



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-1 American Leg

7/12/1999

I had only got to Detroit via Amsterdam en route to Florida and yes my luggage was lost! You may ask why such a strange route? Well, it's all to do with flying around the world with loadsa stopovers on schedule flights for 1250 pounds.

Joy when NW Airlines phoned and delivered the missing stuff in the middle of the night to Cocoa Beach Florida.

Even more joy when the family arrived, especially my grandsons who had flown for the first time at Daniel at 18 months and James at 3 years. I was in my twenties before I first flew - how times have changed. They had all flown on non stop Virgin and the boys were well pleased with their knapsack and freebies. The family had 2 weeks of great weather and fun. Granddads highlights were through the eyes of the boys seeing Mickey Mouse, Shamu, lots of talking and singing animals etc. James had his first motorbike ride and was quite adventurous with the waves. Of course we had sand from my bit of Florida beach everywhere. All handled the hot sun, Harley rides and picnics in the motorhome very well. Di arrived a couple of weeks later and then it was all change as Di's brother and nephew came then my pal Skip from Iowa with his new lady. Wow what a time.

Then we left for Hawaii and have just loved Ohahu (Waikiki/Honolulu) and the other islands of Maui and Big Island. Active and non active volcanoes, mountain and rain forest plus different culture has made it all a joy. Pineapples Macadamia nuts and local coffee had to be sampled - especially in ice cream. Our present hotel is just where the Iron men and women start their Triathlon every Oct.

I should too after all the ice-cream, but its the Cook Islands later tonight.....

Best wishes to all - have fun

Terry in Hawaii



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-2 The Cook Islands

22/12/1999

Kia Orana

We left Honolulu exactly 58 years to the day following the attack on Pearl Harbour. Our destination the Cook Islands just south of the equator so we are in the south seas. It seemed appropriate to have already visited Captain Cooks memorial in Hawaii where he was killed after some disagreements. Anyway I like the taste of Cook beer here in his islands.

This is a truly friendly and fascinating place and full of exotic food and plants. The reef surrounding the island makes swimming safe and warm too. We had our 3rd trauma (the second was lost luggage again) Di had to have a tooth out. Fantastic fast service and she said he was dishy. affordable too at 20 quid.

Later....

We have now spent an idyllic week in Raratonga the largest of the Cook Islands. A T shirt saying "Enjoy heaven on Earth" has it about right. This is a tiny island, takes about 50 mins to ride around on the rented Yamaha scooter.

What have been the highlights?. Certainly the people are just very natural and friendly. The growing conditions are bountiful and the vegetation really exotic. Fruit falling from the trees and plentiful fish, molluscs and crabs. Great cooking and world class baking. Home made musical instruments, the ukulele had its origins here. Lots of music and dancing with the culture being maintained. We heard some wonderful church singing and stuffed ourselves at an Umu (local feast cooked in the ground). Yes did the dancing with the grass skirted locals PHWOAR.

Lost big money (80p) gambling on a crab race, the commentator was a hoot. Beach walked, kayaked, swam in crystal water, and made friends with both locals and fellow visitors. Already this feels more of a way of life than a trip.

Again a T shirt sums up the local humour "Send more tourists - the last ones tasted great" Now its Thurs so Fiji and two more time zones tomorrow....

M minus 15 days and counting

Terry - the internet office Avarua Cook Islands



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-3 Fiji Islands

22/12/1999

BULA (Hello) Everyone

A night flight and crossing date line brought us to Fiji on Sat am - it felt very strange to have lost Fri. Now we are 11 hours ahead of GMT. Time in fact for our 4th major trauma. We were met at the airport by our transit agent, given our normal welcome necklace, taken to the office to get our paperwork. We then walked 100 yds with our driver in the dawn twilight for the mini bus. Di suddenly realised she hadn't got her travel wallet. Yes! passports everything missing. She ran the 100 yds in 6.3 secs. Me and the driver searched the minivan then the pavement. Di convinced herself that she had been robbed!!

Anyway together we went with the driver to the Police office .The Policeman was fast asleep with his head on his old desk. It took fully 5 mins to wake him. Banging coughing and calling officer. To the left was a cell with a male voice quietly moaning. Di made the report with difficulty to the drowsy officer. I again searched without success. We could only decide to travel on, feeling very vulnerable and pissed off. I was thinking, new experience, British Consul, less loving towards Di. I still sat in the front with the driver for the 2 hour drive in the brightening dawn to do the tourist bit. Di was in the back putting herself through the mangle. The driver was Hindu (with a Jehovah witness wife), a really nice guy. He had progressed from local bus driver (gravel roads no aircon ) at 19 pounds per week. He was now getting a princely 35 + tips per week. He was allowed to take the Merc Mini bus home but no private use.

I was surprised by the number of Asians (Hindu/Muslim) on the island. He said the Fijians owned the land but were lazy.....

The road had humps to slow traffic thru the villages. The new local traditional houses being wood frame with woven leaves for walls with thatched roofs. The modern ones looking more like mobile homes with corrugated tin roofs. We went thru a small bustling town with market and a mix of the fuzzy haired Fijians and Asians and some Chinese. There was a bank and ATM so I thought I will get some currency. It ate my card with no warning. Oh Terrific ! this is NOT a good day. Bank shut Sat & Sun so I need to go back Monday - another new experience.

Back in the van and Ashok told me about his friend who had a store and coffee shop and "VERY GOOD PRICES" so I said sure we can stop, we had money for the coffees and we would go back later to look at the goodies. Di was feeling around for perhaps the 50th time - and found the wallet! Imagine the relief, but I had to explain to Ashok that she was crying with joy.....suddenly Fiji looked so much better.

Terry



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-4 Fiji to Auckland

04/1/2000

The Hotel Warwick in Fiji was spectacular. 4 restaurants one on an island with a flame lit walkway and sand floor. 2 big pools about 6 bars, terrific food, service and value. We rented a car and drove into Suva the capital in great heat and humidity. Found lunch in the bus station and shared a curry then "The Hot Bread Shop" next door for a cobread stick. A great lunch for 3 quid for 2. Then came the first serious rain of the trip. It was really tropically heavy and filled the pot holes which were then difficult to spot. It quickly cleared and felt fresher and cooler. Next morning the bank was open and I got my card back. They had a pile about 1.5" thick! I shall try to go in bank hours in future just in case it gets eaten again. We called back at Ashok 's friends store and bought and shipped to UK. It felt a little rushed in Fiji with loosing that day but a short 2.5 hour flight brought us to N Zealand.

Auckland is a terrific airport, free coffee lots of info , ATM'S that don't eat cards - and the Maui motorhome desk. Guess what? - no record of our booking which was 1st made a year or so ago. They phoned their main office and we went there. They found the "cancelled" booking. It was for a smaller model than we had booked. They couldn't contact our UK travel agents. Since it was raining and felt cold we booked into a nearby hotel. We had an excellent meal and wine and a comfortable night, we even watched some TV.

Our first impression was very favourable. Early the next morning we accepted the smaller M/home (no choice) but we are only the second users of it and our NZ leg was underway.

Terry at Cyber cafe Americas Cup Village Auckland NZ  
HAPPY XMAS TO ALL OUR READERS



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-5 Americas Cup and Santa

04/1/2000

This whole trip came about with me being in Spain alone in "Thydi" our UK motorhome. It was on a site in S Spain when I met a Kiwi in an old VW, a sixties model (but without the flower power). A couple of nights drinking with the guy, learning about the dateline and why Gisborne in N Island was the place to "See the light first" the seeds of our Millennium trip were sown. What you are reading about built from this. Being on the net helped me gather info. One friend has just Emailed today. He has seen a T shirt on a shapely body "You certainly won't be the first but you may be the next....." another told me something of the Americas Cup, having spent the whole day in and around the village in Auckland harbour I must now write to Santa! The co-founder of Microsoft, Rupert Murdoch, the owner of Amway (pyramid selling) are among the people with Super Yachts - apparently 30 million + is the entry point. The largest group of 34 ever together are here. A new one called "Georgia" is just being commissioned, the planets largest sloop, at around 70 million and considered good value. The Americas Cup attracted 11 contenders. I shall be cheering for "America One" since I am a sponsor. Yes I bought a cap.....

Later...

We ate in a real Chinese restaurant (a lot here) and slept the night in a central car park. Next morning heading N we saw a couple on a reclining seat bicycle with trailer touring from California. Bought superb fruit (4 avocados for 30p) and provisioned the m/home, now named "Minnie Yinnie" - the number plate is YN and Billy Conolly (the Big Yin) has enthused us with his trip of OZ by Harley. Having meandered through great scenery, we found a thermal aquatic park and campsite. A great swim in the sun in really warm water, opposite was "Black Pete's Bar & Grill" so that was our evenings entertainment, talking to friendly locals and eating the BEST chowder. The campsites seem to have fridge/freezers/hob and oven/toasters as well as the usual facilities. The next days travel took us through the most amazing forest at about 1,000' with giant ferns and Kauri trees. It seemed like a film set. We stopped to see one of the biggest Kauris, which are considered "Gods of the Forest" - having seen a 26' diameter specimen when double this size are documented it's easy to understand why. Around 2,000 years old and 150' high with straight trunks and branches only at the very top, they looked like giant grey candles and the sap looked like milky candle wax running down.

The Kauri museum showed all the "harvesting" of this crop just 100 years ago, maybe a million trees!

We bought our first diesel today at 20p per litre, saw a few motorcyclists enjoying the twisty good surfaced roads. We have seen deer, ostrich, llamas and the road kill looks very different to Olde England.....

Hope you had a great Xmas

Terry & Di

PS "Georgia" was such a boring name for a schooner "Philanderer" is so much more stylish.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-6 'Big T' meets 'Goodlady'

04/1/2000

Our Xmas day was to phone home and speak to the grandsons, Dan has such a deep voice for a 20 month old, plus the family. Then it was NZ champers "Lindauer" to go with asparagus, steak pie and new potatoes. The first cooked meal in "Minnie Yinnie" - very nice after eating out most of the time. There are lots of houses and land for sale and they are around a third of the prices in Yorkshire. Bay front in Auckland is a different story though. Boats are everywhere filling the many bays and harbours, and we seem to be drawn to such places and their pavement cafes. Di was excited to find some 3" thick seafood quiche for lunch - delicious. I listened to the Test Match whilst on the beach at Waipu Cove - this is the life. One of the best things about the internet is Email and I have made several pen pals. Now we are headed back to Auckland to meet "GoodLady". I know she is Chinese and an enthusiastic traveller and Emailed. When we arrived at her home she introduced "Big T" - that's me to her Chinese and Japanese friends.

