

For Six Month Period Ending

Aug 31, 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	Yes ☐	No ☐
(2) Citizenship	Yes ☐	No ☐
(3) Occupation	Yes ☐	No ☐

(b) If an organization:

(1) Name	Yes ☐	No ☒
(2) Ownership or control	Yes ☐	No ☒
(3) Branch offices	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

Ann Black

Vice President

7/15/94

RECEIVED
DEPT. OF JUSTICE
CRIMINAL DIVISION
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INTERNAL SECURITY
SECTION
REGISTRATION UNIT

A . V . I . S . O

AVISO INC.
MARKETING COMMUNICATION

AUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION

CLIPS REPORT

MAY 1994

RECEIVED
DEPT. OF JUSTICE
CRIMINAL DIVISION
96 FEB -5 P 3:33
INTERNAL SECURITY
SECTION
REGISTRATION UNIT

**AUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION
CLIPS REPORT
May, 1994**

U.S. VISITING JOURNALISTS PROGRAM

APR/ MAY	'94	GENTRY (MENLO PARK, CA) "Dining Down Under" by Glen Putman	\$N/A
APR	17	THE SUNDAY OKLAHOMAN (OKLAHOMA CITY, OK) (S-323,763) "Perth, Austrailia is Like Northern California 25 Years Ago" by Kit Snedaker	\$30,692.00
APR	24	ARIZONA DAILY STAR (TUCSON, AZ) (S-174,793) "Out West in Australia" by Sherry Shahan	\$33,808.00
APR	24	SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE (SOUTH BEND, IN) (S-110,000) "Outback Four-Wheelin'" by Jeff Miller	\$26,316.00
APR	24	SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE (SOUTH BEND, IN) (S-110,000) "Walking - Not Climbing - Ayers Rock is Rewarding" by Jeff Miller	\$13,080.00
MAY	'94	FAR EAST TRAVELER "Out of the Way...Out of This World" by Sherry Shahan	\$N/A
MAY	01	SUNDAY DENVER POST (DENVER, CO) (S-428,000) "Beyond the Blacktop" by Jeff Miller	\$105,948.00

CANADIAN VISITING JOURNALISTS PROGRAM

APR	03	NORTH SHORE NEWS (NORTH VANCOUVER, BC) (D-61,554) "Visit Melbourne for an Alternative Aussie Vacation" by David Wishart	\$5,800.00
APR	03	THE VANCOUVER COURIER (VANCOUVER, BC) "Melbourne Paradise for 'Clubber and Tipplers'" by David Wishart	\$6,044.00
APR	25	TRAVELAGE WEST (SAN FRANCISCO, CA) (W-36,000) "Sydney Boasts Variety of Four- and Five-Star Hotels" by David Wishart	\$11,456.00

CANADIAN VISITING JOURNALISTS PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

MAY	02	TRAVELAGE WEST (SAN FRANCISCO, CA) (W-36,000) "Golf Opportunities Abound in Australia" by David Wishart	\$2,452.00
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U.S. PRESS RELEASES / INTERVIEWS

APR	'94	INCENTIVE (NEW YORK, NY) (M-40,000) "ATC Appoints Nigel Bramich"	\$680.00
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APR	'94	JAX FAX (DARIEN, CT) (M-28,000) "Visitors to Australia Receive a Warm Welcome and Fair Price."	\$6,604.00
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APR	03	CALIFORNIAN (TEMECULA, CA) (D-12,300) "Tread Softly" by Laura Bly	\$1,212.00
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APR	03	TIMES-ADVOCATE (ESCONDIDO, CA) (S-46,000) "Tread Softly" by Laura Bly	\$7,172.00
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APR	10	ASBURY PARK SUNDAY PRESS (ASBURY PARK, NJ) (S-229,056) "Doings Down Under"	\$1,528.00
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APR	10	SUNDAY ISLAND PACKET (HILTON HEAD ISLAND, SC) (S-14,500) "Doings Down Under"	\$256.00
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APR	10	TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (TALLAHASSEE, FL) (S-78,790) "Doings Down Under"	\$520.00
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APR	11	TOUR & TRAVEL NEWS (MANHASSET, NY) (W-48,000) "Qantas Vacations and ATC Team On Tours" by Mark Roberti	\$11,824.00
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APR	11	TRAVEL AGENT (NEW YORK, NY) (W-52,132) "Hutchison Tackles False Perceptions" by James Ruggia	\$25,688.00
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APR	17	NEWS (GREENVILLE, SC) (S-142,766) "Doings Down Under"	\$1,368.00
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APR	18	TRAVEL WEEKLY (NEW YORK, NY) (BI-W-21,198) "Tourist Office Offers Hot Line"	\$2,656.00
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APR	21	TRAVEL MANAGEMENT DAILY (NEW YORK, NY) "Winning the Right"	\$1,540.00
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U.S. PRESS RELEASES / INTERVIEWS (CONTINUED)

APR	24	BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE (BOSTON, MA) (S-812,021) "Lions Camel Cup"	\$3,396.00
APR	24	BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES (LEVITTOWN, PA) (S-74,591) "Australians Gearing Up for Darwin Beer Can Regatta"	\$376.00
APR	24	BURLINGTON COUNTY TIMES (WILLINGBORO, NJ) (S-49,449) "Australians Gearing Up for Darwin Beer Can Regatta"	\$300.00
APR	24	INTELLIGENCER - RECORD (DOYLESTOWN, PA) (D-44,211) "Australians Gearing Up for Darwin Beer Can Regatta"	\$356.00
APR	24	SUNDAY POST - CRESENT (APPLETON, WI) (S-75,000) "Doings Down Under"	\$1,136.00
APR	25	TRAVELAGE WEST (SAN FRANCISCO, CA) (W-36,000) "Distinctive Properties Featured at Trading Post" by Lyn Hikida	\$10,580.00
APR	25	TRAVEL AGENT (NEW YORK, NY) (W-52,132) "Good Things Come In All Packages" by James Ruggia	\$97,232.00
APR	28	TRAVEL WEEKLY (NEW YORK, NY) (BI-W-21,198) "New Qantas Promotion Features Seven- to 10-Day Packages" by Laura DelRosso	\$30,292.00
MAY	'94	HARFORD BUSINESS LEDGER (ABERDEEN, MD) "Doings Down Under"	\$352.00
MAY	'94	TRAVEL SMART (DOBBS FERRY, NY) (M-15,000) "10-Day Vacation Time"	\$N/A
MAY	01	NEWS - TIMES (DANBURY, CT) (S-46,000) "Doings Down Under"	\$312.00
MAY	01	VINDICATOR (YOUNGSTOWN, OH) (S-136,458) "Down Under"	\$588.00
MAY	02	TRAVELAGE WEST (SAN FRANCISCO, CA) (W-36,000) "ATC Launches \$9-Million Ad Campaign"	6,952.00
MAY	08	DESRET NEWS (SALT LAKE CITY, UT) (S-66,004) "The 1994-1995 Version of 'Destination Australia'" by Kathryn Clayton	\$548.00

U.S. PRESS RELEASES / INTERVIEWS (CONTINUED)

MAY 22 DAILEY TIMES - CALL
"Take a Quick Trip to Australia" **\$3,244.00**

CANADIAN PRESS RELEASES / INTERVIEWS

MAR 26 DAILY SENTINEL REVIEW (WOODSTOCK, ON) (D-11,075)
"If in Australia, Enjoy Festivals" **\$400.00**

MAR 27 ADVOCATE (VICTORIA, TX) (S-41,000)
"Spend Weekends Down Under, Mate" **\$636.00**

APR 05 AGENT CANADA TRAVEL MAGAZINE (VANCOUVER, BC) (M-10,700)
"Qantas' New State of Itneraries" **\$296.00**

APR 07 CANADIAN TRAVEL PRESS WEEKLY(TORONTO, ONTARIO (M-13,00)
"'Weekend To Weekend' Tours Offered By Qantas" **\$2,824.00**

APR 08 DAILY SENTINEL REVIEW (WOODSTOCK, ON) (D-11,075)
"Australian Connection" **\$48.00**

APR 08 DAILY TOWNSMAN (CRANBROOK, BC) (D-4,500)
"Fly, Drive Australia, Mate" **\$304.00**

APR 09 THE LETHBRIDGE HERALD (LETHBRIDGE, AB) (D-28,257)
"Going Down Under" **\$924.00**

APR 10 THE VANCOUVER COURIER (VANCOUVER, BC)
"Northwest Link Speeds Service To Eastern U. S."
David Wishart **\$1,272.00**

APR 14 TRAVEL COURIER (TORONTO, ONTARIO) (M-5,000)
"Second Annual North American Travel
Manual Released by ATC" **\$724.00**

APR 16 THE EXAMINER (PETERBOROUGH, ON) (D-27,927)
"Down Under for 10 Days" **\$436.00**

OBSERVER (SARNIA, ON) (D-24,600)
"Down Under Packages Pushed" **\$312.00**

APR 17 THE TORONTO SUN (TORONTO, ON) (D-260,000)
"Phone for Advice on Travelling Down Under"
by Percy Rowe **\$328.00**

APR 21 CANADIAN TRAVEL PRESS (TORONTO, ONTARIO) (M-13,000)
"ATC Updates Trade Manual" **\$1,696.00**

U. S. PHOTO / INFORMATION ASSISTANCE

MAR/'94	ISLAND MAGAZINE (SANTA BARBARA, CA) (BI-M-170,000)	
APR	"Lord Howe Island; Australia's Genteel Paradise"	
	by Jan Morris	\$504,844.00
MAR '94	WORLD TRADE MAGAZINE (NEWPORT BEACH, CA) (M-60,000)	
	"Aussie Appeal"	
	by Eric J. Adams	\$68,996.00
MAR 14	TRAVELAGE EAST (NEW YORK, NY) (W-28,697)	
	"Riding Australian Rails on 'Spirit of the Outback'"	
	by David Knibb	\$3,736.00
APR '94	JAX FAX (DARIEN, CT) (M-28,000)	
	"Global Touring Enters 11th Year Providing Americans with South Pacific Programs"	
	by Donna Attra	\$4,272.00
APR 10	LOS ANGELES TIMES (LOS ANGELES, CA) (S-1,515,220)	
	"Australia's Land of Sand"	\$37,168.00
APR 13	DAILY MESSENGER (CANADAIGUA, NY) (D-15,180)	
	"Aussie Holiday"	
	by Pete Banko	\$2,772.00
APR 17	LOS ANGELES TIMES (LOS ANGELES, CA) (S-1,151,220)	
	"Australian Tourist Commission"	\$2,476.00
APR 24	SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE (SOUTH BEND, IN) (S-110,000)	
	"Australian Adventuring"	\$4,644.00

CANADIAN PHOTO / INFORMATION ASSISTANCE

APR 16	TIMES - COLONIST (VICTORIA, BC) (D-81,000)	
	"Australia: The Rock, It's a Tourist Trap and a Sacred Site"	
	by Catherine Foster	\$18,996.00

U.S.
VISITING JOURNALISTS PROGRAM

dining down under



GLEN PUTMAN

Snorkling at a cove off Hayman Island, Great Barrier Reef

Glen Putman discovers that Australian cuisine has gone way beyond shrimp on the barbie. The food in Australia certainly fooled me. As far as I know, I didn't have one bite of kangaroo (or skoppys, as the Australians call them), and nary a smidgen of crocodile, snake or emu touched my lips. Aussie meat pie? No way.

What I did enjoy on a recent trip was an incredible cornucopia of native Australian fish and shellfish, lamb, vegetables and fruits, local cheeses and more — all lovingly prepared by a cosmopolitan brew of foreign chefs who have emigrated from France, Switzerland, Japan and the United States. This was all washed down with the world class Australian wines that are finally beginning to get the recognition they deserve. All the gold medals in Australia are not won for swimming and tennis.

Frankly, I was expecting Australian fare to be a spin-off of the bland offerings most usually associated — incorrectly — with the food in England. What I got instead was a sophisticated cuisine and culinary style reminiscent of the best any California chef could concoct, enhanced with European flair and distinct Pacific

Rim accents.

Dietmar Sawyere, a 30-year-old Swiss who is executive chef at the Park Lane Hotel in Sydney, is a typical apostle of the "new Australian cuisine." On an early morning tour through Sydney's ultra-high tech fish market, Sawyere explained how he chooses the freshest and finest quality Tasmanian salmon, sea scallops, mud crabs, Nambucca River oysters, harbor prawns, squid and other delicacies prepared in the hotel's extraordinary Gekko restaurant.

Sawyere, whose parents are both chefs, began his career at 16 in London, and

at age 19 was named Young Chef of the Year and the Savoy Hotel's Best Young Chef. Before coming to Australia in 1987, Sawyere worked in New Zealand, where he was twice named Chef of the Year. After sampling his peppered tataki of tuna and salmon steamed in Chinese cabbage, I can see why. The Park Lane Hotel is ideally located opposite Hyde Park with sweeping views of Sydney harbor and the city skyline.

The Observatory Hotel, opened in 1993, is the latest addition to the Orient-Express Hotels group, which operates the Hotel Cipriani in Venice, the Lodge at Vail and nine other ultra-deluxe properties around the world. In the Observatory's Galileo Restaurant and Orient Cafe, chef Kit Chan, the only woman in Australia who is executive chef at a five-star hotel, spins magic into wonders like grilled blue eye cod with onion and butter mint fondue and Thai crab cakes with snow peas. The 100-room hotel features a beautiful indoor pool under a ceiling of twinkling lights recreating the constellations of the Southern hemisphere. CDs can be borrowed to play in the immaculate guest rooms that feature marble baths, sash windows and CNN news, a welcome connection when you are on the other side of the world.

Surprisingly, the only place I came close to having a shrimp from the barbie was at Doyle's at Watson's Bay, a huge local hangout where Sunday brunch can last from 11 AM until after 3 PM (try the Barramundi, an excellent local fish). The view of Sydney across the harbor is wonderful, as is fifth generation owner Peter Doyle's Hunter Valley Endless Summer chardonnay.

In the Hunter Valley, a two-hour drive from Sydney, the wine makers say they have the perfect combination of soil and climate to produce the highest quality wines. Ian and Merralea Scarborough, owners of Scarborough Winery in the valley, spend part of each year in California. They ship their grape picking equipment to the Bay Area and rent it to Napa Valley winemakers, whose harvest season is opposite that in Australia. Over dinner at Peppers, a charming 47-room country house with sweeping views of the valley, we enjoyed a selection of wines from McGuigan Brothers (cabernet-merlot) and Tyrrell's (pinot chardonnay) with the excellent cuisine of chef Jean-Marc Pollet, who was born in Calais and has worked in some of the world's top hotels in Monte Carlo, Geneva and Paris. Our menu included fresh river yabbies (similar to crayfish) and a whole Tasmanian salmon encased in rock salt and cracked open at the table. Delightful.

Tiny Tamburlaine Winery offers a program with Peppers where guests can actually pick the grapes in the vineyard and then help hand press them at the winery. A barbecue lunch and wine tasting follow, conducted by Mark Davidson, the personable owner. A couple of miles up the valley, chef Robert Molines Presides over Robert's at Pepper Tree, a unique restaurant furnished with antiques and set in an original settler's slab cottage built in 1876. Molines uses a wood-fired oven to produce his excellent cuisine, which includes char-grilled quail, stuffed calamari and roast suckling lamb with pinot noir glaze. A French Algenan, Molines worked in Nice and Cannes before coming to Australia. While his Australian wine list is extensive, this Frenchman serves champagne in lieu of a local sparkling wine.

Off the coast of North Queensland, the Great Barrier Reef is one of the great natural attractions in the world. Hayman, one of the leading hotels in the world, is a mega-deluxe resort in the nearby Whitsunday Islands, and the food and wine at the Chef's Table at Hayman, hosted by executive chef Jean-Marie Pougnet, are worth the trip. Pougnet, a Frenchman who trained in France, Switzerland and the United States, simply stuns the score of selected guests who join him once a week at a long, candle-lit table set in the resort's huge

kitchen. For about \$55 per person (wines are extra), the diners are lavished with the likes of ravioli de fois gras, glazed veal sweetbreads, John Dory on a bed of fennel and lamb loin encased in puff pastry. Incredible, when you realize that the 31-acre resort is the only business on the tiny island. Virtually everything is prepared on site (ask for a tour of the pastry kitchen).

After their grand dining experience at Hayman, a few lucky guests can sleep it off in some of the most spectacular suites ever constructed. Each of the 11 penthouses is individually themed and styled to resemble a Moroccan hideaway, a grand English home, an Italian palazzo and a sun-bleached Grecian villa. Other penthouses suggest Japan, France and Southern California, and there is something for every taste. Penthouse decor includes priceless vases, original paintings and rare antiques. The standard rooms are very large and comfortable. If you do nothing else at Hayman, take the spectacular scenic flight over the Great Barrier Reef and Whitsunday Islands in a small seaplane. The highlight of the flight is the landing just off Whitehaven Beach. After you wade ashore, you can enjoy the most secluded picnic imaginable.

Last bite: Qantas is said to be considering offering kangaroo meat on international flights. The taste is considered "excellent," but some Aussies are concerned. "We can see all those American wildlife campaigners worrying," reads one report. But many Australians I talked to consider the prolific skippys a scourge, since they feast on farmers' crops.

And wouldn't you know it: in Sydney there's a place called Sam's Designer Hot Dogs. I passed. ■

for more information

AUSTRALIA TOURIST COMMISSION (510) 865-5100

THE OBSERVATORY HOTEL, SYDNEY (800) 237-1235

HAYMAN, GREAT BARRIER REEF (800) 366-1300

PARK LANE HOTEL, SYDNEY (800) 338-1338

PEPPERS GUEST HOUSE, HUNTER VALLEY (800) 687-7200

THE SUNDAY OKLAHOMAN
APRIL 17, 1994 p. 1

Perth, Australia Is Like Northern California 25 Years Ago



Settled more than 100 years ago as a mission, Holy Trinity is now a bed and breakfast inn.

— Copley News Service

By Kit Snedaker

Copley News Service

Until you've flown over it, four hours from one coast to the other, it's impossible to picture Australia. Oz, as the country is sometimes called, is almost the size of the United States.

Flying from anywhere on the east coast of Australia to Perth, geographically Los Angeles Down Under, is like flying from New York west to Los Angeles. The difference is, Perth looks like a small, clean Los Angeles or maybe San Francisco.

Even though it's Australia's Wild West, there wasn't a single pair of cowboy boots on anyone. No hitching posts, stagecoaches or bucking broncos, either.

This sparkling town, the state capital of western Australia, is closer to Indonesia than it is to its own east coast.

I knew I was in the West, though, because people talked about the big gold rush at the end of the last century. Dozens of wineries crush and bottle in the nearby Margaret River region, and the food is an exquisite mix of Asian and European.

The new Esplanade Hotel in Fremantle, the capital's port, looks as though it's been there forever.

Actually, it was spiffed up in 1987 when Australia defended the America's Cup won in San Diego.

The whole town of Fremantle was spiffed up for that occasion and still looks as though someone is going to tie a bow around it any minute. Cafes line the streets, a big bookstore fronts on Market Street, and the mother of all markets stands on the corner of Henderson and Market. Everything from T-shirts to tea, boots to bananas, spills out in bins under one sprawling roof.

Another symbol of the West is the Benedictine monastery just north of the city at New Norcia. Like the California missions, Holy Trinity was set up by Spanish monks in 1846 to teach the aborigines and ended up as a self-contained village.

When the school ran out of funds, the monks offered the dormitories as a sort of bare-bones B&B. Guests get full board and lodging, with unbelievable peace and quiet. If they like, guests may join the brothers at prayers six times a day, but

it's not required.

Rooms, single and twin, are simple; board is home-cooked and includes monastery bread baked now by The Gourmet Grocer, Kingsley Sullivan. Sometimes he commutes a couple of hours from his store in Perth to New Norcia at 2 a.m., bakes and is home in bed by 8 a.m. or 9 a.m.

"Perth is just getting a food mentality," Sullivan said. "When my wife, Chrissie, and I started, no one even wanted goat cheese."

Sullivan persisted, making his own mayonnaise, rolls, brownies, muffins and meat pies. In just 2½ years the store has become a foodie destination.

"When I heard the monastery was going to close its bakery I raced up there and cut a deal with them. Then came back and learned to make my own sourdough starter from grapes," Sullivan said.

He doesn't add any yeast or butter.

Everything from macadamia-nut oil (from Queensland, up north) to Moroccan pickled lemons, cactus paddles and Italian mascarpone gets house room on his shelves.

Sullivan is right about Perth's new food mentality, Gary Jones, chef/owner of San Lorenzo restaurant discovered.

He refused to gild his dishes with pine nuts and sun-dried tomatoes just because they were the hot ingredients of the moment.

Instead Jones, a stubborn Yorkshire man who apprenticed in French kitchens, created his own Asian/European mix.

Salt cod pie, his menu reads, garbure of venison with duck confit and bacon, twice-cooked Kervella goat cheese soufflé, Moroccan fried chicken with couscous, spicy tomato sauce and chickpea chips — the combinations are dazzling.

Even the staid Sheraton in Perth kicks up its culinary heels. Peter Tischhauser, chef for the River Room, serves crocodile ravioli in a cream sauce, buffalo and emu.

What makes Perth most familiar to Americans, however, is its wine country. The Margaret River region, south of Perth, is like Northern California 25 years ago.

Australians are Americans with a funny accent. Sydney

wants to be New York; Perth is a young San Francisco. Just turn things around, go south from there, and it's wine country. This part of Australia is the Wild West tamed, familiar and still exciting.

If You Go There

Getting there: Qantas has direct flights to Sydney daily, and either Ansett Airlines or Australian Airlines fly east to west.

Continental also flies to the east coast for west coast connection.

Staying there: Hotels are generally priced about the same as they are here, although the Australian dollar is about one-third less than the American.

The Lodge, Grange Road, Nannup, WA 6275. Rates from \$70 Australian for a single to \$130 for a queen. Dinner is \$35.

Gilgara Homestead, RMB 300, Margaret Rover 6285. Rates from \$100 for a single to \$320 per couple for weekends.

The Monastery Guesthouse, New Norcia, WA 6509. Rates, \$40 per night including full board.

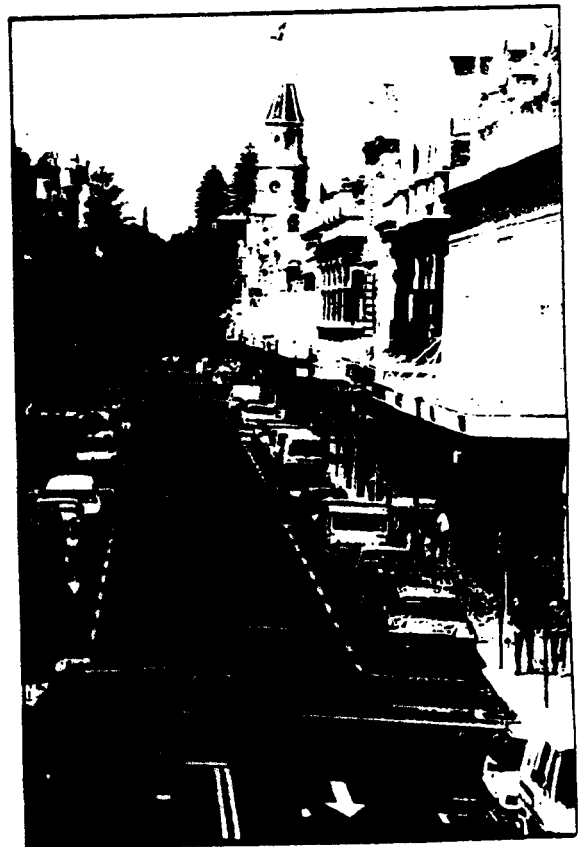
Esplanade Hotel, corner Marine Terrace and Essex Street, Fremantle, Western Australia 6160. Rates from \$150.

Getting around: Driving on the left isn't as tough as it sounds. Although there is great public transportation, trains and planes, renting a car and driving around makes the most sense.

