

Del Tate's & Marie Everest's trip around Australia on 125cc Vespa Motor Scooters 11th September 1957 to 20th December 1958

This trip had been planned for quite a while, but like a lot of 'plans' they didn't get off the ground until I had a 'slight' altercation with Mum about a boy she didn't want me to go out with. I cracked a 'wobbly' and decided there and then to leave home and 'go around Australia' with Marie (my cousin).

We started off with the gear you can see tied on with rope to the back of our scooters (yes we tied the luggage on - didn't know anything about knots – more about 'ropes & gear' when we get near Maryborough)

We wore leather jackets, denim jeans, shirts, scuffs (note no crash helmets - in those days they weren't compulsory.)

(The comments in **red** & *italics* came from letters Marie had written home to her Mum – without these letters there wouldn't be the detail there is – thanks 'Melski')

Del Zuidema (Tate) March 2005





Leaving Murwillumbah

BRISBANE - 11th to 17th September, 1957

We had our scooters serviced while we were in Brisbane.

We tried to get sponsored by Bruce Small Motor Scooters – (the usual ‘put off’ – come & see us when you get back & we might be able to do something then). While we were away on our trip, Bruce Small sold his business – gosh I didn’t think we were that threatening. Bruce Small later became Mayor of the Gold Coast.

Then we tried 3 petrol companies to see if any of them would be open to sponsoring us for petrol for the trip, but no luck there either. The excuses were:-

1. **Ampol** Sorry no – but they gave us 5 maps and one tank of petrol each.
2. **Caltex** We don’t go into sponsoring.
3. **Shell** You just missed out - we sponsored a girl from Melbourne to Brisbane last month.

We bought our '2 man' tent in Brisbane, then we needed tent poles. We tried to get collapsible ones but that worked out too dear, so we bought a wooden pole 12'6" long (probably like the modern day curtain rods) and had them cut into 2' lengths and found a factory that made them so they would fit together as two tent poles and could be dismantled to easily fit onto our scooters.

We had our photo taken in Brisbane by the Brisbane Telegraph (which doesn't exist nowadays). We were also interviewed by 4BC.



Did you hear all about us on the news from 2ML and on the local news? We will probably have our photo in the paper to-day, send it up will you please.

Before we left Murwillumbah we went down town and everybody stopped and said how lucky we were and said goodbye to us. When we came down later all loaded up everybody looked.

You should have seen us all loaded up Del had the lantern, primus and tin hanging on the back it looks really good.

We rode right through Queen Street yesterday. Lots of people looked at us, even the cops smiled at us. It cost us 6 pence to park in a parking meter.

On way to Maryborough

Guess what? Our 'gear' started to slip off (surprise, surprise). So after numerous stops a 'knight in shining armour' in the guise of a male driving a Holden stopped & offered to take our luggage to Maryborough where we were going to get racks made for the back of our scooters. (I bet you couldn't do that these days!!)

Maryborough - 17th September

We pitched our tent in a paddock just out of Maryborough. Gee it was fun. We lit a fire and had tea.

We got to Maryborough, collected our luggage & went to an engineering shop and arranged for our brackets to be made up. Had our photo taken for the Maryborough 'Chronicle'.

We broke the lantern globe on the way up – tried to use it without the globe but it flickered and we had to turn it off and use our torch (we probably only had one torch between us) & we pitched our tent in a paddock just out of Maryborough”.

When we were coming through town today I heard somebody say “There go the two girls that were in the paper today. Maryborough is a lot bigger than I thought, they call it a ‘city’ and the population is about 17,000.

You should see the push bikes in Maryborough – there are thousands. Everybody rides a bike because it is such flat country. Most of the houses are old looking and in nearly every garden we noticed Gerberas. Are those I pinched from Jessie growing?

Childers – 18th September

We passed through Childers at about 11.00 am – it is situated right in the middle of cane fields, you would think that somebody picked it up and just plonked it in a cane field, the cane grows right up to their back doors.

Gin Gin (113 miles north of Maryborough) – 19th September

We are camping in the showground tonight, it is right in the town with plenty of houses around. We are going to sleep in a horse stall because is plenty of soft dirt on the floor. I never thought I would be sleeping in a horse stall, but you do a lot of things you never thought you would – like walk up streets with dirty feet & dirty blouses & leather jackets on, but you just can't keep clean when travelling.

Remember in those days it was safe to camp anywhere. There wasn't once that we had trouble being bothered by young men – and we had plenty of them around. (I guess we didn't 'lead them on' as was & still is the saying, Perth & Adelaide we did meet some 'rotters'– that's a later story).

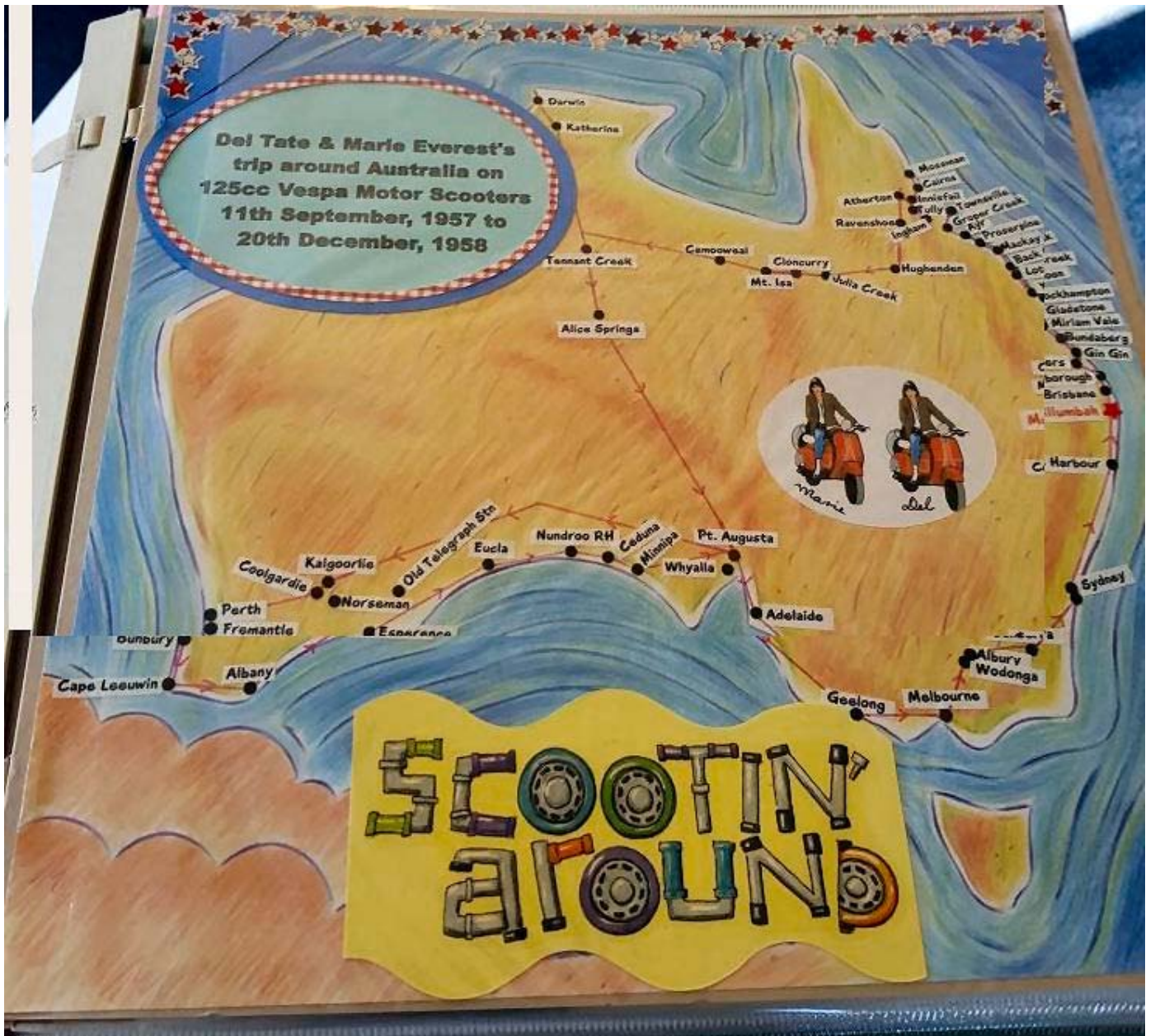
Some comments about the Roads

Gin Gin to Miriam Vale:- At one stage there was about 30 miles of dusty, sandy, corrugated road, the sand on it was about a foot thick in places, and it was real soft. Del fell over once, but didn't get hurt because we were travelling so slow.

Bundaberg

We arrived in Bundaberg for lunch. We went into one café, sat down and looked at the menu and discovered that everything was too dear so we walked out again. We went into the next

café and they were too dear also so we ended up getting a couple of pies and eating them in the park. Had our photo taken by the local newspaper.