They cooked a communal feast and we had a terrific evening. I hope we can meet again sometime, maybe in her home town which is Beijing, or when she gets her NZ passport in England. A hot day on a West coast beach with a creek joining a sandy beach, ideal for the young future surfers. The craggy coastline had a blow hole spouting in the distance "MY" was the ideal vehicle for such a day out. Yet another invite to visit friends we met on the Cook Islands at their home in Waieke Island. Jacky (originally from Vanuatu - French speaking) collected us at the small ferry terminal. It was just 35mins from Auckland on a high speed ferry. She took us to their home, which was idyllic on a beautiful bay. Ken is an enthusiastic fisherman and has a deep water mooring in the bay. We were taken on a tour of the island and a lunch with well chosen (by Ken) white wine.

Then we were back on the ferry about sunset. It truly is a great privilege to have such a wonderful opportunity to see someone else's life on the other side of the world. Now we were headed for a thermal area and saw touristy Rotorua. Further south was Lake Taupo and we had dinner at sunset overlooking the lake. Fab food and service including the candles lit at sundown. An impressive red from the local Hawkes Bay and slept by the lake. Only a day to the Millennium.....

Terry - Picton South Island NZ



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-7 Gravel towards the Dawn

04/1/2000

Happy New Millennium Everyone,

An early start got us looking at waterfalls, jetboats, prawn farm, Geosteam & power plant, steaming "Craters of the Moon". Then we again had the sheer luxury of a thermal swimming pool - no chemicals, just changed everyday. Then I made a big mistake, this road looked good on the map through 2 state parks towards the E coast and Gisborne. The first 20 miles were OK then a roadwork sign and "gravel". The road works after 5 miles but the gravel was for 100. 3 hours driving and we arrived at a massive secluded lake and relief - a campsite since dusk was falling. We are not supposed to take the rented m/home on gravel (no insurance) but once we were on site it felt a great adventure though Maori country.

One advantage to arriving in NZ on summer solstice day was light from 6am to 8:30pm - and we take advantage of it. More gravel the following day, but we are used to it now. The new "Minnie Yinnie" looking very used and dusty - inside too! Once back on the surfaced road we had a sweep and a dust, and straight to the info office at Gisborne, our nadir of our Millennium Tour. The concert was free, the car park 1 pound 50p. A little sleeping and we were ready. The car park was filling, the Maori based pageant (floats etc) started arriving and a superb sound system carried primeval noises and bird calls with 4 Maori female vocalists - very effective. Then the symphony orchestra played but when Dame Kiri Te Kanawa came on stage the reception was amazing. This wonderful lady bridges both classical western culture and her native Maori. The Maori choir then joined her on stage. What a remarkable start to 2000. However it was just the beginning - we then walked to the beach for the sunrise. Maori canoes, two tall ships and many other vessels plus swimmers all greeting the dawn of the new millennium.....

Terry - Picton S Island NZ



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-8 After the Millenium

09/1/2000

Welcome to Terry's 21st Century'

Not feeling my brightest, only due to lack of sleep not booze! I'm back behind the wheel of "MY" heading S towards Wellington. We picked up a hiker, very talkative unemployed 47yr old male. He was good company and well travelled. We took him as far as Napier where we visited this remarkable town. Napier had an earthquake and fire that wiped it out in 1931. It was rebuilt quickly in 1932/3 to become an unusual "frozen time" as a compact art deco area (the world's largest). Refurbishment has gone on continually since 1989 and is a spiffingly vibrant place with old cars and fashions, music events etc. Speaking of fashion in NZ, the young ladies are wearing their jeans low slung showing their underpants names.

Also in vogue are private plates, how about PILS4U on a chemists van, HARDON on a "private" car. I swear that later the same day I also saw VD!!! Even some of the businesses are creative thinkers - a bakers "Knead your dough"

Just a little further S we caught up with laundry etc in Hastings. There even was a children's bath at waist level in the laundry. Driving through this are was the best yet for farm produce (caulis at 11p) and healthy looking vineyards. We called at the local and caught the exciting end to the 1st 1 day International cricket match on TV. The pub was in Oriental Bay in Wellington and we wild camped in a central car park ready to be onboard the Capt Cook's famous "Endeavour" replica.....

Terry



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-9 Endeavour and South Island

11/1/2000

It was drizzly but didn't spoil our final morning visiting "Endeavour". This is a super working replica of James Cook's famous ship, the original was built in Whitby around 1760. What a man he was, to say nothing of the sailors who lived in 14" bunk space and 4'6" headroom. Then a very short visit to "Te Papa" the new museum, the ferry was a fast 2 hour one with good looking waiter service! - how far removed from Channel Ferry 'services'. We arrived at Picton S.I. - a delightful place and still trimmed with Xmas lights, not many places have been Xmassy. We ate at the Old Barn which was a very well run family restaurant, 60's music and decor. The owner had put the speakers in 1950's radios. We met a guy with a shop who was from Scotland and has been here for 5 years, he said we would like S.I. even better and suggested keeping to the N coast to visit Golden Bay. We drove the narrow windy coast road with spectacular Fjord like views. Mussel farms here mean you can get green lipped ones for 2 quid per kilo. You can have them in pies, breaded, mussel soup - or just a bloody big dishful! There are more motorhomes to be seen on S.I. and also many more motorcycles. Lots of cruisers (a big %age being Harleys, Buells and Triumphs. For the first time I was missing my bike. Horse were being ridden in the Marlboro Sound and enjoying it in the crystal seas. A farm shop tempted us with cherries and boysenberries. The ice cream was blended there and then with real fruit - yummy. Having camped on a quiet car park I awoke to a metallic sound, I thought a car was being broken into but couldn't see anything - then an alarm and flashing light on a shop was activated. I woke Di and we saw the getaway van immediately drive off. I recognised a sound of a V8 engine and the shape of the van, Di noted the colour, it was 5am. We slept some more then called in the shop giving the police what we knew. The owner had seen the same van as he was called to the shop and got part of the number. So we may just have helped in the battle against villains - they stole nothing. A visit to the most popular national park Abel Tasman further emphasised the untouched natural beauty, access to the beaches was by water taxi on this scorching day. The Southern Alps are impressive and we were lucky to find a local concert in the farm like sports stadium with a home built stage. We saw the Bootleg Neil Diamond, Abba and top of the bill BeeGees with a crowd of about 250 (at 10 pounds per family) giving a terrific reception and dancing too. It was part of the local friendly family scene. It has been so easy to talk to everyone in the shops and bars, easy to park, drive - in fact everything.

Terry - the Darfield Library Internet Service S.I. Nz.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-10 Humour and Stuff

13/1/2000

'A New Zealand lady hadn't been feeling too well and went to see the doctor. She came back all excited and explained to her husband that what she needed was more LOVE. She explained that the doctor suggested at LEAST 7 times per week. Her New Zealand husband considered quietly for a moment - then replied " well put me down for two of them"!!

They are laid back here, many people go without shoes - by choice. Today is special. Endeavour is expected into Nelson Harbour having sailed through 'The Cut'. We joined the crowds and what a sight. In about 8knot wind she carried near full sail and then hove to whilst the sailors climbed the rigging and reefed the sails - all 11 of them. She came in slowly on her well hidden motors and fired a cannon to the delight of all of us. Our first miserable weather day was on reaching the East coast. The large colony of seals were lazing on the rocks and now we are at Kaipora. This is the place for watching the whales - except they don't want to be seen today. The sea is a little rough and the chances of whale watching low - we will try later.

A visit to Montana Winery and lunch was excellent - exotic salad with flower petals etc with salmon. Then to Christchurch for a quick drive around and through the long tunnel to the harbour. Union problems erupted here around Christmas and a lady was tragically rundown whilst picketing. It feels a strange disconnected harbour (apart from the tunnel) but a coast drive was spectacular with a sunset in Governor's Bay. A day out on the Banks Peninsular with the end of the road Akaroa, this felt very like the Lake District in England. We had bought tickets for the Jade Stadium and saw New Zealand score 300 runs beating the West Indies by 20.

The sunny game started at 2:30pm and with sunset at 9:0pm with the floodlights until 10:15pm. With music/TV screen and entertaining scoreboard it was a great experience. Still on the sporting front we are following the Americas Cup and "our" yacht America One is still looking good to qualify. Radio reception is very patchy here with all the rural expanses and mountains. Not aided by a poor antennae on "MY". We have just a week left in New Zealand with all the glaciers and high mountains to come.....

Terry - Hokitika (former goldmining town W coast)



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-11 Arthur's Pass to Wildwest

18/1/2000

The drive through Arthur's Pass and the S Alps has been the most spectacular yet. Lots of hot sun shining on crystal lakes and streams. Touches of snow on the mountains, one lane bridges and a new viaduct. "MY" really chugged up some of the inclines and needed full use of '2' to get engine breaking. No wonder they don't recommend caravans to do this. Having reached the wild west coast one of the things is whitebait - either in sandwiches or patties! The pubs here have lots of gambling machines and one had a betting shop inside where we saw people winning. Having wild camped for so much of the trip we were now getting beach front sites. One was down a lane with allotments, the difference with England being they grew sheep rather than veggies. We are seeing signs to keep off the beach when the penguins are here - no sign of them though we have seen lots of seals. This is a great area for touring cyclists, many have camping equipment and very low gears. It's strange to see hiking boots on a rack on the front forks. I talked to the group leader of a BMW equipped party of motorcyclists, they were on a 3 week tour and he was happy to give me advice on which routes to take. Breakfast at a pavement cafe gave plenty of time to people watch in this quaint gold mining town of Hokitika which had one of NZ's busiest harbours in its heyday of the 1860's. There was internet service at the library but a 6 year old had a game CD loaded that was keeping him occupied. I found another again at the average NZ\$8 per hour (NZ\$ 3= 1 pound)

Spectacular Alpine type mountains - some snow-capped were the norm from Haas Pass to the tourist town of Queenstown on the shores of a large lake. We were heading for "The Remarkables Rally" which I had seen in the Kiwi Biker. The remarkables were the mountains but could have easily applied to the wet T shirt and wet willy contest at the rally! Queenstown is very touristy but stylish with it. It's the home of the first westernised Bungee Jump in 1988 and watching it was enough for us. More young ladies than young men were jumping. One girl wetted down (up?) to her torso in the fast flowing river that was being used by kayakers too. Then our ride on the "Sotover Jet Boat" missing rock faces through a fast flowing canyon and gorge. The 360 degree turns were wonderful, the wetting was OK in the hot sun. I met a Dutch couple with a home in Florida too, so I hope that we see them again. They had to get over the 'flu on their arrival in NZ. We need our mobile to keep family contact - it makes you feel so close from the other side of the world. Our next major Drive was to Fjordland - a long way but very worth while. A spectacular drive over the S Alps and finally via the Homer Tunnel. Unlined and unlit, wet and steep made it feel quite an adventure. The voyage to the Tasman Sea was aboard "Wanderer" a 100' motor sailer. More seals and luckily a large school of dolphins plus 600' high spectacular waterfalls. Thirty feet below the surface via an observatory - memorable. A liner even larger than the QE2 was expected into the Milford Haven Fjord was expected that afternoon. We have regularly called into pubs for a beer, watched TV and talk to the locals. This visit certainly provided local colour. Eight guys in their 60's were amusing each other (and us) with their repartee. Apparently a 'Sheila' had been in earlier with her attentive boyfriend. She must have been voluptuous etc. One local said she looked to have a bit of Maori in her. His pal said no she hadn't but she would like to have!! .....

