lenin's body be buried in St. Petersburg near his mother, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported.

Way Down Under:

Christmas in Australia can be a balmy summer holiday — and weather definitely modifies the holiday happening-of-choice. In the remote desert mining town of Coober Pedy in South Australia, worshipers retreat underground to escape the heat at one of five underground churches in town. On Cable Beach, the capital of Western Australia, visitors celebrate the season with a camel ride along wide stretches of sand. And some just put the whole thing off by postponing Yulefest until the cooler months of June or July.

— Mary Forgione

TOUR & TRAVEL NEWS

MANHASSET, NY
WEEKLY 48.000

DEC 6 1993

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Partnership Postponed

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The Australian Tourist Commission's long-awaited announcement on "Partnership Australia," the scheme under which states and the federal government will cooperate in promotions overseas, has been delayed yet again. In June, ATC managing director Jon Hutchison said the plan would be unveiled "within a few weeks." But the announcement was delayed because of the states' concerns about getting fair treatment under the umbrella of the ATC. Minister of tourism Michael Lee was scheduled to make an announcement by the end of November, but an ATC spokesperson said it had been rescheduled for early December.

DEC 16 1993

BURRELLE'S

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Christmas around the world

by Dee Ann Ray 6675

"Why does Santa Claus go down the chimney on Christmas Eve? Because it soots him so well." "What does Santa Claus like to do in his garden? He likes to hoe, hoe, hoe."

Christmas books at your Weatherford Public Library and from the WPLS Bookmobile offer a whole variety of information about Christmas around the world, the music of Christmas, holiday cooking, crafts, and yes, even Christmas jokes.

In Mexico, Christmas is called Navidad and one of the main celebrations is called Posadas, which is a traveling parade lasting nine nights as the people in the group seek a resting place for the baby Jesus, Mary and Joseph; and continue to find the inns are all full.

In China, Christians light their houses with beautiful paper lanterns and their Christmas trees are called "Trees of Light." Santa Claus, known in China as "Dun Che Lao Ren," visits to fill stockings.

In Sweden, Christmastime begins on Dec. 13, which is St. Lucia Day in memory of a brave young woman who helped to feed Christians in hiding during the fourth century. She wore candles on her head to light her way to the people who were hiding in dark tunnels.

One country custom in Spain is the "Urn of Fate." On Christmas night, folks go to the village square. They put their names on slips of paper and place them in the urn. Slips of paper are then drawn out of the urn, two at a time. The pairs drawn are supposed to be best friends for the coming year.

Twelfth Night, which is Jan. 6, is very important to many people in Spain. On 12th night, children put barley in their shoes and put the shoes outside in doorways and on

balconies. The barley is for the Wise Men's camels. In the morning, the barley is gone and candy and gifts are found in place of the barley.

In Australia and New Zealand, Christmas is celebrated in the summertime, and families often celebrate at the beaches.

In Denmark, folks have their big Christmas meal at midnight on Christmas Eve. A special rice pudding is served for dessert. One almond is placed in the pudding and whoever gets it will have good luck for the coming year.

In France on Christmas Eve, children place their shoes in front of the fireplace, in hopes that Pere Noel (Father Christmas) will fill them with presents.

In Norway, the best wheat is saved for Christmas. It is put on poles made from tree branches which make nice perches for birds. A large circle of snow is cleared away beneath each pole. Norwegians say that birds dance in the circle between meals.

Parts of the Norwegian Christmas relate back to earlier days when folks were very suspicious of evil spirits; and started hiding their brooms on Christmas Eve to prevent evil spirits from using the brooms to travel.

Fire shovels and tongs are also hidden so that naughty spirits can't use them. Spruce logs are burned in the fireplace so that the hot sparks will keep witches from flying down the chimney. Lights are left on all night to keep evil spirits away. One bright light is lit in a window to welcome any Christmas travelers.

Whatever your Christmas customs — enjoy your holiday; and enjoy your closest WPLS library and bookmobile all year long!