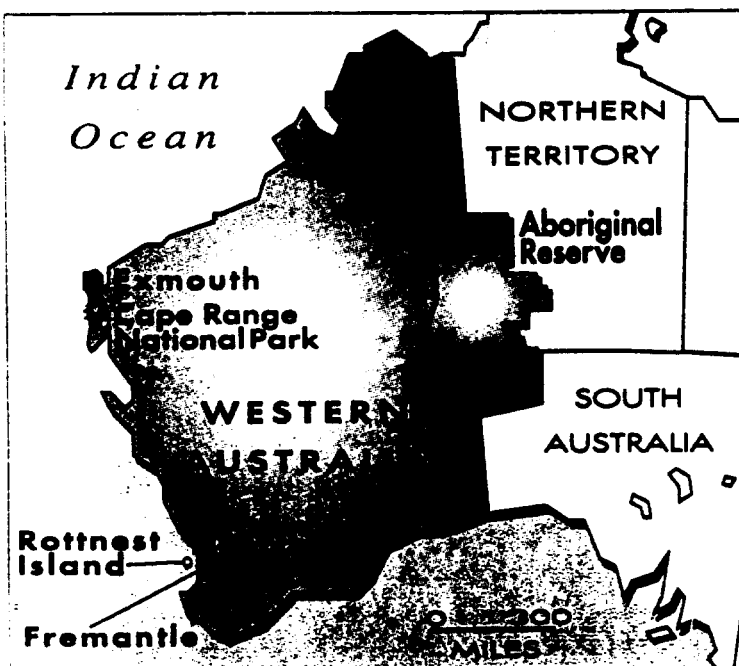
Out West *in* AUSTRALIA



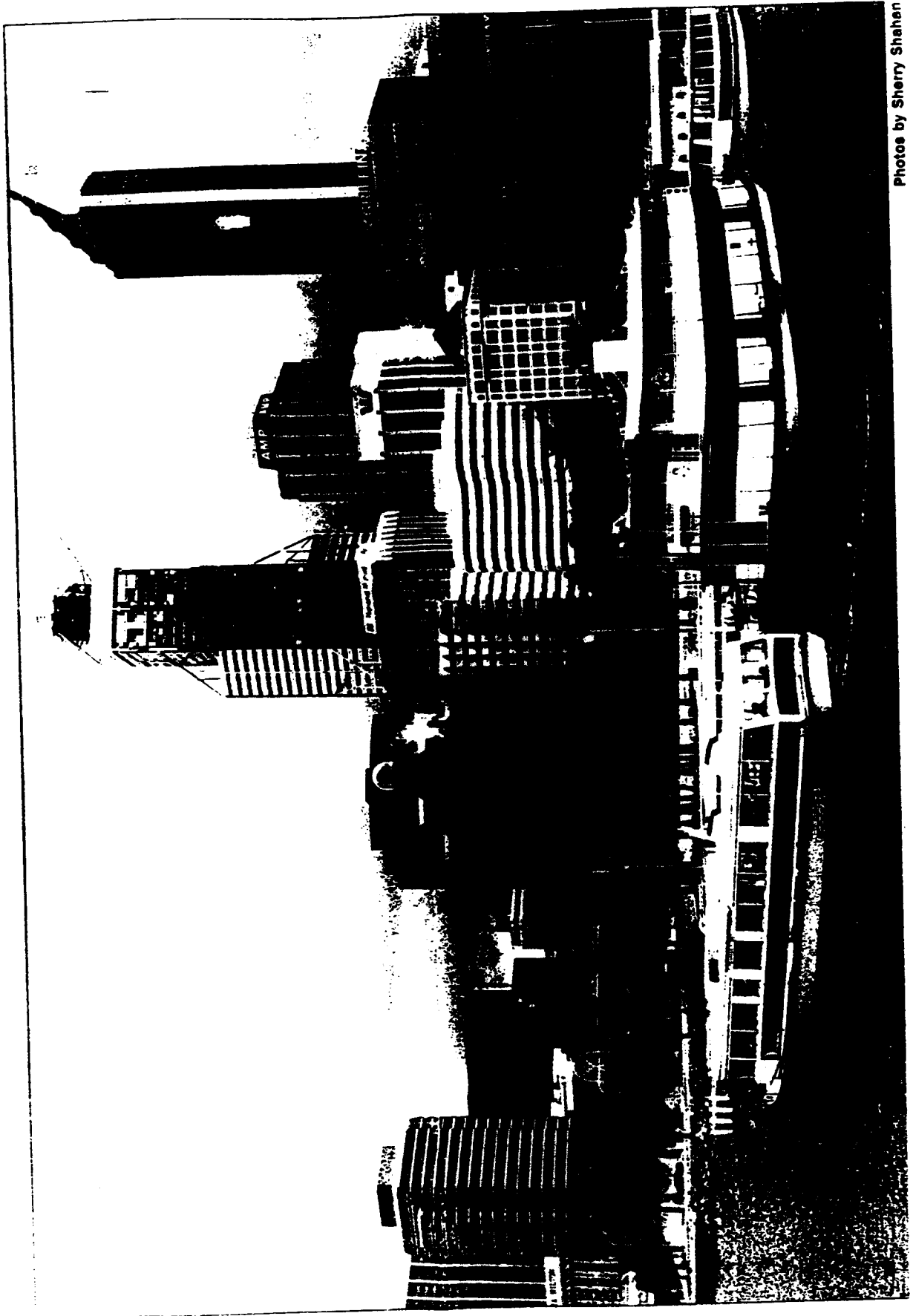
Rottneest Island is an hour's ferry ride from Fremantle



Fremantle got a multimillion-dollar face lift for the 1987 America's Cup Challenge.



Judy Margolis, The Arizona Daily Star



Photos by Sherry Shahan

Perth, the capital of Western Australia, is the commercial and political headquarters for an area four times the size of Texas

From cities to parks, it's exotic countryside

By Sherry Shahan

© 1994

'Does the water in the toilet (tub, basin, sewer) swirl clockwise?"

"Do cyclones in the Southern Hemisphere circulate clockwise?"

The answer is, "Too true, mates."

Believe it or not, those are two of the most common questions asked of cabbies Down Under. Which is one of the reasons we travel to the world's largest island or its smallest continent. It's just different enough to be a curiosity. Yet they speak the same language (sort of), use a currency called dollars, and the water's safe to drink, even if it does swirl clockwise.

Western Australia is one-third the size of the entire continent, or nearly four times the area of Texas. Few are prepared for the awesome size, a 7,750-mile coast that encompasses lifestyles and industries as varied as the environment.

To say there's something for everybody sounds like a TV commercial. Except that it's too true.

The capital city, Perth, straddles the Swan River about 10 minutes from the Indian Ocean, as the kookaburra flies. Perth claims the title of "the most remote capital in the Western world," a notion that's reinforced by the fact that it's closer to Jakarta, Indonesia, than it is to the Australian national capital of Canberra.

The first Europeans known to land in Western Australia were 17th-century Dutch navigators blown off course by the Roaring Forties. It wasn't until 1829 that Capt. Charles Fremantle took possession of what cartographers knew as the west of New Holland, all in the name of King George IV.

Later that same year, Perth was chosen as the administrative center, named after Sir Charles Murray, member of Parliament of Perth in Scotland. And, as they say, the rest is history.

Less than two blocks from the downtown center of high finance and commerce, Barrack Street Jetty connects skyscrapers with a string of colorful kiosks on the waterfront. Funky eateries like Mrs. Mac's Famous Port Pies entice the cholesterol-deprived with sausage- and egg-stuffed pastry, a must for those interested in local flavor.

For a journey through 150 years of Western Australian history, locals and visitors alike take the 144-hour cruise downstream to Fremantle, the multicultural port tucked between the Swan River and Indian Ocean. A descriptive commentary is provided en route, as cameras capture offshore views of historic sites such as the CSR Sugar Refinery, a massive brick structure built to create employment during the Great Depression.

Millionaires Row continues to elicit a chorus of "aahs," especially when figures in the \$30 million range are banded about. Fremantle itself underwent a multimillion-dollar face lift in anticipation of the Americas Cup Challenge in 1987.

Paint was slapped on colonial- and European Gothic-style architecture; repairs were made to weathered limestone blocks and baroque iron lace. Restaurants seemed to open overnight to cater to throngs of international enthusiasts.

Today boutiques and art galleries pepper the one-way streets, competing for attention with old-fashioned pubs and alfresco cafes. There's a distinctly European mien on "cappuccino strip" where, as the name implies, the air is thick with the aroma of freshly ground coffee.

The Round House is the oldest public building in Western Australia, originally a 12-sided limestone civil gaol (jail) for short-term prisoners and ticket-of-leave men breaking curfew. Inmates were allocated a half pound of soap each week for washing "body linen," and the daily food allowance for both males and females was 1½ pounds of bread and 1 pint of gruel, or 2 pounds of bread.

Down the road apiece, the Maritime Museum is a cluster of renovated stone structures containing barnacle-encrusted treasures and other buccaneer remnants.

A visit to Fremantle wouldn't be complete without a stroll along Fishing Boat Harbour, where the America's Cup Defence headquarters was located. Find a place in the sun and watch yachts sail circles around fishing boats. Complete the picture by munching from a steamy tub of fish and chips.

From Fremantle, it's about an

hour's ferry ride to Rottnest Island, so named because of its inhabitants, nocturnal marsupials called *quokkas* that were thought to be strange rodents. Dutch navigator Vlamingh described the quokka as "a kind of rat as big as a common cat, whose dung is found in abundance over all the island." A conservative estimate places the quokka population somewhere between 10,000 and 12,000. Though most are camera-shy, some will leave the shade of the wattle to pose for snapshots. But only if the price is right: a bit of tucker (food).

The main settlement at Thomsom Bay dates back to the 1840s, resembling the Mediterranean with simple stone cottages in warm lime-wash hues. The compact but comprehensive museum presents a time line of Rottnest history, including samples of flora and fauna, and salt-corroded artifacts from the world's southernmost coral reef, watery grave to some 700 vessels.

Because no cars are allowed on Rottnest, bicycles remain the most popular (and practical) mode of transportation. A must-see is Cape Vlamingh, on the eastern tip of the island, where lunar limestone cliffs shelter snow-white beaches, and turquoise water splashes through blowholes. It's amazing to peer across the sea and realize the next chunk of land is Africa.

For those with time to spare - at least two days - consider the short flight to Exmouth, where Cape Range National Park remains an off-the-beaten-path destination. Spend the day with Crocodile Dunder look-alike Neil McLeod, owner and solo operator of Ningaloo Safari Tours (maximum 11 passengers).

A fleet of *galahs* often escorts his four-wheel-drive vehicle to Mangrove Bay, where a boardwalk winds through exposed roots to Bird Hide. Birders have been known to spend hours in the wooden enclosure peering through binoculars to study raptors (such as osprey and kestrels) and waders (such as ruddy turnstone and whimbrels).

McLeod keeps a small outboard motorboat hidden in the scrub for exploration of Yardie Creek Gorge, saltwater trapped by a sandbar. There, black-footed wallabies and feral goats navigate ledge, and ospreys build massive nests

or "stacks." Wild fig plants send roots as smooth as cables dozens of feet down sheer cliff walls.

For information: Contact the Western Australia Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1210, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067. (310) 557-1987; Captain Cook Cruises, No. 3 Pier, Barrack Street Jetty, Perth, WA 6000. Australia; Ningaloo Safari Tours, Neil McLeod, P.O. Box 203, Exmouth, WA 6707, Australia. /

Sherry Shahan is a free-lance writer from Templeton, Calif.

Outback four-wheelin'

When traveling in the deserts Down
Under, don't forget the big rig

STORIES AND PHOTOS BY JEFF MILLER



This trusty set of wheels was
christened Tonka



Famous Avers Rock is climbed by hundreds every year despite the fact that the they're going
down the other side of the cliff.

Clambering up into the huge four-wheel-drive vehicle on the first day of our Australian 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 "land-cruiser" 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 buffaloes — 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-driven four-wheel-drive adventure into Australia's Red Center, it was obvious Alice Springs (pop. 25,000) in the Northern Territory was the perfect jumping off point. Located near the exact center of the country and the only major town for 500 miles 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 (Kate Tjuta) lived up to their advertising, it was our discovery of three special places accessible only by four-wheel drive — 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 four-wheel-drive adventure with a bold first stop — Alice's visitors center. 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 (100 miles 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 plateaus, reminded us of New Mexico and Arizona, but here the palette was dominated by a fiery red soil, forged in a landscape furnace that can reach 120 degrees.

Sixty miles from Alice, the pavement faded to a wide, relatively smooth dirt road. At Hermannsburg — an aboriginal community with traveler 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 onto 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 rainforest — most notably the Red Cabbage Palm (the seedlings resemble cabbages) and the palmlike 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 four-wheel-drive-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. Twenty-five miles down the line we found the Ewaninga rock carv-

ings, one of the best surprises of the entire trip.

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 merrily around tufts of prickly spinifex grass. Blue mallee bushes and pine treelike 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 for nearly half a day.

Back in Alice we decided that now, as "experienced" four-wheel drivers, it was time for a longer trip — a two-day journey to Uluru via Kings Canyon. While the four-wheel driving — 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 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 accommodations). 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 many warnings 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 step-pingstones.

The hardest going is at the beginning, when the trail snakes up a rugged, rubble-strewn hillside to the top of the canyon. This climb not only gave us great views of the surrounding desert, 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 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 like 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 scaring 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 visitors NOT to climb it. 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 traveled — 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 have 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, rpms and gear ratios.

Walking — not climbing — Ayers Rock is rewarding

6675 - uw travel

The T-shirt says it all:
"Nganana tatintja Wiya —
Anangu never climb."

People come from all around the world to climb Australia's famous Ayers Rock, the largest monolith in the world. Most accomplish the feat proudly without realizing they're going against the wishes of the Aboriginal Anangu tribe which has revered the rock they call Uluru for more than 300 generations.

Where now international visitors unwittingly create a daily ribbon of disrespect to the top, Aboriginal ceremonial men once tread. In the Anangu tradition, climbing Uluru was done only so a pole could be planted to announce the beginning of certain sacred rituals.

Today, the Anangu share responsibility of Uluru and the surrounding Uluru National Park with the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. While the Aborigines have given visitors permission to climb, they prefer you don't.

The Anangu want people to understand there is much more to be seen, experienced and learned from Uluru than can be found in just climbing it. They see the rock and the entire landscape as a three-dimensional blackboard that tells them of the past, present and future. This is part of the tribe's cultural and religious belief — Tjukurpa — that there are strong relationships between people, plants, animals and the physical features of the land.

Tjukurpa is the traditional law/knowledge that explains existence and guides daily life. Tjukurpa ancestral beings created all the waterholes, plants and wildlife for the survival of the Anangu. The adventures of the Tjukurpa beings are stamped on the earth — every hill, river, mountain or grove of trees can be traced back to one episode or another in their lives.

SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE

APRIL 24, 1994

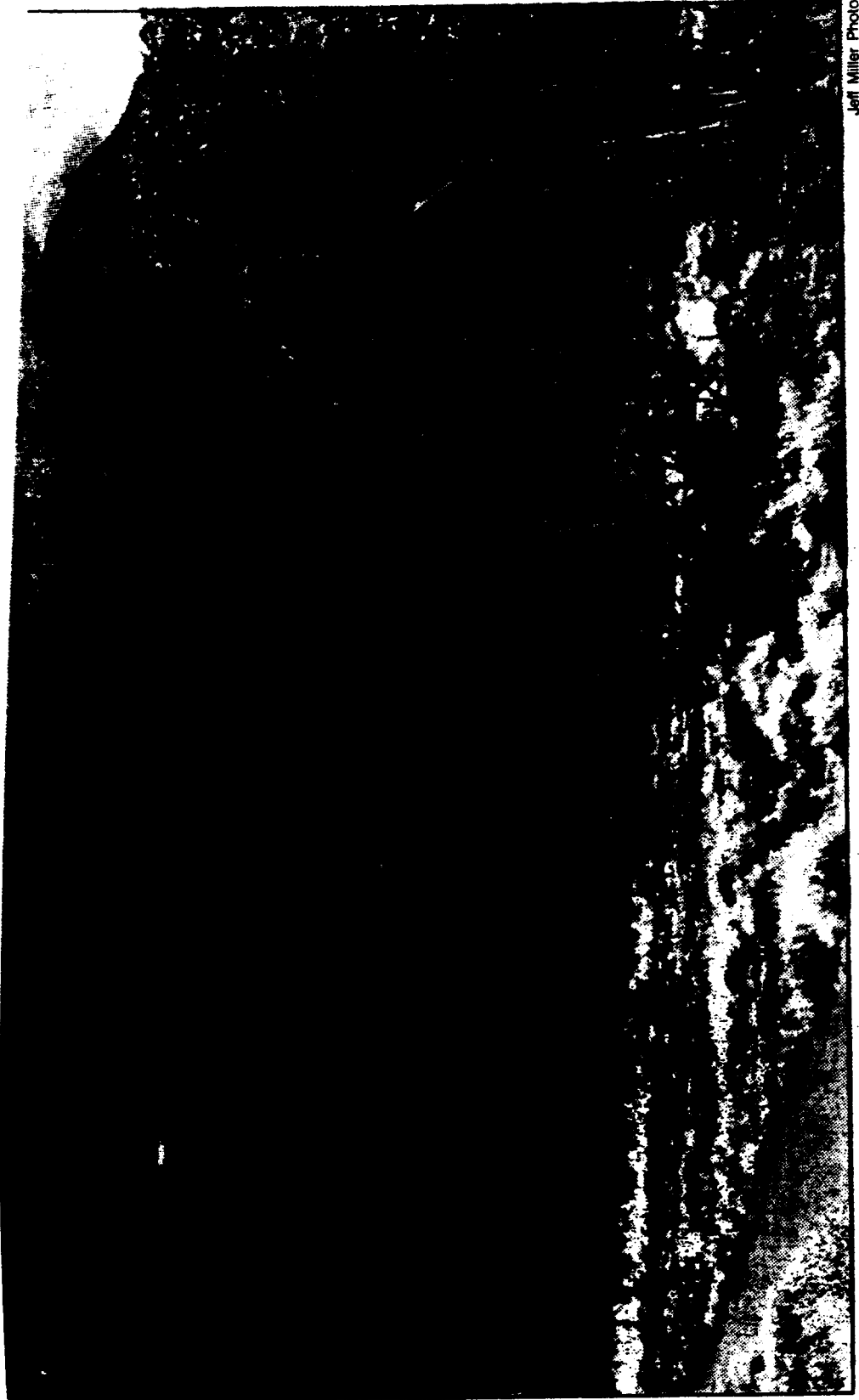
p. 1

The adventures are everywhere: A stand of desert oaks south of the rock are the Liru, or poisonous snake men, sneaking up on the Kuniya, or python men, of Uluru. Some deep grooves on the rock's face are the tracks left by the python men fleeing across its surface. And a cluster of holes on the southwest side of Uluru were made by spears where the Liru attacked the Kuniya.

To climb such a rock in such a place only to see the view is something the Anangu find hard to understand. In one brochure it says, "The route taken by Mala (hare-wallaby people) men to reach the top of Uluru is spiritually very important to Anangu."

"Visitors call this route 'the climb,' and it makes Anangu sad to see people swarming over the tracks of our ancestors simply to get to the top. When we see visitors doing this, they remind us of ants, so we call them Minga. Although Anangu have given permission for visitors to climb

C



Jeff Miller Photo

The alternative to walking up Uluru is walking around it. The three- to four-hour walk is a wonderfully spiritual journey of beauty and discovery.

HILL

From Page E10

Uluru, we would prefer it if people chose to respect the Tjukurpa instead."

At the ranger station there is a section titled, "We Never Climb," which includes various statements from Anangu elders on not climbing. "That's a really important sacred thing that you are climbing," Tjamiwa, an elder, says. "You shouldn't climb. It's not the real thing about this place. The real thing is listening to everything."

This can best be understood and appreciated by a walk around Uluru. While there are excellent

free guided tours along the base, you'll have to walk on your own if you want to go completely around. The five and a half mile track takes about three to four hours, but is definitely worth it.

On the walk around, visitors come to understand Tjamiwa's "the real thing is listening to everything." Away from the carpark, the land and wildlife take over. Crickets come alive, birds chatter in foreign tongues, and prickly tufts of spinifex grass sway in the wind. Stands of black-barked bloodwood gum trees, mulgas and desert oaks offer their green leaves to the blue sky. The light sounds of the wind in the trees harmonize with the deeper tones

made by breezes playing over the rock.

Eons of wind and weather have sculpted magnificent formations. Erosion at the moist base eats up and into Uluru to form caves and overhanging ceilings which eventually collapse as jumbled boulders. The caves and crevices whisper to the explorers in all of us, and some hold Aboriginal paintings, such as "Kurpanngu," a huge evil dog, and "Mala Man," a powerful ancestor. If it's been raining, cascading waterfalls more than 300 feet high tumble and roll down the graceful rock shoots of Kanju Gorge. When the water is gone, dark algae stains create silent ghost falls.

Found along the walk are four sacred sites that are fenced off and picture taking is prohibited. As one brochure explains, the Anangu believe these sites are "too important to have their relationship with all the surrounding land ignored, removed and isolated in a photograph."

As visitors finish the walk, they realize the experience was worth every step. In a place of such grand proportions, the individual becomes smaller, merges with the monolith that fills the horizon. It's easy to sense why the Anangu view the rock as sacred — Uluru seems to absorb the soul.

AUSTRALIA

OUT OF THE WAY... OUT OF THIS WORLD



Cape Range is a remote coastal fringe that persists as the most westerly protrusion of Australia, and has seen the faces and footsteps of Europeans longer than any other place on the continent. European vessels would sail east across the Indian Ocean to the west coast of this weathered landscape, then navigate north for the rich spices of the East Indies. Many a captain laid a rueful course too close to shore, only to become a mournful statistic on coral reefs and sandy shoals.

A corrugated road of red earth forms a bumpy route through Cape Range, declared a national park in 1964. The dramatic folds of this arid bushland remain an off-the-beaten-path destination — a snagged stone landscape that opens up to coastal plains and windswept sand dunes. The road passes scores of termite hills, each bringing to mind an oversized, overturned ice cream cone sprinkled with cardamon. Spiky spinifex and a coastal heath provide Euros, the large gray-rust kangaroos of such climes, with abundant tucker. Emu and wild turkey plod across the plains, sharing space with feral camels.

No one describes such a scene better than poet A.B. "Banjo" Paterson:

The shining plain that is said to be
The dried-up bed of an inland sea,
Where the air so dry
and so clear and bright
Refracts the sun with a wondrous light...

It's best to plan a couple of days to fully explore the Cape's limestone ranges and red rock canyons, which cover some 50,000-plus hectares. Those who would rather not take their vehicle into the scrub should consider signing up with Ningaloo Safari Tours, owned and operated by Crocodile Dundee look-alike Neil McLeod. The 10-hour, 230-kilometer round-trip is more awesome than any history course (and without the ominous pop quiz).

A fleet of sulphur-crested cockatoos cruise beside the 4WD vehicle to Mangrove Bay, where a boardwalk pushes through exposed picket roots to a bird hide. Ornithologists have been known to spend hours in the wooden enclosure with binoculars fixed on raptors such as osprey, kestrel, and spotted harrier, and waders such as curlew.

Text by Sherry Shahan

whimbrel, and ruddy turnstone — not to mention enough other species to exhaust the most ardent list-maker. If you weren't a birder when you arrived, you will be by the time you leave.

Not far from Mangrove Bay, Milyering Bicentennial Visitor Centre offers a comprehensive overview of the region via videos, graphic displays, and three-dimensional models. The buildings themselves are enthralling since architects and engineers harnessed natural resources to provide structures with minimal impact on the environment. There are no noisy generators, no smelly fumes, no unsightly tanks — no small feat.

'All at once I heard myself screaming madly. I had two wretched crabs hanging on to my foot and dozens of others coming on.' (M.J. Butler)

Further on down the track, McLeod keeps a small outboard motorboat hidden under a wattle for exploration of Yardie Creek Gorge — a mini-Grand Canyon of russet rock underlined by a course of saltwater. All in the group agree that their first visit to Yardie Creek is a rite of passage. Wild figs send cable-like roots a dozen meters down to a waterline of fossilized oyster shells. Striped rock wallabies peek out from behind rocks, making all of us pause to wonder how they could have navigated the sheer walls.

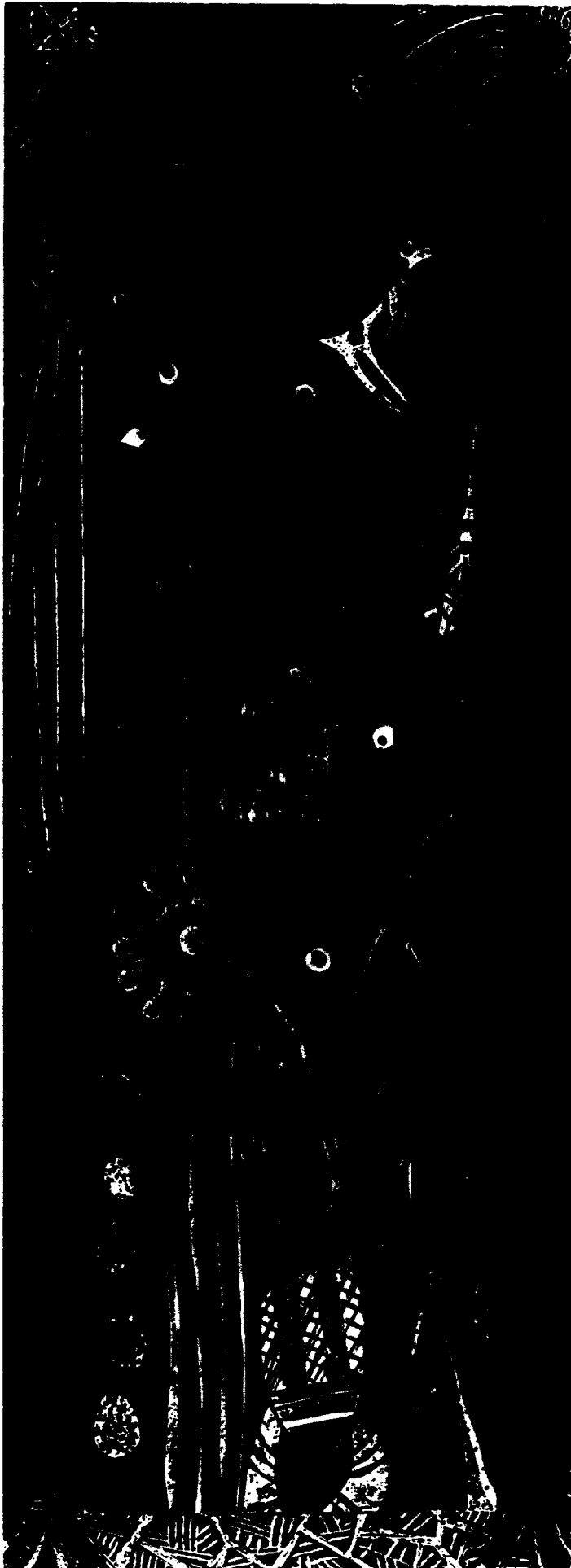
Osprey construct massive nests or "stacks," so spectacular in their simple beauty that it is difficult to look elsewhere. Then something draws our attention even higher — a chorus of birds, each an instrument blending into an unseen symphony. All the while, McLeod's "bonzer" tales offer a sense of pioneer history — a raw intimacy with the unyielding vastness of this continent.