Terry - Internet Cafe - Dunedin S.I. NZ.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-12 Attempted Poisoning—End NZ Leg 20/1/2000

Kia Orana for the final time, Since we have greatly praised the food here it had to happen. Perhaps it was a mistake to stop at all in a place called Gore but we did and tried the Cafe 1901. Seated at a table for two in the window was an OK start, the waitress took our order for a house red wine and a beer. After ages she return and said "no red wine" - puzzled Di changed to diet Coke and this arrived with my beer. Then Di overheard someone else order Pinot Noir, his didn't come either but his wife got it by going to the bar. Then Di ordered a Caesar salad and for me the pasta. Yes! she came back after another wait and said "no pasta - you'll have to chose something else". At this stage we should have left (I also noted her grubby T shirt) but I said I would have the pork and veggie stir fry. Again a long wait and I couldn't believe my eyes. It was more like a bed of watery rice plus a LOT of sweet and sour sauce, some veggies that had been boiled/steamed and or microwaved plus some breaded pork (or chicken?) and the plate so filled it was oozing onto the table, only serviettes stopping it from getting me. Di's didn't look appetising -it was a bag of coleslaw mix covered with torn up soggy bread, with an overcooked Chicken Kiev. After looking for the Candid Camera WE LEFT.....

Having driven a couple of long days we saw the farmers haymaking until dusk (9:30pm). We pushed on to get to Dunedin which is quite a large manufacturing city and harbour. Forming the approach to the harbour was a peninsular. This is the only non-island in the world to be home to some Albatrosses. We were thrilled to see five sitting on nests. One baby had hatched just four days before. It was a wind free morning so we were denied seeing them in flight with their 3 meter wingspan. It was still an awesome sight with seals in the bay and Yellow Eyed Penguins just around the point. Now we were seriously getting to the end of our terrific NZ leg. We had an intro to meet Andy in Ashburton who has a company that imports/supplies and services farm implements right up to giant combines. We had a tour of the spacious warehouses and really enjoyed a family evening at his house. It was a lovely final night with his children. Repacking ready to leave "MY" in Christchurch and fly to OZ was our next but last thing in NZ.

Our last was to call at "The Fat Ladies Arms" - we missed the people we were to say Hi to, but met "Spratt" a fast talking NZander with Irish ancestry.

Having asked was I in the police he mimicked his mothers Irish brogue who told him "St Patrick cleared Ireland of all snakes - he sent them to join the police in England!

To sum up the RTW trip so far, we could have spent more time everywhere - but yet we have done so much, over 6,000km travelled in the motorhome. It started to feel like a sampler to come back and fill the gaps. I hope you are enjoying reading RTW -TTT,copies go to Australia-NZealand-Canada-UK-Europe-America-Mexico.

Terry - Christchurch Airport NZ

PS. Please excuse any mistakes but I compose in real time at busy places where people jammed either side sometimes read aloud their Email. Imagine the distraction that I had when someone describes her girlfriends 'accident' - dropping her mobile down the loo!!



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-13 Worlds Largest Island – OZ

02/2/2000

An easy 3 hour flight feeling sorry to have left "MY" in NZ but excited to see Sydney. It is hot (32C) sunny and busy The pre-booked Hotel Mercure proved to be a good location and having bought 3 day transport passes we were ready to see Sydney. The harbour is vast with the Opera House and Harbour Bridge the well recognised features. In fact these are just a small part of the total harbour which has 240km of coast line. Taking the Explorer bus tour was the ideal way to get our city centre bearings. It turned out so well since we were the only passengers, it was like having a limo with my own friendly driver. he GOT THE PUB RECOMMENDATION RIGHT and we were amazed by the seafood and fruit. Close by was the "Pies on Wheels" caravan where the famous occasionally drop by when slumming it - I do it all the time! The Olympic Village is almost ready (just 7 months to go) and was accessible by Catamaran Ferry, a scenic trip with about 8 water bus stops on the way and a short coach ride. When we watch the Olympics on TV it will mean so much more, we even saw a diving competition in progress at the Aqua Centre. The thing that impressed me the most was that the total site was an abattoir and brick works previously. The new lasting facility is therefore a re-generation of a huge neglected area. About 500,000 spectators per day are expected. The competitors beds will be made 392,00 times during the Games. We had a week or so in mind for Sydney but since the container with my bike is "misplaced" it will certainly be more..... It's not too much of a problem since there is so much happening. Kings Cross area is similar to Soho (need I say more) but Di didn't like it. The internet cafes were amazing with around 50 well used terminals jammed in a hot airless old shop with an Asian proprietor collecting the \$3 a time for maybe 24 hours a day.....

Terry Katoomba Blue Mts OZ



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-14 Sydney on Australia Day

09/2/2000

Since our stay in Sydney was extended we could see some of the Festival events. Mainly music and outdoors it added to an already impressive pub and pavement cafe culture. The temperature varies more than England and the sun is POWERFUL. Since I had bought Di an extremely expensive pair of travel pants she was able to just zip off the legs as required (I know I spoil her rotten). We also had a chance to meet Sheila & Greg. I had corresponded with her on Email and she "met" Greg on Email - married him and re-located from Canada to Sydney - WOW. It was really good to catch a double deck train out of Sydney for 45mins and met and taken to their house for an Aussie beer and barbie. Di and I were able to wish them future happiness. The power of Email is truly awesome.

Another day around Sydney gave me the chance to try the central monorail, another ferry ride and a trip to Bondi beach. Sydney has got to be one of the best cities in the world for quality of life. The extra stay (no - the bike is still not here) now took in Australia Day.

Sheila suggested the four of us meet up at the Opera House steps. The Aussie Army Band was playing to an audience already in the hundreds and then a busker arrived. We watched his excellent performance using balloons and really funny children from the audience. He admitted that we were the biggest audience of his career so he had a good pay day. This was a great location to watch the start of the Tall Ships Race (HMS Bounty won) and Ferry races plus a flag competition on all the yachts that filled the giant harbour. It made a sight in the sunshine that never will be forgotten.....

Terry - Lake Entrance, Victoria, Australia



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-15 Countryside and Country Music

09/2/2000

Since the container (and my bike ) were still misplaced we rented a car for a week to get away from Sydney to see some more of this vast continent. As usual we had talked to everyone and had the idea of the Blue Mountains, Hunter Wine Region. The guy at the car rental said do it the other way round since its a rainy day. I drove over the Harbour Bridge and N, it took about 30mins for the heavy traffic to thin out. It was raining as I took the motorway for a while. One unusual feature is leaving natural rock as the median between N & S lanes. Steep inclines and spectacular lakes - this felt exciting. We saw our 1st Kangaroo (dead) and other strange looking road kill. Soon we turned off onto more interesting local roads. I realised I hadn't seen another car for a half hour.

Our first small township was civilised, it had a bike shop and a racecourse where we saw a race. There were few spectators but the TV is well used for gambling (more later). Watching TV that night we saw the Tamworth C&W Festival was on so.... Along the way we saw the Hunter Valley Wineries, the home of Aussie Wine and very commercialised for tourists. Onwards past stud farms with huge pastures rivalling Kentucky in the States. One called Emirates Park gives you an idea of the ownership. Half an hour from Tamworth we called in a local for a beer where the friendly owner explained how difficult accommodation was. He phoned a friend 15mins back and we booked in. This proved good advice since Tamworth's population grows from 16,000 to 66,000 for the Festival. We looked around in amazement and returned to the local to hear their band and eat a steak off the barbie. Chatting to the locals they said it doesn't come any more country than this!

Next day in Tamworth was mega. We saw the world record set for a line dance in the main street. Yes 6,275 people - brilliantly organised and fun. Then a cavalcade of 70 floats, many playing Country which took an hour to pass. Top that - but we did going to the outdoor launch of Lee Kernaghans new CD. We met Charlie Landsborough an English songwriter and heard many buskers.

Harleys were here in quantity and style, in fact the States would be pushed to better this event.....

Terry Lake Entrance NSW Australia



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-16 Spectacular Blue Mountains

10/2/2000

Now we were driving the wide open spaces calling through Mudgee a splendid and more recent wine area. Driving gravel roads and watching for "Dunnys" (toilets) we saw the first Roo just hopping along at the side of the road. I'd heard of Bathurst and motoring. Not only did we see the town but Di drove the circuit - twice. This is a great town - the Internet is free at the library, but was fully booked. A local village was established on gold mining and was as quaint as they come. We had an Evanshire Tea (similar to Devonshire) and watched the many local characters. Our motel that night had a Teppanyaki restaurant attached, a good meal with interesting company, a Swiss couple who had emigrated to start a Winery near Adelaide. The chefs party piece was to cleverly sign his name in salt on the griddle - from his side.

Leaving Lithgow we now set about all the Blue Mountain touristy stuff. The ZigZag railway. Called that because it Zigs to a rockface, then Zags down the mountain. Run by enthusiasts it has steam at weekends and an art deco diesel.

The views, waterfalls and forests make this whole area special, the highlight being a ride on the worlds steepest cable railway. This Victorian relic used to haul coal - scary. Then the Gondola a horizontal cable car. The "mister" said it was fairly safe to walk around whilst flying! A phone call and the bike has turned up, stuff this rental car - it's back to Sydney.....

Terry the Dragon (it's my year in the Golden Dragon Year)



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-17 Worlds Most Expensive BMW

12/2/2000

QUESTION - How do you get a 1978 BMW 800/7 to become the world's most expensive?

ANSWER - Export it to Australia!

The story is l-o-n-g, complicated, confused - and expensive. From England we must have bureaucrats along with the convicts to get the colony going - they have all thrived. My feeling is that the bureaucrats should now become the convicts! Having got that out of my system and not wishing to be a whingeing "Pom" the good news is the bike started 1st time.

It was interesting to collect the crate from the busy container depot, unpack the bike, quarantine it, fuel it and RIDE - to get a vehicle inspection and then a temporary registration. Finally we were ready We met Sheila and Greg again and were introduced to Greg's sister and hubby, another tinny or two and more travel talk. John goes abseiling but otherwise seems normal. It was another fun evening and we hope to see them all sometime, somewhere.

