

Chapter 22 Aptos and Down Under

I had been retired now from Syntex for six months so there was no need for us to live across the mountain from Jack's employment. We had been thinking of moving over on the ocean side of the mountains. One day in July on Jack's way home from working , he drove into a big Trailer Park in Aptos , just cruising he spotted a nice home with a "For Sale" sign. He took down the phone number and headed for home as he was again on the grave yard shift and needed to get some sleep. He called the number that evening talking to the owner finding out the price, and the size of the unit which was a sixty foot double wide three bedroom with a small room added at the end of the carport.

We made an appointment to go look at it the next day. When coming home the next morning Jack spotted a wildfire in the Santa Cruz mountains, according to reports it was getting under control. Jack got some sleep and we headed out about 4 pm to meet with the owners. Well the fire got out of control burning over 15,000 acres so we had to take a different route to get there. The smoke was so thick and black, the flames were close to the road.

We did get there and looked it over and decided it would work for us. The cost was \$48,000 so we made arrangements though the Bank of America in Aptos. Our loan was approved in just two days. In the next two days and it was ours! No more paying rent. No more land lords I am sure that this was the place the Lord wanted us to be. Everything fell into place so perfectly and quick for us.

Jack started the move by taking loads of our belongings each day and unloading on his way to work. We made the big move Augusts 19, 1985. What a



Our home in Aptos at Seventy Cherry Blossom Lane

great birthday gift for me. I worked my fanny off. I about cut my thumb off by misusing a sharp knife. I could not stop the bleeding. By the time Jack got home three hours later and saw blood all over the little bathroom, he thought I had been murdered. He loaded me up and took me to to the hospital emergency room in Santa Cruz. The shot they put in the cut hurt ten times more than the cut. Every time we move I do something stupid, always ending up wounding myself. The only thing that got broke in the move, was a quart jar of sauerkraut. It sure stunk up the back of that U Haul.

Our new home was at the end of the road, back up against the fence leading to the High School campus which was up the hill from us. We had neighbors across the street and below us, so I felt we had more privacy than any place that I had lived since I left the farm. The hills above us were heavily wooded and was home to a lot of birds and other critters.



Our home from the front.

We set about to make it ours and did a lot to improve it. It was the brick masons idea that we redo the entry way, which turned out to be a good idea. As we removed the old steps we found some rotted areas that would sooner or later give way.

The brick job was the only thing we hired someone else to do, all the rest we did ourselves, such as the roof, all the doors, windows, kitchen floor and counter tops sky lights, and many other things over the next several years.

The house gave us more room and was quite nice. No more long drives for Jack; only 15 miles each way. It took him all week to accumulate the miles he drove in one day from Sunnyvale.

The ocean was only 5 minutes away with its lovely beaches. Aptos was a very small village nestled among many other small villages surrounding Santa Cruz. The

main coastal route, Highway One, was right out in front of the park, we had to get on it to go shopping, to church, or any place else.

It didn't take us long to get settled in and loving Aptos. There were 170 units in the Aptos Pines Mobile Home Park so it was very large and very well kept. All the neighbors was very likable so we made friends soon. We didn't drop any of our old friends, we just keep adding more.

We attended the Pajaro 1st Ward of the Santa Cruz Stake. As soon as we got settled we were given callings. They just happened to need a Sunbeam teacher. I think the Lord knew he was going to put us in Aptos so He saved that little class just for me. Jack was put in as 1st Assistance to the High Priest Group Leader, besides other callings.

Our Family Reunion in 1985 was held at Indian Hot Springs the 8th and 9th of August. My family was in charge, but with us in California and they in Idaho, it was up to me to do it. It was another overnigher. Since I don't like camping, we stayed in a motel not too far away on Friday. Saturday morning I woke up so ill, I could hardly hold my head up, but Jack and I dressed in our clown costumes for the children and they loved us. Little Britney Schuitthies took a hold of my hand and was my companion most of the day. Everyone had a great time swimming and other attractions that the park had to offer. There were 106 present and guess who finally won the quilt? Me!



*With the Dudley kids at the Twin Falls Airport:
Michael, Melynda, me with Jeremy, Raydon, and Mark*

Lorna and Stan drove to Aptos and stayed a couple of days so Stan could attend a class in San Francisco. I rode back with them, Lorna slept most of the way, so Stan and I had a very nice visit. I stayed with the kids a few days and Tim, Delynn and their children took me to the Twin Falls Airport to fly home.