Miriam Vale 22nd September

We arrived in this terrible hole on Friday evening and as we were coming along the road we passed a showground with a lot of people and horses around. I thought it must have been a sale, but it was a rodeo.

We went to a rodeo – (we didn't think they had them in Australia). Everybody gets dressed up 'fit to kill' to go and the contestants all get around in real cowboy style outfit. Met some 'cowboys'. Comment from Marie's letter:- "This town is nearly as bad as Gin Gin, they haven't even got electricity.

Gladstone

We reached Gladstone about lunchtime. The main street is on a steep hill so if you want to go through it you have to go up the hill and down the other side, very awkward for parking.

Rockhampton 24th September

Rocky is a fairly big city (43,000) and is very nice. I took a photo of the main street so you can see for yourself. We stayed here a day because we had to get the oil changed in our scooters. We had another photo taken by the local paper.

Some comments about the roads:

Rockhampton to Mackay:- The road was chronic. After going for a while we hit bad roads and when I say 'bad' that is just what I mean. You have never seen such shocking roads in all your life, the roads down home are 'highways' to them. The potholes are anything up to 8" deep. The road is also corrugated, dusty & sandy. The sand is the worst, we can dodge in & out of the potholes, (if we can see them), whereas a car can't miss them. The worst patch was a patch that the people call 'bull dust', but I can think of more appropriate names for it. On the top is thick white dust and the road looks alright but underneath are pot holes about a foot deep and that is a fact. They are doing the road up and there are detours everywhere, I never want to see another detour as long as I live. They go for miles into the bush, winding through the trees and over deep & bumpy gullies.

Rockhampton 24th September

We stayed in a caravan park so we were as safe as a church, a man helped us put our tent up. You would be amazed how friendly and helpful people are.

Rocky is a fairly big city (43,000) and is very nice. I took a photo of the main street so you can see for yourself.

We stayed here a day because we had to get the oil changed in our scooters.



The following story accompanied our photo in the Rockhampton newspaper:-

Two 18 year old Murwillumbah girls, who started out from their hometown on September 11th this year on their way around Australia, arrived at Rockhampton last Sunday on their motor scooters. The girls, Del Tate (left) and Marie Everest, were photographed at the Caravan Park yesterday making running repairs to their machines. The girls have allotted themselves two years in which to make the trip round Australia, and in that time they intend to obtain casual work from town to town. At their hometown they were both stenographers, but they said yesterday they would take on any job as long as it was 'respectable and well paid'.

After leaving Lotus Creek we headed for Mackay and what a road we had to travel over. Between Rockhampton & Mackay there is about 130 miles of dirt road with about forty miles of bitumen & that is all. It is the most shocking road I have ever been over. It isn't as if it was a 'back' track either, it is the main Northern Highway.

It took us 5½ hours to come fifty miles through one stretch of it. It wouldn't be so bad if it was through a populated area, but it is isolated. All we saw for two days were trees, dirty, dusty, bumpy roads, a few houses and cows and an occasional car that passed us. In one part the grader had just been over it and there was thick sand all over the road and we had to go right over on the edge of the road. That went on for about two miles and we had to go about ten miles an hour over it. The road is full of dried up creek beds without bridges over them. Some of them are twice as steep as our little creek at home. All along the road we saw tyres, apparently they had been punctured and the motorists just leave them there. That stretch of the road was in the Mobilgas Trial and was considered a horror stretch. I quite believe that.



General comments about the scenery

Rockhampton to Mackay:- We were travelling for about nine hours yesterday and for the last six of that we didn't see a house, we were travelling through bush country. It is really through Stations, no wonder that they have to have so much land, the country is covered in trees and in between them is a bit of dead looking course grass. Occasionally it thins out a bit and there is a bit of grass. There are dozens of creeks up here to but most to them are dry or stagnant.

Yeppoon

Went for a ride down to Yeppoon. The sand at the beach was real dirty and it was too windy to swim.

Refer to the photo of Back Creek - This is the type of roads we went on in those days, dirt, pot holes, detours on side tracks which were very bad for little scooters.

Lotus Creek

Marie has written a very descriptive account of the roads (refer her letter dated 24.09.1957). We hit here about 7.00 p.m. last night and gee we were tired & dirty, we camped with a lot of other caravans near a river. Flying fixes were flying around all night and cows were prowling around. I was glad when morning came and it was a beautiful morning. Sometimes we didn't pitch the tent just put the two scooters together & threw the tent over them.

After leaving Lotus Creek

We made for Proserpine. The road was pretty good and only about 20 miles of gravel. There isn't much gravel now and that sure is a great relief.

Another menace on the roads are the grids – there is one about every mile or so up here. The train lines are just as bad and there are just as many of them, especially in the cane country. We are staying in a caravan park here too, so we are quite safe from 'bad' men and other dangers that you might have had in mind.



Back Creek

You will notice in the photo of 'Back Creek' that the country is almost scrub, that is what we have been coming through since we left home except for cane fields. Back Creek was almost 30' from top to bottom.

Mackay - 28th September

Well we finally reached Mackay and went and saw the Bruce Small Motorcycle. The manager invited us home to tea and said we could stay there. People have been wonderful to us, if we don't accept their invitations they get insulted, so don't think we push ourselves on anyone and I bet that is what you are thinking.

While we were there we went through a sugar mill. I don't know whether you have ever been through one or not but if you have you will understand when I say that it has a very sweet smell - it was interesting though.

Bram (the Manager of Bruce Small Motorcycles whose place we stayed at) took us through a barge that was anchored at the wharf one night. We had a cup of tea on board and came home at about 10.30 pm.

We were interviewed by a reporter from the Mackay newspaper on our travels.

Proserpine - 29th September

We are staying in a Caravan Park here too, so we are quite safe from 'bad' men and other dangers that you might have had in mind. We are going out fishing with two boys we met here today so we should get a bit sunburnt. At least it won't be so hot on the water. It is steaming hot here at the moment.

Road from Proserpine to Ayr

After Proserpine we headed for Ayr. The road was pretty good with only about twenty miles of dirt & sand. As I said before the roads are a disgrace to the Qld. Government.

Ayr - 2nd October, 1957

We went on 'air' at a Radio Station to give a talk about how our trip was going and they gave us a photo of the newly completed Burdekin Bridge which took 10 years to build.

GROPER CREEK – Just out of Ayr– Marie and I were approached by a 'media' man who said he was interested in getting a few shots of us for a story to be published in a Melbourne newspaper on the youth of to-day and would we be interested in having him take some photos of us. Of course we were interested so he took us to some isolated spot and tried to get us to pose with our arms pushing our 'boobs' across to make them look bigger, but we seemed to sense something amiss and got away as quickly as we could – **'story' – what story?**

TOWNSVILLE - 7th October

We had a bit in the local Townsville newspaper regarding our trip so far.

By now we had run low on money, so we went to a local hotel Railway Hotel to see if they would give us a job and 'yes' they would – and that was where we learned to pour beer – we didn't drink ourselves.



Marie had a 'prang' in Townsville, all she can remember about it is that 'someone' ran a 'Stop' sign & she can't remember whether it was her or the other person. (Of course it would have been the 'other' person)

While we were in Townsville the American Navy came into port and we met them when they came into the hotel for a drink. After work they would take us out and later on we would take them on the back of our scooters back to their ship.

We used to go on sightseeing trips while we were in Townsville.

We got our names painted on the front of our scooters by a signwriter and were to later find out he was an ex criminal – more on this later.

Don't worry about us not eating, maybe for the first few days we didn't eat very much but now we usually end up having a steak each especially if we meet some boys. We are having a fabulous time. I can't believe that I lead such a dull life, I should have taken your advice ages ago and had a good time, but it isn't too late yet, and believe me we are having a lot of fun now.

I don't think that we are 'game' to do this - there is nothing dangerous about it. I ought to know because I am doing it, so for once I know what I am talking about. No 'Buddy' hasn't written to Del and I don't think that he will. She is forgetting him as I said a few letters ago so you can't worry about that now and we are safe and sound in Townsville so you just have to stop worrying whether you like it or not because you haven't got a thing to worry about and as for getting married on the way around – never. I am having too much fun, but I must tell you about a fellow I met down in Ayr. He is a German and has only been out here six months. He was absolutely crazy about me even wanted to take me back to Germany with him. But don't worry I wasn't that keen on him and I will never see him again anyway. I think I will stick to the Aust. Boys anyway, they are not so quick tempered as foreigners.

By the way those fellows at the rodeo weren't show fellows but all respectable hard working station hands.

8th October

Just got your letter now, we are at the baths. We have got a place to stay at last and also a job. When I last wrote the position looked pretty grim. Of course I didn't tell you that because I knew that you would worry. We were staying with the housekeeper of the hospital. We went there for a job and as we didn't have anywhere to stay she said that we could stay in her flat. We could have got in a place for £2.15.0 a week. We would have to cook all our own meals, so it would have ran out quite dear. We are now at a place and they only charge £1.6.0 per week. We still have to cook our own meals but that is alright.