Our last night was near Sydney in a place called Ramsgate, very lively and on the ocean. We had rented a mobile 2 bedroom cabin and when we left on the bike the maid would have been pleased with all the goodies that we left behind. Necessary now were to ride the World's Most Expensive BMW. The first call was to Botany Bay where modern Australia began. I felt somewhat equipped for the journey since I had learned some Australasian.

sammie=sandwich:

pani=toasted sandwich:

de facto=common law (as in wife):

judder bars=humps, sleeping policemen:

trundler= shopping trolley:

hoon=idiot, revhead, loony:

jandals=thongs (the ones for the feet!);

cockies=???:

pokies=gambling machines:

I had also been taught the Aussie wave (keeps the flies away!) - no problems mate .....

Terry the Dragon (now in my year of the Golden Dragon)



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-18 The Illawarra and South

14/2/2000

Down the coast from Capt Cook's landing place we left the busy, hot, polluted traffic to enter a State Forest and quieter area. Round a corner and two lines of hot Sydney residents queuing in two lines to enter. This wasn't what we planned, but the hottest day of a so far below par summer had brought them all out - and it was a Saturday. Having passed through the booth - no charge if you are just driving through \* it really was untouched forest and the odd lake. In the terrific heat I felt somewhat threatened. What if a fire broke out? Warnings were everywhere requiring a permit for a fire. It was wonderful to hit the spectacular coast and cliff drive. An early stop found us in Bulli and we got the Motel's last room. English managed (they are everywhere!) and a recommendation to eat at the RSL (or Russell) in fact it stands for Returned Servicemen's League. An Aussie tradition and centre of social life. The meal was excellent and the booze cheap thanks to the considerable number of "pokies" - like a mini Las Vegas. We drank at the bar with large TV showing Rugby with the locals very enthusiastic about this 1st match of the season. We then dined in the dining area and had coffee and drinks in the dace area with a good musician and some dancing. The whole environment was of friendly sophistication - and we liked it.

Visiting the Coolangatta Winery was interesting being built by convicts and the live jazz entertaining the diners was to a high standard. That afternoon when we passed through "Yatte Yattah" I simply knew that Di must be connected with this place. Biking has many appeals for me , one is the solitude whilst riding - even with a passenger. Another is the smells of forest, Eucalypts, flowers - you even know when road kills are coming. One Wombat had ballooned and looked ready for floating away. Joking apart on a bike the wildlife is something not to hit. Wombats can even take the suspension out on a truck. This day finished with a picnic in the motel watching the well produced "David Copperfield" with Pauline Quirke

Terry - Melbourne OZ

Valentine's Day - so xxx's(French) and xxx's (Aussie)!



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-19 500+ Miles so Far

14/2/2000

WE had the first wetting with 15mins of rain - then we dried out half an hour later. A guy we saw was well equipped, he was driving a truck with camper back that also went on water - an AquaCamper. Many side trips helped to see the varied coastline, even beachside property advertised with views to NZ. A night spent in Eden, I was careful not to bite the apple, then a visit to a Whaling Museum on Double Bay. Now an area for whale watching, it used to be a place for whale catching. The largest ever caught there was NINETY SEVEN FEET. Even more amazing that a whale called "Old Tom" even helped the whalers catch their prey. His skeleton is now in this splendid museum. There's even a British Admiralty report of a whaler who went missing during a catch and finished inside a whale for 15 hours - and lived for 20 more years with bleached hair! Further S the Sapphire Coast was quite a wilderness area as we crossed into Victoria State. The State had power problems due to heat, strikes and breakdowns.

No aircon was allowed from 1pm to 7pm but yet the pokies were permitted. We love the tiny rural petrol stations that invariably are cafes, info centres, craft shop - in fact you name it. Sitting having a pot of tea in the dust on a rickety table is charmingly served with leaf tea and a strainer. Lots of passer-by's to talk to. We try not to buy fuel in these places since I already have had to clean red dust from the carburettors despite extra fuel filters. The weather forecast was predicting 100 degrees and now with a total fire ban The wind was blowing hard too and felt like riding into a fan heater on full. One dodge that worked well was soaking my T shirt, wringing out and wearing under my leather. It takes about 2 hours to evaporate- then re-treat.

The cold beer never tasted so good. I met another biker who said how good Tasmania was to visit. The pool at the motel was very welcome and a few days swimming everyday was getting me fitter. We heard rain during the night and couldn't believe the change. Still raining and down from 100 to about 58 - unbelievable that now we were keeping warm. It was just drying when we refuelled at Inverloch and met a husband and wife both riding their own sidecar outfits - in itself very unusual but as we talked to them WOW. They had ridden all the way round OZ having started married life and riding in 1947. Wonderful people at 75 and 72 years old.....

Terry in Tasmania



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-20 Philip Island and Melbourne

16/2/2000

Gooday

Sorry there's been a lot to read - it will slow down again. Philip Island was a destination I really wanted to see having watched GP's on telly. It's an island connected by a bridge some 30miles S of Melbourne. It's a popular track with the racers and even under grey skies we could see the lovely setting. How fortunate that the cars were qualifying for the weekend's Aussie V8 Touring Cars - the seasons first. Barry Sheene commentates on this series too. The visitor Centre was like a version of Daytona with all the goodies for sale. The island also has prolific wildlife with a colony of rare Fairy Penguins, seals and a great variety of birds. Melbourne is a huge city with 75% of Victoria's population. There's a free Victorian Tramcar that rattles and bumps around the city centre. In fact the brakes failed on ours so we changed trams. The City's a mixture of old and new - very London like. We rode the bike to the other side of the bay and found delightful cafes and play areas. We then tried to go to the St Kilda Festival and outdoor concerts. No-one told us 350,000 were going!! - we had to give up. Their bike was fluffing too - so back to the motel. The bike wasn't my Valentine the following morning but an adjustment to the contact breaker and I fixed it. It had me re-calling "Zen and the Art of M/Cycle Maintenance" - all about mind over matter if ever you get your brain free. The outer suburbs are quite nice and time around the sunny pool before we go to Tas. Yes it's Valentine's Day and it's an overnight dinner cruise. Am I a smoothie or what?.....

Terry in Tas



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-21 Tasmania and The Penal Colony

21/2/2000

Melbourne was busy as we headed for the ferry. It was at a red light that we met our knight in shining armour. He was mounted on a BMW r850 motorbike and offered to guide us to the boat - about 10 mins if you knew the way. We waved our thanks as he rode away sitting high in the saddle. Then 2 hours hassle to get on board the crowded boat. Whilst waiting we met a couple on a Yamaha Diversion and met them for a drink before dinner and a quiet cabin. Riding off the boat and into Tasmania was a total contrast - a lot like Scotland and NZ. We rode with Donald and Rosemary to Launceston and a cuppa. Once again I was spotted with my British plates and an English couple now resident in Tas were soon giving good local knowledge. Di and I decided to ride some more in the improving weather and swapped Emails with our new friends. The riding became wonderful through the mountains. The bends needed watching as there was loose gravel around some of them - and the stunning scenery was so distracting! St Helens on the E coast was the night's stop and some scrumptious salmon whilst overlooking St George's Bay - this is living. It was a joy to ride early on the fresh sunny morning and continue down the scenic E coast reaching Bichenor for brekkers and the I/Net. Two unusual coastal features are close together. The Tasman arch is a natural square cut bridge over the rocky coast. Swallows and gulls were flying through and using the uplifting wind. The other was even more manmade looking- almost like a section from the Corinth Canal with the Tasman Sea rushing in.

Our stay that night was in Eaglehawk Neck Bay, this was a strategic site being a narrow isthmus that lead to the peninsular which is (was) the site for the Penal Colony Port Arthur which during it's life from around 1830 it processed some 12,000 convicts. There is a superb A/V presentation in an old convict built cottage that told it's story with sound, light and cut-out figures. Convicts were such an important part of OZ's history that a visit to Port Arthur was a must. Convicts and their captors were shipped out from 1830 and built a spacious facility first in wood and then stone which has been restored. It was a cruel place with floggings and chain gangs but also was the first to give training. Eventually many were pardoned and became the community. This very same site was where in 1996 a madman ran amok and shot 35 people

Tasmania tourism is still recovering.....

Terry - Wyndham Library Tasmania



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-22 Up with the Locals

22/2/2000

Dinner was over and the bar beckoned - not the hotel side but up a few steps to the local's bar. Three guys were spaced around the curved bar. Baileys for Di and a whiskey and water for me. 'Half or Full' said the barmaid. 'Oh! Full please' I said. Two shots were served. We got into conversation with the nearest two guys. I called one "ESH" because that was printed on his work shirt. He saw me looking at photos on the wall of local catches. BIG-VERY BIG Blue Fin Tuna. Of course the conversation switched to big sharks. He told me of a two ton one - I was thinking Bullshit when he said come next door where he showed me the jawbone - OH! Then the third guy fell off his barstool. You know how you watch to see if it was an accident or booze. He was a little unsteady as he walked to the dunny. T shirt read "If I can't eat it or screw it My philosophy is to Piss On It" I ordered the same again, the other waitress said 'Double?' 'Sure' I said. She then poured FOUR shots. See what we're into? "ESH" was drinking more and the talk came to bikes- more specifically he said ' Have you ever had sex on a bike?' Of course my reply had to be 'No'. 'Well' he said ' You need a blanket for the tank, get her facing you, and start riding down a bumpy road.' I nodded, then he said ' Course there's lots of bumpy gravel roads here'. Then a worried look crossed his face 'Your heart's strong ain't it?' Then he looked miles away and noisily re-lived his own experiences. As luck would have it - no blanket in the room, only a duvet.....

Terry - Devenport Tasmania



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-23 The Black Cockatoos

23/2/2000

We bumped into the couple of bikers we had met on the ferry on the quayside at Hobart, we then planned a days ride together. An 8am start and we were riding from our motel on the sunny beach and into cloud on the mountain. Then into blue sky at the top and back into clammy, chilly cloud on the other side. It was condensing on our visors so a bit of mental telepathy and into a cafe for coffees and a chat. It gave the chance of knowing Donald and Rosemary better. An hour later and the day looked fabulous the coastal scenery was stunning so we stopped on Verona Beach. The sand was fine enough for an egg timer, quiet apart from the gentle waves and bird noises Koo-eh, Koo-eh. Then we saw two Black Yellow Tailed Cockatoos, most beautiful and impressive with a 24" wingspan. The sea was crystal and we saw two sting rays of about 3' wingspan slowly enjoy their cruise on by- just like us Donald led the way to a secluded hill top via gravel roads to visit a winery. Not a bit as we expected, just a tiny counter, a few bottles with quick squirt dispensers !! - served by the Bride of Dracula. It tasted like poison too!! Nothing could spoil our enjoyment of motorcycling in paradise and we completed about a 100mile loop before saying a sad farewell to our new friends.

The tour around Tassie is roughly clockwise and now it was time to go from Hobart in the South with its famous harbour towards the west coast. More super bend swinging and mountains but much of the farmland was really parched and with a total fire ban. Then higher and into total wilderness and forest and a huge Hydro Plant. It's now really windy and very hot and muggy - and where is the next petrol station? The road surface is very variable and some fallen rocks to watch out for. It made for difficult and uncomfortable riding. We found fuel and a drink as we neared Queenstown.

