

AUSTRALIAN LONG DISTANCE EXPERIENCED COACH CREWS INCORP



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ALDECC
1993/94

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Kevin Bryant	Barbara Conner	Joy Harry
Alison Coop	Keith Grant	Garry Higginson
Cel Curtis	Sheryl Gillespie	Charlie Holland

G'day,

Well the Autumn has finally gone and we have truly jumped into winter. On the Queens Birthday weekend a few of us went up to Deniliquin to spend the weekend with Ian "Red" Purtil on his houseboat. Unfortunately the Houseboat went to ground (there was no water in the Edwards River). We decided to make our camp for the night, or the river decided, so Purts and a few other ALDECC members started a campfire on the banks of the River. Well, we all settled in for a night of talking, the occasional drink and spinning a few yarns (some of them true and some not so true). As I was about to stand up and leave the campfire I fell forward and landed in the camp fire, with my right hand taking the full force of my 100kg and ended up with 3rd degree burns . Last Christmas when I went up to Purtils I only ended up with a nail in my foot, so I'll have to be more careful if I ever risk going back to Deni or should I say Purts place again. Apart from that small incident we all had a great time in Deni. It's always good to catch up with old crew and needless to say we're all looking forward to ALDECC next year, so I hope you all start saving now and I look forward to seeing you all next February.

Greely

Hello to all,

The year is half way through now and the reunion is getting closer and closer every day. We hope you are saving hard because it's looking like another great reunion isn't too far away . We have managed to keep the cost down to the same as this year \$105.00 per person, so that's great. It will be held at Valley Homestead, Ovens, once again, but we have some surprises in store for you!!!

Well, my life's never been quite as exciting as our President's but I manage to keep quite busy with work, with a little time over for leisure. Winter see's me hibernating in my little unit down here in Melbourne. So if you ever have any stories or gossip please don't hesitate to drop me a line.

Just a short note regarding Truck and Bus subscriptions. The cost will rise to \$15.00 per year as of January 1994 (the price hasn't gone up in 9 years). Still great value.

Don't forget if your subscriptions are still owing, please forward a cheque or money order to the Secretary.

Well, till next time.

Regards Mary.

FIVE DECADES OF F.C.C

The old adage that country people are slow was well and truly enforced on that fateful day 20th October 1943 when Fredrick Celwin Curtis was brought into this world.

His parents being of the Leongatha farming type wondered if their son was a result of mixed breeding or a freak of nature, but as their other children had turned out alright, they weren't sure.

His schooling was at Mirboo North, hence his accent, where his teacher secretly wondered what would become of that little boy. Not realising that only a few decades later that our Cel would reach the pinnacle of his notorious fame, starring in an ad with John Farnham, and becoming El Presidente.

Cel first married in 1967 and against doctor's orders (fearing that they would turn out like Cel) had two children, Katrina and Stewart.

In 1978 he joined Pincinis and his first trip was to the East Coast in a Leyland 401.

His second trip was to the Centre. The initiation into Centre work came at a place called Marla, where he met Greg Oakley and met up with a few other crews. It was one of those late nights celebrating a birthday.

The next morning Greg came around with a bucket of ice. Cel, easily puzzled as he is said " I didn't ask for any ice" to which Greg replied " It's not for you, come this way and I'll show you a wake up call that is guaranteed to get a cook out of bed". They both went into a room and pulled back the bed covers. Lying there was the cook in all her naked splendour. As for the ice, we don't need to say where that went.

The ultimate challenge of Cel's life was knowing what was happening at Pincinis from day to day. Part of his job specification was to load and unload spuds, milk cows, sheer sheep and that was all in one day.

A very big change occurred in 1984 when Cel left everything back in Leongatha and moved to start a new career with a 40 foot coach at Landmark Tours. Life had become all too much for him, as he found it increasingly difficult to know whether to crutch sheep or the passengers, and he had the latter fearing for their reproductive safety.

This move was also the start of a new life of love, written on the back of his hand when he was picking up a group at Alice Springs airport. Here he met Claire, a teacher on this tour, and as it was his second trip with a male cook, he was hungry for a woman.

Claire (as it was in her nature to take pity on strange children) married Cel on 25th July 1987.

Cel left the coach industry to spend more time with his new family, with Hannah arriving in July 1991 and a second on it's way.

He now finds some degree of solace in driving trucks for his father-in-law, which we suspect is a pay back for letting his precious daughter marry Cel. Cel's allegiance is still with Coach Tours, though God knows why.