TRAVEL MANAGEMENT DAILY

NEW YORK, NY
DAILY

FRIDAY
DEC 17 1993

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PARTNERSHIP AUSTRALIA, a joint tourism marketing accord between the Australian Tourist Commission and that country's states and territories, is finally under way after more than a year in the making. Australia's state, territorial and federal tourism officials have signed the pact, which will be funded by those governments. The agreement comes after all but two states -- New South Wales and Queensland -- either closed their North American tourism offices or shifted their marketing in the U.S. to outside contractors earlier this year. With the new program, "we hope to convert the strong interest that consumers worldwide have for Australia into travel," said Bill Baker, the ATC's regional director of the Americas. Surveys show that while consumers rank Australia first or second as a most-desired travel destination, the country's market share is 0.5% of world visitor arrivals, according to federal tourism minister Michael Lee. Partnership Australia is a three-tiered program. Level One, called Base Marketing Support, includes the development of consumer and trade phone service bureaus, data bases and feedback to the states on consumer market trends.

It's Christmas time around the world

Australia, New Zealand

Christmas is a summer celebration in Australia and New Zealand, often observed with a picnic or going to the beach. Children have a six-week summer vacation at Christmas time.

Caroling is popular with both Father Christmas and Santa Claus as the gift-givers to children. Christmas foods include both turkey and plum pudding.

HIBBING DAILY TRIBUNE
DEC 19 1993

MARKET

Qantas Vacations (800-641-8772) is offering five tours that include the 1994 Ford Australian Tennis Open, Jan. 17 to 30. The tours all feature center court seats. Tours include roundtrip economy air from Los Angeles, accommodations at the all-suite **Parkroyal Hotel Melbourne**, sightseeing, transfers and more. Packages range from six to 11 nights and from \$2,395 to \$3,695...The 18th **Adelaide Festival** will take place from Feb. 25 through March 13. The festival will highlight the arts of the countries in its time zone, including the Asian nations. American and European arts will also be represented...The **Kangaroo Road 'n' Rail Pass** (800-423-2880 or 800-551-2012) offers unlimited use of trains and Greyhound, Pioneer and Bus Australia buses for a price of about \$511 (economy) and \$811 (first class) for 14 days. The pass is commissionable...**Ansett's Visit Australia Pass** allows passengers to choose four flights between Australian cities for a price of \$444. The cities available include Adelaide, Alice Springs, Ayers Rock, Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra, Coolangatta (Gold Coast), Darwin, Gove, Hobart, Hamilton Island, Launceston, Mackay, Melbourne, Mount Isa, Proserpine, Rockhampton, Sydney and Townsville. A pass including Perth will cost \$514. A minimum of four flights must be booked; the maximum is eight. All reservations can be made through **Apollo Direct Link** or through **SABRE Total Access**. Agents can also contact Ansett's Travel Agent Information Line at 800-366-1300...**Fraser Island** was recently ranked by the United Nations as a **World Heritage Site** along with other notable sites such as the Grand Canyon and the Great Barrier Reef...**Brendan Tours** (800-421-8446) has revamped and expanded its South Pacific product line. A new 52-page brochure details fully escorted and independent tours, city-packs, modules and self-drives to Australia, New Zealand, Tahiti, Fiji, Western Samoa, Cook Island, Tonga and the Orient.

Fiji Fast

New Direct 767 Widebody Service from LAX

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NAN Sunday 7:30 p.m.	PH 550/312	LAX Sunday 3:25 p.m.

Book your clients on Polynesian Airlines, the carrier serving the South Pacific for nearly 35 years. Stop-overs in beautiful Apia, Western Samoa are available at no additional charge. And remember, our PolyPass program offers unlimited travel for 30 days in the South Pacific at one affordable fare.



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Book your Clients now for our smorgasbord of gourmet delights. It's a mouthwatering opportunity.