I am starting work tomorrow in a hotel. I work from 7.00 to 10.00 a.m., 12.00 Noon to 2.00 p.m. then 5.00 to 8.00 p.m. I hope it is permanent, because it is much easier to get a job if you know the hotel trade. Del is working at night In a café.

Yes I like Townsville it is a big place and very hot, but this is nothing to what it will be like in the summer.

Last Sunday we went over to Magnetic Island. It is very nice but the beaches and surf are lousy. The sand is real course and brown. We went job hunting over there but they wanted experienced girls so you see what a great help it will be if we can get in the hotel. Pleased to hear that Pete can crawl, you will soon have to be putting things up out of his reach. Get some snaps of him as soon as you can I would love to see him.

It hasn't been raining up here – water restrictions are on and everywhere is looking dry. But it always looks pretty dry looking because the soil is so poor – the hills are nothing like the lovely green ones down home.

23rd October

Now don't worry about us not eating, you ought to know better than that, you know I could never go without my food. I usually end up having a steak just about every day. I have lost a bit of weight too. I am down to just a little over 8 stone. How come you lost so much weight? You must be thin, then you had better eat up big and put on some condition.

I forgot to tell you that we went sailing with the sailors on Sunday, we went in a yacht. It belongs to a chap we met on South Molle. The boys had never been sailing before and really enjoyed it. You should have seen the swimmers that Phil had on, they were an old pair of whites and that is what they call their white pants, cut off at the knees and with tears all around the bottom, they looked like this – real Robinson Caruso style. (Then Marie draws the pants).

I have been having more dates since I came here than I would have had in two years down home. I am going out on Thursday & Saturday nights with a very nice chap. He is about the best yet. I have been out with a real mixture:- Germans, Dutch, English, Danish & American and of course Australians. I still think that the Aussies are better than any. The Americans fascinate me the way they talk but they all take you out and expect the one thing of you, get what I mean. Not that all the others don't, but they take 'no' for an answer.

Oct, 1957 Townsville

Well guess what your daughter is doing for a living. To put it crudely I am a 'barmaid'. But it isn't as bad as it seems and I get terrific wages. I got £7.14.0 for 4 days. In an office up here I would only get £5.14.0 a week. I start work at 7.00 a.m. and to-day I didn't knock off until 3.30 p.m. Boy was I tired, I worked 8 hours straight, on my feet all the time. But I don't start work until 10.00 a.m. Monday. It is good in the bar, you don't hear any swearing and nobody gets real drunk. They throw them out if they do, it is a very orderly bar.

What is this about people not knowing I am a 'cow cockies' daughter? If people ask me what my father does I always tell them he is a farmer and I couldn't care less what people think.

I am getting quite a tan up. I am about the brownest I ever have been.

No the trip isn't really what I expected it to be. The roads are twice as bad, the people twice as nice and a lot more people know about us than I thought would. But it is a really wonderful life, you meet so many people and have such a good time, but I miss home.

I like Townsville it is about four times the size of Murwillumbah and much better laid out. As I said before there are palms up the streets and it give it a real tropical air. The baths are beautiful and big. All the Olympic swimmers come up here in the winter to train. They are lined with tiles and they look most effective. We go there nearly every day. It is good doing shift work. I had from 10.00 a.m. until 4.30 p.m. off Thursday & Friday. Shift work makes you feel as if you aren't really working. I like it.

23.10.1957 Townsville

Dear Mum,

I got your letter yesterday and am sorry that you had to wait so long for a letter, but didn't think that it was a week, but suppose it was.

I suppose that you have read in the papers that two boat loads of U.S. sailors are here. And 'man oh man' have we been having a time. We have been out every night. Just as well we are starting work late each morning, I would never have got out of bed early, we usually crawl out at

about 10.30 a.m. They are an awfully nice bunch of boys. So polite and well mannered. The ones I have been going out with is going to give me his white jacket (or one of them) & a white cigarette lighter, I didn't want to take the lighter, but he said it was to remember him by. The

✦ Scooter ✦ Tourists at Townsville

Tweed Valley Motor Scooter Club members, Del Tate and Marie Everest, have completed the first major stage of their round-Australia marathon.

They arrived in Townsville recently, after 1300 miles, including at least 400 miles of very bad roads.

In a letter to the club, the girls said they were now so experienced at riding on this type of surface that they tackled it as confidently as a ride from Murwillumbah to Coolangatta.

Both girls claim that they would not change places with anyone and have enjoyed their complete trip so far.

They have camped out, and they did their own cooking most of the trip.

Since leaving Murwillumbah, Del and Marie have been interviewed by major newspapers and radio stations along the route.

A feature of their journey has been their appearance before television cameras. They will be seen on television in Melbourne this week.

hotel has been full of them and the first evening they arrived I got about £1.40.0 in tips. Some of them have 'civvy' clothes with them and you should see them, real light coloured pants and bright shirts. They all like Australia and some of them wish that they could stay. They say it is even better than the States. The fellow Del has been going out with said that he is coming back in December to see her. He probably won't though. I went out with one last night and he played basketball in the Olympic Games. He is a professional and gets time off from the Navy to play. He said he would like to take me back to the States with him. He probably didn't mean it, but it sure would be great. Now don't get any ideas, I wont be going.

There is one thing that I don't agree with and that is that they all have steady girls and most have had them since they were about 14. They must miss out on a hell of a lot of fun. They marry early over there too, one of the boy's brothers was 16 and so was the girl but they are divorced now and she is married again. They get divorced at the drop of a hat. So it is not only in Hollywood that they do it, but it must be all over America.

24th October

Well I must say your letter was a shock to me. It is alright for you down there with a farm behind you. For the first week we were here we couldn't get work and things were getting pretty desperate. I didn't tell you because I knew that you would worry. There were 26 ahead of us at the hospital and we couldn't even get an office job. Anyway I would have got £5.14.0 in an office and I am now get £9.9.9, don't forget Del has to pay her scooter off. So we put our dirty pride (not that we have any) in our pocket and took the only vacant job that we could find.



I don't get what you mean about this 'temptation' business. Jessie wrote and said the same things to Del. Do you think that we would end up prostitutes or something? Well take it from me we are both still as respectable as we were when we left home.

Townsville has what is called a floating population which means that there is only seasonal work here and when that is finished there are no jobs around and this happens to be the time. He

meat works have closed down and the cane has finished so a couple of hundred men are out of work.

I still say that there is nothing wrong with working in a bar, and I ought to know, I do it whereas you have never. As I said before I have never heard any swearing or anything like that. To give you an idea what I say when there is nothing wrong I will tell you about the other barmaids. Two are travelling, (they are not together) from N.Z. one from Melbourne, one has been all over Aust. And is going to Perth in a couple of months time, the others are married women. All have done office work or other work before and the ones that are travelling have the same opinion as us, that is that, we will only be here six months and anyway it is good experience because once you become experienced you can get a job easy, and believe me jobs can be hard. For example, two girls staying here were here six weeks without work and nearly starved, so you can't just pick up jobs easy. Maybe to work in a bar all the time wouldn't be too good in fact I wouldn't think of it, but as I said Townsville has a floating population and people come and go all the time. Like I said a lot of the girls at the hotel are travelling and once people know that you are travelling they understand. Anyway I think that it all depends on the girl herself. As I have often said if you don't give people anything to talk about, well they can't talk and as Betty (head barmaid) said you educate the fellow on the other side of the bar, not let him educate you, that is, don't swear, tell yarns or make dates over the bar and we don't do any of those things and once you get the respect of the man and he realises that you are a nice girl, you are okay. As I said before it is a nice hotel right in the main street. Maybe the ones further out aren't the best, but this one is good, the boss's wife doesn't drink anything stronger than tomato juice and he only drinks a bit, so everything is kept in order, he won't even allow singing in the bar.

Well enough about that I feel much better now that I have got a few things straight. I can tell you I felt pretty bad when I got your letter, as if you thought that we were developing into 'bad' girls.

After we leave Townsville we are going to Cairns, through Mt. Garnett to Hughenden, getting a transport truck to take our scooters to Mt. Isa, because the road is all gravel and it is too deserted, from Mt. Isa, through Tennant Creek to Darwin by scooter, down the west coast to Geraldton by boat, it will take about 10 days and cost about £25, but the road is all sand and very deserted and no trucks go down that way. On the Perth by scooter, across the Nullarbor Plains by train and then back on to scooters for the next of the way, so we won't be riding them much until we hit Adelaide.



Using the Scooters to hold up the tent

I can't think of anything that I want for Christmas, but if you have any suggestions write and tell me. I wrote to Phil and asked him what he wanted I can't think what to buy him. I think I will get dad a shirt (don't tell him) and do you think Billy needs any more, if not ask him what he would like, I know what I am getting you, I will tell you that is it something electrical, so you had better let me know if you have added anything to your stock since I left.