And one last thing. How is it that Cel managed to be one of the first drivers to get their coach up to Cape York when others failed. It is because he took a wrong turn somewhere and cut across some sacred Aboriginal territory out of the ranger's sight. The Aborigines are still wondering to this day what dreamtime animal left it's tracks across their Elder's Burial ground.

Author: Chucky Holland

NEWS FLASH!!!!

THE AYERS ROCK SOCK CLUB BOARD.

The news on the Sock Club board is great. We have a new board, kindly made and donated by Lance Grenda. The original silver plate has been cleaned and with a little more of KB's elbow grease it will be as good as new. The members badges will be kept in original (burnt) condition, as this is now part of the history. Mary Petrie is busy knitting a new sock, and the history and members name plates will be done shortly. We should have it complete by the next reunion.

Congratulations to Lisa and Mark (Bluey) Westcott on the arrival of their first child, Harrison.

Congratulations also go to Peter Boyd who is getting married in a couple of weeks up in Lismore NSW.

WANTED!!!! Water for the Edwards river. Please contact Ian Purtill, he would like to get the house boat back to the mooring.

Talking about the house boat, a special thanks to Connan the Barbarian (alias Boxhead) who pushed the grounded houseboat of the sand, single handed.

What was the little pink pig doing at Mataranka in the recent school holidays. It was last seen grunting through Cliff and Sheryl's kitchen.

REWARD OFFERED A reward is being offered to anyone who can get their hand's on the original and only copy of a incriminating video, taken by one David Rounds. Please contact the secretary, thank you.

It seems we have a new Australian ALDECC Invention, **THONG SOCKS**. Mary Petrie has the Patent, so if anyone would like a pair, please contact her.

DEAR DIARY

August 7th: Dear Diary,

The cruise this morning was definitely a highlight. Massive rock walls in that funny orange colour and cool clear waters. I think I enjoyed it a little more than the cruise at Katherine. The guide was a bit better looking too. We had another hot and dusty drive afterwards but now we're in Broome. I must admit, I'm a bit disappointed with this place. It's nothing at all like I expected. We're camping almost on the beach so hopefully tomorrow I'll get to have a swim and see a bit more of Broome. I'm a bit weary, Diary, so till tomorrow.....

August 8th: Dear Diary,

I feel exhausted and exhilarated all at the same time! We had the most wonderful day and evening that I felt I had to tell you.

After breakfast, which was continental style because it was so hot today, we went for a town tour. Phar Lap knows all about this place and gee he made it all so interesting. He gave us some free time in town, but I had to buy some supplies like bread, milk, meat etc etc. We had lunch in the park, the one where the old plane is, and then we went to see a real dinosaurs footprint. That was exciting. I never really thought about dinosaurs before. Actually, we never really got to see the actual footprint because the tide was in, but Phar Lap showed us where we could have seen it if the water wasn't there. We also went to visit a pearl factory which was great. Most of the things there were a little out of my price range but it was nice to look.

When we got back to camp everyone went for a swim, but I had to get things organised in the kitchen. A man came around and sold me some fish, which was pretty cheap, so we had it for tea. The passengers really liked it. Phar Lap told them that we had caught it while they were swimming. And they believe him!!!!!!!

After tea, Phar Lap suggested that we go for our swim, because we had missed out this afternoon. I was glad it was dark because I look rather terrible in my bathers. Anyway, we went down to the beach, and Phar Lap held my hand so that I wouldn't get lost. Then he took off his shorts and dived into the water, naked. I was so surprised, I've never seen a naked man before. And now I know why they call him Phar Lap!!!!!

So I went into the water and all of a sudden he was swimming right beside me and then he grabbed me and started kissing me. It was just wonderful!!! I got all shivery and he thought it was because I was cold so we left the water and after he had put his clothes back on we walked back to camp. He held my hand again. Then he told me about some friends of his who went skinny dipping there one night and when they had come out of the water their clothes had gone and they had to go back to camp in the all-together. They must have swum a far way out not to notice their clothes missing.

Oh Diary, I'm so joyous tonight. What happy dreams I'll be having.....

BROOME - HOW THINGS HAVE CHANGED

FROM BARB & LANCE

The last time we went to Broome was in 1982. There were two main camping areas and two motels which took coach groups and China town was really a shanty town. Boy have things changed!

In 1993 Broome has come of age! There are at least four Resorts, Roebuck Bay, Continental, Mangrove and Cable Beach, not to mention the other motels and camp grounds.

China Town! The old shanties are being pulled down and rebuilt to look the same but safer. The design of the area is to keep the appearance of the old world. The plane which was the information centre has been replaced and the Chinese Junk that was the entrance to Chinatown is gone. We were informed that the Junk and statues had become unsafe and were being rebuilt and relocated.