New Zealand

We had planned to go to Alaska for vacation but did not get our tickets in time. We had the time and the money saved up for two years, so we switched plans and decided to go to New Zealand and Australia instead. We left November 8th from the San Jose Airport to Los Angeles. There was some concern with canceled reservations that were soon cleared up. We left Los Angeles at 8:30 p.m. on Air New Zealand. Eight hours later our first stop was in Papeete, Tahiti for a crew change. After five hours we arrived in Aukland at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, November 10th (time changes etc). The temperature was in the 70s and the sun was shining. We picked up our rental car, a Honda Civic, and found our motel and checked in and went to our room and set down our bags. We looked at each other and said "Now that we are here, what do we do now"???"

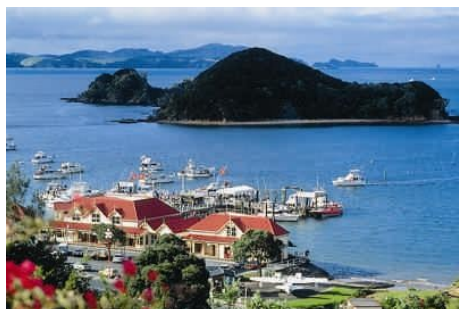
With it being Sunday morning, we looked in the phone book and found an LDS church. He talked to a gentleman and got the time and place which happened to be close by. So we went, it was not an affluent ward, but it was sure rich in love! The congregation was about half white and half Maori. Jack was asked to give the prayer in Sunday School and I was asked in the Relief Society.

After church a young couple by the name of Neal and Kathy Frodsham invited us to their home for dinner. Kathy prepared a lovely dinner of lamb, veggies and kumara, which is an ancient Maori sweet potato. It was very good. After dinner they drove us on a mini tour of Aukland. They own a furniture manufacturing business in Aukland. Neal is originally from Seattle. (He named his business "The Seattle Wood Works".) So that was our first day in New Zealand.

On Monday we drove around and did a little bit of shopping. We had an invitation for Monday night from another young couple, Annetta and Graham Scott and their two children. We had another lovely dinner and a nice visit. Graham helped us map out places to see. From day one, we met very nice people from all over, receiving pointers of things to see and places to stay.

While in Aukland we visited a war memorial museum and learned a lot about the

Maori people. Leaving Auckland we headed north. New Zealand consists of a North and South Island. The vegetation on North Island is very green and lush with lots of tropical citrus crops. They do not have any native animals, so all were brought in. They do have a lot of native birds, some really weird ones. There were no wild animal and no snakes. New Zealand has everything from tropics to glaciers. I wish I had room to describe the beauty and the differences we found there. There are so many places and things, it is going to be hard to keep this short.



The Bay of Islands

Our first stop after Auckland was Paihia at the Bay of Islands. We took a cruise boat out to the island. We saw so many interesting places of history dating back to Captain Cook's days. We drove over to Kerikeri for the night. We went on a tract (hiking trail) before breakfast.

It was in Kerikeri that some hot shot hit and run driver wrecked our car. He passed us on a double yellow line with a third car coming at us, crunching us. An eyewitness followed him and got his license number for us. We couldn't make a police report at the time, the only policeman in town was on holiday.

We both liked Kerikeri very much and wouldn't mind living there. We could have gotten used to that lifestyle very quickly. We drove back over to Paihia to get another car. This one a Mitsubishi. While in this area we toured the Treaty House, a Maori Meeting House, a Maori Village, and the oldest stone building in New Zealand.

We then went to Opononi, a small village on the west side of New Zealand on the Hokianga Harbor on the Tasman Sea. It is a very small place with a neat history. Back in 1953/54, a dolphin came into the harbor and swam with the swimmers, letting them ride on his back. Later he become beached in the rocks and died. They have a darling monument of him.



The monument to the Opononi Dolphin

We headed south along the Tasman Sea. We were a fair distance from the sea but were high enough that we could still see it. We traveled about 30 miles on a gravel road which is known as metal roads. We traveled through a national park that has a great many Keri trees which are native to New Zealand. We did stop to look at the largest of these trees. These were the trees used by the Maori's for their canoes. We drove back to Auckland and did a little shopping. There was no other way around it to get out. These two island or only two thirds the size of California, with a population of three million.

We then proceeded towards Hamilton and Temple View. We had made advance reservations for the Temple View Apartments. They are owned by the Church and the requirements are: a temple recommend, and you have to do two sessions each day that you are



The New Zealand Temple

there. We stayed there from Friday to Monday. We did two sessions Saturday morning .