Parched and ravenous after a morning's exploration, we find satisfaction in a picnic fit for triathletes. From inside McLeod's basket emerge loaves of crusty bread; corned beef; and a variety of cheeses, fruits, and vegetables — the onion, of course, is roasted — and his mum's homemade boiled fruit cake — one bite is worth a thousand words.

A scone's throw from Yardie Creek Gorge lies Ningaloo Marine Park — Western Australia's largest marine park, teeming with no less than

Illustrated by Dee Keaney





500 species of fish and 200 species of building corals. Since it's closer to shore than any other coral reef in the world, it's much more accessible than the Great Barrier Reef.

The 4WD pulls onto a stretch of blinding white sand at the base of windswept dunes. The hour is rapidly approaching high tide, the time when green turtles lumber ashore to lay their eggs. We join another small group in search of turtle tracks, which resemble the scalloped marks left by tractors.

Two turtles soon command center-stage, playing to an audience who groan with empathy as each sand-filled flipper is laboriously lifted. An hour passes before the "egg chamber" is completed — a vertical pit excavated with the turtles' hind flippers.

"Why is she crying?" someone asks. "Does it hurt to lay eggs?"

"Not to worry," those in-the-know reply. "It's just the salt solution that flushes her eyes when she's out of the water."

We learn that clutches laid in cold sand at the beginning of the season take up to twelve weeks to incubate and produce male hatchlings. Those laid in warm sand incubate in half the time and produce female hatchlings.

Our last stop is Vlaming Head Lighthouse, just outside the park. Located on the northernmost tip of the cape, the lighthouse provides both a panoramic view and insight into the harsh lifestyle of lighthouse keepers and their families. The following paragraph was excerpted from a letter written in 1914 by Mary Jane Butler, wife of lighthouse keeper Arthur Butler.

From inside McLeod's

basket emerge loaves

of crusty bread: corned

beef: a variety of

cheeses, fruits, veg-

etables — the onion.

of course, is roasted.

"The first evening of our arrival I decided to rest on a couple of rugs with my five month old baby, thinking too, how lovely and cool the verandahs would be during the hot months. All at once I heard myself screaming madly. I had two wretched crabs hanging on to my foot and dozens of others coming on. No-one ever travelled quicker than I did to the safety of a bedroom."

Before returning us to our familiar air-conditioned accommodations, McLeod pulls out the road for a moment. We stop, look, and listen. What do we hear? Nothing. That's the point.



Jeff Miller

Story by **Jeff Miller**

**Australia's brick-red
outback opens its
fiery heart to a
pair of modern-day
explorers cruising
the untamed land
in a tough diesel
called Tonka**



ONWARD:
Four-wheel-
drive track to
Palm Valley,
above, wades
through
streams, climbs
over boulders
and skirts sand
pits.

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 my wife and me like a magic fingers bed.

The vehicle would get five grunts on television's "Home Improvement." They don't call it a "land-cruiser" 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 buffaloes. 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, hardworking friend. But on the dry, paved roads of Alice Springs, it was hard to imagine we ever would need such an all-terrain monster.

When we decided on a 4WD adventure into Australia's famous Red Center, Alice Springs (population 25,000) in the Northern Territory was the logical choice for departure. Located near the exact center of the country and the only major town for 500 miles in any direction, Alice offered not only a

- Safe travel in the outback/TT
- If Alice Springs is your base/ST
- Climbing considerations/ST

good base for day trips but a major tourist attraction within a day's drive as well: Ayers Rock.

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

We started our 4WD adventure with a bold first stop: Alice's visitors center. It's a must for self-drivers, not just for detailed maps but to learn the

Please see **AYERS** on **TT**

Australian outback trip unveils tropical oasis in desert

AYERS from Page 1T

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 100 miles southwest of Alice. We started on paved road — Aussies call it bitumen (pronounced BITCH-a-men) — and quickly became accustomed to 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 in a landscape furnace that can reach 120 degrees.

Sixty miles from Alice, the pavement faded to a wide, relatively smooth dirt road. At Hermannsburg, an Aboriginal community with traveler 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 were thrown from side to side like balls in a pinball machine.

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 the natural bridge made it a tightrope fording. As I slowly pulled onto the ledge, water grabbed the tires. One careless move, and Tonka would be a houseboat. I laughed at the thought of the rental company trying to bill my credit card

The next day we headed southeast on another 4WD-only track. There were no boulders to climb or rivers to ford, just a wide dirt swath of washboard ruts and mudholes. Twenty-five miles down the line, we found the Ewaninga rock carvings, one of the best surprises of the entire trip.

There, 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 sprouted merrily around tufts of prickly spinifex grass. Blue mallee bushes and pine-tree-like desert oaks shaded small rodents and lizards.

Swallows, wrens and martins chattered; crickets throbbed a welcome. Imaginative listeners could have heard the light breeze whisper tales of 300 generations of nomadic Aborigines who had lived and died in this area.

Wrapped around everything was a sense of ageless serenity, 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, barred circles and animal tracks. Thousands of years old, these haunting symbols, and their peaceful home, held us in their thrall 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 half highway/half dirt road wasn't as dramatic as the routes of the previous two days, Kings Canyon made up for it.

Only four hours' drive from Alice, the canyon is part of Watarrka National Park and begs 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 but demands only average fitness. It's made easier by the layered formations of the rock, which create natural stepping stones.

The hardest going was at the beginning, where the trail snakes up a rugged, rubble-strewn hillside to the top of the canyon. The climb provided not only great views of the surrounding desert, but also constant reminders that we're 40 years old.

At the top, the trail was well marked by unobtrusive blue arrows and enhanced with good interpretative signs. After catching our breath, we headed 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 that they look like they've been sliced by a giant cleaver. With no guard rails and a playful breeze, most people laid on

their stomachs and inched to the edge to peer over.

We could have spent an entire day wandering around the canyon's sandstone domes or sitting near the rim and scaring ourselves with the heights, but it was time to head to Uluru, a half-day's drive south.

For at least 10,000 years, the Anangu Aborigines have revered Uluru, the largest monolith in the world. The rock is so sacred that the Aboriginal caretakers now ask visitors not to climb it. After learning this at the ranger station, we chose not to join the ribbon of disrespect inching up the rock. Instead, we took the road less traveled, walking around the base in about three hours, and were better for the choice. Few saw the sights we saw that day.

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

A few days later, a four- to five-hour drive on bitumen returned us to Alice Springs and a farewell to Tonka. We had grown fond of our muscular friend. Initially, he had been intimidating, but actually proved 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, rpms and gear ratios.

Jeff Miller is a freelance writer based in Denver.



Susan Burdick
PALM VALLEY: Reservoir supports lush vegetation.

\$50,000.

No worries, however. Sure-footed Tonka carried us through.

Palm Valley in Finkle Gorge National Park was startling: a tropical oasis in the heart of a desert. Permanent underground water and protective cliffs have nurtured and sheltered remnants of a prehistoric rainforest, most notably the red cabbage palm (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, picnicked beside the stream and then drove leisurely back to Alice.

Be prepared for problems in outback

SUNDAY DENVER POST
p. 4

ALICE SPRINGS, Australia — Travel in Australia's harsh outback should never be taken lightly. Daytime temperatures can reach 120 degrees in summer, while nights can dip below freezing in winter. In the wet season, 4WD roads can become impassable, and flash flooding is a danger. In the dry, standing water is rare and dehydration is a constant threat.

Settlements — and service stations — are far apart, and drivers must plan accordingly. This applies equally to those who plan to drive on dirt tracks and those who will stay on main highways.

If you travel 200-300 miles inland from practically any coastal spot, you're in Australia's outback. Here are important considerations before venturing there.

■ Pretrip preparation

Members of the American Automobile Association are entitled to reciprocal rights with Australia's state automobile associations, which have excellent route maps, resource materials and roadside services.

Preparation for a self-drive outback adventure starts before you leave the rental-car lot. Take time to thoroughly check the vehicle with the agent. Inspect the tires and make sure the spare is full of air (recheck it every time you stop for gas). Find out where the jack and other tools are stored. Have the agent explain when and how you should engage the 4WD.

After you've adjusted to driving on the left side of the road and shifting with your left hand, make your first stop the local visitor center or automobile club. Either can supply you with route maps and current road conditions. If not, try the nearest gas station.

Pack your vehicle as though you plan to get stuck or break down. Take plenty of food, water and clothes appropriate for desert extremes. If your vehicle doesn't have a flashlight, buy one at the local supermarket or hardware store; it will be invaluable if you're stuck overnight. Nonsmokers should carry matches to start a fire for warmth.

Call ahead to your hotel and tell them the route you're taking and when you expect to check in. If you have trouble, someone will know where to look for you.

As you depart, check to see you have a full tank of gas (for those really big 4WD vehicles, make sure the subtank also is full).

■ On the trip

If a stretch of off-road track looks especially nasty, stop your 4WD and walk through it. Make sure your vehicle has enough clearance over boulders and check deep-water fords with a stick — as long as you aren't in crocodile country. If you are, avoid getting out of your vehicle around fords, where crocs prey on the unwary. Either take the chance your vehicle will get through, or wait until another 4WD comes along and consult with that driver.

■ Breakdown advice

If you get stuck — "bogged," the Aussies say — or break down, the first rule is: Stay with your vehicle. Immediately begin conserving water and rationing food.

Remain as far from the elements as possible but don't use the inside of your car as shelter. A vehicle conducts heat, and it's better to use the shade it provides. Build a shelter by using a blanket, clothes or vegetation as a lean-to against one side of the vehicle. If this isn't possible, dig a trench under the car and lie in its shade.

When preparing a bed, keep in mind that the ground is the hottest spot during the day and the coldest spot at night. Elevate your bed atop available clothes, suitcases, vegetation or even the vehicle's seats, if they're removable.

Clothes protect from desert extremes. Even during summer, remain fully clothed to minimize perspiration and dehydration. The best clothes are a long-sleeved cotton shirt, cotton pants, wide-brimmed hat and sturdy shoes.

Dehydration can be the biggest danger. Stay out of the sun and minimize physical exercise.

Water can be found in unlikely spots. At night, condensation can accumulate on grass or the roof and hood of your car. Bases of cliffs and hollows in rocks can collect water, as do roots, trees, vines and plants. If there's a dry creek bed nearby, dig along an outside bend for residual moisture.

Resource: For more details, read "Safe Outback Travel" by Jack Absalom (Five Mile Press, \$7.95).

Dry season best time to visit Down Under

Getting there: Alice Springs has regular air service from any large city in Australia via the nation's two major domestic carriers, Australian Airlines (now merged with Qantas) and Ansett Airlines.

Weather: The seasons are reversed Down Under; our summer is their winter. In the Northern Territory, there are two distinct seasons: wet and dry. The Wet is from November to April, when 4-wheel-drive roads can become impassable 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 70s and 80s — although nights can dip below freezing in July and August.

4-wheel-drive routes: The

IF YOU GO

routes described in the accompanying article are enough off the beaten track that they give a sense of adventure and solitude.

If your vehicle breaks down or gets stuck, however, the routes are well-enough traveled that sooner or later someone will come by and offer a hand. Helping others is vital in the outback and is part of Australia's concept of "mateship." Avoid driving after sunset, when animals become road hazards.

Supplies: When preparing for a trip, take plenty of food and water and adequate clothing for the desert's extreme temperatures.

Rental vehicles: Alice Springs has numerous car rental companies, including such international

firms as Hertz. Depending on the time of year, type of 4-wheel drive and length of rental, the daily rate can range from \$70 to \$110.

Before you leave the rental car lot, make sure you and the agent go over the vehicle thoroughly.

Most 4-wheel-drive vehicles are manual transmission because proper use of gears is important to the pastime. With a little concentration — and the fact that outback roads aren't crowded — it's relatively easy to drive on the left and shift gears with your left hand.

Fuel: Gasoline is expensive and is sold by the liter (about 4 liters to the gallon). Filling a large 4-wheel-drive tank (which holds 90 liters) can cost \$46-\$60. The vehicle in this article was filled three times during its travels. It's a good

idea to check the spare tire each time you get gas.

Accommodations: Like any tourist town of 25,000, Alice Springs has hotels, motels and resorts at all levels and prices.

Kings Canyon is serviced by just one resort, Frontier Kings Canyon, which has a gas station, general store, cafe, two bars, two restaurants, two swimming pools, camping area, bunkhouses and motel units. Motel units per room per night range from \$71 to \$131.

At Uluru, Yulara is the service village for the national park. The village has a service station, numerous shops, stores and an excellent visitor center.

It also incorporates the Ayers Rock Resort, which provides various levels of accommodation from campsites to motel and hotel units. Prices per room, per night can range from campsites at \$43 to five-star rooms up to \$149.

Further information: Contact the Australian Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1200, Los Angeles 90067; 1-800-333-0262.

— Jeff Miller

Tribal members frown on climbing

AYERS ROCK, Australia — The T-shirt minces no words: "*Ngan-ana tatintja Wiya* — Anangu never climb."

People come from around the world to climb Australia's famous Ayers Rock, the earth's largest monolith. Most accomplish the feat proudly without realizing they're going against the wishes of the Aboriginal Anangu tribe which has revered the red rock they call Uluru for more than 300 generations.

Where international visitors now clamber upward, Aboriginal ceremonial men once trod. In the Anangu tradition, Uluru was climbed only to plant a pole to announce the beginning of certain sacred rituals.

Today, the Anangu share responsibility for Uluru and the surrounding national park with the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. While the Aborigines have given visitors permission to climb, they would prefer they didn't.

Much to be seen

The Anangu want visitors to know that there is much more to be seen, experienced and learned from Uluru than can be found in climbing it.

To climb Uluru only to see the view is something the Anangu find hard to understand.

At the ranger station, a display entitled "We Never Climb" includes statements from Anangu elders about climbing. Says one, Tjamiwa: "That's a really important sacred thing that you are climbing

You shouldn't climb. It's not the real thing about this place. The real thing is listening to everything."

This can best be understood and appreciated by a walk around Uluru. There are excellent, free guided tours along the base, but you have to walk on your own if you make the 5 1/2-mile, three- to four-hour circuit completely around the rock.

Magnificent formations

Away from the parking lot, the land and wildlife take over. Crickets strum, unfamiliar birds chatter and prickly tufts of spinifex grass sway in the wind.

Stands of black-barked bloodwood gum trees, mulgas and desert oak offer their green leaves to the blue sky. The hum of wind in the trees harmonizes with deeper tones made by breezes playing over the rock.

Eons of wind and weather have sculpted magnificent formations. Erosion at the moist base eats upward and into Uluru to form caves and overhanging ceilings which eventually collapse in a jumble of boulders.

Some caves and crevices whisper to the explorer in each of us, and some hold Aboriginal paintings, such as the evil dog "Kurpanngu" and the powerful "Mala Man." If it has rained, cascading waterfalls more than 300 feet tall tumble down the graceful rock chutes of Kantju Gorge. When the water is gone, dark stains of algae create ghost falls.

Along the walk, four sacred sites

are fenced off, and photography is prohibited. As one brochure explains, the Anangu believe these sites "too important to have their relationship with all the surrounding land ignored, removed and isolated in a photograph."

At circuit's end, most walkers judge the experience to be worth the effort. By leaving the crowds behind, the individual becomes smaller and merges with the monolith. And in the solitude, it becomes easy to sense why the Anangu view the rock as sacred.

— Jeff Miller

**CANADIAN
VISITING JOURNALISTS PROGRAM**

Visit Melbourne for an alternative Aussie vacation

David Wishart



TRAVEL TIPS

THE TOURIST route here is to visit Sydney for a couple of days then head up to the Great Barrier Reef resorts, stroke the crocodiles south of Darwin and visit Ayer's Rock in the middle. Not bad, but there is an alternative.

This place — Melbourne. If Sydney has the feel of Toronto then Melbourne is like Montreal. It is old, fashionable and comfortable but is still capable of finding the energy to lure the Australian Grand Prix away from Adelaide and \$600 million for a delightful new city centre attraction, the Southgate Centre.

This is a handsome development on the far side of Yarra River which has given locals a place to sit and look across the water at the city skyline, a mixture of Gothic revival and gleaming skyscrapers.

It offers an appealing selection of places to sit, to drink and to dine, and one hopes that our Expo land redevelopment may yield something as appealing.

I liked Walter's Wine Bar, which features 20 wines by the glass every day, and I could not resist a Scotchman's Hill pinot noir from Geelong

Once a gold-rush town (more gold came through here than out of California and Alaska combined), the locals now like to look at life through the bottom of a wine glass.

Hence the Original Aussie Wine Bar in Fitzroy, a Bohemian section just 10 minutes from the city centre by streetcar.

This is a place for serious tipplers and features the world's first sparkling burgundy bar. Bush tucker is the ticket here with kangaroo prosciutto, emu cotechino and crocodile quenelles.

Nightlife is epic, as you'd expect in the home town of Dame Nellie Melba, Olivia Newton John, Kylie Minogue and Barry Humphries, with an average of 30 stage plays and 20 classical concerts every week.

Sport is big too, starring the Melbourne Cup horse-racing classic.

Which is our cue to get out of town, for below Melbourne lies Port Phillip Bay fringed by Victoria's famous sand-belt golf courses, superb links where you'll hardly notice the green fees but be knocked over by the warm welcome in the clubhouse.

Don't miss Portsea, a delightful little seaside town where well-off Melbourne folk have cottages. When the cook's not on duty they dine at the elegant Delgany Country House Hotel, but for ordinary mortals there's good fish and chips, and inexpensive rooms, at the Portsea Hotel on the beach.

Linger here for water sports of all kinds, great walks and browsing among the shops of nearby Sorrento, which has another three pub-type hotels where a couple can get a room and breakfast for about \$50.

The bars here are good crack, full of holiday-makers and Aussie fun.

A car ferry offers a 40-minute ride across the Rip to the other side of the bay, and to Queenscliff, which has enormously wide streets such as I have not seen since Bulawayo, where Cecil Rhodes had them laid out so a wagon and team of eight oxen could turn

around.

Sure enough, on the wall of the Vue Grand Hotel was a faded print of a wagon and six bullocks on Queenscliff's main street.

The Vue Grand, heartily recommended for food, service and ambience, is one of several ornate hotels which have been restored to their century-old elegance.

This was where Melbourne merchants used to come for the week-

end, presumably before they started to build their own places at Portsea, and play golf.

Barwon Heads Golf Club charges just \$35 for a great course and a warm welcome. At Anglesey nearby, kangaroos roam on the links, although it is not considered sporting to look at them through prosciutto-tinted glasses.

Then it's an easy drive through rich wool and wine country to Melbourne, which has easier connections for domestic and international flights now that Qantas has taken over Australian Airlines and merged it all into one carrier.

Melbourne paradise for clubbers and tipplers

THE VANCOUVER
COURIER
APRIL 3, 1994

Laid-back Aussie city well-worth a trip off the beaten tourist track

MELBOURNE — The tourist route here is to visit Sydney for a couple of days then head up to the Great Barrier Reef resorts, stroke the crocodiles south of Darwin, and visit Ayer's Rock in the middle.

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Sydney Boasts Variety of Four- and Five-Star Hotels

By DAVID WISHART

SYDNEY — One of an agent's basic concerns for the client — where to stay — is easily dealt with when booking a trip to Australia's premier destination city.

Sydney has a good selection of hotels at all price levels offering 30,000 rooms to 1.5 million overseas visitors annually. One-third of Sydney's rooms are in the four- and five-star category, including the new ANA Hotel Sydney, a 37-story tower overlooking the majestic harbor.

The hotel touts its 573 rooms as the largest in the city, and each has a harbor view, a large tub with a separate shower, 40-channel TV with satellite service and a personal safe.

Guests on the top six Executive Club floors receive butler service and access to a clubroom offering a panoramic harbor view, breakfast, afternoon tea and evening drinks and snacks.

As befits a property aiming at the corporate market, the hotel has a large business center, a Clark Hatch health club and the biggest pillarless ballroom in the city. It has five restaurants and 85 chefs on the total staff of 600. Unkai, the only formal

Japanese restaurant in the Rocks area, is on the top floor. The restaurant and its sushi bar and private tatami rooms have superb views.

The Rocks Brasserie is on the first level, while the other three restaurants are in other parts of the complex.

One is the Rocks Teppanyaki, another is the Harts Pub which serves snacks and the third is a beautifully restored heritage house, Lilyvale Cottage, built in 1845. This fine-dining restaurant has just 58 seats spread over a number of small rooms on several floors, including an attic with a separate lounge area. Lilyvale Cottage succeeds in evoking the feel of pioneer Australia, and the food will not disappoint.

Concierge Team

The ANA Hotel Sydney has a strong concierge team led by Michael Moran. Rack rates start at A\$300; executive floor rooms are priced starting at A\$350. Contact 800-262-4683.

Sydney Harbor is huge, and with projects such as the proposed casino and hotel under discussion, the area behind the bridge is likely to see a lot more action. The first bay in this direction is Darling Harbor, the location for the 645-room Hotel Nikko Darling Harbor. This hotel, close to the downtown business district and the exhibition center as well as a host of tourist attractions, is a good choice for the leisure traveler or the businessperson seeking good value.

For a big hotel it has a friendly staff and agreeable design touches. The nostalgic, ocean-liner theme includes art deco lights and port-holes.

Rooms are large and well-equipped with desks, tables, arm-



The Regent of Sydney

chairs and individual air conditioning. Groups use a separate entrance, located in a handsomely restored heritage building. There also is a lounge for early arrivals.

The hotel complex also includes a refurbished pub, the Dundee Arms, one of the oldest in Sydney. The Nikko has just one restaurant, the Brasserie, which has an enthusiastic following for its acclaimed lunch buffet, and in the evenings the terrace also offers traditional Australian BBQ fare.

Rack rates start at A\$160. Contact 800-645-5687.

Two hotels in the Rocks area which are attracting attention are the Park Hyatt and the Observatory.

The waterfront Park Hyatt claims its 90% occupancy rate is the highest in Australia. Its 159 guest rooms are large, luxuriously equipped and offer butler service; most have balconies. They are completely sound-proof when the doors are closed, but clients using the balconies are subject to the noise of frequent trains passing almost overhead on the Sydney Harbor Bridge.

Rack rates start at A\$415. Contact 800-233-1234.

Domed Lobby

The Observatory, an Orient-Express hotel, is a 100-room property that cost A\$850,000 per room to build — the most expensive in Australia. It is indeed quite spectacular starting with the domed lobby which is a feature of a period Australian home.

Everything is just steps away on rich rugs and marble floors — the Drawing Room with its antique fireplace, walnut furniture and tapestries, and the Globe Bar, where the bookcases actually contain rare editions, unlike some hotels that

buy their books by the yard.

The Galileo restaurant is pre-sided over by Kit Chan, Australia's only female executive chef at a five-star hotel. The Orient Cafe does Asian-style food.

One surprising feature is the 60-foot-long pool and health club.

Rooms are superbly spacious, comfortable and decorated in great detail. Rich tapestry curtains have rope-tasseled tiebacks, and the colonial-style windows open for fresh air. All rooms have VCRs and CD players; suites have faxes. There are 27 individual design styles, and the marble bathrooms have oversized tubs, heated towel racks and separate showers. There also are in-room safes, slippers and umbrellas.

General Manager Patrick Griffin, once the youngest hotel manager in Britain, came to the property from the Hotel Como in Melbourne. "We are here to provide people with what they want, and nothing is too much trouble for our staff," he said. At the Observatory, the staff smiles a lot, there is no background music (in other properties it can be annoyingly loud) and the bookmarks read, "We have carefully marked your page."

Rack rates start at A\$340. Contact 800-237-1236.

Grand Dame

The Regent, for 11 years the grande dame of Sydney hotels, has answered the competition with frequent refurbishments, maintenance of standards and a realistic rate card. For example, room rates start at just A\$210, and a harbor view is A\$315 — a very good value considering the Regent has a superb location almost on the harbor and close to the shopping and business districts, ferries and trains.