There had been a recent bush fire and it looked like an alien planet - all grey and black with touches of new green showing from the ferns.

Queenstown is a mining town - originally gold around 1870 but then copper. The rainforest has been stripped for smelting on the surrounding hills. This caused erosion so you see bare hillsides of many different colours with all the chemical bearing lodes. The steep twisty final bends down to the town allowed an even closer look at the amazingly coloured rocks. We were pleased to get to a motel, it had felt the first really tiring day. A beer and a powernap (are you allowed these when retired?) and then the rain came - lots of it. What was a gully behind our room became a raging torrent. The noise still didn't drown the heavy metal group playing across the river - ,thank goodness for the nap.....

Terry



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-24 Great Aunt Di

27/2/2000

My mobile rang - Di is now a Great Aunt! - what excitement. N from Queenstown gave great riding again through Strahan which had one of the state's earliest penal colonies. Lots of pristine rainforest then suddenly one of the world's largest tin mines at Zeehan. A cuppa at the Milk Bar in Rosebury sat on a wall in the main street told us a lot about the youth of the area. Those that had 'utes' (pick up trucks) had girlfriends. Those that did not - did not. You can understand why so many get in debt for 'chick magnets'.

\* Now I know why I passed so many years working. The glorious ride continued N until hitting the N coast at Wynyard. A lovely place with nearby fossil area from 30 million years back. Up to date houses looked especially good with their tiled roofs - A typical roof here is tin - often painted green.

The motel was near the estuary and a couple of 'teenagers' had been noisily skinny dipping - I missed that but one squelched back noisily through the 10" deep muddy foreshore. I waited for her and she shouted that she did this everyday. What a shock when I saw she was maybe fortyish! Our penultimate day on Tasmania was along the N coast. We had our cuppa in a Penguin mug in the Penguin Cafe in the village of Penguin. Guess what the waste bins were? Then into the mountains near Cradle Mountain through Sheffield with murals, making it a quaint village and not a bit like its namesake in England.

Our final day in Tassie and we rode to Launceston to meet a couple of Brits we met the week before. We also had in mind a visit to some Roman Baths with sybaritic treatments! My hardest decision of the day whether to have a Cleopatra Bliss - Pamper - Euphoria or Utopia. In reality we talked too long and ran out of time. Bugger it. Just a ride up the West Tamar wine region plus our second wetting before reaching a very wet Devonport and the overnight ferry....

Terry - now in Adelaide



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-25 The Great Ocean Road

27/2/2000

This famous coastal road goes from Port Philip Bay near Melbourne - West to the border with S Australia. You may recall pictures of "The 12 Apostles" which are along this its coast and battered by the seas of the Bass Straits. It's 300km long and was built by Returned Servicemen as a memorial to fallen Servicemen. The vistas around each bend are quite breathtaking and the small amount of traffic makes it a joy to ride. It was one of the 'magnets' that brought my bike to OZ.

We left the ferry on a wet morning and headed for the Gt Ocean Rd via Geelong. Calling at a large new Info Centre there were 2 outside dunny's. The guy said 'Sorry we keep them locked and a lady has got the only key' - OH. Ten minutes and several other people enquiring later also I got the key. Inside was a Black & Yellow box for used syringes - "Sharpies". The whole drug scene around Melbourne has been very 'in your face' . I returned the key and the guy explained they had problems keeping druggies out of the toilet. Di used the ladies - no "Sharpie" box !

The day was brightening and Torquay was the first stop. It's very much the surf capital of Victoria with all the fashionable named clothing and surf boards. Strong similarities with the surfing scene in America. Even "point Break" Backpacker motels etc (remember the Patrick Swayze film?) We stayed in a B&B - these are normally more upmarket than motels - different to England. We enjoyed a full grilled breakfast for a change with a splendid ocean view. The next days riding was the ultimate with bendy

roads ,beaches, rocks, cliffs and the famous views. Even one rock called London Bridge - which really did fall down in 1990. Loch Ard Gorge where two teenagers were magically washed ashore and the only survivors of shipwreck. We then saw our first Wallaby.

What a great day .....

Terry - Glenelg



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-26 A Rest day at Warranbool

01/3/2000

A hot sunny day and a pool, even shops close by and we decided on a rest day. The pool was heated and could have done with cooling a little! We needed to plan ahead to visit Ayers Rock via Alice Springs near the centre of OZ. We had an outward flight booked from Adelaide and decided to rent a camper there and then return on the Ghan train. Lots of conversation in the pool with an adventurous Aussie has given me future ideas.

It felt good to be riding again after a day off and we had breakfast at Heywood - the day of their carnival so we saw a mile race and Police and the Aussie army on horseback. Once again lots of friendly people chatting to us after our best value beans on toast yet. We left the main road and the minor coast road took us to Beachport - so delightful that we stopped early. An immaculate motel and we bumped into a couple from Addingham just 6 miles from where we live in England - it's a small world. The local tourist drive was unpaved sandy road along pristine ocean and dunes. We thought it couldn't be beaten - then we found Robe which had history too. A group of 20 off road motorcyclists were having a break stretched out on a grassy bank overlooking the crystal ocean - this is how life's meant to be.

The riding became average with more plains and salt flats like mini Lake Eyries. V formation flights of very large Pelicans gave us a fly past. We topped for petrol - and found another biking couple from Kent !! Talk about 4 amazed people. They too had ridden from Sydney but had previously ridden in the US and NZ. We swapped phone nos and promised to meet up in Adelaide. More featureless riding until we hit the Murray River and stayed the night in a pub at Murray Bridge. This old bridge being the first over the mighty Murray. We rode the bridge the following morning for the posy photo and were startled to see huge flocks of white Cockatoos in the trees alongside the river. Then it was a short stretch of Freeway towards Adelaide Hills. A detour to the Germanic town of Hahndorf was especially worthwhile. Then via the impressive suburbs of Adelaide with the traffic building up as we reached the seaside towns of Brighton and Glenelg where we stayed. It's quite Florida like here. We had dinner on a balcony and watched the cruisin' down below. Both 2 and 4 wheels and I would say more chicks than fellas. The tram service was handy and we went the 10km to Adelaide centre to meet Paul and Claire (the bikers). We are planning to ride the dreaded Nullarbor Plain together. It was good to have some biker conversation even though I'm a generation older. Enthusiasm spans age gaps. After Di and I walked around the centre which is beautiful - but seemed quiet.

We watch the news and weather so we know of Queensland having power outs and severe floods. NSW with a cyclone warning and Alice Springs has had flooding so it's fingers crossed for tomorrow. The other news items are petrol up 10c per litre - the bike does 60mpg - no worries. GST is going on at 10% - just like our VAT (Value Added Tax) which is now 17.5% in England.

The Olympics are building up and the team clothes shown to much criticism. We like the outspoken news reporting. The Aussies are thrashing NZ at cricket. Strangely Aussie red wine is quite expensive here - the house wines (from boxes) are to be avoided. The food gets better as we travel west - or are we better at choosing?

In closing this long RTW I welcome two more readers. One is new to Emailing and got a friendly 'techie' to help. I imagine his amusement - she thought my scribbled Email was @HOTMASH. It made me laugh! .....

Terry - still in Adelaide and Glenelg is 39 degrees today.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-27 The Red Centre of Australia

6/3/2000

The last day in Adelaide/Glenelg was spent in the pool and taking the bike to leave for an oil change in the city. The Fringe Festival had started and lots of the outdoor events were just a short walk away. The Fringe area was all pubs and pavement cafes and got busy as the hot evening progressed. Buskers busked and with an outgoing audience it was lots of fun. There was a spectacular ballet overhead on 25' carbon fibre poles with a golden Icarus the leading 'flyer'- I've never seen anything remotely like it. The famous Spiegeltent which I have seen at the Edinboro Festival was being used in a nearby park and was a popular venue. This historic tent has seen some famous performers inc Marlene Dietrich. People are even asking to be married in it. Our final show was 'Fiona & her Sisters' - a bit like an Aussie Victoria Woods. Since she was from Alice Springs it gave a bit of an intro to where we were headed.

An early taxi to the airport and a 2 hour flight over a spectacular landscape started a trip within a trip. The colours of the rocks were largely magenta and with the tinges of green following the rain was very picturesque from 6 miles up. When I remarked how far the airport was from Alice Springs the taxi driver explained that the planner was a taxi driver. The Mercedes 312 Diesel camper was waiting and looked the part. Almost 5 hours driving later we passed Ayers Rock Resort and an aborigine flagged us down. I thought he wanted a lift but he wanted a rum. I gave him \$3 but he wanted to give me a \$20 and send me back for a bottle! He was very miffed when I wouldn't go.

We found our biker friends who had driven all the way and chatted whilst we watched the sunset and nightfall over the Rock. It was unlike anything that we had seen before but was still a bit disappointing. You enter (and pay) for the National Park to see the Rock so we couldn't wild camp and returned to the Resort. Next morning was hot and sunny and we all drove back alongside the Rock.

This time it felt quite awesome. The power of the Rock was evident, it was making humans climb it in terrific heat - looking like flies. Several other sensible people were sitting alongside me gazing at the spectacle when a guy came running from the back of the Rock. He was gasping and unsteady on his feet but managed to click his stopwatch!

There were Dragonflies flying coupled together (must be fun), butterflies in threes and then simply flies - LOTS OF THEM. They are most inquisitive, they insist on looking up my nose, going in my ears and eyes. I had seen people with face nets looking total pratts - now I wanted one. We drove round the Rock marvelling all the way and so fortunate to see it in this setting more green than for at least 10 years. Unforgettable. Then it was on to Kings Canyon, The Olgas which all builds into this picture of a remarkable landscape. Some roads were still closed after the recent rains and the red earth was all newly washed and very distinctive. We called for fuel where Quad bike tours were offered on this million acre property. Our friends left to drive S to Adelaide and we went N to Alice Springs. Back on the Highway we saw the desert was starting to really bloom following the rain. We passed the place where several motorists were cut off between rivers for 3 days. We saw Road Trains - even a BP one with 4 Tanker Trailers. This is not the biggest, a 550hp Mack over 53metres long is IT. Another diesel stop where ostriches, kangaroos and geese were happy to be fed and then back to Alice .....

Terry - Alice Springs NT,OZ.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-28 Alice Springs and the Ghan

7/3/2000

Alice has proved a surprising place to us. We are staying in a Caravan Resort with a pool and pub. The power has been useful for the microwave and even a little aircon. The wildlife is fantastic with noisy green parrots and quiet but large iridescent green beetles. Stick insects cling to the mesh around the camper. At sunset Rock Wallabies come from the rocky hills to one side of the Resort to be fed. Like mini kangaroos but quite trusting of humans. The pub has good food and music - even a show featuring a range of didgeridoos that was great to see and hear. They are not too easy to play - just gently blow a raspberry into the beeswax mouthpiece. I won't give up my day job ( come to think of it - I have). The longer we stay in OZ the more we like the laid back ways and friendly outgoing ways.