Sunday morning we went to a church at the church college (high School). I would love to tell about the temple and the beautiful area, the people we meet there and the history of it, but there just isn't room. After church we took a short ride to a small town on the Tasman Coast called Raglan where we had fish and chips in a small tea house. We met a nice couple that told us of more places to see. We met them back in Hamilton and they showed us around a very beautiful rose park, and another park that runs along the Waikato River.

On Monday morning we headed for our next destination, Rotorua, which is a tourist town with a lot to see there. We rode a tram up to a high mountain to another tea house where we had lunch. We had an excellent view of Rotorua, the lake. It is located in the surrounding area.



Some woolly friends

Later we went to the Agrodome where we learned the history of how sheep were brought into New Zealand. Here we saw 19 different breeds of top rams, how they are sheared, and saw how the dogs work with the sheep. We then went to a water garden with streams full of fantastic looking trout. Parks,

gardens and golf courses are plentiful in New Zealand. For an evening of entertainment we went to a Maori feast and concert. The food was smoked eel, wild boar, venison, lamb, different kinds of fish, chicken, and all kinds of fruits and vegetables. The concert was wonderful, they have such beautiful voices, (I noticed that in church). They danced and showed us the games they play. The evening ended with a dance where a few people from the audience were picked to participate to dance the last dance. I was picked to dance, what fun!!! As a parting gesture we rubbed nose's twice. That means they really like you.

Rotorua is also where the geysers are. It looks and smells a lot like Yellowstone Park only on a much smaller scale. We planned on going to some wildlife parks but woke up to heavy rain. I wanted to see the kiwi birds! We saw the Kiwi but got soaked skin deep. We missed out on some other attractions but it was raining and we had to move on.

Our next stop was Napier, a town located on the Pacific side of the North Island. We enjoyed a wonderful evening there. A bit of history about Napier. In 1931 Napier was destroyed by a killer



One of the geysers at Rotorua

earthquake. Land came up from the sea and what used to be an island is now part of the town. When they rebuilt they had more land to build on. It is a beautiful town stretched along beaches and beach parks with lovely monuments each with a meaning. Throughout all of New Zealand every town and city no matter how small has a monument to their World War I and II dead.

As time was flying, it was now time to head for Wellington and to the South Island. It poured down rain plus high winds all the way, our tempers flared a little as finding our way in those conditions with poorly marked roads was not easy. Wellington, was an interesting city, very modern, windy like Chicago, and like San Francisco built on hills. The rain let up so we were able to do some sightseeing. We woke up to a sunshiny day and a little sad for we were going to leave the North Island in a few hours. Our travels there were so beautiful and we made so many friends along the way. We were told that South Island was more beautiful but we found them about equal. But most of all it was the people that made it beautiful!

We arrived at the ferry dock, dropped off our car and took the 10:00 ferry to Picton, picked up our third car, a Nissan, and started out on the scenic route to Nelson. Yep. Rain! After getting to our motel, we did what all New Zealander's do on Friday night. Go Shopping! Friday night is late shopping for all of New Zealand. It was still raining the next morning but in spite of the rain, we hiked to the top of a very high hill. It took us 30 minutes to reach the top. At the top was a marker indicating the very center of New Zealand.

We then headed for Greymouth. With the weather being so nasty, we made very few stops. The rough water along the coast line was awesome. We stopped at a very nice motel that had an excellent restaurant, that is where we celebrated our 7th wedding anniversary with a very nice venison dinner.

We backtracked for about an hour to see the pancake rocks and blow holes. It was well worth it. Still heading south we stopped in the town of Hokitika where we visited a Greenstone factory (jade). We bought a pair of jade earrings, a pair of cuff links and matching tie tack.

We continued on to Franz Josef where we stayed the night. In the evening, we took a long walk. We walked down the middle of the main road for an hour and not a car went by. The only thing we saw were cows that came to the fence to say “hello”.

On November 25th we started the day with a helicopter flight up into the mountains, I lucked out and was able to sit in front with the pilot. The flight took us to and landed on a glacier where we were able to see part of Mt .Cook.

An English couple that were on the flight invited us to their caravan (small motor home) for tea and biscuits. We hiked some more tracts, talked to more people, and hiked into Lake Matheson. It was so beautiful!

We then headed for Queenstown, 404 kilometers away, so we started out at 7:00 am. By noon we had only gone 150 kilometers. There was so many places to stop and see. There were so many beautiful beaches. We drove through a valley we named the Valley of Falls. Every direction we looked were waterfalls of all sizes. You just have to see it! As we traveled along, the general appearance of the landscape began to change from a lush green to a dry green and then looked more like Nevada. We saw lots of sheep stations as we approached Queenstown.