The Yanks left the other morning but gee we had a mighty time while they were here, the only thing wrong was that we never got any sleep. They were very well mannered and polite and a lot more so than our boys. Some of them had 'civvy' clothes and boy they were loud. One fellow had about two dozer pairs of trousers, about that many shirts and about 15 pair of shoes, about four coats and one suit back in the States and he said that everyone had that much clothing.

I have enclosed some photos. One of them took and from them you can get a pretty good idea



of Townsville. They are taken from Castle Hill, which is 1' under being a mountain and is right in the middle of the town, so that there is town all around to the foot of it. The hill is very ugly, all rock & barren soil with only a few trees on it.

30th October

I took my scooter into Bruce Smalls the other day to get fixed, it was making a terrible knocking

noise. They said that it was the gears, and that it would cost about £15 to fix, but they said that

they would keep costs down as much as possible and when I went in this morning they told me that it would only cost £6 so that isn't too bad.

Guess what we have been eating ever since we came here? Mangoes & water melons. They are on a lot earlier up here & also I have noticed the Poinciana (the tree out the side of the house that has the red flowers - I can't spell it) trees up here are out in flower. There are coconut trees everywhere up here, especially on the Island. They don't sell them in the shops, they are that plentiful. The paw paws are lovely up here & have a much sweeter taste to the ones down home.

I must tell you a few funny things about the people up here, firstly all the professional men wear white, that is all the chemists, lawyers, doctors, bank clerks etc. get around in white. They all look as if they are off to a game of bowls or something. Also nobody is ever in a hurry up here, if you go into a shop or anywhere like that you have to wait ages, they don't believe in hurrying.

12th November

About Jessie writing up to our boss and telling him to keep an eye on us. He would get the impression that we were either a bit wild or a bit silly. Anyway Mrs Patterson is very good that way. She even served a man this morning for me because she said that he wasn't the best and she always tells us if she thinks a fellow isn't the best. She gives us nearly the same shifts as each other and always the same days off.

Before we left Townsville I sent a telegram to Mum :-

“Send large suitcase by train moving Innisfail. Love Del”.

I tell you kids haven't changed – no please or thank you, we just expected it to happen. Of course Mum had to pay for the suitcase to be sent up. We had accumulated so much extra 'stuff' we needed something to put it in.

INGHAM – A photo of me standing beside our tent, which we used to throw over our scooters . Ingham, about 70 miles from here is called 'Little Italy' because there are so many Italians there. Just to give you an idea as to the type of fellows we go out with. Del, believe it or not, has been out with two policemen. We have got to know about 4 policemen here and one Mal a very nice chap said that if we ever got booked to say that we knew him and we would be alright, not that we ever expect to be booked of course. Most of the cops up here are young and very nice. Also we have between us, been out with a fireman, salesman, medical orderly from the hospital, RAAF chap (they have a big training base here and the place is full of them) and a couple of fellows that just have ordinary jobs. The fellows that I wouldn't go out with are the ones that are in the bar every day, for the best part of the day. All the fellows that we have been out with only come in occasionally for a few and go again.



As for working in the bar, as I said last letter everything is different up here even the local people say that there is nothing wrong with it as the town has a 'floating population' and even the most well educated girls take what work they can get. But we wont be doing it down south.

I was talking to a chap the other day who has been all over the place and you have to be 21 in W.A., 30 in S.A. and have been a bar maid before 1925 in Vic. So we will either work in shops, offices or catch the fruit picking season when we're down there. We might work in a bar in Darwin because the wage is £15. To get down the west coast we will need some money.

Paronnella Park – Just 12 miles from Innisfail

1930 when Jose Paronella , aged 24, came to Australia.

“Twenty years ago when Jose Paronella came to Australia aged 24, was standing by a water-fall. Through his mind was passing visions of a Spanish castle, of shaded paths through jungle fern and foliage, of a softly-lit dance floor and the water power that would supply him with light. Many other ideas passed through his mind. This was to be his home, his ideal – this was to be Paronella Park.”

Jose single handedly built Paronella Park.

(There is a Souvenir booklet in my old scrapbook).

18th November

We went to the pictures the other week and saw an advertisement on Lennons Broadbeach & Kirra hotels it showed both hotels & surrounding beaches. It made us real homesick. We also saw a picture with Elvis Presley in it, gosh he is sickly and awful. I don't know what anybody could see in him.

I am pleased that we are leaving the hotel, because I can't stand our boss or his wife, they are rich I suppose but both are mean, especially **her** and all she worries about is getting that money in the till. Soon as the glasses are empty she is on to you and goes mad if anyone is kept waiting even a couple of seconds. He is nearly as bad, but he at least doesn't tell you in front of

the customers, but she does. Even some of the customers don't like her and have stopped drinking because of that. I don't think that I will get another bar job if I can help it, because I don't really like it. I might when we go out to the 'Isa', because you get terrific money there and make a lot in tips, besides & after all money is the main thing when you are travelling. The more money we make the less time we have to work.

We went to tea with a chap from the RAAF tonight, we went to a continental looking place and had a large plate of spaghetti & steak. I have been there a few times with him and always have spaghetti - it is beautiful – the only thing it is very filling and I usually feel like 'bursting' when I have finished. I usually go out with this chap's mate, also in the RAAF, but he is in Brisbane at a shooting competition at the moment. He shoots a 'Bren' gun. He went to Melbourne the other day for a few days. He flies everywhere of course and only for the 'shoot' being on he would have gone to Perth this week. He was going to take our luggage up to Darwin (he goes up every 6 weeks or so with his crew. They have to go up there to standby in case anyone gets lost) in the plane for nothing but now that we are going to Innisfail first he won't be able to, but anyway we are getting a chap to take our luggage up there for us, so all we are taking with us is our sleeping bags and a clean blouse & bra & towel etc. It will probably take us about 3 days to get there, but we are going to take our time. It is about 190 miles & Cairns is only another 60 miles further on from that.

Ingham – 25th November

We stayed in a caravan park and the 'robbers' had the hide to charge us eight shillings. Ingham is only a small place but has the second widest street in the world. There would be about 3 times as wide as Murwillumbah's streets, but they aren't very well laid out. Cars park up the middle & also against the pavement and there is still tons of room.

It also has the biggest sugar mill in Australia - the Victoria Mill. The funniest thing happened to us this morning when we went out to have a look over it. We were dressed in shorts & strapless tops and the man told us that we would disturb the men too much if we went through and that we went through at our own risk. I never thought the day would come when we had that effect on people - so we didn't go through. Ingham is also over run with Italians, in fact they call it "Little Italy" – all the cafes play Italian songs & specialize in spaghetti. We have been eating a lot of spaghetti lately, it is really lovely not all like to stuff you get in tins.

Tully - 26th November

Since I last wrote we have had our names painted on the front of our scooters, also a map of Australia showing the main towns and our route so far. They look good.



As you can see by the address we are in Tully. It is built right up against a mountain and the streets are as narrow as Ingham's are wide. There are Italians running everywhere here too and the town is just like all the small towns up here: sandy soil everywhere, very sparing on the grass and pretty old fashioned looking. The Commonwealth Bank here is the nicest I have ever seen. it really stands out in the town.

The road to Ingham was good, but from there to Tully it was mostly sand & gravel and a few potholes thrown in for good measure.

We got terribly sun burnt today but as we have a good tan up it doesn't affect us so much. The tops of my legs are real red-brown colour but they don't feel sore.