There was a street market with buskers and the cafe society gave lots of people watching time. There are quite a proportion of abbos here and they too spend much of their time watching. Quite a few look to live rough in their jeans and T shirts but yet we see a lot in good housing. They are certainly very different to any race I have seen before. The ladies looking especially different with their facial construction. Most of the shops are very stylish and selling quality products, some even made in OZ. The fashions are Bushranger type with desert type colours. Certainly it all gives the feeling of a quality of life here, the properties too reflect this. Yesterday was a little rainy so I didn't get my balloon flight. It finished being a relaxing day - no bad thing after all the travel. We leave on the famous Ghan train at 1pm arriving in Adelaide at 9am tomorrow. Should be good with today's hazy sunshine. The cabin converts into a sleeper and with a bar and restaurant onboard should be a bit like the Orient Express. Hope there's no murders.....

Terry - Alice Springs NT,OZ.

PS - Don't expect many internet places across the Nullarbor



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-29 The Ghan Train

13/3/2000

We returned the Campervan dusty and with 750 miles covered in our 5 days around the Red Centre. It proved an ideal way to see it. Now for the ride on the famous 'Ghan' Train. About 150 years ago a guy brought in herds of camels. The local Bushwacker Bills couldn't handle them so camel handlers were brought from Afghanistan. They established a camel train route which became 'The Ghan' railroad. Our conductor welcomed us aboard and we squeezed into our tiny compartment. Two lounge chairs folded down and two stacked bunk beds were the night time arrangement. There was a small washbowl too and then shower and toilets down the narrow corridor. Even this being so much better than an aircraft. The surprise was the coffee lounge and spacious restaurant car where we wine and dined whilst watching the sunset through the panoramic windows-wonderful.

The red soil was still there after 6 hours of travel. Vast ranches and small herds of cattle. Pens for direct boarding onto railcars. The lush grass following the rain could have supported much bigger herds but already people were saying the plains would be scorched and a fire risk in a month. I took the bottom bunk and slept well until about an hour before sunup and was able to stargaze whilst trundling along at 70mph. The sunrise was on the opposite side to my window but breakfast was called so we enjoyed that whilst munching muesli. The terrain was now wheat growing and some huge silos were casting long shadows. I saw the first dingoes and the other wild life was flocks of birds- again parrots lorikeets and some cockatoos. Then Adelaide approached and cars were moving on their wheels, the many cars we had been seeing were just carcasses - normally overturned for their suspension spares.

The 'Ghan' experience was over - and very worthwhile. It makes you feel small in the big scheme of things.....

Now to collect the bike.

Terry - Norseman W.A.OZ.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-30 Biking Again to the Nullabar

14/3/2000

Bike City had the old Beemer ready and I paid the service receptionist. She wasn't wearing the world's shortest split skirt - today damn. The bike - and ourselves - felt refreshed and soon we were N of Adelaide and heading close to the Barossa wine region. The Swiss couple that we met in NSW were in the Clare Valley wine region and also on our route to Port Augusta. Their winery, restaurant and accommodation was absolutely delightful, it's called Tatehams of Auburn. We enjoyed a coffee and look around but couldn't taste the wine since we were on the bike. Maybe we will get back sometime. The ride through Clare was superb with undulating hills and bendy roads. We had arranged to meet our biker friends Claire and Paul at Port Augusta and arrived first at the motel with time for a swim. It had got to 7pm and they still hadn't arrived when the heavens opened. The mini broolly was useful as we splashed to the restaurant and found Claire dripping and booking in. Dinner together was very talkative and pleasant and we planned our journey along the Eyre Highway prior to "crossing The Nullarbor".

Excited and starting early - this was it. Top up the tank, another bottle of water and we led being the slower bike. It was still and beautiful passing the glassy harbour before losing sight of the ocean. Hardly any traffic in either direction and lots of landscape. Suddenly an old guy in overalls is walking towards us - miles from anywhere. I waved - he did - or did he give me the finger? I worried that maybe I should have stopped. Certainly the odd vehicles we saw were waving. When we stopped for a cuppa Paul said that he raised his arm to him too - weird. We rode on passing a 'Concrete Crapper' but didn't stop. Lots of thinking time on this quiet road - did the concrete refer to the building construction or....?

We needed fuel at Kimba which is 'Halfway across Australia'. Having fuelled we went indoors into aircon, an ice lolly a drink and lots of chat. One lady was minding the pumps and the shop with the locals doing a shop for groceries. It seemed remote to us but she said it's not real outback. Newspapers everyday and milk and veggies twice per week, bread three times per week. The school bus calls so it's the tuck shop too. Then a rusty old estate pulled up at the pumps, the large lady driver got out, then her abbo passenger plus 3 kids and 2 pups. It was also jammed with household goods and headed for Perth. Locally the minimum spread that can give a family a living is 6,000 acres. Water is a problem when it costs 3c per litre from a de-salination plant is too expensive for cattle raising. A couple of years back farms had simply to dispose of their flocks for NOTHING. The dirt is poor too and can only grow every other year.

Before we left the aircon she said it must be hard on a bike. She then said that people crossed on bicycles, wheelchairs, and even roller blades. And we thought we were really doing it!.....

Terry - Kalgoorlie W.A. OZ.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-31 The Nullabar Plain

15/3/2000

An early cooler start from Ceduna and all the vast plain vistas seem pink tinted. There have been kangaroo warning signs but now blood on the road, carcasses and lots of huge Ravens have me riding in front VERY watchfully. Many more blood stains than carcasses - do the dingoes take them? Then a flock of the grey and bright pink birds flew across causing me to duck. A mini tornado whirling in the field well away from the road. A sign for the E end start of the Nullarbor and the terrain is immediately different - no trees. Less bloodstains and a clearer view and back to 70mph (110kph). A drink stop at Yallata which was VERY ethnic. Then a fuel stop at Nullarbor itself. You expect a village but its just a roadhouse with food fuel and beds. We had a drink and decided to do the lonely stretch. Now 3 of us were wetting our T shirts and neckerchiefs to counter the heat. The warning signs now pictured camels, wombats and kangaroos. There were a few places where you could just see the ocean, the Great Australian Bight. An odd slightly cooler puff of air and I pulled off. We were instantly attacked by swarms of flies so a quick photo and a drink from the warm water bottle and back on the road. The flies fall behind at over 20mph! A twister was blowing close to the road - I shut off and it went quiet momentarily and forced the bike to a funny angle - then passed. I'm glad it was a small one - SCARY. It's been a long ride today but a sign showing 150k to Western OZ border encourages onwards. Our only shade for 200k is at the border. NO - we have no pot plants or fruit. Parked at the Eucla Motel my very first stop is the bar. Beer never tasted so good .....

Terry - Kalgoorlie W.A. OZ.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-32 40 Days and 40 Nights

15/3/2000

Since this whole trip is a bit Biblically based being the Millennium Trip I thought it appropriate to tell you that it's down to 40 days left. Having crossed into W.A. it's our last State but by far the biggest. Europe would fit easily. We have stayed on in Eucla because of VERY high wind today - and it's still nearly 100 degrees. I rode a dirt road in my face net to the dunes where the old Telegraph office is largely covered by sand. Having heard that the snakes coil on top of the sparse vegetation then strike at groin level, I was VERY CAREFUL. I don't want to learn to play the flute! Dinner was strictly 6pm-7pm and with nowhere else for 100 miles - we were all there. Frogs outside were enjoying the proliferation of moths and insects due to the unusual cyclone caused wet weather.

That night it rained very heavily but it made it cooler for riding. The plains were unusually green but not many flowers. All the day's excitement came in the afternoon. First a plague of locusts - just like shrapnel hitting the visor and could be felt through the clothing. A new experience - again with Biblical links. Then quite a few Emus. When they stand still they look just like bushes, when they move near the road they really worry me. Their (brains) are similar to British sheep and when I see them each side of the road I slowed right down. Good decision, one tried to outrun the bike for a while - I think I saw 30mph before it gave up.

Then an uncomfortable night at Caiguna Roadhouse (like a jail). The ravens were noisier than the Road Trains - a weird range of noises more human sounding than birdlike. Competing was the odd small aircraft on the strip behind the cell. Eating the food was a worry - remember over 100 miles to the first loo the next day. This stretch was DEAD STRAIGHT for 90 miles. I tried to slip stream a Road Train and 2 trailers at 70mph, about half the amount of throttle was needed but bad buffeting - so I dropped back.

RT,s coming the other way would almost blow your head off on the narrow 2 lane strip.

I ran over a snake but otherwise an easy run to Norseman. With 4,000 miles ridden so far and we had successfully crossed the DREADED NULLARBOR PLAIN.....

Terry - Kalgoorlie W.A. OZ



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-33 A Cyclone

18/3/2000

The weather has been unusually extreme throughout the continent for weeks. Now it was really going to affect us. Three bridges on the S coast had been damaged and the road closed. Kalgoorlie had just had it's annual rainfall in ONE day. This road had been closed yesterday morning but we hoped would be passable today. The night had been spent in a mud (rammed earth) walled motel in Norseman, named after a horse who pawed up a gold nugget whilst tethered - it felt a one horse town! The ride to Kalgoorlie was uneventful but lots of washed out road shoulders. This town is one of OZ's wealthiest towns - also called the Golden Mile. The airport is jammed with small planes and palatial houses surround it. Much of all this is American owned, it's such a huge contrast to all the empty desert. What a difference some Gold makes (actually nickel too). The miners get around A\$1500-2,000 pw sometimes more and don't even dig deep anymore nowadays in open pit mining. They operate scrapers and trucks.

We have now bought our most expensive fuel at A\$1.14 - quite a difference from starting at 76c. I have also put the first Lead Replacement Petrol into the old Beemer - no problems. At one Bush fuel stop the young owner was very well educated and in the ensuing political discussion made a very good case for being a Republic. The Northern Territory is not a State and in effect want devolution - sound familiar? I'll just stick to biking and having fun. We were quite taken with Kalgoorlie and stayed a second day, saying goodbye to our biker friends who were heading W direct to Perth - about 600km. We shall miss them but are quite sure that our bike treads will cross again somewhere in the world. The historic buildings here are quite splendid and well lit at night. Their old facades looking terrific against the inky blue night sky. We had a pub crawl - easy with such small beers ( less than half a pint). The waitresses were nicely almost dressed in thongs (the ones for bums not feet) and the bars were buzzing. Next day Di was happy to shop whilst I Emailed, I even had a haircut and bought a shirt. Our clothing is becoming travel weary so we were dumping some and replacing ready for more socialising next week.