Our boat ride on the Shotover River

The first thing we did was to take a jet boat ride up the Shotover River. What a fantastic ride. We took another tram ride up a mountain for lunch where had a great view of Queenstown (and the lake 52 miles long 3 miles wide). After lunch we rode an old old steamer, the T.S.S. Earnslaw: Lady of the Lake to a sheep

station. It covered 100,000 acres with 22,000 sheep, 2,500 beef cattle, and 200 deer. I know because I counted them all! The trip back was just so much fun. The crew entertained us with banjo music and song. They handed out songbooks and we all

sang. I hated for that trip to end. After returning to Queenstown we had a pheasant dinner at a neat place called Roaring Megs. It was the first time that Jack had ever eaten pheasant.

The next days trip was to Milford Sound. We got started at 6:00 a.m. We stopped in Te Anau for breakfast and to pick up our Milford tickets. The trip was unbelievable! The view staggers the imagination. The kea bird liked this area and we saw a lot of them. In some places, the only place to look was up.



A kea bird

Arriving in Milford at 1:30 we boarded the Fiordland Flyer, a new ship of 5 weeks. The trip on Milford Sound and out to the Tasman Sea was awesome. We returned to Te Anau just in time to book the last boat to Glow Worm Caves. We traveled the ten miles across Lake Te Anau. This was a cavern with the river running through it. We rode on small boats in the dark, billions of tiny pinpoint lights glowed over head.

When we got back to Te Anau all the eating places was closed so we had to settle for the "Burger Bus". The lake was so clear you could see the pebbles on the bottom. It looked like a mirror. As is all the lakes in New Zealand, their water is 99.98 percent pure. I saw a sea-plane pilot take a drink from the lake. They are not bothered with pollution, or agricultural diseases, and use little or no pesticides, and there are no billboards to mar the beautiful countryside. There are between 70 and 80 million sheep and we must of seen at least 60 million of them.



Lake Manapourie

A few miles from Te Anua was Manapourie located on Lake Manapourie. It was even more beautiful than Te Anua. We took lots of photos and went on our way arriving in Dunedin in time to tour a museum, but our main thing was a drive along Cliff Drive. It was very scary at times. This took us past an old castle, and on to a penguin

nesting area and a seal colony. It was amusing to watch those little penguins in their tuxedos jumping out of the Pacific Ocean up on to the steep cliffs. Then there were the seals. Their colony was separated by cliffs from the penguins. The big fat seals just laid on the beach. Lazy bums.

We followed a very scenic route along the water back to our motel. Once again we were late for dinner so had to have fish and chips.

The next morning we were able to go to church. The church was only five minutes from our motel. It was a lovely new building built as a state center. Again we met so many very friendly people. About 3 percent of New Zealand is LDS about equal between Maori and white, with the biggest percent on the North Island. After church we hit the road again stopping in Ashburton for dinner. Before leaving the next day we decided we would like a spinning wheel, seeing that they were manufactured there, so we helped the economy. We bought one and had it shipped home.

We drove over to Christchurch, our departure point for Australia. We spent three days there. We visited a wildlife park where we drove the car into the lion enclosure and watched the park attendees feed the lions. What table manners. We kept the windows closed because we didn't want to be dessert. We did other sight seeing in and around Christchurch. We had so much rain on the North Island. Almost every where we went, we got rained on. We didn't let that stop us.

December 5th. I really was sad. I had fallen in love with New Zealand. The country and the people. it is one fantastic place. The New Zealanders have a saying. "God made the world, then He made New Zealand." I can believe it!

Australia

We arrived at the airport the usual two hours ahead of time and dropped off our car. We checked in and paid our \$2.00 export tax. The flight to Sydney was a three hour flight with a two hour time change. The flight over the Tasman Sea to Sydney was one of the smoothest flights I have ever been on. But in landing, the pilot plunked us down



A Yellow Eyed Penguin of South Island

real hard on the runway.

We picked up another car, this time a Ford Laser, and headed for our hotel which was right in the heart of Sydney. Being 20 floors up we didn't need a tram ride to get a view of the city. As big as Sydney is, we decided that an all day tour would be our best bet. Our tour started at 9:00 a.m. We began with a bus ride to a hydrofoil that took us across the bay where we boarded our bus. We toured until noon, visiting many places. One of these was a wildlife reserve where I left my heart with the koalas, they were so adorable. We also saw a lot of kangaroos.