The main attractions are still Pearls, The Pier, The Golden Staircase to the Moon, The Dinosaur's Prints and the Japanese Cemetery. New attractions include the Pearl Coast Zoological Gardens with their breeding of rare and endangered species. The Broome Crocodile park which gets the tourists in as well. There are walking tours through the mangroves (sandflies haven't gone), Helicopter flights and Hovercraft rides as well. The two camels which used to plod up and down Cable Beach have become a rather large herd doing day trips etc.

Cable Beach is still white sand but you now swim between the flags. The coach won't get bogged as there is a rather large parking area. The Cable Beach Resort is on one side of the car park and the beach and store are on the other.

Time brings change. Where have you been lately that may be of interest to those who used to be on the road. How about giving your ALDECC friends an update.....

FACES SEEN IN AND AROUND ALICE - FROM VAL AND MARGIE

Ian Cawood and Johnny Spencer in deep conversation with Henk Guth at Kings Canyon, Bill & Doreen Hann on a six week trip that others do in two weeks. Geoff Cottle seen in Alice Springs escorting a member of his family around. Nabob Naylor and Viv celebrating the 1st birthday of their beautiful daughter Tanami. John Gullock wearing a blue shirt with an eagle as its emblem. Alice being his latest home.

Well, I didn't make it to the camel cup this year, but in October I will be making a double crossing of the Simpson Desert. If you think you could put up with my stories for fourteen days, just contact me on 03 5448849 or leave a message. There are four seats vacant at the moment. Noel Fullerton is taking his six wheel drive truck & I will be driving a six wheel drive landcruiser.

PAGE-McGEARY END OF AN ERA

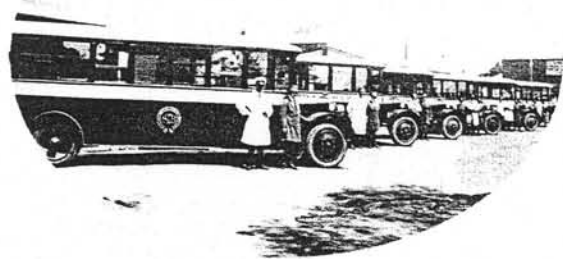
South Road Brighton was the first depot for Motor Mechanic Abe Page's bus business back in the 1920's running a service from Melbourne to Brighton. About the same time Bill McGeary was the proud owner of three Reo buses running from Moorabbin Railway Station to Middle Brighton.

In 1967 the two son's of these pioneer families Mayer Page and Geoff McGeary merged and became Australian Pacific Tours. Over the years they grew and grew and in 1984 they purchased AAT Kings and became Australia's largest Coach Tour operator going from strength to strength with offices and tours throughout the world.

As of the 1st of July 1993, Page and McGeary have parted way's. Geoff McGeary retaining Australian Pacific Tours and Mayer Page retaining AAT Kings and Evergreen Tours. They are looking towards the future and that of their families to continue these two great pioneer families. We wish them all the best for their future.



1927. Page Motors, Nepean Highway, Elsternwick, Victoria.
(fourth from right Mr. Abe Page)



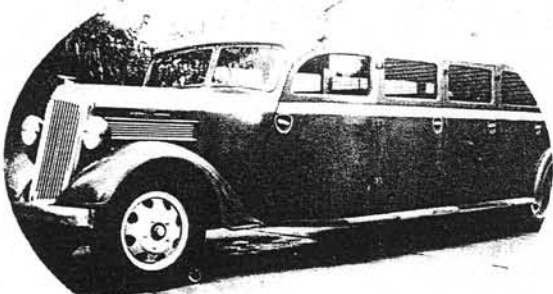
Some of the Page Family's early buses.



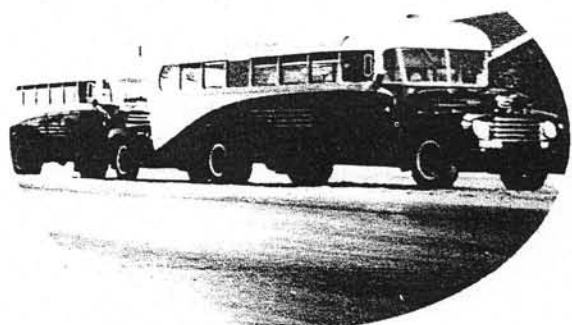
1930. Some of McGeary's team and coaches.



1927. One of the first of Bill McGeary's coaches.



1949. Charabanc, McGeary Parlor-Coaches.



1930. McGeary Parlor-Coaches, South Road, Brighton.