We left Kalgoorlie for Coolgardie (I remember both mining towns from my school geography lessons). My geography is coming on in leaps and bounds - actually more in throttle twists and revs per minute! It was spitting and the road muddy from all the trucks from the very many mines. At a fuel stop there were two Greyhound buses, the passengers were gratefully stretching and having a drink before hundreds more kilometres. It really is a VAST continent.....

Wave Rock will be tomorrow.....

Terry - Albany on the SW tip of OZ.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-34 Wave Rock and Seaside

20/3/2000

The deserted minor roads were a welcome change from the very quiet highway. Mainly bitumen one lane strips with graded dirt shoulders. The odd passing truck put wheels onto the dirt leaving clouds of dust. Many of the fields were stubble but some were growing yellow tennis balls. We stopped for a closer look and found them to be just the rejected pumpkins. We made a wrong turn (quite a novelty) and had to ask directions. Correcting the navigational error caused us to use an even more minor road, we came up to an old truck herding a flock of sheep and pulled alongside. 'Sir Les Patterson' was driving and with his ruddy face and mouthful of teeth said G'Day. He said OK to pass the herd with spittle being projected at every consonant - I was glad I'd left the visor down. Now it was a stretch of dirt road riding, mainly good for a careful 45mph with all our luggage until hitting 'washboard' stretches. These corrugated parts REALLY shook us on the bike. It reminded me from years ago when I was a passenger in an ambulance with several others. The vehicle hit some bumps and one old lady passenger said "he's trying to shake t'shit outta us" to the GREAT embarrassment of her daughter! We regained the bitumen and had to be watchful as there were many flood damaged sections. It was approaching sunset and quite a bit cooler when we reached 'Wave Rock Motel'. It proved to be one of the best motels in weeks and yet in the middle of nowhere. There was a DIY indoor barbie. You selected the food for the barbie and cooked it then trimmed it with marvellous salads and bread. Wave Rock had been around several billion years and would wait for us.

A short ride in the early morning sun and we were gob smacked by the rock. It was just like a BIG wave around 40' high and 100 yards long. One tourist had brought his surfboard for a joky photo. Miles of plain and then this massive rock that had been eroded by wind and water over thousands of Millenniums. The view from the top over the vast plains was well worth the climb and the biting bugs. Back on the minor roads again and heading for the sea and Albany. Fabulous winding biking roads and various coloured salt lakes from icing sugar white to to green to pink to blue. We saw a sign to 'Rosie's Coffee Shop' - what a change from the Roadhouses. Tasty home baked quiche and pasta and trimmings - well done Rosie. Distant mountains came into view and was very exciting - after about another 100km we were in the Stirlings. The drift into civilisation was gradual until I reached a ROUNDABOUT - I hardly knew what to do! This stuff called traffic was there too. Advantages came too with a small beer in an Irish Pub. Yes. It was St Patty's Day. A good conversation with a member of the Ulysses Motorcycle Club was very informative. The club was formed 6 years ago by an ex-Brit and now has 14,000 members. Mainly mature riders (OK - old ) and with enjoying riding and camaraderie, perhaps I will join when I come again.....

Terry - Albany (about 400km S of Perth)



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-35 Albany and SW Corner

22/3/2000

This is a lovely little town on a huge bay with port and massive wheat silo that fills both ships and Road Trains. Having found a motel with Foxsport that will carry the motorcycle Grand Prix - we're here for the weekend. The local internet cafe is run by a scouser. He's been in OZ since 1966 but his Liverpool accent hasn't changed a bit. A night at the cinema 'Double Jeopardy' was a real treat but a bit chilly on the ride back to the motel. Life's getting a bit more normal after all the Plains riding. Albany was where the fleet assembled in the King George Sound for the First World War and has quite a history. Massive guns on top of the headland with 5-10 mile range provided the protection. The coastline on the SW tip of OZ is very spectacular and the big icy blue green coloured breakers are quite a sight. Walks to the Outlooks and Blow Holes are well worth the effort and there's no fly problem here. The biggest treat was seeing the Mutton birds in their gliding effortless flight. This is also a whale watching place but we were 4 or 5 months early. There was a Soapbox race down one of the hills which reminded me that I was selected to be a driver when I was in the Boy Scouts - OK so gravity worked especially well on me!

The forecast is for more effect from 'Olga' the latest cyclone so fingers crossed. The Grand Prix from S Africa was fantastic with Aussie Gary McCoy amazing everyone with his 500cc win and spectacular drifting style (he was a Speedway rider)

Good on yer mate .....

Terry - Margaret River (about 300km S of Perth)



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-36 The Poms are Coming

23/3/2000

From Albany we are just 'Cruisin' the coast on the bike. This means riding slower, looking round more and fewer miles in the day. It also means being seen more - but there are still few people about. Motorcycles are made to suit different purposes and I'm so lucky to have a few - and even luckier to have now made time to ride 'em. The old Beemer is a 'Roadster' or universal bike. On this trip it's served as 'Long distance tourer', 'Cruiser' and even 'Adventure' bike for off road riding. This leads to dressing the part (seen Harley riders?) according to your style. My style (sic) is 'Aging Eccentric' - this means I can wear what I damn well please. In fact it's meant my old suitably faded American Cop style leather jacket. Generously sized (for onboard crutch comfort) faded frayed blue jeans and a pair of good cushioned Spanish work/hiking boots and a pair of cowboys Deerskin gloves. The jacket works really well with an assortment of zippable vents. The jeans also have a zipper but with the biting bugs here.....

I do have a Harley and take the sniping from the non-Harley riders. I have a shiny BMW 'Cruiser' (James Bond replica) and take the sniping from Brit riders who think me to be just a poser. I have a BMW 'Adventure' model and strangely don't get sniped at on that. When riding the Harley I wear a helmet with suitably rude stickers - and grow a bit hairier (in facial hair - not riding style). On the BMW 'Cruiser' I wear a 'Chips' style helmet and posh gloves. On the 'Adventure' model I sometimes wear an enclosed helmet which covers the grey hair - then the young chicks have a second glance!

My favourite biker clothing is a leather vest (waistcoat) with suitable patches (badges). One says DILLIGAF:- (Does It Look Like I Give A F\*\*\*) Just so long as I'm biking I really don't care much what I'm riding or what I'm wearing. The old Beemer has brought us from E to W across this VAST continent and covered over 5,000 miles so far.

Now it's time to socialise for a week. Two biker pals and their family plus 3 Perth residents are gathering in two rental properties in this wine region. Having done the geography and history I now feel the need for lessons before taking my 'A' level in Wines.....

Terry - M.River W.A.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-37 Margaret River WA

27/3/2000

Before we arrived in M River we went deep into a marvellous forest called "The Forest of the Giants". A walkway has been created so you 'walk' into the treetops as high as 140' in the air. The walkways are very well constructed but do swing about. The idea is that you hear and see the birds closer. A great idea but self defeating. For the many old biddies (aging ladies) this is like an Indiana Jones adventure and they NEVER shut up - and this was BEFORE the coach load came in. We saw and heard far more birds just 10 minutes down the road whilst having a cuppa.

It rained heavily last night with the rain on the tin roof almost drowning the noise of the local sawmill. Yes - working until 11pm. We had been so lucky on the trip missing the rain and the floods. This was our day to get it. We started in the wet gear. I had burst the crutch (my imagination) on my old rain pants. In fact they had perished and I bought \$20 replacements (cheap). Half an hour later we were in a deluge and no shelter in sight. I knew it wasn't incontinence when I felt a wet crotch - I felt the cold trickles. The standing water was inches deep when a wagon completely filled me in.

Then Beemer started going onto one cylinder (out of only two). I managed to nurse the engine a further 40km to get to Nannup and found shelter at a garage. Drying the plug leads plus the heat from the engine did the trick. The weather improved a little to just normal rain and we were glad to make the motel at M River. The room heater was needed for warmth and drying out.

Margaret River is known for wineries and also surfing beaches with BIG waves. In fact the following day was sunny but the surf was up and wonderfully spectacular - we were looking forward to meeting our friends.....

Terry M.R.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-38 Eating like Abbos

29/3/2000

It was a thrill to join our friends and their relations for a few days. The larger rented property was an ideal centre of activity with kitchen/dining room and sunny balcony all with stunning views over Graceland Bay - a hifi system too. The surfers and windsurfers could be watched through binoculars and were there until sunset when the waves were up. The barbie was made to work hard to feed up to 18 people. After dark the games room came into its own with table tennis and pool tables. Two large fridges almost kept up with chilling the copious quantities of beer and wine. The other 'Chalet' was used as an extra bedroom annexe. The owner of this also being the astute owner of The General Store - the ONLY shop for this small community near Margaret River. In fact the 'Chalet' was 1 in a row of 4 barracks - he'd obviously got 4 for the price of 1. It was furnished (MFI must have a branch here) and ALMOST finished with curtains for bedroom doors!

It was fun to visit a winery in a large group. I've been a wine drinker for many years - but not an expert and wanted to learn more:-

1. Not all wineries grow their own grapes
2. Rose trees are planted at the end of a row of vines. The aphids like them better so give an early warning of attack.
3. Wine is tasted - even though it's not ready for drinking.

I definitely don't want to buy wine that's not ready for drinking - I already live in an environment where there are pillows that I can't put my head on, and special towels that I can't get dried on! It soon became obvious that we don't have taste buds that worked in the same way. Training them definitely makes them have more expensive tastes. To prevent the many local wineries from straining these taste buds further exercise areas are provided in the form of Cheese and Chocolate factories.

One nearby field is the meeting place for a large group of wild kangaroos and we saw one pair boxing. The females always have one young one with them plus one in the pouch and a foetus that only gets born when conditions allow and the older one has left home. If farmers build tall fences they just kick them down.

The Bushtucker Tour that 6 of us went on was total fun. First a 45 minute canoe paddle up the Margaret River starting from the sand bar by the ocean. Two per canoe and the first lessons on Aboriginals was amongst the paper trees. They used the paper like bark for all the uses that we put paper to. Then paddling to a grassy bank for the Tucker tasting. Smoked Emu and Kangaroo was good. Aussie tomatoes were like sultanas with a acrid lemon aftertaste. Aussie lettuce was like dandelion leaves. 'Pigsface' was a red fruit found on beaches (it looks like a pigs face) and tasted like very salty kiwi fruit. YES - we did the large grub eating but made into a pate - only the eyes were crunchy! Helen was our intrepid leader and also owns the tour, a former teacher she was excellent at imparting knowledge. She assured us of no tummy upsets - I still wished I'd taken some bark.