It has been maintained so well that a client could be forgiven for thinking the lobby was new, and the reception staff is very well-trained. As Wolf Hengst, president of Regent International Hotels, said, "Superior service is not a goal, it is a requirement."

The 596 rooms are luxurious, most have panoramic harbor views, and bathrooms are large and well-equipped. Each floor has a steward.

There are six restaurants, including Kable's, which has won many awards, and a health club with two exercise rooms. Executive suites have twice the space of regular rooms and offer fax machines. There also is a business center.

Contact 800-545-4000

TRAVELAGE WEST
MAY 2, 1994

Golf Opportunities Abound in Australia

SYDNEY — Golf is catching on as a tourist activity in Australia, according to David Saunders, managing director of Koala Golf here.

"It used to be that people came here to sightsee, and some still do," said Saunders, "but more and more travelers are looking for an active holiday. Some come to play golf every day while others are happy with the odd hit, just to try Australian courses."

Either way, Koala Golf can help them out, offering land packages that include meet-and-greet service, transfers, meals, pre-booked tee times, transportation to and from golf courses, and golf club and shoe rentals.

Land Packages

Three-day land packages in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Gold Coast, Brisbane, Cairns and Perth are priced starting at A\$810 per person, double.

Custom tours and group bookings also are available.

Saunders said that while there are many public and resort golf courses open to visitors, Koala Golf gives clients access to several private clubs, including Sydney's New South Wales course and the Royal Melbourne.

Contact the company in Sydney at 61-2428-2911 or fax 61-2428-

1676. Koala Golf FIT packages also can be booked through Qantas Vacations; packages must be purchased in conjunction with international air on Qantas or a minimum five-night hotel booking through Qantas Vacations. Contact 800-641-8772.

— David Wishart

**U.S.
PRESS RELEASES / INTERVIEWS**

INCENTIVE
APRIL 1994

The Australian Tourist Commission
appoints **Nigel Bramich** to head the
commission's incentives and meetings
market program. 6675

JAX FAX
APRIL 1994

6675

Visitors to Australia receive a warm welcome and fair prices

The Australian government is committed to providing visitors to the 2000 Olympic games with fair prices for everything from hotel accommodations, to taxis, restaurants and the Games themselves.

"From the beginning of the bid process, ensuring equitable pricing and easy access to the Games has been an important consideration," said **Bill Baker**, *regional director, the America's of the Australian Tourist Commission*.

Part of Australia's winning bid included well-conceived provisions to allow athletes and spectators alike excellent opportunities to attend the Games. "This philosophy was reflected in the united commitment from the tourism industry to fair pricing," said Baker.

Members of the **Australian Hoteliers Association (AHA)** and the **Motor Inn and Motel Association** have agreed to limit accommodation prices during the Games. Retail and hospitality industries have also agreed to abide by a special code that will require them to provide value and quality service. Spectators will be able to buy tickets to Olympic Games in Sydney for as little as \$10.

Sydney offers international visitors a range of accommodations and services from five star to mid-range and budget travel.

"In all classes, Sydney's hotels offer value for money, with excellent service and the warm welcome for which Sydney is renowned," said Baker. "A sense of fair play



Photo—Australian Tourist Commission

Koalas never come to the ground except to cross from one tree to another, and eat only eucalyptus leaves. They live in Southern Queensland, Eastern New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

will indeed dominate the Olympics, even outside the fields of play."

For more information, contact the **Australian Tourist Commission**, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Ste. 1200, Los Angeles, CA 90067, tel. (310) 552-1988 ext. 200; or in New York, 489 Fifth Ave., 31st floor, New York, NY 10017, tel. (212) 687-6300. □

TREAD *Softly*

A⁶⁶⁷⁵t a recent international conference on the promises and pitfalls of indigenous tourism, Australian Chris Burchett told the story of an Alice Springs tour group that had signed up for an Aboriginal performance after reading a brochure that touted the "haunting strains of the didgeridoo."

The trouble was, the long, hollow musical instrument is carved from trees that don't grow near Alice Springs. It isn't considered part of the local Aboriginal culture, and therefore wasn't included in the program.

"So, right in the middle of the dance, two busloads of tourists got up and walked out," recalled Burchett, director of cultural affairs for the Northern Territory Tourist Commission in Darwin.

"They came to hear a didgeridoo. And when they didn't, they said (the performance) was a sham."

When the United Nations tagged 1993 as the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, it focused new attention on the economic and cultural plight of more than 300 million indigenous and tribal people living in 70 countries.

At the same time, the U.N. declaration has spotlighted the often-troubled encounters between First World tourists and Third World native cultures.

"By and large, tourism has been devastating to indigenous people," says Robert Leavitt, ed-

ucation director for Cultural Survival, a Cambridge, Mass.-based human rights organization that focuses on native culture.

"More and more people are looking for what they think is an 'authentic' cultural experience, but what we're seeing are facades put up to manufacture that authenticity," Leavitt adds. "It's been going on for decades in Hawaii and the Caribbean, and now it's global as well."

Getting past those facades is a difficult, sometimes treacherous passage both for native cultures and the tourists who come to admire and learn from them. Here are some suggestions for smoothing the journey:

■ **Don't let your own curiosity become invasive.** Each November thousands of tourists head for the small volcanic island of Janitzio, near the colonial Mexican town of Patzcuaro. There Purepecha Indians celebrate the Days of the Dead with a poignant, all-night vigil that combines Catholicism with the pre-Hispanic beliefs of their ancestors. And there, those same tourists have turned vigil into carnival — trampling on graves, swigging beer and sticking camcorders into worshippers' faces.

Not every breach of cultural privacy is as blatant as that at Janitzio. Sometimes, it's as seemingly innocent as asking questions about long-held, carefully guarded beliefs — and ex-

Please see **TREAD, H2** ➤

Story and photo by **Laura Ely** for Universal Press Syndicate

TREAD: Visiting indigenous cultures

Continued from H1

pecting answers that might better come from pre-trip research.

"Good tourism must create and protect pride and privacy," says Robertson Collins, a Singapore-based consultant with the Pacific Asia Travel Association.

■ **Respect restrictions on photography and other visitor access.** Many native cultures request visitors not to take photographs or make sketches of sacred sites or celebrations — a request that, in some cases, may be backed up with confiscation of the offending camera.

Even if you're not taking photos, be considerate of a site's spiritual or historical significance by tailoring your own behavior to that of your hosts.

In Australia's Northern Territory, for example, participants on some Aboriginal tours are separated into men's and women's groups because the knowledge presented is sex-specific. On other Aboriginal programs, visitors are taken to areas of special significance but are requested not to photograph or even talk about what they've seen.

■ **Find out who benefits from, and decides the nature of, your visit.** Among the questions the San Anselmo, Calif.,-based

Center for Responsible Tourism recommends asking potential tour operators: What percentage of the trip cost stays in the community you visit? Does the tour's pacing allow time to create or accept opportunities to interact with local people? Is there a pre-trip orientation program? Most important, how much input and control does the local culture have over the conditions of your visit?

■ **Don't impose your own standards of 'authenticity.'** "Escaping to a civilization that has never seen raisins dance on TV or a Liz Claiborne label fascinates me," humorist Erma Bombeck once wrote.

"If I wanted to drink the water, speak English and eat Italian, I'd stay home."

Honorable sentiments, to be sure. But in the global village of MTV, CNN and "Terminator" videos, it's hard to imagine many places whose residents haven't seen dancing raisins — or, thanks to visiting tourists, a pair of designer jeans.

As a result, you shouldn't expect your hosts to look as though they stepped out of the pages of a tattered National Geographic — and if they do, recognize what the exchange is meant to achieve.

APRIL 3, 1994

P. 1

TREAD *Softly*

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pecting answers that might better come from pre-trip research.

"Good tourism must create and protect pride and privacy," says Robertson Collins, a Singapore-based consultant with the Pacific Asia Travel Association.

■ **Respect restrictions on photography and other visitor access.** Many native cultures request visitors not to take photographs or make sketches of sacred sites or celebrations — a request that, in some cases, may be backed up with confiscation of the offending camera.

Even if you're not taking photos, be considerate of a site's spiritual or historical significance by tailoring your own behavior to that of your hosts.

In Australia's Northern Territory, for example, participants on some Aboriginal tours are separated into men's and women's groups because the knowledge presented is sex-specific. On other Aboriginal programs, visitors are taken to areas of special significance but are requested not to photograph or even talk about what they've seen.

■ **Find out who benefits from, and decides the nature of, your visit.** Among the questions the San Anselmo, Calif.-based

Center for Responsible Tourism recommends asking potential tour operators: What percentage of the trip cost stays in the community you visit? Does the tour's pacing allow time to create or accept opportunities to interact with local people? Is there a pre-trip orientation program? Most important, how much input and control does the local culture have over the conditions of your visit?

■ **Don't impose your own standards of 'authenticity.'** "Escaping to a civilization that has never seen raisins dance on TV or a Liz Claiborne label fascinates me," humorist Erma Bombeck once wrote.

"If I wanted to drink the water, speak English and eat Italian, I'd stay home."

Honorable sentiments, to be sure. But in the global village of MTV, CNN and "Terminator" videos, it's hard to imagine many places whose residents haven't seen dancing raisins — or, thanks to visiting tourists, a pair of designer jeans.

As a result, you shouldn't expect your hosts to look as though they stepped out of the pages of a tattered National Geographic — and if they do, recognize what the exchange is meant to achieve.

ASBURY PARK SUNDAY PRESS

APRIL 10, 1994

Doings Down Under

^{CC 75}
Festivals the Australian way include the July 3 Darwin Beer Can Regatta, with races of boats made of beer cans. The fun at Darwin, Northern Territory, also will feature bottomless boats with crews jogging under the surf.

Then there's the Aug. 6 to 21 Whale Festival in Hervey Bay, Queensland, to watch mother whales bringing their newborn calves into calm waters of the bay before going on to the Antarctic.

Wildflower festivals in Western Australia go on from August to October, a peak flowering period which fills this part of the country with color. The largest is the Kings Park Wildflower Festival in Perth, Sept. 23 to Oct. 4.

For information call the Australian Tourist Commission at 1-800-333-0262.

SUNDAY ISLAND
PACKET

APRIL 10, 1994 .

Doings Down Under

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TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

APRIL 10, 1994

~~Doings Down Under~~

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Qantas Vacations And ATC Team On Tours

U.S.
BY MARK ROBERTI

Airline, Australian Tourist Commission Launch 10-Day Tour Series

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. — Qantas Vacations, the in-house tour wholesaler of Qantas Airways, and the Australian Tourist Commission have teamed up to introduce a new series of 10-day tours.

The "Weekend to Weekend Australia" itineraries are designed to attract younger, working Americans who are probably more price-conscious than older Americans visiting Australia.

Prices for the five itineraries start at \$1,159 per person, based on double occupancy, and include roundtrip airfare from the West Coast on Qantas, hotels and scheduled touring or a Hertz rental car for a portion of the trip, as well as some meals.

The tours combine visits to Australia's major tourist cities with a range of rustic experiences. There are five itineraries. A fly/drive package is available



Melbourne (above) is one of the destinations featured in the new Qantas Vacations "Weekend to Weekend" itineraries.

to Cairns, Brisbane, Melbourne, or Sydney from \$1,159.

The "Sydney and Wine Country Explorer" covers Sydney, the Blue Mountains and the Hunter Valley in New South Wales from \$1,599. "Host Farm and B&B Getaway" visits Melbourne, the wineries of the Mor-

rington Peninsula, a sheep station, "Gold Rush" country and Sydney. Prices start at \$1,599.

"The Outback & Back" includes Sydney, Ayers Rock, the outback and Cairns in northern Queensland. Prices start at \$1,729. "Where the Rainforest Meets the Reef" is a tour of

Cairns, the Great Barrier Reef and Daintree National Rainforest. Prices are from \$1,329.

The ATC and individual Australian states and territories are working with Qantas Vacations to promote the package in the U.S. Jon Hutchison, managing director of the ATC, said the program addresses many of the problems Australia has faced in attracting a wider American market.

"We hope that it will address the perception that there isn't enough to do in regions of Australia so you have to see all of it," he said. "It addresses the cost-sensitive nature of the American market, and it expands our involvement with industry."

Bill Baker, regional director/the Americas for the ATC, said the ATC has done cooperative marketing with other wholesalers, including ATS Tours of Burbank,

Calif., Swain Australia Tours of Ardmore, Pa., Austravel of New York City, and others. But this is the most sophisticated marketing project attempted so far.

"This is really the prototype of the integrated marketing approach we want to take," he said. "It incorporates advertising, direct mail, public relations, travel agent incentive programs—all in one marketing project with the states and industry involved."

Baker said that 200,000 "Weekend" brochures would be printed for distribution to travel agents and consumers. Tactical advertising will be done in specific markets.

The ATC has been trying to get Americans to go to Australia for shorter stays, rather than waiting until they retire to take a grand tour.

Qantas Vacations:
(800) 523-5272



TRAVEL AGENT
APRIL 11, 1994

HUTCHISON TACKLES FALSE PERCEPTIONS

It's been a busy year for Australia, beginning with its selection as the site of the Olympics in the year 2000. As the Australian Tourism Commission's (ATC) managing director, Jon Hutchison, heads to Seoul for this year's PATA conference, he'll probably take a few hours to inspect that city's beautiful Olympic Stadium, a reminder of the 1988 Games. In 1995, Sydney will host the PATA Mart, and Auckland, New Zealand, will host the conference. Besides being part of the successful bid to secure the Olympics, Hutchison was able to launch Partnership Australia, a marketing alliance between the ATC and the Australian states and territories.

During March, Hutchison toured the U.S., doing ATC trade shows in New Jersey, Minnesota, San Francisco and Los Angeles. On this swing across the country, the ATC met with over 200 wholesalers, hoping to influence the way tour operators package Australia.

"We need packages that address the perception that we're too far away, too expensive, and that you need to visit all of it on a single trip."

The prototype package that Hutchison hopes will take hold with tour operators is the 10-day Qantas Vacations "Weekend to Weekend Australia" series. The packages include air fares from the West Coast that begin at \$1,159 per person.

"We've enjoyed substantial growth in the U.S. market since the end of the Persian Gulf War. In 1993 we had 6.9 percent growth out of the States, yet we still feel our potential is unrealized. Our research shows that we're still the number one place people want to go.

Converting Interest to Bookings

"Plainly, we've been good at generating interest; now we have to generate cooperation in the marketplace, to generate a price-based product that will enable us to convert that interest into sales.

"We're directing our energies at overcoming perceived barriers. The Aussie Specialist program has been enormously successful in educating travel agents, and we've started a consumer hotline."

The Aussie Specialist program has created a network of about 2,400 travel agents trained to be experts in selling Australia. In its first year of operation,

Aussie Specialists reported that 26 percent of their overall bookings could be attributed directly to the program.

At 331,266 North American arrivals in 1993, Australia still hasn't caught up with its banner year, 1988, when *Crocodile Dundee* lured 388,947 tourists from the U.S. and Canada.

Bill Baker, the ATC's regional director for the Americas, noted that "it's nothing for people in Los Angeles to jump on a jet for four days in Hong Kong or a week in Italy, yet both of those places

are farther away than Sydney. If we can get that message out, we'll open a new and younger market."

"And now," adds Hutchison, "we've got a product in the 'Weekend to Weekend' package that's price-competitive with a European vacation."

The older market that has been a mainstay in the United States for travel to Australia prefers the 21- to 30-day escorted tour. That market is doing fine, according to Baker: "Just about every element of the group market is enjoying a resurgence now; there seems to be plenty of latent demand."

"About 40 percent of our Olympic infrastructure is already in place, but we're not gearing all of our energies on the Olympics themselves. We'll use the Olympics in everything we do between now and then. We can use it to highlight our sporting facilities, our great outdoors and other related aspects of Australia."

As far as PATA is concerned, Hutchison feels that the focus of the association is a little too weighted toward Asian concerns. "PATA," he says, "has to strike more of a balance between Asia and the Pacific."

—James Ruggia



NEWS

APRIL 17, 1994

Tall Ships

^A tours while docked in Toronto's Harbourfront Centre.

Tall ships will represent three Canadian provinces and six American states in the festival, which coincides with both Canada Day and Independence Day.

For information, call the Metropolitan Toronto Convention & Visitors Association at 1-(800)-363-1990.

Doings down under

Festivals the Australian way include the July 3 Darwin Beer Can Regatta, with races of boats made of beer cans. The fun at Darwin, Northern Territory, also

will feature bottomless boats with crews jogging under the surf.

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Call the Australian Tourist Commission at 1-800-333-0262.

TRAVEL WEEKLY
APRIL 18, 1994

Tourist Office Offers Hot Line

⁶⁶⁷⁵
LOS ANGELES — If your clients have questions or concerns about their Australian vacation, help is just a phone call away.

In March, the Australian Tourist Commission (ATC) created the Aussie Helpline, an information service for prospective travelers that puts them in touch with an Australian travel planner.

The new service is designed to complement the assistance that travelers already receive from travel agents.

In addition to providing immediate answers to questions on a variety of topics, the counselors offer travel tips and itinerary suggestions.

ATC brochure requests also are fulfilled.

Based in Chicago, the Aussie Helpline — (708) 296-4900 — operates Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

TRAVEL MANAGEMENT
DAILY

APRIL 21, 1994

WINNING THE RIGHT to host the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney has spurred big plans in Australia for tourism promotion. The Australian Tourist Commission and state and territory tourism authorities are launching new ad campaigns budgeted at \$9 million in overseas markets through June. In the U.S., the ATC, which operates under the Partnership Australia umbrella, is spending about \$4.5 million on the drive and is hoping for matching investments from the industry, according to John Hutchison, managing director of the ATC. One of the first campaigns is a "weekend to weekend" promotion in North America designed to overcome the perception that Australia is too far and too expensive for a short break. The commission wants to broaden Australia's image from sun and sea to one that includes sophisticated cities, cultural sites and entertainment. Australia drew a record 3 million international visitors in 1993, a 15% gain over 1992. The ATC has set a target of 3.4 million arrivals in 1994 and 6.8 million by 2000.

BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE
APRIL 24, 1994

ASTA, PACIFIC

AUSTRALIA

Lions Camel Cup, Alice Springs.
May 7. Camel races.

BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES
APRIL 24, 1994

Australians gearing up for Darwin Beer Can Regatta

Associated Press 6675

Festivals the Australian way include the July 3 Darwin Beer Can Regatta, with races of boats made of beer cans. The fun at Darwin, Northern Territory, also will feature bottomless boats with crews

jogging under the surf.

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BURLINGTON COUNTY TIMES
APRIL 24, 1994

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Associated Press 6675

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INTELLIGENCER - RECORD

APRIL 24, 1994

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SUNDAY POST-CRESENT

APRIL 24, 1994

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Distinctive Properties Featured at Trading Post

By LYN HIKIDA

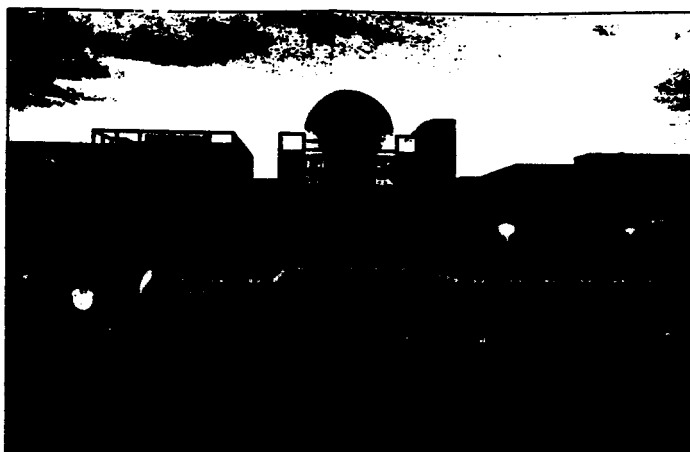
SAN FRANCISCO — During a recent whirlwind tour to Secaucus, N.J., Minneapolis, San Francisco and Los Angeles, the annual Aussie Trading Post brought more than 30 Australian suppliers together with North American wholesalers and retail agents.

TA-West caught up with the trading post in San Francisco to learn about the latest in accommodations offerings. Following is a selection of properties that agents can book through most major Australia wholesalers:

♦ **Cairns Colonial Club Resort** in downtown Cairns features three restaurants, four bars, three swimming pools, a fitness center and conference facilities.

All 346 rooms and suites are air conditioned and are equipped with color TVs, clock radios, minibars and IDD phones.

North Americans comprise 23% of the resort's clientele, said Sales Manager Tracey Vince, who added that the property is starting to pursue the incentive market. Rack rates



The Beaufort Darwin

range from A\$99 for a standard room to A\$250 for a VIP suite.

♦ **Kingfisher Bay Resort & Village** is on Fraser Island, a pristine isle located off the Queensland coast, one hour by air from Brisbane and 30 minutes by boat from Hervey Bay. Kingfisher Bay features 152 rooms, 25 two- and three-bedroom villas and four Satinav bungalows.

phones. Besides a lap pool and a children's pool, the Palm Royal Cairns has a 15-foot-deep dive pool where clients can take introductory dive lessons.

Rates start at A\$110 double.

♦ Accommodations at Reef Terraces Resort in Port Douglas are in two-story townhouses with one, two or three bedrooms. Each air-conditioned unit contains a fully equipped kitchen, laundry facilities and two bathrooms.

The resort also offers tennis courts, pitch-and-putt golf, an indoor/outdoor restaurant and a free-form swimming pool.

Free transfers from the Cairns airport (an hour by motorcoach) are provided to Reef Terraces as well as to its sister property, the adjacent Radisson Royal Palms Resort. Rates at Reef Terraces start at A\$150 double.

♦ Up in the Northern Territory is the Beaufort Darwin, a five-star member of the Beaufort Hotels group.

"Our U.S. market share is quite small," said James Dempster, director of sales, "but the potential is huge."

The hotel's futuristic design encompasses 164 rooms and 32 suites, a circular ballroom and four

several awards for its environmentally sensitive management and design, places emphasis on its natural surroundings, according to Louisa Forrest, director of sales and marketing.

To that end, Kingfisher Bay offers guided ecotours of the island, whale watching, "frog walks," nocturnal expeditions and a Junior

restaurants, including the award-winning Siggis.

Guest rooms feature TVs and radios, air-conditioning, tea- and coffee-making facilities, minibars, IDD phones and 24-hour room service.

Rack rates range from A\$205 to A\$1,000 per night, double.

♦ **Linnett's Island Club**, a resort in American River on South Australia's Kangaroo Island, offers a wide range of lodging options, including deluxe spa suites, economy-class apartments, hostel accommodations and campsites.

On-site facilities include an outdoor salt-water pool, an indoor spa, saunas, tennis courts, game room, and restaurant and bar.

Rates range from A\$40 per night, double for an unserviced apartment to A\$132 for a bay-view villa with a spa.

The island's main attraction is wildlife; clients can view fairy penguins, koalas, hair and fur seals, platypus and a host of other creatures. Four-wheel-drive tours, fishing excursions, camel safaris and nocturnal tours are available through Linnett's Island Club.

Contact the Australian Tourist Commission at 310-552-1988; fax 310-552-1215.

Rack rates start at A\$190 for a forest-view room and A\$200 for a bay-view room.

♦ At Queensland's Orpheus Island Resort, clients will not find TVs or phones in the room, no daytrippers on the beaches and no children under 15.

Located off the Queensland coast, one hour by seaplane from Cairns, Orpheus Island bills itself as an idyllic hideaway. Most of the resort's 31 studios and suites are situated on the beach; six two-bedroom villas perched on the hillside offer views of the lagoon, gardens or ocean.

Rates include welcome cocktails, all meals and snacks, bush walks, use of watersports equipment and an introductory scuba lesson.

Rack rates start at A\$300 double.

♦ The newest resort in Cairns is the Palm Royal Cairns, scheduled to open in mid-July.

The property's 134 deluxe rooms and 16 suites are air-conditioned and feature private balconies, color TVs, minibars, ceiling fans and IDD

TRAVEL AGENT
APRIL 25, 1994
P. 1

PACIFIC/ASIA

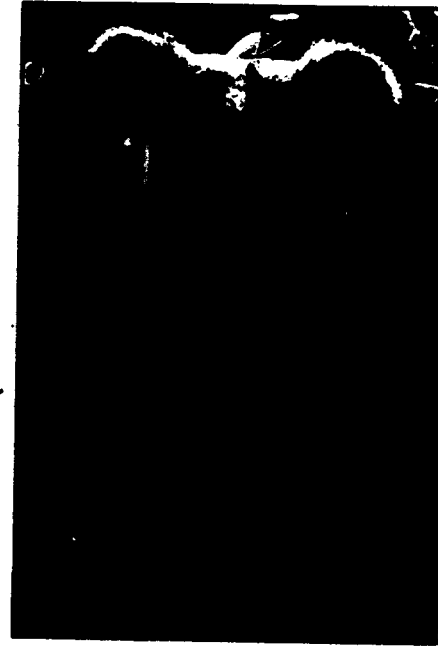
GOOD THINGS COME IN ALL PACKAGES

Australian programs show that the country is reaching out to younger vacationers and providing better variety.