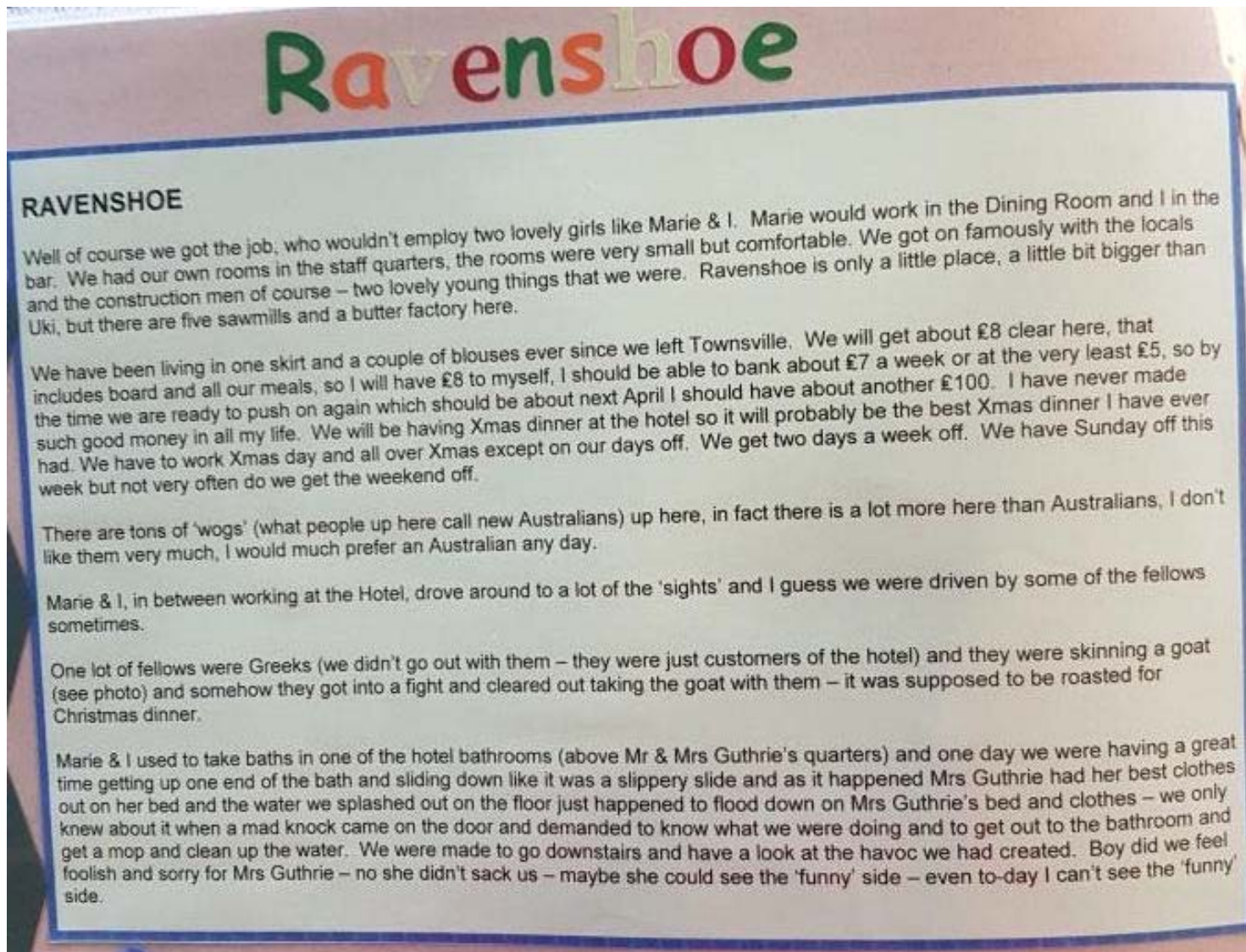


INNISFAIL 28th November

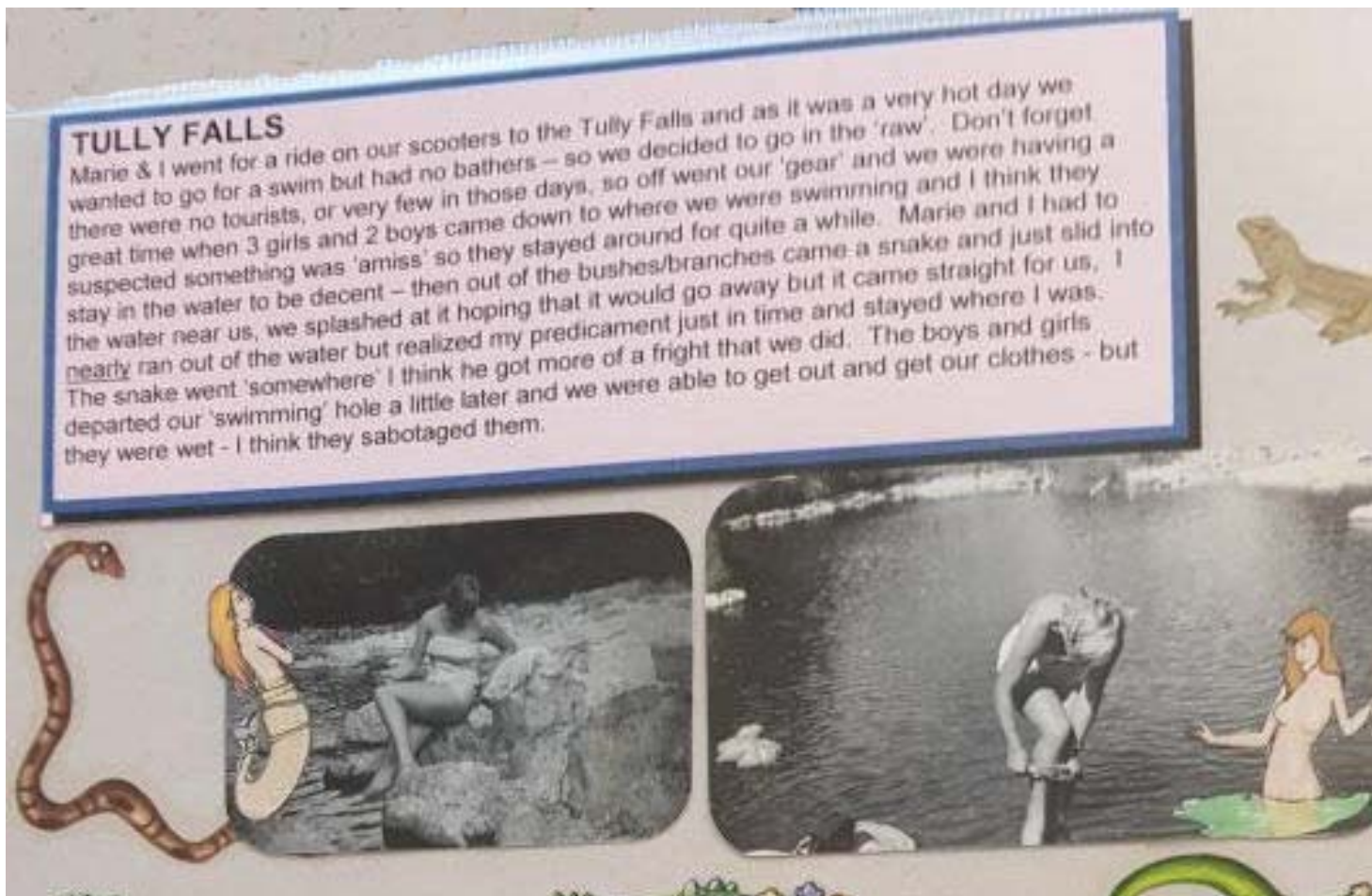
Okay by now we were off again and this time to Innisfail. We were talking between ourselves and a couple of 'old' fellows told us they heard there were two jobs going in Ravenshoe at the hotel, so we went to the Employment Agency and they made enquiries on our behalf and sure enough that was true.

RAVENSHOE

So off we went and landed a job in the hotel, me as barmaid and Marie as waitress. It was a great experience – we met some interesting people. One lot were Greeks Jimmy, Peter & Bill and they were skinning a goat for Christmas but they were mixed up in a fight and took off taking the goat with them.



Koombalomba Dam – I met this nice guy called Johnny Mrakovcic. (He later followed me to Sydney but by this time I was 'in love' with Bobby so poor old Johnny got the big shove – boy do I feel lousy now when I think what I put him through – following me from North Queensland to Sydney.



We had accommodation at the Ravenshoe Hotel in the staff quarters and the rooms were very small, but at least we had our own room.

Marie & I used to take baths in the hotel bathroom (above Mr. & Mrs. Guthrie's quarters) and one day we were having a great time getting up one end of the bath & sliding down like it was a giant slippery slide and as it happened Mrs. Guthrie had her best clothes out on her bed and the water we splashed out on the floor just happened to flood down on Mrs. Guthrie's bed & clothes – we only knew about it when a mad knock came on the door and asked us what we were doing and told to get out of the bathroom and get a mop and clean up the water. We were made to go downstairs and have a look at the havoc we had created. Boy did we feel foolish and sorry for Mrs. Guthrie – no she didn't sack us – maybe she should have.

Went to see Lake Eacham & Barrine while we were working at the hotel.