We crossed the river and hiked to a natural untouched cave. Torches were provided to see this constant 22c environment. This cave had been used to accommodate 52 people saved from a shipwreck. Most returned to England disenchanted - even though they were intending to settle. This happened around 1870 and Perth had only a population of 80. Margaret River just had the one white family and the river Gracetown and Busselton were all named after them. Then the canoe paddle back made it a terrific morning. Helen as doing another straightaway with 24 children. She expects her own baby in just 7 weeks .....

Terry M.R. W.A. OZ.



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-39 Onward to Freemantle

01/4/2000

Our friends left yesterday for Freo, so we had Juniper House to ourselves. It felt strangely quiet to enjoy our last supper. Doris, one of the grandmas of the family group had baked my favourite oatmeal parking and my first Yorkshire Puddings of the new Millennium - what a treat. Now we are packing ready for biking again. I just put a few nice comments into the guest book before leaving. On reading back, the whales were here just before Xmas and one very lucky guest liked pussy on the top of the steps!!

The cruisin' was wonderful on an early autumn (in the S Hemisphere) morning. Undulating hills with many vineyards, art galleries and pottery galleries. Then we saw the 'Holy Coast'. Yes a whole coast of Youth camps run by Catholics/7th Day Adventists/Apostolic/Baptists/ Reform Church and many more. The other grandma is really fit in body for her 80+ years and very religious. At one meal time she quietly suggested to me saying grace. I almost answered 'OK so long as Jesus doesn't want one of my chips' - sorry.

Busselton was a lovely small town with a Florida like beach. Its main feature is a 2km long pier. The longest wooden structure in the S Hemisphere. The little train was just about to go out on it and we jumped aboard. The train driver stopped so we could watch a wild dolphin happily being fed. Garfish were teeming in the clear water and with gulls, cormorants there was plenty to watch. At the end of the pier the driver lowered rubber wheels and could come off the track and go to the front ready for the pull back. More riding N and we called at a cafe. 'The kitchen's closed' we were told, but this means you can have a sandwich. That evening we arrived for a barbie at Jon & Caths lovely Fremantle home. Jon is an expert cook and his gas barbie has two hot plates and a griddle making it a bit easier for him to cater for 25. It was a perfect warm evening in their walled garden with water feature. The wonders of this trip go on - and on .....

Terry Fremantle Harbour (near Perth) W.A. - April Fools Day (no foolin') 39



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-40 Downtown Fremantle

10/4/2000

We were lucky to rent an apartment directly on the reclaimed point of Freo harbour. The harbour was busy with both fishing boats as well as both motor and sail pleasure craft. This is the place for a sybarite like me - sun, beach, bars and so many different restaurants and all feeling very laid back. The history of Freo dates back to 1829 when the very first white settlers arrived. They spent the first year or two living in tents with just what they brought out on their adventure. Looking at the buildings now so much had been achieved by the 1890,s. Fortunately much has been preserved and it melds into a super small city. As with most states in OZ (S OZ excepted) convicts were responsible for much of the early building and settling. The concern for populating this vast continent was still apparent in 1949 since the advertising concept was "Populate or Perish" and attracted many displaced persons following the war. The assisted passages with a voyage here being just ten pounds brought the many Europeans and especially Brits during the 60's and 70's. The people here as everywhere in OZ are really friendly and easy to talk to. Since one of the features here is 'Cappuccino Strip' it really is a café society comparable with the best in Europe.

My biker pal Neil has added an Aussie hat (with dangly corks) to his already posy extensive wardrobe. On our last bush walk together he was deliberately brushing against thorn bushes to demonstrate the quality of his safari suit. I had to tell him that his purple straw hat just didn't go. In fact in blunt Yorkshire I told him he looked a 'reet Wassack'. As a large group there was lots of partying both at the apartment enjoying the sunsets and also at Neil's wife Tess's sisters. The final night before the large group left for England via Malaysia was in a typical BYO restaurant. You are encouraged to Bring Your Own and they charge very reasonable corkage on the beer and wine that you give them. Some cheating definitely went on with more serious bottle bottoms hidden under the table. I heard that there were some sore heads travelling to Perth airport.

We were invited to be house guests with Cathy (Tess's sister) and Jon. We happily accepted since we were very happy to spend more time around Freo in the superb autumn weather. Don't think that the partying ended, it became more sophisticated -dinner parties instead. Jon is an expert and innovative chef besides being bloody good on the barbie. What with the fine wines this was stylish living, but they also have a fine hifi system and collection of both CD's and vinyl. I could live here - in fact I am (for just a bit longer). We have sorted out what to do with the faithful bike. Aussie Crates will pack it and Jessica at the shippers will send it to Christchurch NZ - hopefully to be ready for a future trip.

That accomplished left time for a trip into the Perth hills to look at the fruit growing elevation and a taste of two very fresh crunchy apples. 'Tigger' - Jon's dog took me for a walk to his doggy beach and showed me he can still play with a stick and swim at 14 years old. A coffee at the beach lasted an hour or so whilst talking to the natives. What I really mean is the European natives. I'm due to go to an event that focuses on the 'reconciliation' between whites and aborigines.....

Terry—Freo



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-41 'Booyembara'

10/4/2000

This is the aboriginal name for a limestone hill with ocean breezes. From being this place it became a quarry from which limestone was taken for building in the Fremantle area. It was abandoned to become an untidy tip and many people both white and black have worked on a project over several years for it to become a large park. 'Reconciliation' is the name given to the process to help both white and black to become one nation and a project like this is one practical effort to achieve this. We were so lucky to be here for this opening by the white mayor with aboriginal dance and music. A picturesque lake and planted mounds already are created along with a skate board rink that was in full (and expert) use. The mayor's best comment was that the young could enjoy it and their youth rather than being expected to be middle aged before their time. More activity areas are in the future plans. You have already heard much about the replica of Captain Cook's ship 'The Endeavour' - well it was built here. The skilled builders wanted another project to exercise their skills and the 'Duyfken' (The Little Dove) was born. Two years in building this is a replica of the first European ship to visit the N coast of OZ in 1606. It was launched to music, cheering and many multi coloured streamers. It's first voyage also being one of 'Reconciliation' by the plan of asking permission to land on aboriginal land on the NW tip of OZ. Once out of the harbour it set full sail with a fair wind abeam for it's leg up the N coast. Just a 20 minute Fat Ferry ride away is Rottnest Island named by a Dutchman it means Rats Nest. He got it a bit wrong - what he thought were huge rats were in fact 'Quokkas' unique to this island they are friendly marsupials similar to Wallabies. Visitors to the island can use the bus (no cars or motorbikes). This is clockwise only and takes an hour or so. Bicycle (very popular) or walk taking care to avoid the many snakes in the bushy undergrowth. What a brilliant place for a quiet family visit - except school holidays when it becomes busy. At Xmas the bays are jammed with partying pleasure boats. My final trip to another island off Fremantle was courtesy of our hosts neighbour. The island of Karnac was about half an hours trip on his powerful fishing boat. As promised there were playful seals and we swam with them. It's also a bird sanctuary with gulls and cormorants winging noisily around. Terns are even noisier when in season (not sure that pun was intended).

It's quite a wrench to leave Freo for the final bike ride in OZ, but we leave in the morning to head N before returning to ship the bike .....

Terry - Fremantle



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-42 Biking to the Pinnacles

17/4/2000

This was the last biking tour of this trip - it was good to be in the saddle again, heading N up the sunny coastal beaches, skirting Perth centre to the N outskirts. Huge developments of new estates - each with 'Ocean' woven into the estates name. So much like the new Florida developments - except the large houses almost fill each lot making them look very jammed together.

Then it's quickly bush again. We rode another 100km then turned inland. A dirt road took us to the isolated 'Wadi Park Resort'. We had prebooked since the children had broken up from school for Easter. A spacious chalet was ideal, a short walk back in the darkness for dinner and an owl was in our path. We studied each other for a few minutes - he probably had the better view under just the starlight, then flew into a tree. Talking with the gay Aussie owners, they bought the place after it went bust as a wild flower and Emu park about 6 months ago. They plan to grow herbs around the accommodation area. It already attracts lots of wildlife including kangaroos. I was awakened to very loud bird noises. It was quite an altercation between a raven and a kookaburra (who had the last laugh!). Today's ride was through undulating hills, part of which was called 'Emu Downs' and right on cue we saw a few going walkabout through the golden pastures. 'The Pinnacles' is a National Park close to the Indian Ocean with craggy rocks 'growing' from the sands. In fact its hard bits of limestone up to 10' left as the surrounding sands eroded and blew away. It forms an amazing landscape that you can loop through on golden sandy tracks. I was taking care not to slide off - the luggage was already cracking with the pounding of dirt roads (and age).

That night we came unstuck with accommodation at New Norcia. The hotel was full and the only other accommodation in a monastery was filled with 'nearly deads'. On to Bindoon to the worst dirty room of the entire trip and the longest night on the sloping mattress.

What a contrast after riding more lovely hills of wheat, cattle and sheep with some new lambs to reach our next accommodation at Toodyay. The 1870 Rectory - now a super B&B was owned by friends of friends. This was divine intervention and we had dinner and lots of talk. The owners have put the Rectory up for sale, since with their 1 year old son they are buying around a 50' yacht to live on, around the Whit Sunday Islands. These are in the Great Barrier Reef down the NE coast of OZ - WOW. Another great Email contact to hear of their experiences. The return journey through the Swan Valley and more wineries before the beach ride back to Freo. Sad but its time to wash the bike ready for crating. Our hosts helped us really enjoy our final days in OZ which included beach walking and 'tasting' a multiplicity of wines with their neighbours .....

Terry - Singapore



## Terry's Travels

RTW1-43 Singapore and Homeward Bound 24/4/2000

Singapore Airlines gave the most attentive service on the 5 hour flight. Within minutes of arriving I realised just how much I have missed the Far East. Heat, humidity, tropical trees and flowers and more growing skyscrapers of amazing forms. It was almost 10 years since I had been here en route to Malaysia.

Time here was spent in the rooftop pool with 360 degree views of this advanced island. At street level the bustle of a truly multi race population which led to eating authentic Chinese/Thai/Indonesian and Asian cuisine in outdoor family owned restaurants. Even a trip to the new Rainforest Cafe on its opening day. Our 'passport' to enter let us enjoy food and drink in a tropical (with storms) setting with the 'animals' performing right on cue. Toddlers were having a great time - I wrongly thought they may be a little scared. Yet more goodies to stuff into the already jammed extra suitcase. A Tiger beer and watching the doll like very fashionable young ladies, lots of Cruisin going on with Harleys and many Mercedes. The shops have the genuine products of Crocodile/Lacoste/Reebok/Levis/Timberland/Gucci etc - how different from the 'fake' world just across the border, but where real money goes much further!

I have visited electronic shops to see the amazing ranges of the latest gear. The sales people immediately pounce so I have done more homework via the latest mags. Largely English speaking Singapore makes it so easy. International news is available - shame about the NASDAQ - but I also know how cold it still is in England - I thought I was ready to return .....

Terry