By James Ruggia

Tour operators are reporting that Australia is booming. There's a host of new packages to the Land Down Under that are geared to reaching market segments that were never before considered within Australia's grasp. The traditional stalwart niche, older travelers on long escorted tours, now represents just 20 to 30 percent of the market, with FITs now the predominant sector. "I don't care for superlatives," says Lyndel Gray, the Australian Tourism Commission's (ATC) marketing manager for trade, "but the mood I'm getting is very buoyant.

"We never stopped promoting during the hard times and now with the economy up, the dollar strong and a set of tour products on the market that make Australia



achievable for an extremely wide number of people, we seem to be getting results—big results."

Increasingly, Australia is reaching younger travelers with shorter packages that fit into the constraints of a working traveler's vacation time. A greater diversity of prices is available, ranging from budget to ultra-deluxe. The ATC is watching how the market responds to the variety of packages now on the market.

Qantas Vacations turned heads with its "Weekend to Weekend" itineraries, a series of 10-day independent programs that include roundtrip air from the West Coast, beginning at \$1,159. Each of the tours zeroed in on a particular region in Australia.

"Weekend to Weekend" was designed to overcome market perceptions of Australia as being too far and too expensive.

Furthermore, because of the Partnership Australia agreement between the ATC and the numerous provincial tourism commissions in the country, the ATC can now promote Australia on a regional basis as well as the total destination.

"Thanks to Partnership Australia and the shorter and less expensive packages on the market," says Gray, "we can tackle this notion of it being a 'trip of a lifetime.'" That perception established Australia for the extended group tours that are favored by older travelers. That market remains strong, according to Col-

lette Tours' CEO Dan Sullivan. "Our escorted groups to Australia have grown at a 40 percent clip every year since 1990, and this year our program is up 60 percent over last year."

Plainly, Sullivan has good reason to stick with that niche in Australia, though Collette sells many short-break tours to Europe. "It's an interesting market and we'll be watching to see how these packages do, but for now we'll stick with a traditional escorted program in Australia."

Collette's escorted 18-day "Australia, The Land Down Under" (\$2,999 land only) is all-inclusive except for the trans-Pacific air and about half the meals. The tour covers all of Australia's most famous attractions including Canberra, Tasmania, Melbourne, Ayers Rock, Alice Springs, Darwin, Cairns and Sydney before heading home.

"The long tour still sells," says Gray. "Our average length of stay is still between

two and three weeks, but that figure has been shrinking over the years."

ATS Tours features a 10-day independent pack-

age, "Australia...The Ultimate," among the many programs in its brochure. The itinerary includes Melbourne, Sydney and Hayman Island. This package differs from Qantas' in that it's geared toward the most affluent travelers—using deluxe hotels throughout, chauffeured limousines and other

flourishes such as a seaplane flight.

The tour comes in two classes: deluxe (\$3,000 land only) and club room (\$3,400 land only). Though the market is upscale, "the duration," according to Vice President Wilma Schaefer, "impacts the younger travelers who are still in the business world."

According to Schaefer, "the market is about 50/50 for us, between the long 21-day plus trips and the shorter vacations of approximately 15 days. I find that the longer packages tend to sell on the East Coast, while from the West Coast the shorter packages do well. From Los Angeles nonstop it's only 14 hours to Sydney."

Cosmos Tourama has reduced prices and increased departures for its 15-day "The Boomerang," now priced at \$1,048 land only or beginning at \$2,275 with air from the West Coast. The tour visits Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef, Ayers Rock and Alice Springs, Adelaide, Melbourne,

Canberra, Sydney and more. Prices include economy class hotels, continental breakfast daily, escort, sightseeing and motorcoach.

Among **AAT King's** four tour categories are independent modular programs and city stopovers. These packages can be used as add-ons or as mini-tours for travelers with time or budget constraints. Clients can book their 13-day independent "Australia Highlights" (\$1,709 without trans-Pacific or domestic air) and visit Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, Ayers Rock, Alice Springs and Cairns.

Domestic Air Pass

The tours are locally hosted and include nearly everything except about half the meals. Domestic air can be booked separately with a Domestic Air Pass (through Ansett or Qantas), good for four flights \$444 (at presstime). Clients can add stopovers to create the trip they want. The prices for Australia in AAT King's brochure have been reduced 10 percent for the remainder of the year.

J&O Holidays' South Pacific Dream Book operates similarly with escorted tours supplemented by a wide range of modular packages. Among J&O's modulars are some interesting soft adventure packages such as the "4-Wheel Drive Adventures" that provide clients with their own vehicles to explore the Outback.

The tours above are only samples from a fraction of the operators offering Australia in their 1994 brochures. Virtually all of them also combine the country with New Zealand in other packages. Many also make two- or three-day mid-Pacific stops in destinations such as Fiji, Tahiti or Hawaii. Operators such as ATS and AAT King, for instance, offer a variety of package types beyond those mentioned above.

The Australian Tourism Commission can supply agents with a more complete listing of the many tour operators featuring Australia. For more information, contact the ATC on their agent hotline at 800-433-2877.



S E L L I N G

AUSTRALIA

New Qantas Promotion Features Seven- to 10-Day Packages

BY LAURA DEL ROSSO

SAN FRANCISCO — Countering the perception that Australia is too distant for anything shorter than a two-week vacation, Qantas and the Australian Tourism Commission have launched a promotion featuring seven- to 10-day packages.

Prices for the programs start at \$1,159 per person, double, including air fare from the West Coast, hotel, some meals and either a rental car or escorted sightseeing.

The promotion, called Weekend to Weekend, is being advertised in major consumer travel magazines and Sunday newspaper travel sections with the cute Qantas koala as the attention-getter.

Qantas and its tour operator subsidiary, Qantas Vacations,

also have launched a comprehensive trade promotion.

The 2,400 travel agents in the U.S. who have been certified as "Aussie Specialists" by the Australian Tourism Commission are scheduled to receive packages announcing a Weekend to Weekend Sweepstakes.

Each time they sell the packages, they can send in a sweepstakes entry form with the booking details.

The grand prize is \$10,000 in cash; first prize, \$7,000; second prize, \$3,000, and third prize, a Weekend to Weekend coffee mug.

Qantas Vacations has produced promotional items such as posters for agency windows, buttons, camera-ready artwork and brochures, said J. Patrick Clark Jr., general manager of

Qantas Vacations for the U.S.

"We wanted to make sure that travel agents have the tools to sell, and we've backed it up with the major consumer campaign," Clark said during a recent interview in Qantas' San Francisco headquarters.

According to Clark, Australia still ranks as one of the leading destinations that Americans say they would like to visit.

The main obstacles to getting them to buy the vacation are the perception of the distance and the expense.

"People think it's a long way away and that they need a lot of vacation time," he said.

"We want to debunk that. People have no qualms about going to Hong Kong or to Europe for a week from both the East or West Coast."

The Weekend to Weekend brochure compares flying times to Sydney, Australia, from Los Angeles (14 hours, 40 minutes) to other destinations, such as Paris (11 hours, 50 minutes), Hong Kong (16 hours, 25 minutes) and Rome (14 hours, 40 minutes, with stopover).

The intent of the comparison is to show that travelers who would consider taking a week or 10-day trip to Europe could consider Australia, too, Clark said.

The brochure also compares prices in Australia for a taxi ride, a three-course meal and a cup of coffee to the same expenses in Japan and Italy, indicating that the dollar "goes a lot farther down under."

The campaign was launched the first week of March, and Qantas Vacations received 100 bookings in the first three weeks, Clark said.

Weekend to Weekend programs include roundtrip economy air fare from Los Angeles to Sydney, Melbourne, Darwin or Cairns and all flights within Australia on Qantas.

The plans also feature hotel accommodations, an escorted tour or a Hertz rental car and some meals



Divers may opt for Qantas' Weekend to Weekend package in Cairns, near the underwater wonders of the Great Barrier Reef

Add-on fares from major cities in the U.S. range from \$90 to \$330 roundtrip.

Some of the itineraries are a fly/drive Australia itinerary to one of four major cities — Cairns, Brisbane, Melbourne or Sydney — that costs from \$1,159 per person, double; an Outback and Back program to Sydney, Ayers Rock and tropical Cairns, for \$1,729, and a Host Farm and B&B Getaway, with visits to Sydney, Melbourne, the wineries of the Mornington Peninsula, a sheep station and "gold rush" country, for \$1,599.

The Where the Rain Forest Meets the Reef plan, with a visit to Cairns and the Daintree national rain forest and diving at the Great Barrier Reef, for \$1,329 also is available.

The prices quoted are for low season and increase by an average of \$150 in high season, July through September.

There are several options

available with each package, and they can be combined with packages to other regions of Australia.

For more details, call Qantas Vacations at (800) 523-5272.

The first sales training kit so complete it even comes with customers.

If you want to sell more Australia and make bigger profits, get a copy of our new "Aussie Specialist" self-training video program. You can complete it at your own pace. And when you graduate, hot leads in your area will be referred to you. The kit costs just \$24.95 and can be used by everyone in your agency. So call 1-800-626-6615 today. It doesn't take a brain surgeon to know that it pays to specialize.

AUSTRALIA
FEEL THE WONDER



APRIL 28, 1994

TRAVEL WEEKLY

55

SELLING AUSTRALIA

Inta-Aussie's Safari Packages Trace Outback Pioneers' Routes

LOS ANGELES — Inta-Aussie Tours is giving travelers the chance to follow in the footsteps of Australia's outback pioneers through its new safari tours.

The pioneer route — Birdsville Track, Oodnadatta Track, Tanami Track and Gunbarrel Highway — calls at towns that began as cattle camps and telegraph stations in the settlement days.

Stops include Bourke, Charlesville, Blackall, Longreach, Barcaldine, Winton, Cloncurry, Mt. Isa, Camooweal, Larrimah, Mataranka and Katherine.

Many of the towns, devoid of tourists, look much like Hollywood sets for cowboy movies.

Popular stops such as Alice Springs, Ayers Rock, Kakadu National Park, the Great Barrier Reef, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth are included.

The longest safari, 23 days, departs monthly and costs \$1,190 per person, land only.

A 16-day segment of this sa-

fari costs \$990.

Ten other tours, ranging from 10 to 37 days, provide various combinations of the destinations listed above.

The itineraries feature air-conditioned coaches and two-person tents with vinyl floors and foam mattresses.

Three meals are served each day from a fully equipped mobile kitchen.

Amenities include electric lights and camp toilet facilities.

For information and reservations, call (800) 531-9222 or (310) 568-2060; fax (310) 568-2068.

HARFORD BUSINESS LEDGER

MAY 1994

Doings Down Under: Festivals the Australian way include the July 3 Darwin Beer Can Regatta, with races of boats made of beer cans. The fun at Darwin, Northern Territory, also will feature bottomless boats with crews jogging under the surf.

Then there's the Aug. 6-21 Whale Festival in Hervey Bay, Queensland, to watch mother whales bringing their newborn calves into calm waters of the bay before going on to the Antarctic.

Wildflower festivals in Western Australia go on from August to October, a peak flowering period which fills this part of the country with color. The largest is the Kings Park Wildflower Festival in Perth, Sept. 23-Oct. 4.

For information call the Australian Tourist Commission at 1 (800) 333-0262.

TRAVEL SMART

MAY 1994

• AUSTRALIA. Designed for those with only 10 days vacation time, these new "Weekend to Weekend Australia" tours, priced from \$1,159 p/p dbl, incl r/t air from LA (add-ons from other cities available), all hotel rooms, scheduled touring or a Hertz car, and some meals. The \$1,159 price is to either Cairns, Brisbane, Melbourne or to Sydney. Other packages are slightly higher, and rates go up about \$100 in July. *Good deal for people with limited time; non-restricted air LA-Australia; r/t air by itself is \$2,994 on Qantas.* Qantas Vacations, ☎ 800-523-5272. 6475

NEW-TIMES
MAY 1, 1994

Doings down under

Festivals the Australian way include the July 3 Darwin Beer Can Regatta, with races of boats made of beer cans. The fun at Darwin, Northern Territory, also will feature bottomless boats with crews jogging under the surf.

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For information call the Australian Tourist Commission at (800) 333-0262.

VINDICATOR

MAY 1, 1994

■ AUSTRALIA

Down under 6675

■ Australia, in brief? No, you don't need a month off: "Week-end to Weekend Australia," Qantas Vacations' new series of seven-, nine- and 10-day tours, covers big cities, natural wonders and exotic wildlife, with 11 different itineraries. Explore Sydney and its wine country; stay on farms and at B&Bs, visiting a sheep station, Gold Rush country, Melbourne and Sydney; or do the Outback, plus Cairns and Sydney. Cost is \$1,159 to \$2,159 per person through June, including air fare from Los Angeles (add on \$330 from Washington), accommodations, sightseeing and car rentals, in some cases. Information: (800) 523-5272.

TRAVELAGE WEST
MAY 2, 1994

South Pacific

23 3675
ATC Launches \$9-Million Ad Campaign

SYDNEY — Winning the right to host the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney has spurred big plans in Australia for tourism promotion.

The Australian Tourist Commission and state and territory tourism authorities are launching new ad campaigns budgeted at \$9 million in overseas markets through June. In the U.S., the ATC, which operates under the Partnership Australia umbrella, is spending about \$4.5 million on the drive and is hoping for matching investments from the industry, according to John Hutchison, managing director of the ATC.

One of the first campaigns, a cooperative program between the ATC and Qantas Vacations, is a "Weekend to Weekend" promotion in North America designed to overcome the perception that Australia is too far and too expensive for a short break.

Packages from Los Angeles, including air, accommodations, car rental and sightseeing are priced starting at \$1,159 per person, double.

The commission wants to broaden

Australia's image from sun and sea to one that includes sophisticated cities, cultural sites and entertainment. Australia drew a record 3 million international visitors in 1993, a 15% gain over 1992.

The ATC has set a target of 3.4

million arrivals in 1994 and 6.8 million by 2000. About 40% of the country's tourism growth, according to Hutchison, will come from Asia, with China and India holding "huge potential" in the next five years."



HOTELS OF THE PACIFIC — A recent meeting of the SoCal PATA chapter honored leading hotel companies serving the Pacific/Asia region. Pictured from left are Candy Andrus, Air New Zealand; Claire Grossberg of Calif World Travel, winner of a trip to New Zealand and Australia; and program chairman Pamela Ryan, Pacific Destination Center, Huntington Beach, Calif.

New Anchorage Resort Opens in Port Stephens

PORT STEPHENS, Australia — One of the newest properties at this coastal vacation town in New South Wales is the Anchorage, a stylish, low-rise resort.

The 80-room property is designed in the style of a fishing village, with traditional features such as verandas and metal rooftops. Rooms and suites are outfitted with TVs, VCRs, stereo systems, individual air conditioners, hairdryers and bathrobes. Each room has an unobstructed view of the sea.

The Anchorage's restaurant, Merretts, also has an ocean view; its menu features local produce and Port Stephens' acclaimed oysters. Included on the wine list are some of the best buys from the nearby vineyards of the Hunter Valley.

Activities in and around Port Stephens include wine-tasting excursions to the Hunter, daily boat tours, dolphin watching and golf at Horizons golf resort, a first-class course. Golf packages and other special interest programs are offered by the Anchorage.

Rack rates start at A\$210 double. Contact the resort directly at 61-49842-555 or fax 61-49840-300.

— David Wishart

DESERET NEWS
MAY 8, 1994

✓ THE 1994-1995 VERSION OF "DESTINATION AUSTRALIA," the travel planner published by the Australian Tourist Commission, is available by calling 1-800-333-0262. The 136-page magazine can help you decide where to go, what to do and how to get around Australia. It includes recommendations on traveling in each state or territory, suggested itineraries for making the most of limited vacation time and photographic spreads of the country's cities and natural destinations. The book has a detailed index and is divided into regions, making it easy for you to locate what you want to know quickly. Information ranges from hotels to campgrounds, rail passes to car rentals, restaurants to festivals.

Take a quick trip to Australia

Special to the Times-Call

Now, even travelers with only 10-day vacation time can seriously consider a full-fledged Australian holiday experience.

Qantas Vacations is offering a new series of 10-day tours, including roundtrip airfare, hotels and the best of Australia's cities, natural attractions and exotic wildlife, priced from \$1,159 per person, based on double occupancy.

The new "Weekend to Weekend" itineraries are designed to provide travelers with a range of authentic Australian experiences and scenic diversity. They combine visits to Australia's favorite cities with the charm and hospitality of a wine country or a working sheep station stay; diving the marvels of the Great Barrier Reef with exploring the Daintree Rainforest; and experiencing Aboriginal culture and the Outback with four-wheel driving to Australia's remote tropical wetlands.

"Similar to a European or even Asian vacation, Australia offers a diverse experience in a short vacation stay," said J. Patrick Clark, Jr., president of Qantas Vacations, operators of the "Weekend to Weekend Australia" program. "These Australia packages are as affordable as Europe and Asia, plus they offer the added benefit of a favorable exchange rate once travelers arrive."

"Weekend to Weekend" tours include roundtrip economy class air transportation from Los Angeles to Sydney, Melbourne, Darwin or Cairns and all flights within Australia on Qantas Airways, Australia's award-winning national carrier. The itineraries also include all hotel accommodations, scheduled touring or a Hertz rental car for a portion of the trip, and some meals.

"The tours build in great value for first-time or repeat travelers to Australia," said Clark. Top-of-the-line accommodations, excellent touring and

the opportunity for travelers to get to know the land Down Under like Australians know it, even in the short period of 10 days, are primary benefits.

Qantas offers attractive add-on fares from major cities on the East Coast, Midwest, South and West, ranging from \$90 to \$330 roundtrip, depending on the distance from Los Angeles. The packages also offer the ability to accrue miles in one of several outstanding frequent flyer mileage programs.

Itinerary selections include:

- "Fly/Drive Australia" to either Cairns, Brisbane, Melbourne or Sydney, priced from \$1,159.

- "Sydney and Wine Country Explorer" to Sydney, the Blue Mountains and the Hunter Valley wine country, priced from \$1,599.

- "Host Farm & B&B Getaway" to historic Melbourne, the wineries of the Morrongton Peninsula, a sheep station, "Gold Rush" country and Sydney,

priced from \$1,599.

- "The Outback & Back" to Sydney, Ayers Rock, spectacular Outback territory, and tropical Cairns, priced from \$1,729.

- "Where the Rainforest meets the Reef" to Cairns for diving the Great Barrier Reef and exploring the beauties of the Daintree national Rainforest, priced from \$1,329.

Package prices will rise slightly beginning with departures in July. Single traveler rates are available. Additional nights may be added to any of the packages. Tours may be combined with programs to other regions of Australia.

Qantas Vacations is operated by Jetaboot, one of the world's largest tour operators. It is wholly owned subsidiary of Qantas Airways.

For more information about "Weekend to Weekend Australia," contact any travel planner or call Qantas Vacations at (800) 523-5272.

**CANADIAN
PRESS RELEASES / INTERVIEWS**

MARCH 26, 1994

If in Australia, enjoy festivals

If you are going to Australia to visit one of its at least six Woodstocks, or if you are just going to enjoy the natural beauty, you might want to catch some activities when you are there.

Australia has been called the celebration capital of the world. Acclaimed festivals and sporting events are part of the Australian culture and can be found in cities and small towns year-round.

Visitors are invited to join the in spirit and help residents cele-

brate these historic, cultural and whimsical events like these:

- **Melbourne International Comedy Festival**, April 1-24, Melbourne, Victoria. These three weeks of organized mayhem and hilarity include theatre, television, cabaret, stand-up comedy and more.

- **Anzac Day**, April 25: A nationwide commemoration of the landing of Australian and New Zealand forces at Gallipoli and memorial to all Australians who

died the World Wars, Korea and Vietnam.

- **Targa Tasmania** April 27 to May 1. Various regions throughout Transmania. Edwardian autos meet sleek futuristic vehicles during five days of racing over approximately 1,240 miles of road through historic towns, farmland and mountain wilderness.

- **Lions Camel Cup** May 7 Alice Springs, Northern Territory: Camel races evocative of pioneer travel, and the Miss Camel Cup contest.

ADVOCATE

MARCH 27, 1994

Travel in brief

Spend weekends Down Under, Mate

⁶⁶⁷⁵
L.A. Times/Washington Post

Beginning April 1, Qantas Vacations will offer a series of 10-day "Weekend to Weekend" Australian tours that includes round-trip air fare, hotels and visits to the country's best cities, natural attractions and exotic wildlife areas.

Itineraries include: "Fly/Drive Australia" to either Cairns, Brisbane, Melbourne or Sydney; "Sydney and Wine Country Explorer" to Sydney, the Blue Mountains and the Hunter Valley wine country; "Host Farm & B&B Getaway" to Melbourne, the wineries of the Morrongton Peninsula, a sheep station, "Gold Rush" country and Sydney; "The Outback & Back" to Sydney, Ayers Rock, spectacular Outback territory, and tropical Cairns, and "Where the Rainforest Meets the Reef" to Cairns for diving the Great Barrier Reef and exploring Daintree National Rain Forest."

Prices start from \$1,159 per person, double occupancy, plus add-on fares from major cities on the East Coast. Call your travel agent or Qantas at (800) 523-5272.

AGENT CANADA TRAVEL MAGIAZINE

APRIL 5, 1994

Qantas has come up with a new slate of itineraries that make it possible for people with no more than 10 days off to visit Down Under. The Weekend to Weekend tours start at \$1974 and include airfare, hotels and a variety of options. For more information, contact Qantas Vacations at 800-268-7525.

CANADIAN TRAVEL
PRESS WEEKLY
APRIL 7, 1994

'Weekend To Weekend' Tours Offered By Qantas

Qantas Vacations has put together a new series of 10-day tours that combine airfare, hotels, natural attractions and exotic wildlife.

The "Weekend to Weekend" itineraries are aimed at providing travellers with a range of Australian experiences and scenery, and include round-trip economy air from Toronto or Vancouver to Sydney, Melbourne, Darwin or Cairns, plus all flights within Australia. Also included are hotel accommodations, scheduled touring or a rental car for part of the trip and some meals.

The packages also let customers accrue miles in frequent-flier programs.

The packages include "Fly/Drive Australia" to either Cairns, Brisbane, Melbourne or Sydney. It is priced from \$2,114 from Vancouver and \$2,269 from Toronto.

"Sydney and Wine Country Explorer" goes to Sydney, the Blue Mountains and the Hunter Valley wine country and is priced from \$2,354 from Vancouver and \$2,509 from Toronto.

The "Host Fam & B&B Getaway" visits historic Melbourne, the wineries of the Morrongton Peninsula, gold rush country and Sydney. It is priced from \$2,374 from Vancouver and \$2,529 from Toronto.

"The Outback & Back" itinerary takes people to Sydney, Ayers Rock, the Outback and tropical Cairns. It is priced from \$2,624 from Vancouver and \$2,779 from Toronto.

"Where the Rain Forest Meets the Reef" goes to Cairns for diving along the Great Barrier Reef, and explores Daintree National Rainforest. It is priced from \$1,974 from Vancouver and \$2,129 from Toronto.

Package prices will rise slightly starting with departures in July. Additional nights may be added to any of the packages and tours may be combined with programs to other Australian regions.

DAILY SENTINEL REVIEW

APRIL 8, 1994

Australian connection

Travellers can now ensure their Australian vacation has a genuine Australian touch by calling an Aussie travel counsellor at 708-296-4900. Introduced earlier this spring by the Australian Tourist Commission (ATC), the helpline offers prospective travelers the opportunity to talk with an Australian travel planner about arranging a holiday.

DAILY TOWNSMAN
APRIL 8, 1994

Fly, drive Australia, mate

By Marc Cottone
Newsday

Beginning April 1, Qantas Vacations will offer a series of 10-day "Weekend to Weekend" Australian tours that includes round-trip air fare, hotels and visits to the country's best cities, natural attractions and exotic wildlife areas.

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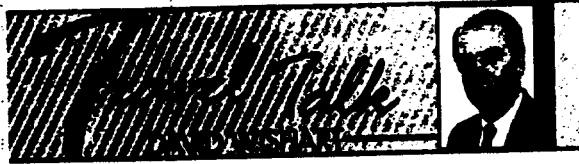
THE LETHBRIDGE HERALD
APRIL 9, 1994

□ Going Down Under

Australia and New Zealand are promoting 10-day vacation packages. Qantas Vacations is offering a variety of Australian itineraries, including a trip to Sydney and the Hunter Valley wine country, another to the Great Barrier Reef, a third combining Sydney and the Outback, and so on. Prices begin at \$1,974 a person from Vancouver and \$2,129 from Toronto. That covers round-trip airfare, accommodation and touring or a rental car. Goway Travel and Air New Zealand are offering an assortment of packages to New Zealand. For example, prices for round-trip air from Vancouver and a 10-day vacation in a six-berth motorhome begin at \$1,346 a person while rates for an airfare-and-rental-car package start at \$1,308 a person from Vancouver. See a travel agent.

Northwest link speeds service to eastern U.S.

Minneapolis
connection to
230 centres



Northwest Airlines started service out of Vancouver this week with a daily flight to Minneapolis.

The first Boeing 727 was met by a brass band, a cake and a very happy Marian Wilson, Vancouver-based sales manager, who said she was going to kiss the airplane.

At first sight not everyone will be ecstatic. Is there a love affair with Minneapolis?