24th January, 1958

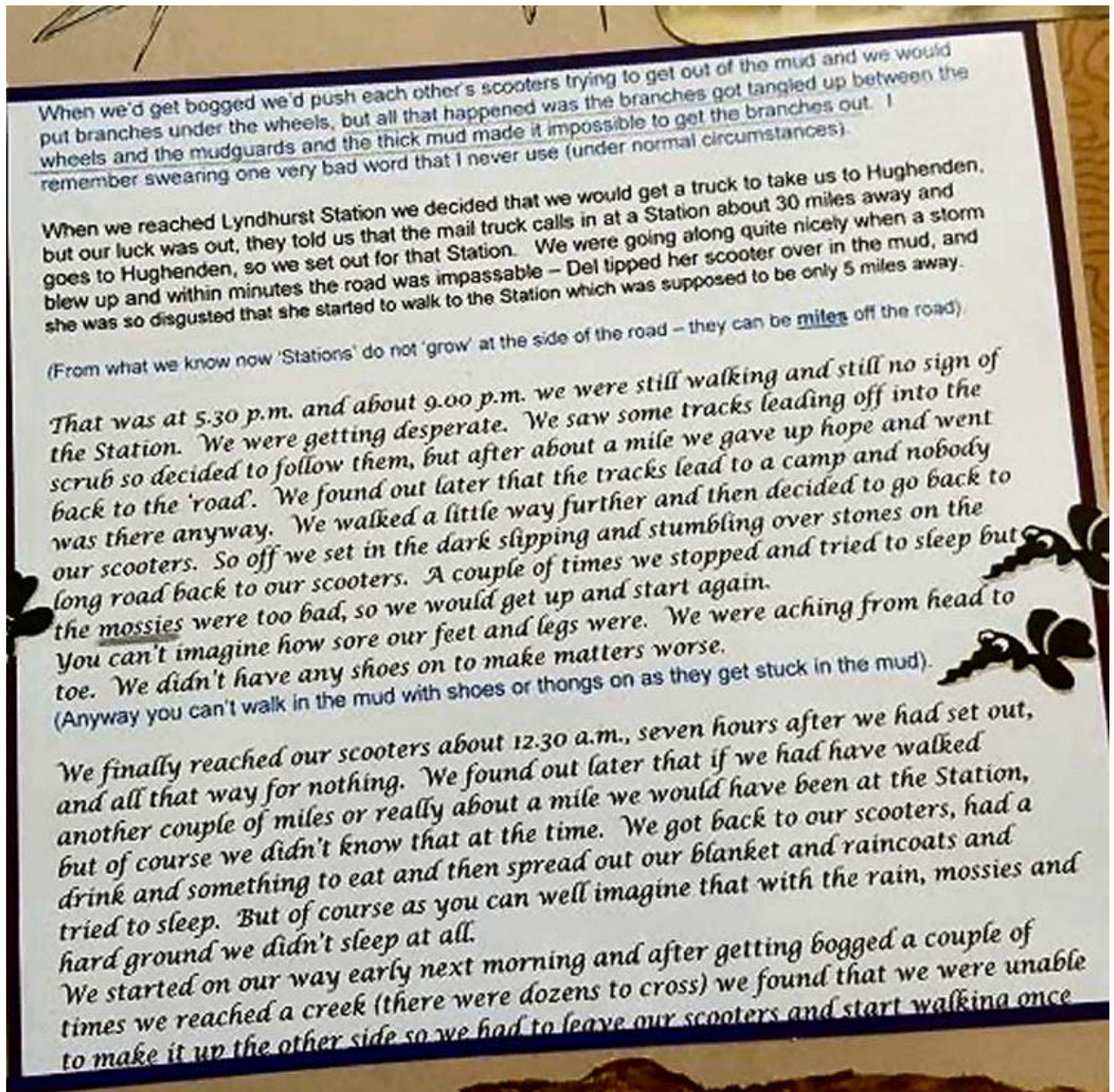
We went to Cairns the other day. I got a windshield, it cost £4.19.6, also bought a canvas water bag each for 9/8 ea. We saw the 'Lakes' and the 'Barron Falls'. The track to the falls is the worst laid out place that I have ever seen - there isn't a signpost to be seen and you have to walk along the railway line to get to them. It was as hot as hell the day we went and we didn't have shoes on so you can imagine how hot our feet were. As you know they are the biggest falls in Australia (in the wet season). We also saw Kuranda Railway Station and is really beautiful and is famous for its ferns and plants that grow on the front and back of the station, even the name 'Kuranda' is grown in flowers on the lawn before the station. Also somebody pinched our tent, the thieving so and so's, we had left it in the shed at the back of the hotel so looks like we will have to 'rough' it more than ever. We are leaving for Mt. Isa at about 5.00 a.m. tomorrow.

I got my car licence today, didn't even have to go for a test, we know the cop well.

Just before leaving Ravenshoe after Christmas Marie and I went to the shed where we had put our tent and other things and guess what someone had stolen them so off we had to go without them.

The wet unsealed road was where we got horribly bogged and couldn't get out so decided to walk to somewhere - it turned out we would eventually arrive at Lyndhurst Station - it took us nearly all night and boy were we scared, could hear what we thought were crocodiles 'crocodiling' and had been told that that is what crocodiles sound like (damn things turned out to be cattle). We were eventually rescued by someone from Lyndhurst Station and because they thought we were a bit rough bunked us in an old derelict building until the owners came and talked to us and found out we were pretty good types and invited us to sleep in the main house.

Our feet were cut & swollen from walking (no shoes) on sharp stones for miles that they asked us to stay with them until our swollen feet got better and we were able to go on. Continued from Lyndhurst Station through to Hughenden, Julia Creek & eventually ended up in Mt. Isa.



The road all the way to Mt. Isa was dirt.

HUGHENDEN

We met some very hospitable police (Ron & Alex) at Hughenden - they let us stay in the local jail whilst we were there. Alex was just a rookie and as yet didn't have his issue of clothing and

he had to wear Ron's and boy was he a sight, Ron was a couple of sizes bigger than Alex – he would have been very fashionable if it had been the present day. We went out with them on patrol to Camooweal one day and they had engine trouble & punctures – I guess we were 'joanas'.

It was at Hughenden when we were looking through 'mug' shots at the Police Station that we came across a photo of the guy who painted our names on the front of our scooters.



MT ISA

Had a few days in Mt. Isa – tried to go down the mines but at that time women were not allowed down mines. We did get a photo of us with a guide – big deal!

Left Mt. Isa for Darwin - the road was long, boring, hot & lonely. When we got tired we would put a couple of teaspoons of coffee into water and drink that to keep us awake – I don't think it worked very well. Also Marie & I did small services on our scooters like taking off the head & decarbonising them.

We sighted a crashed Flying Doctor Plane and took some photos of it. (It had crashed some months before).

We passed the John Flynn Memorial on way.

There is a photo of me up on top of a tank trying to get water to fill our water bags.

I had my first puncture on the whole trip on the road to Darwin (Stuart Highway). To mend a puncture on a scooter you have to lie it over on its side. A guy came along in a truck and thought we had had an accident, but no just mending my puncture.

DARWIN

Have a look at where we stayed in Darwin. This boat belonged to someone we met and they said we could sleep there. Boy of boy what a nightmare – flies during the day and millions of mosquitos at night

We took some photos of the shipwrecks after the Japs bombed Darwin 1941.– they were still there in 1957 but there are no traces of them now.

We didn't stay in Darwin too long. Met Les. He liked me but I wasn't interested in him ,I think I was still in love with Johnny Mrakovcic then, but Marie liked him but he wasn't interested – so that petered out.

ALICE SPRINGS

Okay we went to Alice Springs and had a bit of a look around before attempting to ride to Adelaide . We were told it was impassable by motor scooter so we took the train to Adelaide .

We didn't go to Ayers Rock, too far and too much dirt – so went straight on.



ON THE WAY TO PERTH IN THE TRAIN

On this trip a young fellow befriended us and asked if we would like to see the engine compartment and off I go with him (Marie didn't want to go) after the train had stopped at a station - we had to run up to the engine as the train was going slow. He left me and vanished

leaving me alone with the two drivers of the train. So after a short conversation one of them asked me what was in the lining of my jacket and how warm was it – so I thought I'd show him so I unzipped my jacket and showed him the lining and he put his hand in to feel the lining and felt something else instead. How quick can you slap a guys face? Bloody quick when you get a chock – that stopped him. Neither man said anything so I got off at the next station and returned to Marie and guess who's there trying to get onto her. I told her what happened and that fellow got the short sharp shift. Bloody guys.

COPLEY – S.A.

See the toilet sign – 4U2P – pretty nifty don't you think?

Okay off to Perth – this time in the train again as we were advised the road to Perth was impassable for scooters. (We shouldn't have listened to these knowitalls.)

I have just found a receipt for us renting a room in Kaloorlie on 4th March, 1958 – I'm not too sure why we rented this. But I do remember after one long, long trip we felt so scruffy and dirty we went to a boarding house or something like that and asked if we paid for a bath would they let us. Guess what they said "Yes" and gave us some bath cleaner to clean the bath when we were finished. **(I'll have to ask Marie where that was – CHECK MARIE'S LETTERS).**

PERTH

We must have got off the train at Kalgoorlie as there is a picture of us arriving in Perth by scooter, taken by a newspaper.

More guys Louie & Joe.

We even had our hair prettied up, mine I got permed and Marie had her's blonded.

We went to a Vespa Motor Scooter club in Perth and told them of our trip so far and they asked if we had come across the Nullarbor on our scooters and we said no because we had been advised that it was impassable for motor scooters and they told us we should go back across by scooter as it wasn't that bad – boy I bet they never crossed it by motor scooter.

We didn't work in Perth but stayed in a room belonging to private people in Aberdeen Street, Pimlico – I guess we were boarders.

They had a son who took a fancy to Marie and one night he got a bit carried away whilst smooching with Marie and exposed himself – that was the end of that romance.

We went and found a TATE Street – I know now there are about 4-5 TATE streets in Perth – never found out why they were named so – even though I have since written to various shires in & around Perth, but no one seems to know.

We went to Kings & Queens Park and now you can see my 'thousand guinea jeans' in the photo.