HONG KONG

For details and assistance, please call:
The Hong Kong Tourist Association,
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Chicago, Illinois 60601 - 3966.
Tel: (312) 782 3872 Fax: (312) 782 0864

NEWS-TIMES

DANBURY, CT
SUNDAY 45.319

DEC 26 1993

BURRILLE'S

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Travel trend: See how people live

By William A. Davis
BOSTON GLOBE

I was walking along a beach in Fiji one time, absorbed in the glorious Technicolor spectacle of a South Pacific sunset. Suddenly, from behind a palm tree, a muscular young man carrying a long spear and dressed only in a sulu, the abbreviated Fijian sarong, came charging toward me.

Startled — well, terrified to tell the truth — I froze in place, expecting to be skewered like some sort of Melanesian shish kebab. Instead, the spear carrier stopped in front of me and lowered his lance, which I could now see was a two-pronged fish spear.

"Hope I didn't alarm you, sir," he said, with an engaging grin. "I'm going fishing with my mates tonight. I'm late and they're waiting for me."

He took me down the beach and introduced me to his friends, an amiable and hospitable bunch of guys. They taught me a lot about Fiji and a bit about spear fishing, a practical recreational activity

that is one of the ways modern Fijians preserve the traditions — and cuisine — of their ancestors.

As with those of most indigenous peoples, the traditions and cuisine largely revolve around the rhythms and bounty of the natural world.

I left Fiji having learned an important lesson of the road: The peoples who have lived long in a place are as memorable as the scenery they inhabit.

But you often have to look hard to get a glimpse of them being themselves — and it usually helps to have a knowledgeable local guide.

The United Nations has declared this the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples. But not much has happened at the government level to make the world more aware of its indigenous citizens.

One reason for the lack of interest in indigenous peoples is that they are scattered thinly around the planet. There are an estimated 300 million indigenous, tribal or aboriginal peoples left and they

inhabit some 70 countries.

Many live deep in jungles in remote corners of Indonesia, Ecuador, Brazil and New Guinea, but they also are found in not-so-remote parts of the United States, Canada and Australia.

Because of their scarcity, indigenous peoples are becoming tourist attractions, just like endangered fauna such as the mountain gorilla or black rhino — ecotourist attractions.

There is understandable concern that unbridled travel to rain forests and other exotic but endangered environments may only compound the damage already done to most indigenous peoples by the white man's liquor, diseases and diet.

Exposure to tourism can quickly make a sham out of old customs and turn once self-sufficient tribal people into show business performers living off tips and handouts.

Visitors to the Yagua Indians in Peru's Amazonian basin, for instance, are told by tour guides to blow on a conch shell

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ATC Unifies Aussie Regions Under Worldwide Marketing Plan

BY DINAH A. SPRITZER

LOS ANGELES —The Australian Tourist Commission (ATC) put the finishing touches on Partnership Australia, a program that joins the country's six states and two territories under one worldwide tourism marketing umbrella.

Partnership Australia was unveiled last June at the ATC's annual meeting in Sydney, and led to the closing of several North American state and territory tourism offices.

The program, run jointly by the states, territories and federal government, streamlines the marketing and promotion process through the ATC in Los Angeles, Bill Baker, director of the ATC in North America, said.

He added that the program was introduced to make the country's tourism marketing efforts more efficient.

"I think agents will see more business driven into their offices through our new emphasis on tactical marketing. There will be more product to sell because state and territory offices will now have their hands free to work on product development," he said.

Partnership Australia is a tiered program that offers the states and territories three levels of participation, depending on their budgets.

All regions will participate in level one, which features the development of consumer and trade telephone service bureaus and data bases, and includes feedback on consumer and trade market trends.

A new consumer help line, to be launched in February, also is part of level one.

Level two involves materials fulfillment and participation in ATC trade show events, while

development of price and product advertising in conjunction with tour operators.

This new opportunity for cooperative advertising between the states and territories, the federal government and the industry is unprecedented, according to Baker.

Baker estimated that through July, Partnership Australia will generate at least \$1.5

million in price and product advertising.

As for the states and territories, only Western Australia has completely removed its North American representation.

The other states and territories have either maintained their West Coast offices or have replaced them with sales representatives.



Partnership Australia will streamline promotion and marketing efforts for all of Australia's states and territories. Above, Sydney.