The answer is that there is a surprising amount of traffic to this large, prosperous region, which is also a Northwest hub for non-stop and direct connections to 230 destinations in the U.S.

Thanks to Northwest it will be faster and easier to get to places like Boston, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. Northwest also has hubs at Detroit, Memphis and Tokyo. This is a big airline with impressive trans-Pacific services from Seattle, the latter very accessible via Horizon and several other airlines.

Northwest is offering promotional fares (about 25 per cent off current lowest fares) to celebrate

the inaugural. They're for a limited time so see a travel agent soon.

Just as happy to see Northwest was airport marketing boss Gerry Bruno, who keeps plugging away at the lack of trans-border flights.

"We are losing 1 million passengers a year to Seattle because of the current bilateral agreement," he told the *Courier*. "Northwest's service is a step in the right direction."

Northwest will also operate nine DC-10 charters this summer, bringing cruise-ship passengers from Minneapolis to Vancouver. According to Bruno, 350,000 U.S. cruise-ship passengers who could fly direct to Vancouver every year instead fly to Seattle and then take buses to Vancouver.

We also got a glimpse of one of the first new buildings in the airport redevelopment project. It's a temporary structure which will replace the current trans-border area that is being closed and demolished in September.

The new international building will go up on the site of the trans-

border area and adjoin the present structure, which will become the domestic terminal.

• There are some great fares to Britain and Europe this summer, thanks to fierce competition from both scheduled and charter carriers. At press time, London, Glasgow and Manchester were being quoted at less than \$600 and prices could drop lower still.

Travellers have a choice of several charter carriers, including Air Club International, Caledonian, Canada 3000 and Fortunair. We haven't heard too much about Fortunair but Air Club's Boeing 747 is being sold by Skybridge Holidays, market leader in European charter flights for 11 years.

Caledonian (DC-10) is being sold by Fiesta West and Air Transat Holidays and Canada 3000 (Boeing 757) by Fiesta West, the latter the biggest tour operator in Western Canada.

Air Club, which starts non-stop service to London June 17, offers an Upper Class seat for \$300 round-trip, which added to the \$599 currently quoted makes for a bargain experience for under \$1,000.

Regular first class to London and back is \$8,714 and business class \$3,816 (although British Airways has a special then for \$2,998) and while you won't get scheduled carrier champagne and pampering there will be a big seat and a quiet cabin.

• The Phoenician Resort at Scottsdale, Ariz., has vastly reduced summer rates of U.S.\$67.50 per person, with packages for golf, tennis and the spa.

• People planning a vacation in Australia can now phone the Aussie Helpline for first-hand information. Bill Baker of the Australian Tourist Commission says it's a service to complement travel agents.

In other words, you call the Aussie Helpline with questions on when to go, what to see, how to view aboriginal art and where to see wildlife. Then you talk to a travel agent, fine-tune the itinerary after considering the best flights and fares, and make your bookings.

The Aussie Helpline is 708-296-4900. It's based in Chicago and operates Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. central time. If you call before 8 a.m. Vancouver time you'll get a cheaper rate. You can also ask the Aussies to send their comprehensive tour planner, the Destination Australia book.

TRAVEL COURIER

APRIL 14, 1994

THE SECOND ANNUAL North American Travel Agent Manual has been released by the Australian Tourist Commission....the 128-page guide follows an easy-to-use format so agents can quickly find the information they seek....facts on Australia include temperature ranges, mileage charts, special events, accommodations, transportation and attractions....a fold-out map, sample itineraries, sightseeing suggestions and an 800 number for suppliers make customizing itineraries easy....details are also given on how agents can participate in the Aussie Specialist program and earn the Certified Aussie Specialist designation....copies of the manual are available by calling 800-888-3002....agents can also call the

ATC's Aussie Help Line, 800-433-AUSSIE, for assistance....

THE EXAMINER
APRIL 16, 1994

Down Under for 10 days

(CP) Australia and New Zealand are promoting 10-day vacation packages. Qantas Vacations is offering a variety of Australian itineraries, including a trip to Sydney and the Hunter Valley wine country, another to the Great Barrier Reef, a third combining Sydney and the Outback, and so on.

Prices begin at \$1,974 a person from Vancouver and \$2,129 from Toronto. That covers round-trip airfare, accommodation and touring or a rental car. Goway Travel and Air New Zealand are offering an assortment of packages to New Zealand. For example, prices for round-trip air from Vancouver and a 10-day vacation in a six-berth motorhome begin at \$1,346 a person, while rates for an airfare-and-rental-car package start at \$1,308 a person from Vancouver. See a travel agent.

OBSERVER

APRIL 16, 1994

⁸¹⁰²⁴ **Down Under packages pushed**

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THE TORONTO SUN
APRIL 17, 1994

Phone for advice on travelling Down Under

The Australian Travel Commission has started an Aussie Helpline, based in Chicago, for those who are thinking of going "Down Under" and want their questions answered. Its number: (708) 296-4900.

Phone that, Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Toronto time, and a travel planner will be able to answer questions about anything from Aboriginal rock paintings to where to see koalas and wombats.

●●●

The 1994 Vermont Traveler's Guide is available, free, by calling (802) 223-3443.

●●●

Japan, considered one of the more costly countries to visit, has a free booklet available called *Japan for the Budget Traveler*. It can be obtained by phoning (416) 366-7140.

— Percy Rowe

CANADIAN TRAVEL PRESS WEEKLY
APRIL 21, 1994

ATC Updates Trade Manual

The second edition of the annual North American Travel Agent Manual has been released by the Australian Tourist Commission.

The 128-page guide follows an easy-to-use format so agents can quickly find the information they seek. The first edition of the guide was well received and inspired the ATC to boost

the print run for the updated version, a spokeswoman for the organization said.

Relevant facts on Australia included range from temperatures to mileage charts, from special events to accommodations and from transportation to attractions. A fold-out map, sample itineraries, sightseeing suggestions and an 800 number

for Australian product suppliers make customizing itineraries easy.

Details are also given on how agents can participate in the Aussie Specialist program and earn the Certified Aussie Specialist designation.

Copies of the manual are available by calling 800-888-3002. Agents can also call the ATC's Aussie Help Line, 800-433-AUSSIE, for assistance.

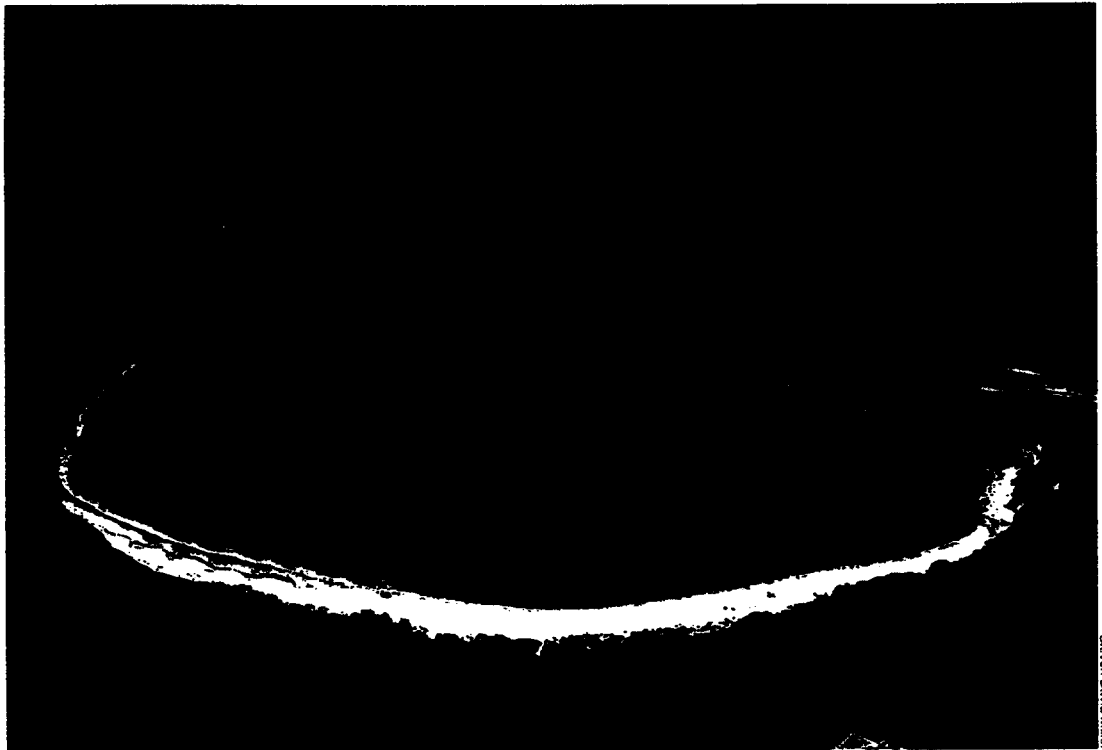
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ASSISTANCE

OLD HOWE ISLAND



Australia's
Gentle Paradise

By JAN MORRIS



Steven David MARR

EEN FROM THE SURFACE OF THE Tasman Sea, Lord Howe Island suggests to me some sort of sea scorpion, with the two high mountains at its southern end representing the sting in the tail. In fact no simile could be more invidious, because of all the islands of the world Lord Howe is, I would guess, the least toxic.

There are no vicious animals on Lord Howe. There are very few biting insects. There are no stinging nettles or poison ivies. There are no criminals to be mugged by, no high-rise building to fall out of, hardly any traffic to knock you down, no racial tension, no poverty, no litter, no touts, no rabies, no AIDS, and precious little envy. It is a very genteel paradise, an Eden without a snake.

Actually I suspect it to be more beautiful than the Garden of Eden, which was presumably in an early state of development. Lord Howe is at its peak. It looks as though it was created a couple of hundred years ago by one of the great landscape gardeners of the Enlightenment – “Capability” Brown, perhaps – given carte blanche to produce the perfect subtropical isle. It is about

seven miles long from north to south, never as much as two miles from east to west – a speck in the South Pacific, 400 miles east from the Australian coast, 1,000 miles northwest of New Zealand. But within these miniature limits it is virtuosic.

Those two big mountains, Gower and Lidgbird, rise to 2,800 feet, and their summits are often misty. They overlook an exquisite ensemble of rain forests, pasturelands, and wooded hills. In the western lee of the island, the world’s southernmost coral reef protects a lagoon of marvelous fecundity, while on the other shore, only a walk away, sandy beaches are set in a rocky, foamy surf-washed coast. To cap it all, away to the south, like the resolving chord at the end of a great symphony, there rises sheer from the sea a stark pyramid of rock, 1,800 feet high: Ball’s Pyramid, one of the great ocean sights of the world, and a perfect foil to the benign green composition of Lord Howe.

No Adam or Eve set eyes on this island until 1788 (five years, as it happens, after the death of “Capability”). It is one of the rare places that can truly claim to have been discovered by the explorers of the European expansion, because there were no indigenous natives. Even now, 200 years on, it seems odd to find no Aborigines here but instead to encounter a popula-

On Lord Howe Island, tropical splendor remains the rule rather than the exception, from the white sands of Ned’s Beach (above) to a waterfall cascading through the greenery of Mount Gower (opposite).

I SAW A NAME FROM ONE OF THOSE OLD CLANS ON A WEATHERED TOMBSTONE, DECORATED WITH SEASHELLS.

tion that would not seem out of place somewhere like Orkney or Borkum – weathered northern-type people, rather stocky and very tough, as who wouldn't be after a couple of hundred years 400 miles from anywhere else.

The earliest settlers were a mixed bag of wanderers, mostly British and American, together with some Maori women and a chieftain's daughter from the Gilbert Islands. Most of today's 300 islanders are descended from one or other of the founding fathers, and one very soon gets to know their names and pedigrees. Half of them are somehow related to each other, and they remember with pride their pioneering antecedents. I was only on the island a short while when I saw a name from one of those old clans on a weathered tombstone, perhaps decorated with seashells, or carved on the war memorial beneath its World War I machine gun, but I came to feel a pang of almost familial sympathy myself.

If there were no humans here when the first British seamen gingerly set foot in this place, there were plenty of other creatures.

Lord Howe is an exhibition of nature's profligacy. It is clothed, for a start, in a thick tangle of forest, reaching from its shoreline to its highest peaks. Palm trees, banyans, the peculiar pandanus, stinkwood and pumpkin trees, vines, creepers, flowering shrubs of wonderful variety, roots, brambles, and ferns are inextricably massed, all mixed up, some growing one on top of the other, so that it is hard to know where one tree ends and the next begins. Sometimes the forest floor is made of hard dry sand, looking like elephant skin, sometimes it seems to be one treacherous expanse of knotted roots.

Around this foliage pullulates a cageless menagerie – an aquarium without glass and a roofless aviary. There are birds everywhere, flashes of sudden yellow, bundles of gray, blobs of white on headlands, shearwaters disappearing into burrows, hawks diving into grasses, kingfishers balanced on impossible twigs, and the ever-present squawks and groans and cackles and whistles. The green-winged pigeon forever forages about the undergrowth. The unique flightless woodhen was, until a few years ago, reduced to a troop of 30 living on the inaccessible summit of Mount Gower. But now

it struts and screeches all over the place.

The lagoon is so aswirl with tropical colors, blues and pinks and yellows, that it looks to me edible, like some vivid dessert sauce, and it is alive with all manner of amazing fish. Whales and dolphins appear offshore. In the forests live 103 kinds of spider, not to mention 51 types of snail and 24 sorts of butterfly. The only mammal indigenous to Lord Howe is a small shy bat, but many animals have been introduced over the years, and today cattle amble around the pasturelands, feral goats haunt the mountains, and I am told that somewhere in the forest there is a single cunning survivor of a once numerous company of pigs, all the rest having been hunted out of existence.

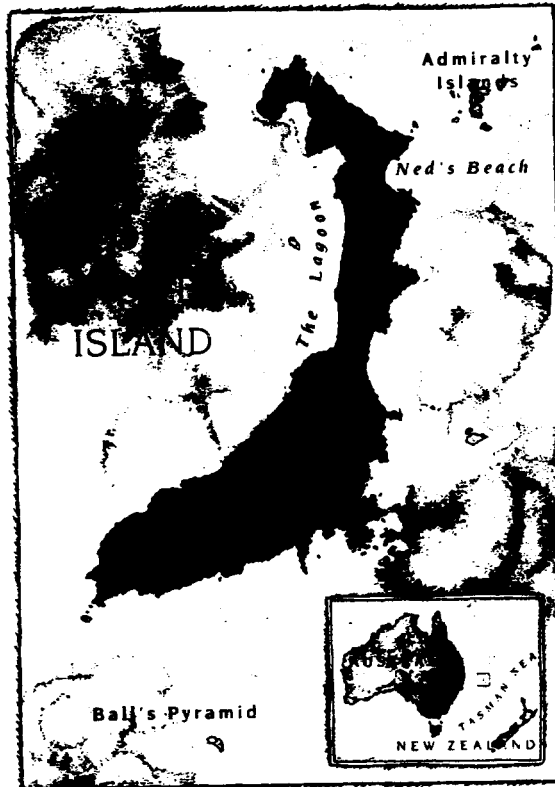
Even now many of these creatures are relatively unafraid of

man. They have not learned the worst about us. I opened my door one evening to find a plump shearwater (which they call a muttonbird here) resting with perfect confidence on my doorstep. Pigeons, blackbirds, and even woodhens scarcely trouble themselves to get out of your way. The providence petrel, which lives in the high mountains, will come fearlessly to a human call, and little kingfishers allow you almost within touching distance before they fly testily away, more irritated than alarmed.

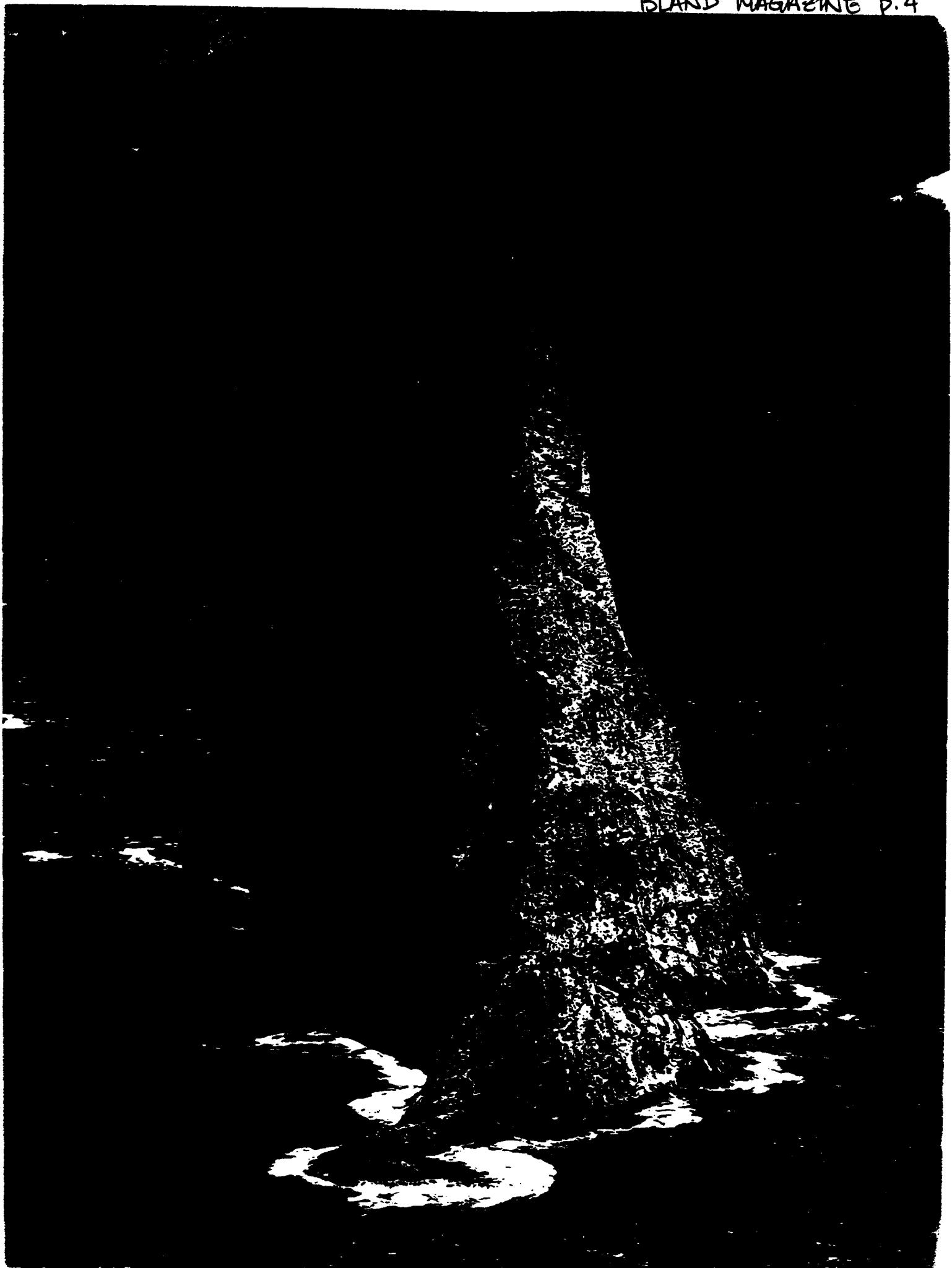
At Ned's Beach, one of the sandy beaches of the eastern shore, it has long been the custom to feed the fish. You have only to paddle into the water with a chunk of bread to find yourself surrounded by multitudes of them, gray, gold, red, and silver in the shallows. They are aggressive in their approach and sometimes nip you rather than the bread, but after all, they have to compete with a squadron of piratical ducks that follow you implacably off the

beach into the water and seldom miss a crumb.

IT IS HARD TO REALIZE, IN THE DEPTHS OF THIS LITTLE island sanctuary, that the 300 islanders are all somewhere about, every one of them within a few miles, as well as the 400-odd visitors who are the most the island can accommodate. If you take a flight in a light aircraft over the island, however, all becomes clear. Up you circle, libonously up the sheer gull-whirled cliffs of Mount Gower, over the forested plateau, and



Ball's Pyramid (opposite), a haven for nesting seabirds, stands sentinel 14 miles southeast of Lord Howe.



summit, high above the viscous lagoon and the rocky islets off the eastern shore, and presently it dawns upon you that the lowland center of Lord Howe is a little suburbia. Tucked there among the green are the white-roofed verandaed homes of the islanders, cozy as could be, linked by trim lanes, cars in their carports, and an air not of South Seas rascalism but of satisfied domesticity.

Lord Howe has sometimes been a haven for shipwrecked sailors, and I cannot imagine anywhere nicer to be washed ashore. On this infinitesimal dot in the ocean the benighted mariner, stepping from his life raft, would find every modern comfort. He need only cash a check at the State Bank, and he'd be set for the day: a restorative cappuccino at Trader Nick's Cafe, a stop at the Lagoon Store to get the Sydney morning paper, a beer at the hospitable bar of the Bowling Club, lunch overlooking the tennis court at Pinetrees Lodge. He could join, if he felt up to it, a game of touch football on the recreation field or a round of golf at the nine-hole course, pop in for a Devonshire cream tea somewhere, rent a video for the evening, pick up a quiche and a bottle of Chardonnay from a deli, and off to bed he could go in any of a dozen comfortable guest houses.

The first function of Lord Howe Island was supplying passing ships, mostly whalers, with vegetables and meat. When South Seas whaling declined, the islanders turned to exporting the seeds of the kentia palm, the indigenous tree that sprang into worldwide popularity with the advent of Victorian decor and that still ornaments the air-conditioned office of nearly every other Manhattan executive. Now, though the palm industry still thrives, the most obvious island purpose is tourism of a singularly restrained and environmentally conscious kind.

It is a very proper kind of tourism. There is nothing flashy or fancy to it. The Lord Howe style is resolutely unostentatious and is best grasped, I think, by wandering up some green frondy lane to one of those hidden-away houses. Doves loiter around this track, blackbirds mess about in the undergrowth, and a homely muddle tells you when you are approaching the homestead. In a small green paddock, hens are scrabbling. A line of washing hangs in the sun, and a motorbike leans against a tree. And when the house appears through a screen of flowering shrubs, it is everyone's dream of a settler's house, with its shady veranda among the hibiscus, wide eaves of corrugated iron, comfortably worn chairs on its porch, and the cool invitation of a parlor, family photographs on the wall, glimpsed through its ever-open door.

Open always, because in this small community, where everyone knows everyone else, and even the tourists are thoroughly respectable, nobody is going to steal anything. Not all of Lord Howe's islanders are figures of winning charm, but most of them seem entirely frank and honest, and for the visitor, life is very reassuring. There is no public transport, so a bicycle is the best way to get around (or tricycle, if you are able to find one of the two for rent on the island), and one's progress, however wobbly and breathless at first, soon becomes a mannerly exercise in acclimatization.

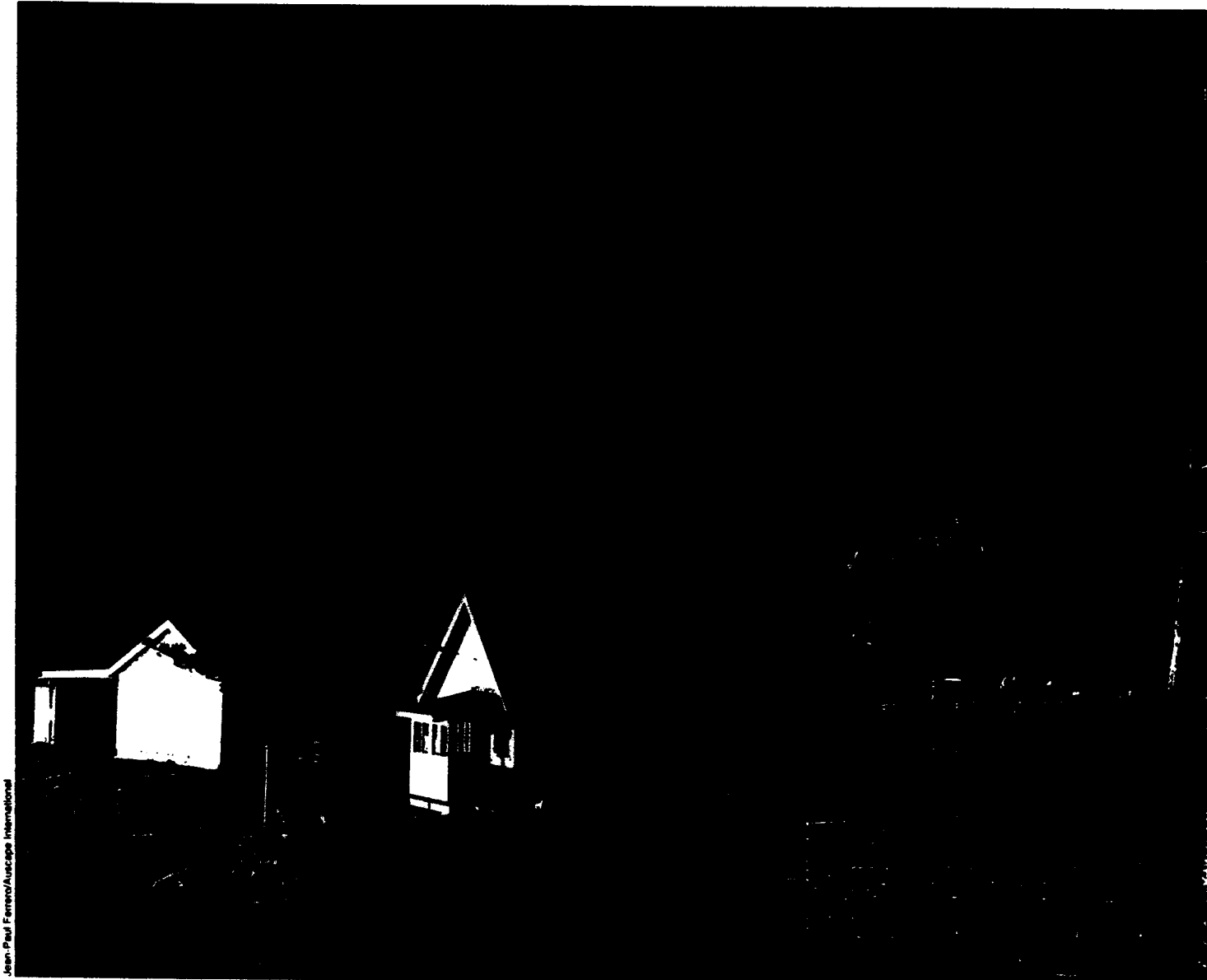
"Morning," "Hi," "Hullo there," "Lovely morning," says every single soul you pass, and if the islanders say it as a matter of habit, your fellow visitors are expressing a kind of astonished

The twin summits of Mount Lidgbird and Mount Gower dominate the lagoon on the western shore.