While we were in Perth my registration ran out so I just kept riding my scooter until one day a policeman stopped us and we got talking about our trip (I put my crash helmet over the registration sticker – hoping he would forget to ask us for our registration papers), but he didn't and I was booked and that is how I got my WA number plates UG 950.

Okay a bit of a saga in one of the little towns. We were looking for the local showgrounds and stopped to ask a policeman where it was – I guess we looked 'easy' so he arrived later that evening (just as it was dark) and brought some sandwiches & coffee – after eating he asked if we would like to have a look around and Marie said she was too tired so I said 'yes'. Greta Garbo again coming to the fore:- But he only drove me across the other side of the showgrounds and put the hard word on me and when I told him no he grabbed my arm and twisted it up and behind my back and repeated his demand and I said 'No you can break my arm but I would never let you – and I will report you to the police' He said 'It will be your word against mine – who do you think they would believe'. So after a bit of a scuffle and no leniency on my part he pushed me out of the car and drove off.

We are getting a bit lazy or broke I don't know which but we were buying photos from shops instead of taking them ourselves.

The photo of the sheep – Marie & I wanted to take a photo of them and the closer we got the further they would get from us – so we had to take it from where we were (a long way away).

LEAVING PERTH

Okay we have left Perth and boy was it cold , it was a week-end and I couldn't ride further as my hands were so cold , so we stopped at a shop and knocked on the door so the poor old owner opened up and I bought a pair of woollen gloves. That night we stopped at Waroona 70 miles out of Perth and we had a fire going all night because it was so cold.

We went south of Perth and went near Bunbury and went through an apple orchard and the owner gave us a bag nearly full of apples for which we were eternally grateful.

We went to nearby Pemberton and climbed the Gloster tree 260' high. This tree is considered to be one of the worlds highest fire look-out.

Another abode at a 'cattle' shed.

And at Augusta 200 miles from Perth.

A very long stretch down the S.W. of W.A.

At one stage we decided to leave our scooters at the Narrogin Police Station and we hitched around the area and then came back in a couple of days and got our scooters.

ON OUR WAY TOWARDS THE NULLARBOR PLAIN

The following was a brief report typed by me **47** years ago on our trip across the Nullarbor:-

"Riding Across the Nullarbor

This is a short account of our most thrilling experience on our trip.

From Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie we got the train as we heard from all reports that this road was almost impassable. We stayed in Perth four (4) weeks and met people who were constantly coming into Western Australia via the Nullarbor and they said it was okay. I thought a lot about it and put the question of going over on our Scooters to Marie and we both had a good chat about it and decided we would like to go back across riding. But before we did we went down the South West of W.A. and had a good look around at the apple towns and down to Augusta & Albany which is the southern most tip of Australia. We also went to the petrified forest at Denmark, 20 miles out of Albany, and we got some petrified wood after walking miles to get it.

After all this we started on towards Norseman where we were to start out on our trip towards South Australia & Adelaide.

By the way, we started out with a 6' x 8' bush tent but someone conveniently swiped it while we were working in North Queensland. So we had to sleep in showgrounds, caravan parks – mainly showgrounds where we would take refuge in the horse stables or cattle sheds, as we would have to keep a tight grip on the purse strings.

There is nothing to a trip across the Nullarbor in a car but try to cross it on a scooter then you really have experience.

The scenery consists mostly of stunted saltbush and tea trees on the long stretches of lonely rough road, plus a couple of lonely outposts placed here and there to supply the weary traveller with petrol and a bite to eat. The city dwellers are amazed at the people living in such places but not one of the contented people would swap places.

The Nullarbor plains starts at Nullarbor Station which is made up of a couple of tin sheds and a stone house and a well, which is most important for water, as the rain is far off for months at a time and when it does rain it is soaked up so quickly. Water will not be supplied to any travellers by the station owners as they have to look after themselves so if you are thinking of crossing the Nullarbor take plenty of water & tyres with you.

Red dust is plentiful across the Nullarbor, our hair got so thickly matted with dust, that it was almost impossible to run a comb through.

The first day was the worst for us as we were a bit worried in case anything happened as we had told our parents we were getting the train back.

Came across a 'skeleton' on the way across but on taking a closer look found it to be animal bones put together to look like the remains of a human. Apparently someone had broken down and put it together for something to do while awaiting help.

It took us 5 days for the 1017 miles of dirt road. The road was very bad for cars and trucks but when you are riding a wonderful machine like a Vespa the bumps are easily dodged. (I think that's a bit of bulldust still in the brain when I typed this many years ago). Although we did hit some bumps I must admit and at times we felt like pulling our hair out and screaming but we made it and are very glad we went across.

One evening about 3.00 p.m. we came to an Aboriginal Reserve and a sign which said:- The next 44 miles is an Aboriginal Reserve and all white people must be out before sun down and must not go off the road or light fires or kill any game. (This was only to protect the Aboriginals not the whites as we then thought – we thought that if the abos caught us they might kill us). Anyway it was getting dark quickly and we still had about 10 miles to go when we came across a Main Road's camp and slept there the night in a vacant caravan. We were told by the men there we would have been okay if we had slept out but we weren't going to take the chance.

We finally made Port Augusta and were happy to see bitumen.

We came into Adelaide at night and it was a very lovely sight seeing the lights twinkling ahead in the darkness.

First two nights we slept at a private Hotel as we had to iron our clothes and also try and look respectable enough to get a job. We got a flat at Henley Beach (6 miles out of Adelaide centre) and we stayed there for 8 weeks then shifted into the YWCA. Jobs were very hard to get and we hunted down paper advertisements etc. and finally I got a job with a copying office and I get temporary jobs at different offices and Marie is working behind a counter.

The Nullabor road was bad but not nearly as bad as the Queensland roads as is shown in the photo of the muddy road when we got stuck one evening after being hit by a severe storm and had to walk 23 miles to get help but found no one, so walked back to our scooters. (This 23 miles includes walking back to our scooters).

After we leave Adelaide we intend going to Melbourne, Canberra, Mt. Kosciusko, Jenolan Caves, Sydney and the home to Murwillumbah. N.S.W."

We are now on our way to Coolgardie which there was a gold rush in 1893. We have a couple of photos of the many signs to many places.

We went passed a salt lake somewhere over there. (check Melski's letters I am sure she mentions something about the Salt Lakes).

WE HAD A SHELL 'STRIP' MAP AND ON IT I HAD WRITTEN A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE CONDITIONS OF THE ROAD – IF YOU COULD CALL IT A ROAD

We started to cross the Nullarbor on Sunday morning @ 7.00 a.m. 6th April, 1958.

"Buy 1 gallon tin for petrol"

"Ask at Norseman if will be hot or cold going over Nullarbor – if hot buy bottle of Lemon Squash, if cold thermos flask full of coffee"

Coolgardie to Norseman – good bitumen road.

Note at Norseman – 'Slept in shed at football ground'

Well here's another silly thing we did., but neither Marie & I can remember which town it was in. The re were guys training for football and they came out to the football ground to train and while they were out on the ground we switched off the lights and caused a bit of a commotion. But after they came and talked to us, I guess they couldn't believe their eyes. How could 2 girls be so stupid? Anyway they continued on with their training.

After leaving Norseman I have a comment on the map – "not too bad, bit of corrugation – but the next comment is B.A. (bloody awful) I fell off twice.

Another comment after Smithania Rocks Water – "good hard surface".

Arrived at Balladonia - Comment "Slept outside Balladonia".

More comments – "Good hard surface".

There is a place called 'Stonehouse ruins' and I think we were meant to stay there the night but it was half covered over with sand.

More comments – "Good hard surface".

Comment – "1 ½ miles Bulldust"

Madura Motel @ Eucla - "Slept on road a mile out".

Road – Not bad road but plenty of corrugations.

Road – No good

Eucla Station: Slept behind bushes

Road – BA loose stones, very sharp.

From Koonalda Homestead for quite a way – not bad some potholes.

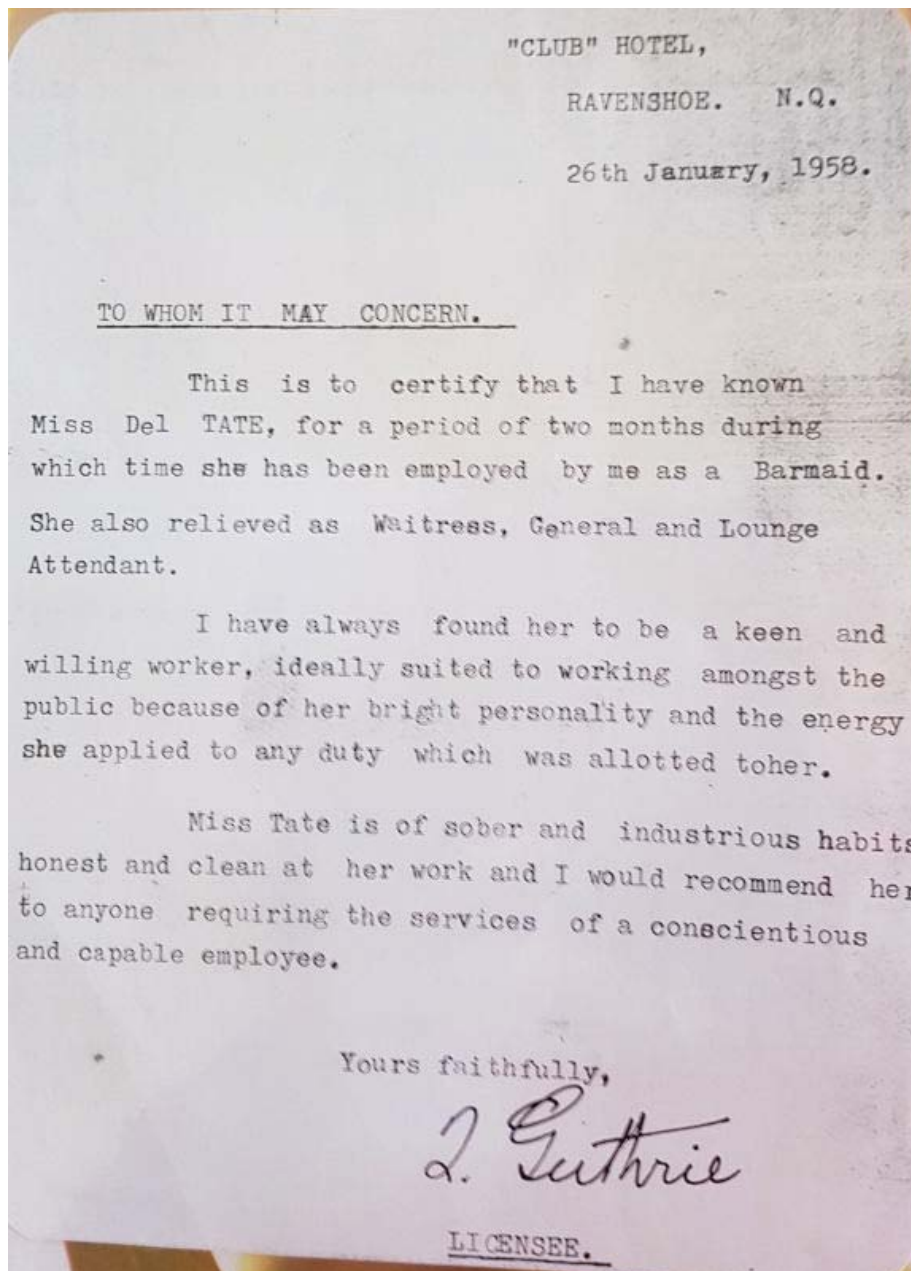
After Nullarbor Homestead – bloody awful corrugations and sand by the ton, very thick in parts.

More comments: “Sand 12” deep, all way down.

My scooter broke down between Nundroo Homestead & Nundroo P.O. Okay I couldn't fix my scooter but somehow I found out what was broken and I took the part and hitched to Eucla – the part I broke down on is right in the middle of the 100 straight mile stretch.(I don't know how far but it was a long way – there was only 2 cars that day crossing the Nullarbor – the one that took me to Eucla and the other one that brought me back that same day.)

Comment on map: “Enquire at Ceduna for best route to take as conditions may necessitate proceeding Whyalla”.

I don't know which road we eventually took but we eventually got there.



ADELAIDE

Once in Adelaide we needed to work again as money was low. We this time I got a job at a recruitment centre and Marie worked behind a counter in a shop . We got jobs and stayed in a one bedroom flat at Henley Beach for 8 weeks and used to ride our scooters to & from work. We wore dresses to work and even wore white gloves, so we then shifted to the Y.W.C.A. in Adelaide so we would go to work presentable. At the YWCA there are rules and one is that you have to be back on the premises by 11.30 week-days & 12.00 midnight on Sundays or they wont let you in.

Another incident – we met some fellows that were ‘cruising’ the streets looking to pick up some ‘naïve’ girls. Well they found us and they asked us if we wanted to go for a ‘burn’, so being naïve we said ‘yes’ and they took us for a drive out somewhere and tried the old trick ‘if you don’t come across you can walk home’. So guess what? We got out of the car and they turned around and tried to run us over, we ran off the road and hid and they half heartedly tried to find us but couldn’t, they then left us and drove off. We were rescued by another man and we were pretty shook up so he took us to his place - once we got to his place we thought ‘Oh no not again’, but he was only getting us a cup of tea to settle us down. He drove us to the police station and told the police our story and they contacted the YMCA and we eventually were let in.

Some of the places I worked:- Pope Products – General Motors Holden – Knox Schlapp – Cellulose. We got references from these places

While we were in Adelaide Marie & I had a fight and Marie said something silly about my Dad not being my Dad (you know what kids are like they say anything that comes into their heads even though it wasn’t true) – Marie & I are very close and always were , so it was just a one off thing. Anyway our Mums decided to come and visit us – fancy from Murwillumbah , Northern New South Wales to Adelaide – that’s a lot of miles, but Mothers are Mothers and I guess they were worried about what had happened – but that didn’t last long and our Mothers came down – bloody kids again.

Okay now we had to find somewhere for them to stay didn’t we so as we were living in a flat and there was an empty one next to us, we decided to unscrew the latch and Marie & I slept in No. 2 flat. It was lucky we didn’t get caught, but once again we didn’t think we did anything too wrong only silly and daring. All’s well that ends well.

After leaving Adelaide it was another bloody cold time we had blankets over our legs, a canvas cover clipped on to the scooter and pulled over our legs, gloves, woollen jumpers and anything that would try to keep us warm, but it was still cold. We did things all wrong, going up North in summer and down south in Winter.

GEELONG

We slept in horse stables at Geelong.

MELBOURNE

We worked at the Melbourne Show on the sideshows. I worked on the climbing monkeys.

Went and saw Captain Cooks cottage.

Sat at open air café – didn’t buy anything though, just sat there long enough to get our photo.

I took a photo of my lying on Parliament House steps.

We were riding along and Tony from North Queensland went passed and saw us and turned around and followed us, and we got a couple more photos of him and us.

Also saw Pentridge Gaol.

ALBURY / WODONGA

Another of our horse stables. This night we had company a few stables up – they were drunks and as we had our scooters in the stable with us they didn't know we were there so we were not disturbed.

We went to Canberra – bloody cold place as well.

SYDNEY

While we were in Sydney there was a procession and it was the Waratah Festival and on one float there was a girl from Murwillumbah on the Tweed Valley float – her name was Heather Hayes so we followed the procession to the end and talked to her.

We got work at a Woollen Mill weaving blankets. Not my cup of tea as I wasn't very good at it, Marie was good.

(Check Marie's letter for explanation of what went on)

We stayed in a type of boarding house (we had one twin room – which had an unusable old stove in it) and the owner & us didn't get on at the last (for some reason or other- how could you not like a couple of girls like us? – I guess we were cheeky – I don't know so just before we left we went around the place and got lots of empty beer bottles and put them in the stove, in cupboards and under the bed. Don't know whatever happened after we left. I do remember the owner trying to hit us with a broom though.

Went to Taronga Park Zoo. Luna Park, Jenolan Caves. Have photos of me in a bikini on Bondi Beach with a Manly towel.

Finally a photo taken by "Truth" & "Sportsman" limited published in the Sydney paper. Me with my skid lid and Marie still no skid lid.

MURWILLUMBAH

Here we are back in Murwillumbah being greeted by the Murwillumbah Scooter Club. Later they had a home coming celebration and gave us a gold cup & saucer as a memento. Don't we look the ladies?

Finished our trip on 20th December, 1958.

I sold my scooter (125cc) and bought a 'u' beaut 150cc model after the trip.

P.S. About 10-12 years ago (now is 2005) Marie's brother Phillip was going through some old magazines that were in a shed at a place he bought and he came across a magazine on Vespa scooters and was looking through it and low & behold here was a photo of Marie & me riding our scooters around Australia – don't know how it got in there but we were thrilled. I have a copy of the magazine and our photo – I hope to get a copy to put in this album

2020 Update



Marie Melski (Everest) 2020



Del Zuidema (Tate) 2020

*Thanks Marie and Del, what a delight to read about your trip, I was amazed by the picture of you both leaving Murwillumbah, trying to figure out what you had tied to your scooters. The list goes something like: Tin for boiling water, Frying pan, Kero lamp, Kero burner, Blankets, Sleeping Bags, Bags for clothes, 2 man tent, Wooden poles to support the tent, Plus other stuff. (List supplied by Del). It was heading off into an unknown adventure. So much has changed in the last 62 years.
Neville Maloney*

Edited June 2020 by NM (There are reference throughout the story to pictures they are part of the albums that Del put together in 2005 it was meant to be a picture album with notes but for this online edition I have turned it into a story with pictures. If time ever permits the work may be completed) Neville.