Juan Pablo Ferrero/Auscape International





Jean-Paul Ferrero/Auscape International

communal delight that you should be there at all, riding your bikes among the rain forests in the far Pacific. In no time at all you are pedaling down to the post office, along to the bank, up the road to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, greeting all comers as to the island manner born.

There is an Anglican church, too, and will soon be a Catholic one, and there are four country stores, and a bakery, and a boatyard, and a visitors' center, and a palm nursery, and a hospital with three beds, and a trim, small airport. There is a lovely little school whose pupils come and go on bikes wearing colorful helmets and jaunty rucksacks on their backs. There is a jetty where the weekly supply ship comes through the reef from the Australian mainland, and up every other road there seems to be a restaurant: Elsie's or the Blue Lagoon, the Beachcomber or the Admiralty Bar and Grill.

In the center of the settlement, with a flag on a pole out-

side, stands Government House. Almost from the start Lord Howe Island was officially regarded as part of New South Wales, then a British colony, and this must be one of the smallest and most engaging of all the government houses, from palaces in India to Caribbean villas, by which Queen Victoria's empire expressed its supremacies around the world. Today the islanders are on electoral rolls in mainland Australia, but they have their own governing board, a majority of it elected, and their own chief of state, as it were, the occupant of Government House, in the person of a Manager and Executive Officer.

The present incumbent is Judith Mortlock, and she and her husband, Alan, live there in a most agreeable style. Lawns and flowers surround them, music fills their rooms, there are woodhens in their garden, and Mrs. Mortlock serves her visitors excellent tea and chocolate cake. On the wall of their sitting room hangs an official portrait of Elizabeth II, who as Queen

Island traffic moves at a pedal-power pace (above and opposite top), which provides plenty of opportunities to observe woodhen fauna (middle) and fungi flora (bottom).



of Australia (for the moment, anyway) is Queen of Lord Howe Island, too.

Mrs. Mortlock's authority is amiable but wide-ranging. "You must excuse me now," she said to me as we chatted outside my guest house one day. "It's time for me to marry that couple over there." Sure enough, a young couple coming down the lane had a distinctly festive air to them and appeared to be carrying a wedding cake.

"Have you decided where you want the ceremony?" the Manager and Executive Officer sang out cheerfully as they approached, and the last I saw of them they were off in her car to celebrate their nuptials, and presumably eat their cake, beside the lagoon somewhere or in a forest glade.

I am told that some islanders, descended as they are from bold adventurers of the past, rather resent the tight-laced, somewhat goody-goody way in which Lord Howe is orga-

nized. Since 1982 it has been a World Heritage Site, which means that it is almost excruciatingly Green. Planning restrictions are severe – 75 percent of the island's surface is defined as permanent park preserve. Building of any kind is strictly controlled, and a man can hardly dig a hole in his garden, so residents complain, without getting a permit. There is a speed limit of 16 MPH. You must wear a helmet even if you are only riding a bike (though riders of those two tricycles are exempt). Spearfishing is forbidden, as is the collection of tern eggs, once among the islanders' favorite delicacies. The possession of dogs is discouraged, and except for a few aged survivors of more heedless times, cats are banned. They are bad for the native fauna.

No fauna, indeed, could be more privileged than the indigenous birds and beasts of Lord Howe Island, almost all of whom are protected by law and by technique. Things were different in the bad old days. The first human arrivals slaughtered and gobbled up anything that



Mike Longford/Auscape International

looked sufficiently appetizing or profitable, turtles to muttonbirds, and in 1918 rats swarming ashore from a wrecked ship swiftly wiped out not only half the kentia seeds, but also several species of birds. You may see examples of these lost kinds, flat on their backs and very dead, in the excellent little Lord Howe Museum – the Lord Howe starling, the vinous-tinted thrush, the robust silveryeye, each one of them unique to this island, and now forever gone. How I would like to have seen the tints of that thrush. And how I would love to have seen another of the island's rare creatures, a large stick insect thrillingly called the tree lobster!

Today one of the few creatures that can be killed at will is the masked owl. This strikes me as tough luck for that bird, because it was itself introduced to the island in an attempt to keep down the rats. Only too late was it discovered that it had a taste for the woodhen...

The story of the owl indeed has a sort of allegorical meaning for the island as a whole. Everything here depends upon a most delicately maintained balance: between wildness and control, between the fierce and the decorous, the free and the disciplined. Five square miles of delectable island landscape, unpolluted in a glorious climate – in an age when an aircraft takes only a couple of hours to fly here from Sydney, and Australian TV is in almost every home, the character of Lord Howe is terribly vulnerable.

Few would argue that so lovely a place needs very special treatment, but there are moments when the island seems not quite natural as a result, neither fish nor fowl as it were, a jungle island where you must wear a helmet to ride a bike. At the end of forest tracks you find garden seats and well-mown swards. Surf-loud beaches, from which you may watch the storms of the South Pacific raging out at sea, are equipped with barbecues, picnic tables, and trash bins. There is a strong element of recycled earnestness to the place.

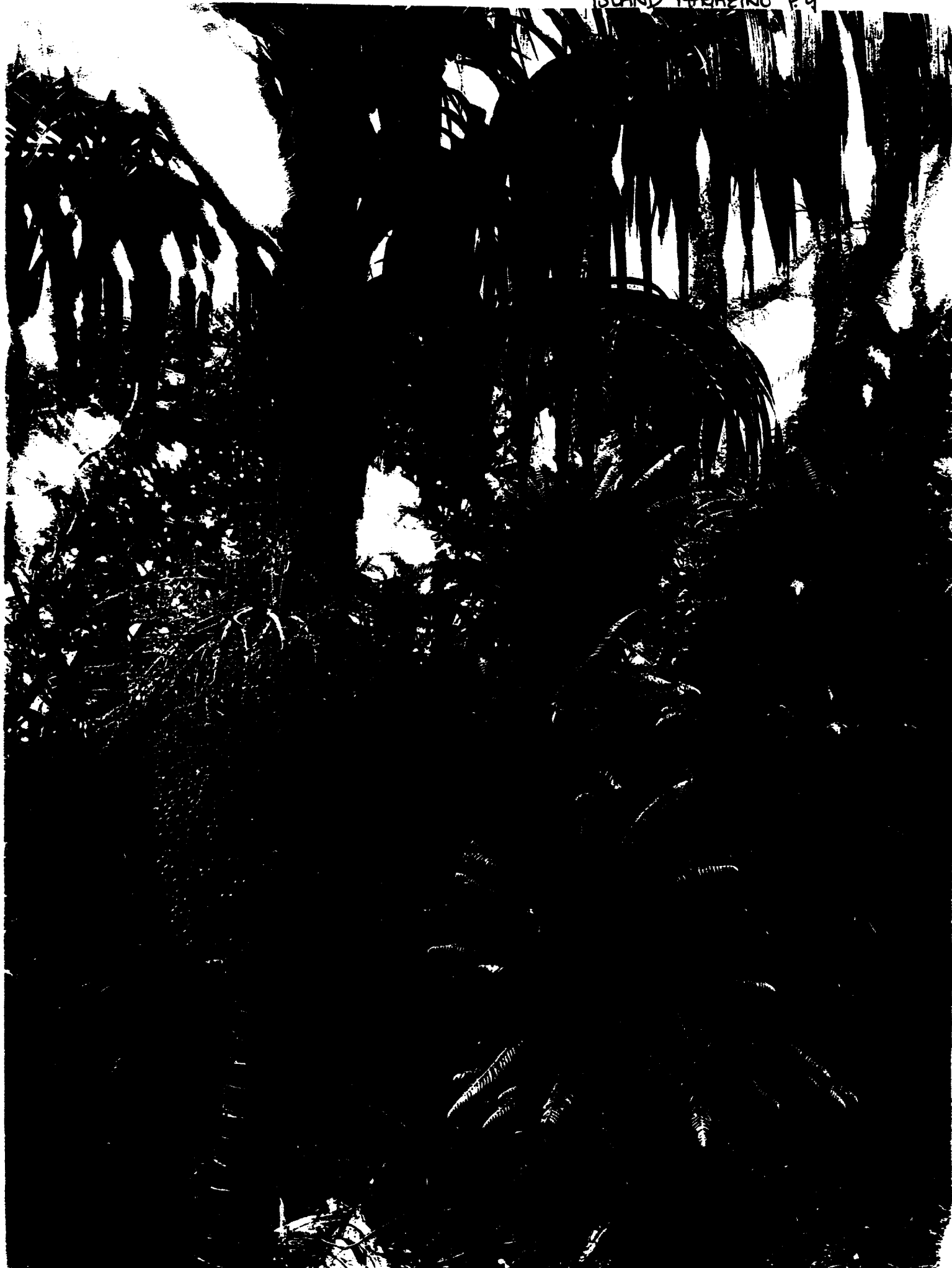
"What am I going to do there for a whole week?" I had asked an Australian friend of mine in a feeble moment.



Jean-Paul Ferrero/Auscape International



Michael Longford/Auscape International



"I think," she replied severely, "you are expected to do some walking."

Walking and fishing are indeed the chief things to do, and, except for honeymooners, most of the visitors I met on Lord Howe were elderly Australians of a fairly sinewy kind – aging backpackers, mature bush-walkers, members of adult education groups or environmental protection societies, liable to be wearing T-shirts with slogans like Operation Challenge. Their stamina seemed to me amazing. High on rainy ridges, as I staggered, slithering and panting from tree to tree, I would come across groups of laughing elders in easy and agile promenade. There was apparently no shortage of candidates for the guided climb up Mount Gower, which takes nine hours, which involves creeping along a cliffside path three feet wide high above the sea, and which rainstorms fortunately excused me from undertaking.

Twice a week for more than a decade, weather permitting, Mr. Ray Shick has led this expedition, and he seems to me the perfect exemplar of the well-balanced islander. He lives on the edge of pastureland toward the south end of the island, and until only the other day twice daily milked his two cows (now retired and seen happily mooching about the green attended by a variety of esoteric birds). His house is well-couched in flowers and foliage, and an elderly grace-and-favor cat sits benevolently on its veranda.

Mr. Shick, who is shortly to hand over his mountain guide duties to one of his sons, can remember when Lord Howe was quite another place. He can remember when the only tourists came by ship, or later by flying boat. He can remember going pig hunting all alone with his dogs in the high forest (though he never ate the consequent pork, being a Seventh-Day Adventist). When he is recalling those days he talks like a pioneer and a mountain man. Yet twice a week for all those years, he has shepherded tourists from Pinetrees Lodge and Ocean View, from the Leanda-Lei Apartments and the Waimarie Holiday Flats, with cameras and picnic lunches, up the track to Mount Gower.

He has succeeded, in short, in combining the organic with the commercial, and so on the whole has Lord Howe Island, tamest, most genial and most civilized of South Seas islands.

If there is one temptation that does frequent this serpentless paradise, it is perhaps the maverick urge. Like some of the less conformist islanders, every now and then I felt like breaking out, disgracing myself, behaving with Environmental Incorrectness or just subsiding into languid decadence. It was a shame, a particularly green person said to me on my last day on the island, that I had missed the opportunity to make the ascent of Mount Gower: I might have seen one of Lord Howe's most curious creatures, the minuscule freshwater crab, *Hali-carcinus lacustris*, which lives in rock pools along the way.

I allowed my eye to stray up the mass of the mountain, up the dizzying cliff path, to the forest-clad summit veiled in cloud. Temptation struck, and I felt rising within me the spirits of the original Lord Howe islanders, some of them scamps and swashbucklers I feel sure, with their Maori women and their Gilbert Island mistresses, their pig herds and their taste for roast muttonbird.

"Bugger the freshwater crabs," I heard myself saying, there beside the sweet lagoon. ♦

**Little mountain palms thrive in the mist of
Mount Gower's cloud forest.**



DAVID SIMMONS/AUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION

Melbourne boasts a "we-try-harder" attitude
But the weather's a lot like foggy-olde England.

Aussie Appeal

*Is the lure of Australia as an Asian regional
hub too good to be true?*

Aside from driving on the wrong side of the road, using the metric system, and speaking with those friendly Aussie accents, no country outside of Canada so resembles the US as Australia. We share barbecues, "Seinfeld," wide open and abundant lands, and a proud history as breakaway British colonies.

Depending on your point of view, this similarity is either an advantage or a disadvantage if you're considering Australia as a stepping stone into the rapidly growing Asia-Pacific market.

By Eric J. Adams

Boosters will tell you that it's to your advantage. Get your feet wet, they say, in a country similar to the US but with more experience with Asian partners. Detractors argue that the only thing Asian about Australia is that it lies on the other side of the international date line.

The boosters seem to be winning. To date, more than 300 US firms, including Kellogg, H.J. Heinz, Caterpillar, American Airlines, Morrison Knudsen, Sara Lee, and Dow Corning have chosen Australia as their Asia beachhead, spurning traditional

COUNTRY PROFILE

Asian bases such as Singapore and Hong Kong. Another 1,200 US firms have subsidiaries located down under.

"We looked at other sites in the region and decided to stick with Australia because it is right on the Asia Pacific Rim and has strong trading links there for us to build on," says Don Fritz, director of Australasian operations for Kellogg. The company recently pumped \$150 million into expanding its Sydney manufacturing plant to handle rising Asian sales.

The Reasons

A number of compelling factors attracted Kellogg and other companies down under, starting with cost.

"While operating costs in Singapore and Hong Kong are spiraling, in Australia costs have remained stable, even decreased, in some key areas," says Danny Engles, assistant director of investment for the Australian Department of Treasury.

Office space in Singapore, for

instance, costs up to 105% more, than comparable space in Melbourne, Sydney or Brisbane, says Engles. Australia's housing costs are one-ninth of Japan's and construction materials are one-fifth less.

Other business costs are also cheaper. A 10-minute call to the US, for example, is 50% cheaper in Australia than in Singapore (though the cost of leased lines are roughly equal), and local salaries of top and senior managers are between 30% and 60% lower.

It was cheaper raw materials that attracted Sara Lee. "With Australia's low raw material and operating costs we can even out price products from the US," says Allan Rogers, Group CEO for Sara Lee Holdings, which ships processed foods throughout Asia from its Australia kitchens.

But business doesn't live by low cost alone.

Kinney Shoes came because of Australia's unequalled skills base at the senior-executive level. Despite the country's meager 18 million population, its

management pool is seven to eight times larger than Singapore's and three to four times larger than Hong Kong's, according to government statistics. And nearly everyone, naturally, speaks English.

From its Brisbane headquarters, Kinney's now operates 520 shoe stores in Australia under various retail names. "We've never had an American manager or even an American employee," says Kenneth Wouda, Kinney's finance and administration director. "There was never any need to."

The highly skilled labor pool has spawned a mature support-services sector as well. "Of the 29 leading international firms in accounting, advertising, law, and management consulting that have Asian regional headquarters, half have chosen Australia as their home base," says Australia's trade minister, Sen. Peter Cook.

Binding Ties?

Whether Australia has closer ties to Asia than does the US is questionable. The

ASCENDANT BRISBANE

A Tale of Three Cities

Brisbane, Queensland. It used to be that Australia had only two major cities: Melbourne and Sydney. Not anymore. A third city is emerging as the continent's new star. It's Brisbane, two hours north of Sydney by plane in the far warmer "sunshine coast" of Queensland. Brisbane is growing three times faster than the rest of Australia and boasts some 1.4 million inhabitants, excellent ports, direct flights to more than 12 nations, and weather that makes Melbourne seem like foggy-olde England.

Just to the south of Brisbane lies the Gold Coast, a glitzy collection of high-rise hotels and casinos akin to Nassau. To the north lies the unspoiled Great Barrier Reef, the richest ecosystem on the globe. And to the west lies mineral-rich Queensland, a territory more than twice the size of Texas with a total population of slightly more than three million.

Melbourne and Sydney, meanwhile, battle it out like San Francisco and Los Angeles, or New York and Boston. The two cities are located some 500 miles apart on the southeast coast of the continent. Melbourne, in Victoria, is laid out on the banks of the river Yarra with a certain sensibility and correctness that categorizes its inhabitants. It's a tidy, friendly place, easily navigated and rarely overwhelming. Melbourne's collegiate atmosphere belies its population of three million plus, which makes it Australia's second-largest city.

Melbourne has a certain "we try harder" attitude and harbors a slight resentment that Sydney gets all the glory—and the warmer weather (which can be a disadvantage, attested to by this winter's wildfires).

Sydney, on the other hand, is located on a sprawling, teaming harbor and exudes the energy of a world-class city. It's fast, brash, and has some of the same eccentric appeal as San Francisco. Indeed, the names of Sydney and San Francisco are often uttered in the same breath.

But Sydney, the largest Australian city with nearly four million inhabitants, is also more crowded and more expensive than Melbourne. And the hassles of modern living—traffic, crime, even graffiti—have landed on Sydney's shores.

Still, Sydney is unquestionably Australia's center. Sixty of Australia's top 100 companies are headquartered here, and a third of all foreign investment in Australia ends up in Sydney's home state, New South Wales. It is also home to the Australian Stock Exchange, the Reserve Bank of Australia and the country's only futures markets.

Sydney's preeminent position is sure to be solidified when the Olympics arrive in 2000. "It's fitting that the Olympics will be here at the turn of the century," says Dr. John Saunders, chief executive of New South Wales' office of economic development. "Because we believe Sydney is destined to become one of the preeminent cities of the 21st century."

COUNTRY PROFILE

Australian government will tell you that 12 of its 13 largest trading partners are Pacific Rim countries. "That's critical expertise that can be utilized immediately by US firms," says Engles. But Australia has had its share of political and trade disputes with its neighbors to the north, Malaysia in particular. And Asian nations have not been quick to forget Australia's role in Vietnam or its "whites only" immigration policy that all but ostracized Australia in Asia during the post-war period.

But the dazzling feather in Australia's Asian cap is location, location, location. Sydney and Japan are just a time zone away, and shipping routes and passenger flights in the "Singapore-Sydney-Tokyo" triangle are well established. The Sydney stock and futures markets open just as US markets close, and they close just before European markets open.

"The big advantage of the time zone for an American company is that you can talk to your regional office at the end of your business day and get a problem resolved or worked on while you sleep," says Dermot A. McManus, director of trade and investment development for the government of Queensland.

Another Australian standout is telecommunications, where recent investment in new fiber optic connections came on line last year. A self-restoring loop around the Pacific now connects Japan, Hawaii, New Zealand, Guam, and Australia for automatic rerouting—a feature not shared by telecom operations in Singapore or Hong Kong.

That's why such telecom-dependent global concerns as Cathay Pacific Airlines and the Hong Kong Jockey Club chose Australia as their telecommunications hub. Telstra, Australia's phone company, is headed by Frank Blount, a former group president of AT&T (and one of the few Americans you'll see managing high-profile Australian companies).

"It's now a stated part of Telstra's vision to be the customer's first choice for communication and information services in Australia—and the Asia Pacific region," says Blount.

The Climate

Perhaps the greatest lure of Australia is Australia. "Clean," "safe," "friendly,"

"energetic," "entrepreneurial," "optimistic"—these are terms US businesspeople use to describe Australia and its inhabitants.

"It's a Western, laid-back country with a great lifestyle. You couldn't buy this standard of living in most Asian countries at any price," says Charles W. Blunt, national director of the American Chamber of Commerce in Australia.

And "responsive" is the term often used to describe Australia's current government, run with technocratic efficiency under the sometimes acerbic leadership of Prime Minister Paul Keating.

The government has been working to make Australia more inviting to foreign companies. During the past decade, the government has floated the Australian dollar; deregulated the telecommunications and airlines industries; upgraded Australia's rails and ports; removed many of the obstacles to foreign investment and ownership; instituted a number of foreign investment incentives; and slashed corporate tax rates to 33%, among the lowest in the developed world.

There's good reason why Australia is so hospitable.

"Australians look at NAFTA and the EC and the several Asian trading associations, and you can imagine the horror," says Blunt.

Australia, with historical or geographical links to the three regions, fears it could effectively be excluded from trading freely with all three blocs. Consequently, the government is telling its people that to survive means they must export, and to prosper means getting used to the idea of American, Japanese, and Korean bosses.

"The recent global recession helped change the attitudes of many Australians toward foreign companies and foreign investment. It taught us a stern lesson: We had better look beyond our borders to succeed," says Leigh Mackay, manager of trade development at the Port of Melbourne.

The message to American firms, meanwhile, is recited by government officials like a mantra: Australia is your best business location in Asia.

"We are ready to negotiate tax and incentive breaks on a case-by-case basis if it means the difference between a US

firm setting up regional headquarters here or elsewhere," says Australia's trade minister Cook.

Friendly, politically stable, abundant in raw materials, low in operating cost, English speaking, an educated work force—is Australia too good to be true? The answer is no. Australia is too good to be missed.

LUCKY... AND CLEVER

Surprising Australia

Quick—what's the capital of Australia? If you said Canberra, you know more about Australia than most Americans. Australia is full of surprises for the uninitiated. The first is its sheer size. It looks lonely out there in the South Pacific, but Australia is roughly the size of the continental United States; flying from Perth to Brisbane is like flying from Los Angeles to Washington, DC.

Yet the continent is inhabited by a mere 18 million people, approximately the population of Southern California. The vast majority of Australians are crowded into coastal cities and towns on the southeast edge of the continent. Much of the country, desert or lush rain forest, is largely uninhabitable. With 70% of the population living in the 10 largest cities or their suburbs, Australia is one of the world's most-urbanized countries.

A look at trade figures indicates just how Asian Australia has become. Today, Australia exports more to China than to the US, more to Singapore than to the UK. It's leading the way in trade with Vietnam—a country its soldiers fought in along with the Yanks—and it sells a whopping 25% of all its export goods to Japan.

"We used to be called the 'lucky country' because of our bounty," said Prime Minister Paul Keating recently. "But we're working hard to become the 'clever country' instead."

TRAVELAGE EAST
MARCH 14, 1994

0075 Australia

ASIA PACIFIC

Riding Australian Rails On 'Spirit Of The Outback'

By DAVID KNIBB

BRISBANE — Queensland Rail's new luxury train, the Spirit of the Outback, operates twice weekly between here and the Outback town of Longreach.

The Spirit of the Outback departs Brisbane every Tuesday and Friday at 7 p.m., travels north to Rockhampton during the night, then heads west for a daylight trip into the Outback.

A 24-hour trip

Twenty-four hours and 825 miles later, the train pulls into Longreach. The returning train departs Longreach at 6:30 a.m. on Thursday and Sunday and arrives back in Brisbane the same time the next morning.

As befits its name, the train features an Outback theme, with each sleeping car named after a famous sheep shearer, artist or Outback poet. The cocktail lounge is called the Stockman's

Bar, and the dining car is known as the Tucker Box.

Clients who prefer to make the entire trip by daylight can leave Brisbane in the morning on the all-electric Spirit of Capricorn, spend the night in Rockhampton and board the Spirit of the Outback early the next morning for the trip to Longreach.

Itineraries to this area frequently include Winton, a smaller town 100 miles northwest of Longreach.

Winton is known as the birthplace of both Qantas Airways and Waltzing Matilda, which was written by Banjo Patterson while he was staying at a nearby sheep station.

What it costs

The one-way, adult fare for a first-class sleeping berth on the Spirit of the Outback is approximately \$155. An economy sleeping berth with shared shower and toilet costs about \$100; sitting-car

fare is approximately \$80. Clients can ride the train to Longreach and fly back via Flight West Airlines for about \$7 more than the roundtrip, first-class rail fare.

The Spirit of the Outback can be booked through several U.S.-based tour operators. Agents also can book direct through Rail Australia, the central booking office for all Australian passenger trains. Fax the company in Adelaide at 618-217-4682.

Global Touring enters 11th year providing Americans with South Pacific programs

by Donna Attra

In its 11th year of business concentrating on the South Pacific, **Global Touring** has pulled together a host of tour offerings designed to suit every client.

Presently, a \$949 special to Sidney Australia provides customers with six nights accommodations at the *Manhattan Hotel* when they purchase the \$948 round trip air fare, a generous \$1 value by any standards.

Global Touring co-owners, **Jennifer Pickens** and **Robert M. Vanderkay**, both travel to the area promoted in their brochure several times a year. In the 1993-1994 brochure covering "Australia/New Zealand/Tahiti/Fiji," are numerous tour options.

"Everything in the brochure, we've experienced," said Vanderkay. "And I might add that there were hundreds of things we didn't put in the brochure because we didn't think the American tourist would enjoy them."

At Global Touring's offices in Pompano Beach, Florida, Pickens oversees the bookings for the company while Vanderkay handles promotional activities.

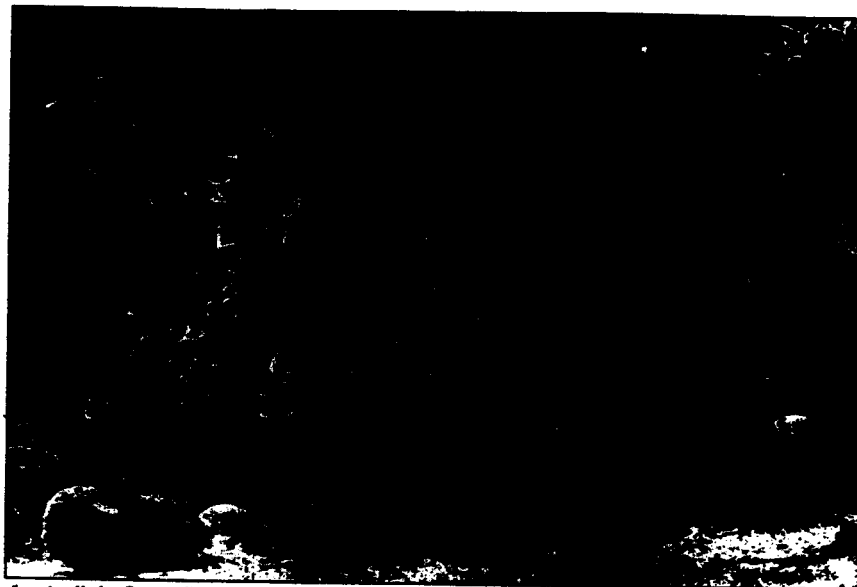
Free Travel Insurance

Customers of Global Touring receive free travel insurance when their per person package price totals more than \$1,500. If a travel package price ranges from \$500 to \$1,500, per person, Global will add \$14 to the package costs and provide full insurance coverage.

Australia Fams Throughout 1994

In 1994, Global Touring is offering travel agents a familiarization tour of Australia for eight days/seven nights starting at \$339, land only. Blackout periods are in March, October and November.

Sightseeing excursions on the fam include a Captain Hook boat tour, Sidney City tour, trip on the train that goes to Kuranda, a visit to a rainforest station where participants



Australia's Great Barrier Reef is one site that Global Touring's Bob Vanderkay will not allow his clients to miss.

ride an army "duck," (a 45-foot long amphibious landing craft left over from WWII). At the rainforest station, a group of aboriginal dancers perform in a natural amphitheater.

Vanderkay is enthusiastic about the company's programs to Australia and the country as a destination, "It's a fascinating place . . . like no other place in the world."

"And they like Americans, which isn't true in other places. It's a nice relationship," added Vanderkay.

Brochure Highlights

Among the programs offered by Global Touring are Sidney packages with selected hotels ranging in category from tourist three-star to deluxe five-star. Prices are from \$155, twin, per person at *The Manhattan* for four days/three nights.

A Melbourne stopover from \$180 for four days/three nights is available as well.

Capital Connections links the cities of Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne for seven days/six nights from \$517 and includes accommodations, air conditioned room with private bath, limousine transfer from Sydney airport on arrival and upon departure to Melbourne airport, sightseeing and

admissions per itinerary, and scheduled express coach service between Sidney and Melbourne.

The Whitsunday Islands, off the coast of Queensland are also featured in Global Touring's brochure. Participants travel from Brisbane to Cairns on the Queenslander Travel-train and then board the *Coral Princess* for a four-day/three-night cruise from Townsville to Cairns. Cruise prices, per person, begin at \$653 for a twin cabin until March 31; from April 1 to December 31, the same category is \$672.

Cairns, on Australia's east coast, is tropical year round and a fast-growing resort area. Here, visitors can see the Great Barrier Reef, a spectacular display of coral and fish.

A four-day/three-night Cairns Stop-over starts at \$169.

According to Vanderkay, Global Touring is an all-American operation. "We pride ourselves on the fact that we're Americans selling to Americans. We know what Americans want."

For further information, contact **Global Touring**, 1150 S.W. 10th Ave., Ste. 204 W. Pompano Beach, FL 33069, tel. (800) 942-9399, (305) 785-6488 or Fax (305) 943-0011.

LOS ANGELES TIMES
APRIL 10, 1994

6675
GUIDEBOOK

Australia's Land of Sand

Getting there: From LAX fly to Brisbane, with a connection in Sydney, on Qantas, United, Northwest and Air New Zealand; round-trip fares start at about \$1,000.

Several air services make the one-hour trip from Brisbane north to either of Fraser Island's two airstrips, or will land directly on the beach. Harry's Air Charter (from the U.S., telephone 011-61-7128-9056) also offers short flights to Fraser from Hervey Bay and Maryborough at prices in the \$25-\$45 range with the added option of a scenic tour. From Brisbane to Hervey Bay it is roughly 3½ hours by car, four hours by rail.

Where to Stay: Accommodation information, as well as general information about the island and tour operators, is available from the Hervey Bay City Council, 77 Tavistock St., Torquay, Queensland 4655; tel. 011-61-7124-2448.

Kingfisher Bay Resort, P.M.B. 1, Urangan, Hervey Bay, Queensland 4655; lavish yet environmentally friendly resort has doubles starting at about \$135 per night; tel. 011-61-7125-5155.

Happy Valley Resort, P.O. Box 224, Torquay, Hervey Bay, Queensland 4655; newly upgraded surf-side resort offers access to miles of unspoiled beach at about \$75; tel. 011-61-7127-9144.

Eurong Beach Resort, P.O. Box 100, Maryborough, Queensland 4650; an economically viable option for those wanting to stay in a place with full-service amenities at about \$50 to \$110; tel. 011-61-7127-9122.

Dilli Village, P.M.B. 10, Maryborough, Queensland 4650; government-sponsored lodging catering to educational insti-

tutions, recreation clubs and community groups; about \$30 per person; tel. 011-61-7127-9130. (Reservations should be made several months in advance.)

Tours: One-day tours, lunch and transfers to and from Hervey Bay included, start at about \$45. Three-day tours range from about \$55 for tent-and-baloney trips to tours starting at about \$225 that include a four-wheel-drive vehicle, food, guide and cabin lodging.

Fraser Venture, P.O. Box 100, Maryborough, Queensland 4650; tel. 011-61-7124-1900.

Fraser Island Fishing and Tours, P.O. Box 64, Rainbow Beach, Queensland 4225; tel. 011-61-7127-9126.

Fraser Island Top Tours, P.O. Box 224, Torquay; Hervey Bay, Queensland 4655; tel. 011-61-7125-3933.

All-Terrain Rentals, P.O. Box 12, Rainbow Beach, Queensland 4581; tel. 011-61-7486-3227.

Kingfisher Bay Tours, P.M.B. 1, Urangan, Hervey Bay, Queensland 4655; tel. 011-61-7125-5155.

Sun Safari Tours, P.O. Box 1, Rainbow Beach, Queensland 4581; tel. 011-61-7486-3154.

Specialty Tours: For equestrians, Clip Clop Treks offers a six-day horseback ride across Fraser Island; about \$585 for horse, food, tent and guide. Write Lake Weyba, Noosa, Queensland 4581; tel. 011-61-7449-1254.

For more information: Write the Australian Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1200, Los Angeles 90067, or call (706) 296-4900.

—K.B.

APRIL 13, 1994

By PETE BANKO
 Messenger Staff Reporter **6675**

CANANDAIGUA — George W. Hamlin IV holds up a beachball-size globe and puts his index fingers at opposite ends.

"I think Perth is about as far away as you can get from Canandaigua and not be in the water," he said, his eyes circling the plastic earth.

And yet, after spending two weeks in Australia in February, Hamlin is amazed at the similarities between Canandaigua and the Australian town of Benalla. The two have enjoyed a sort of sister-city relationship over the last three of years.

"Canandaigua is my favorite place, far and away," said Hamlin, the 52-year-old president and chief executive officer of Canandaigua National Bank & Trust Co. "Australia is second."

The Gibson Street resident said the Australian people he met were almost exclusively warm and friendly.

"I've traveled a lot around the world to various places over last 30 years or so and I have not been in a place that is more immediately familiar and friendly and comfortable than Australia in general and specifically Benalla," said Hamlin. "The people are less hassled. People were constantly going out of their way to help me . . . it didn't matter if I was in a train station or airport or anywhere along the way. I said to myself, 'Why am I so at home and I've been here a week and traveled all over the place and when is other shoe going to drop?' It never did drop."

He spent a few days in Benalla, which has a population of about 12,000 and is in the state of Victoria between the major metropolitan cities of Sydney and Melbourne. But Hamlin's trek was actually made for another reason . . . and proved to be an adventure on several levels, he said.

Hamlin made the trip to testify in a high-profile, complicated and decade-old race-fixing case. The alleged fix came in the 1963 Brabury Stakes, a race Hamlin described as "on par with our Kentucky Derby." A jockey implicated in the scheme found his way to the Canandaigua area shortly after the questionable race and was receiving monthly checks from Australia. The checks passed through Canandaigua National during the jockey's few months here.

So Hamlin's first couple days Down Under were spent in Perth helping the prosecution's case in the sensational trial, which is in the national spotlight.

"People were very willing to talk to me about (the case)," said Hamlin. "It's a matter of national consequence. It didn't matter where I was . . . in a train station or on an airplane . . . everyone had their theories and were willing to impart it to me."

Hamlin said the small part of the trial which he witnessed was both odd and interesting.

Inside the courtroom, Hamlin said the scene was much like what Americans have come to expect in the British justice system.

"It's Gilbert and Sullivan: Everybody has the wigs on and they've got these coats and the chief judge has the most splendid wig and scarlet at the throat . . . he was a cross between a bishop and a cardinal. He looked like (English actor) Alec Guinness. He was right out of central casting."

Hamlin said he was on the stand for about an hour testifying about the six checks his bank hand handled.

"I think I just helped pound more nails upon the nails which were already in the coffin."

After his testimony, Hamlin then went on to Benalla, where he stayed with Benalla Town Clerk Bill Jaboor, who has visited Canandaigua over the last couple of years. While in Benalla, Hamlin

local industries to pilot a glider to go on a mountain bike ride in an attempt to photograph kangaroos.

"I have a busy schedule, but trying to keep up with Bill Jaboor . . ." said Hamlin. "... I hope no one thinks that Australians don't hustle."

Hamlin said he was impressed with the development of the town and the government's role in it. He saw many parallels with Canandaigua.

"The downtown is extremely vibrant," said Hamlin. "Having a bypass was essential to Benalla and they made an attractive median, roundabouts and used the closed lane for pull aside and diagonal parking. And they did nice things with trees and sidewalks."

"They also have hard awnings out on the stores . . . they've done that sort of thing in Burlington, Vt., so it could be done here. You could go up and down the entire main street and not get wet if it was sprinkling. You walk in and out of stores like it was a mall."

Hamlin noticed many other similarities between Benalla and Canandaigua.

"They have a civic center they will be building, and in the next nine months they may be combining the city of Benalla and shire (town) of Benalla."

Naturally, one of the highlights of the banker's journey was a simple bank transaction.

"Right outside city hall I put my Canandaigua National Bank ATM (automatic teller machine) card into an ATM and out comes \$20 in about the time it takes you to tie your shoelaces," Hamlin said. "It was 5:57 p.m. on Feb. 20 and actually 1:57 a.m. in Canandaigua and out comes the dough, so I was pretty excited. I took a picture of myself because this has got to be the record distance transaction. It all took 12 seconds." ◀

LOS ANGELES TIMES

APRIL 17, 1994

AUSTRALIA: Australian Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1200
Los Angeles 90067, (310) 552-1988.

AUSTRALIA: ADVENTURING

by [illegible] at [illegible]

Here's some practical information on traveling in Mel Gibson's country in a vehicle "Mad Max" would like.

■ **Getting there:** Alice Springs has regular air service from any large city in Australia via the country's two major domestic carriers, Australian Airlines (now merged with Qantas) and Ansett Airlines.

■ **Weather:** The seasons are reversed. Down Under: out summer is their winter.

In the Northern Territory there are two distinct seasons—wet and dry. The wet is from November to April, when roads can become impassable 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 70s and 80s—although nights can dip below freezing in July and August.

■ **Four-wheel driving:** The routes outlined in this article are off the beaten track enough that they will give you a real sense of adventure and solitude. If, however, your vehicle does break down

or gets stuck, the routes are just well-traveled enough that sooner or later someone will come by and offer a hand. Helping others is critical in the Outback and is part of Australia's concept of "mateship."

When preparing for a four-wheel-drive trip, it's paramount that you take plenty of food, water and adequate clothes for the desert's extreme temperatures. The single most important rule when confronted with a breakdown is **STAY WITH YOUR VEHICLE.**

Most four-wheel-drive vehicles are manual transmission because the proper use of gears is an important part of four-wheeling. With a little concentration—and the fact that Outback roads are not that crowded—it's relatively easy to drive on the left and shift gears with your left hand. Avoid driving after sunset, when many animals become se-

rious road hazards.

Before you leave the rental car lot, make sure you and the agent thoroughly go over the vehicle, particularly how and when you should engage the four-wheel drive. It's a good idea to also check the spare tire for air each time you get gas.

Alice Springs has many car rental companies, including international ones like Hertz. Depending on the time of year, type of four-wheel drive and length of rental, the daily rate can run anywhere from \$90 up to \$160 (Australian dollars). Gas is expensive in Australia and sold by the liter (about four liters to the gallon). To fill up a large tank that holds 90 liters can cost \$65 to \$85. The vehicle used in this article was filled up three times during its travels.

■ **Accommodations:** Like any tourist town of 25,000, Alice Springs has many hotels, motels and resorts at all levels

and prices.

Kings Canyon is served by just one resort, Frontier Kings Canyon, which offers a gas station, general store, cafe, two bars, two restaurants, two swimming pools, a camping area, bunkhouses and motel units. The motel units per room per night range from \$100 to \$185 (Australian dollars).

At Uluru, there is Yulara, the service village for the national park. The village, which has a service station, many shops, stores and an excellent visitors center, also incorporates the Ayers Rock Resort, which provides various levels of accommodation 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, Los Angeles: (800) 333-0262.

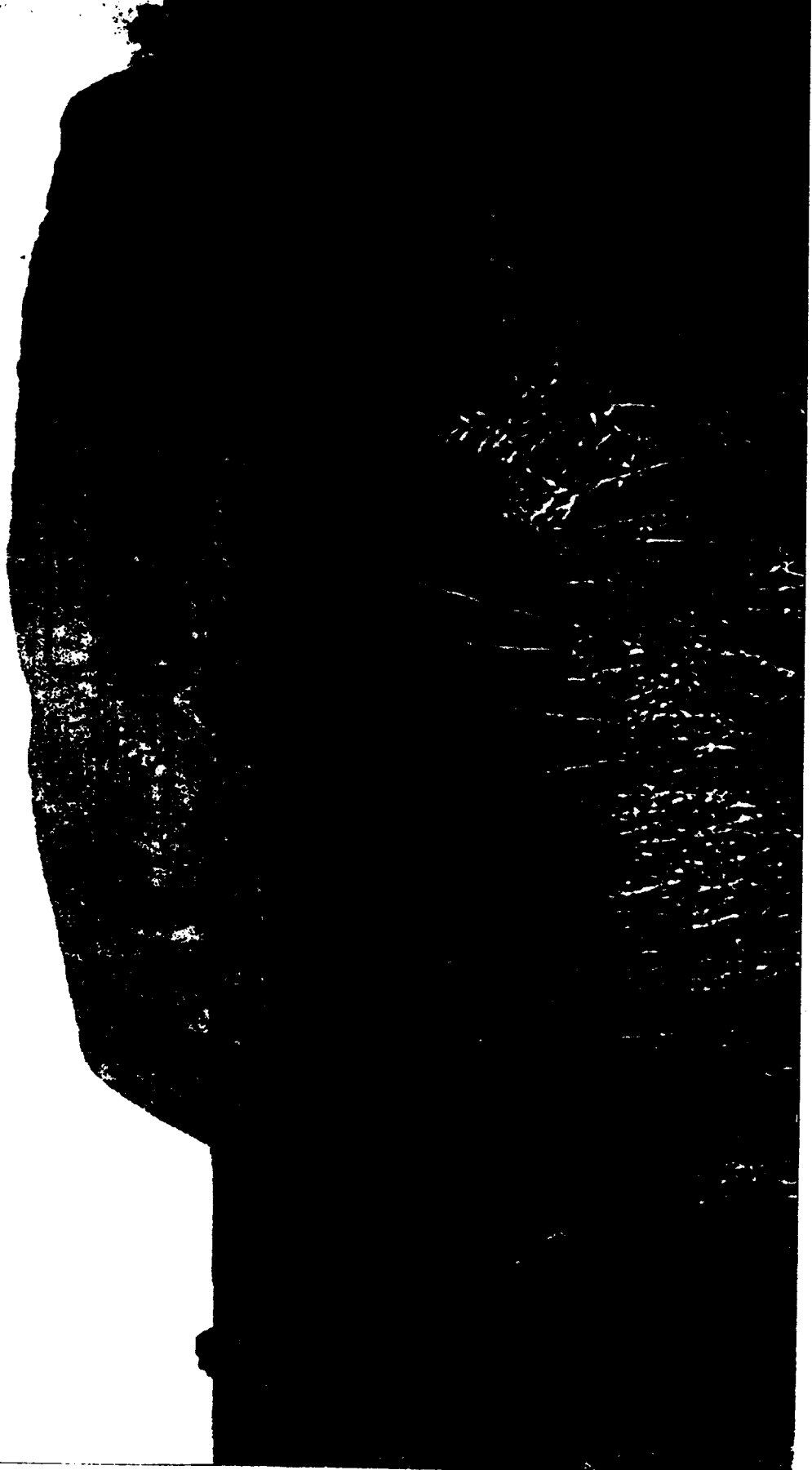
SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE

APRIL 24, 1994

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■ ULURU ROCK is one of the most famous tourist attractions in the Australian interior. But to the native people, its vast bulk represents a sacred site.

Cliffhanger Foster

The Rock

It's a tourist trap and a sacred site

By Catherine Foster
Yulara, Australia

What's purple in the morning, gold at night, and covered with white ants?

Uluru—or Ayers Rock—depending on whom you talk to.

Often, all that tourists want is to visit the Great Barrier Reef and then fly to Australia's centre for a day to "do" the rock. "White ants" are what the Aborigines call the tourists crawling over their rock.

Increasingly, rangers, Aborigines, naturalists, and even hospitality management are trying to encourage visitors to experience Uluru, the Aboriginal name for the rock, in a different way.

This is the typical "whitefella" way: Buy a package deal to Ayers Rock from a bus company. Fly in to Alice Springs or Ayers Rock airport and take a bus out to the base of the rock in the late afternoon. Listen to your driver-guide recite a memorized speech. Pull Up alongside many other buses at the official viewing area. Watch the sun set over the rock. Go back to the hotel.

Next morning, roar out to the viewing site by bus. See the sun rise over the rock. Climb the rock: Haul yourself hand-over-hand up a chain strung along a viciously steep incline. Ignore the warning signs. Don't take water. Wear high heels.

Clamber down. Check it off your list of sites to see. Go home.

This is how many of the 300,000 tourists who visit the park each year experience Uluru. But consider these other options:

□ Go around, not up. Walk around the base of Uluru instead of climbing it. It's free, fun, fragrant, and, in contrast to the freeway of climbers above you, almost deserted. About 5-1/2 miles (9 kilometers) around, it takes 1-1/2 to 2 hours.

You will pass sacred sites (fenced off and not to be photographed) and Mutijutu (formerly Maggie's Spring), a wonderfully cool pool with a welcome shady bench. Uluru is not a monolithic dome, as it looks from afar. It's got folds and ripples and rain-carved channels. It changes with the light.

□ Walk with rangers. The Mala walk, a free interpretive walk that highlights Aboriginal culture, takes place each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 10 a.m. Our ranger-guide, Julian Berry, tells us that the traditional owners are the Anangu, the Aboriginal people who live in the Western Desert area. They were granted title to the park in 1985 and now co-manage it with the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service as part of the agreement. While Berry is white, he has studied Aboriginal culture and has been briefed by the Anangu.

You can't learn all about an ancient oral culture in 90 minutes, but Berry manages to give us enough to go on. The Anangu have been here for 22,000 years, he says. For most of that time, they have been foragers and even today are only a few generations away from that lifestyle.

Berry tells us a bit about Tjukurrpa, a difficult concept: It means both the creation period and the laws and rules that make up Aboriginal law. It's a way of life, a philosophy, a religion. In Anangu belief, the Tjukurrpa ancestors created all

the features of the landscape - wind, rain, kinship, languages. During this time, the ancestors travelled around in the form of animals, humans, or plants. Evidence of their visits can be seen in the sacred sites.

Berry shows us a big hole in the side of Uluru, created by the Itjaritjariku Yuu, the marsupial mole, which dug around and created this windbreak. We see caves with rock painting, where parents have instructed their children in Tjukurrpa over many generations.

We learn of Aboriginal customs, like men "going bush" for months to be taught law in seclusion. Berry hints at the adjustments that must be made when two cultures meet: Even today, the Aboriginal members of the ranger staff may suddenly disappear for a few days to attend to business.

"When ceremonies happen, people disappear, sometimes for a couple of months," Berry says. The Anangu rangers' right to do this has been enshrined in the agreement made with the federal government, which required a "sensitive employment structure."

The Anangu would rather that visitors did not climb Uluru, Berry says, because they feel responsible for anyone on their land. The not-uncommon rescues are stressful for the Aboriginal rangers and for the nearby Anangu community, which can see them taking place. Just the week before my visit, one tourist tried to climb down by another route. He fell and injured himself. It took 14 hours to rescue him.

Peter Shands, who has brought his family across country to see the rock, appreciates the rangers' presentation. "This walk changed my perspective on walking up the

rock," he says. "It went from being something necessary to something not good." Not enough people know that the Aboriginals don't like it, he adds.

The high point of the week was to have been another walk led by two Anangu women elders who would explain traditional customs. But the elders are away on Anangu business. So it's Berry again, with three Anangu trainees: Kevin, Akana, and Nicole. This time, with the walk limited to 15 people, Kevin becomes talkative. Akana and Nicole do not feel well-versed enough in some of the tasks the other women would have showed us, so instead of teaching us how to make resin from the spiky spinifex grass (kiti), they just tell us about it.

Kiti is used as a hardener on the tips of spears and as a glue to bind together parts of weapons and implements. The trainees also describe how to make piti from bark. It looks like a concave shield and is used for carrying everything from berries to babies.

☐ Take an alternative tour. Uluru Experience is a small two-year-old operation that focuses on Aboriginal culture and the ecology of the area. It uses vans guided by university-trained naturalists. Because of school holidays, the only one I could take was the Valley of the Winds walk through Kata Tjuta, about 34 miles (55 kilometers) away.

We walked through a lovely, absolutely silent valley between the huge, ochre-colored, puddingstone knobs of Kata Tjuta ("many heads"), then climbed up rock stairs to a great ledge. There we could see

X THE ROCK E2

AYERS Continued from E1

the valley stretching out before us. It was magnificent. We rested beside a pool you could actually drink from.

Uluru Experience also has a day-long trip to Kings Canyon, which I'm told is well worth it. There's a late-afternoon trip to Mt. Connor, another little-visited but stunning geological wonder. There, you can have a barbecue on a traditional working cattle station with the jackaroos (ranch hands).

Even Yulara (Ayers Rock Resort) is getting into the act. The week I visited, they had just started "Sounds of Silence," a barbecue under the stars with grilled emu, kangaroo, and buffalo, plus a visit by an astronomer and a few

moments of silence to hear desert sounds. Sometimes, they say, you can hear dingos howling.

Simon McGrath, the manager of Desert Gardens, one of the four hotels at the Ayers Rock Resort that house all the tourists, says that the resort is in the "unenviable position" of trying to change the perception that climbing Uluru is all there is to do there.

"I think world tourism is definitely changing, especially with ecotourism," he says. "People are more interested in the behind-the-scenes and in the depth of local culture. It's becoming a learning process, rather than a 'been there, done that.'"

The Christian Science Monitor