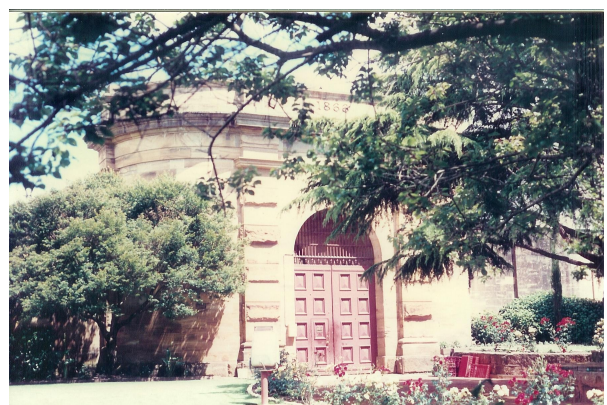


The Opera House and bridge over Sydney Harbor

Returning to the harbor at noon, we boarded another boat for a two hour luncheon cruise around Sydney Harbor that was fantastic. Back to our bus at 2:00 p.m. we continued our tour through the most interesting parts of Sydney, learning much of its early history. We saw the famous Opera House and the bridge. The tour ended by going to some of the more famous beaches,

such as the Bondi Beach. We learned later that it was a nude beach. By this time I was so bus sick, and I mean sick! I couldn't wait to get back to the hotel.

Heading south, it took us 2 hours to get out of Sydney. We stopped for the night in a tiny town of Goulburn, a wool shipping terminal. There was a bad rain storm all night, but the next morning was great. We decided to backtrack about 40 miles to an early settlement town of Berrima. It looked a lot like our early old



The Berrima Prison

west towns. A very old but wonderful looking old prison is there and is still used as a youth correction school. I thought it was a museum and tried to get in the huge metal

door. Boy! was I glad that it didn't open.

We then headed for Canberra, the capital of Australia which is located in Australia Capital Territory in the State of South Wales (somewhat the way Washington DC is situated.) The city is designed with lots of parks and wide streets with a big lake in the center. I told Jack that Brigham Young may have laid out the city. We took a drive up to Black Mountain where they have a Telecom Tower. We got a fantastic 360 degree view of the countryside with Canberra all laid out like a painting. We particularly enjoyed driving around looking at all the embassy houses. Most of them, if not all, were of a design representative of their own country. I loved seeing them.

Being Sunday, we spent time just sightseeing. While having dinner we meet another very nice couple, we spent 2½ hours eating and chatting. I found the Auzzies to be just as friendly as the New Zealanders.

It was in Canberra that we called Gordon in Rexburg. Bonnie should of had their baby by then. We had been expecting a message from him while in Sydney but we hadn't heard from him, so we decided to call him. They were not home, but in talking to the babysitter, we got the bad news. Vance Allen Buttars was born November 22, 1985 at Madison Memorial Hospital. Little Vance just didn't make it. After putting up a good fight, and giving his family a lifetime of love. After 26 hours on this earth he went back to his Heavenly Father. He was a spirit so great in the sight



Vance Allen Buttars

of God that he did not need to live on this earth. There was no way that we could have made it home. I was glad most of the trip was behind us as it did make a difference to how it affected the rest of my stay.

Monday morning after a nice breakfast we headed towards the coast and back to Sydney. We stopped for the night in a small resort town right on the ocean at Bateman Bay. After dinner we spent time walking along the beach enjoying the evening, aside from the pesky flies which seemed to be a problem no matter where you go in Australia.

We had breakfast in our room and it is a good idea to make use of this service, there is not eating places like at home. We went without breakfast more than once.

We headed north to a place called Pebbly Beach. It is a place where the kangaroos run wild with nice sandy beaches, and is not advertised as a tourist attraction. We only found out about it by talking to people. The road was enough to discourage anyone in their right mind. Only 8 kilometers (4.8 miles). When we finally arrived it was just like we were told it would be. Kangaroos all over the place. These roos are somewhat tame as they are fed by those who come to the beach. You have to be careful feeding them or they will grab your bag and even eat it. They liked being petted.



Two little roos

towns arriving back in Sydney about 7:00 p.m. We were lucky that our motel had a place to eat. We picked the motel for its location, being close to the temple.

After a good night's sleep, we went to the Temple for the 9:00 a.m. session. I had such a spiritual feeling come over me that I started crying and couldn't stop. I don't know why, unless the person I was doing the work for was so happy that it affected me. The Temple is located on one of the busiest streets in Sydney (Collingham District).

Out in the harbor we spotted 3 dolphins playing about 50 yards off shore as they swam. At first I thought they were sharks. The only ones there besides us and the Roos, was a cute family from Sydney. We had fun as we combed the beach together. We started heading north, passing through a few beach



The Sydney Temple



Petting Grandma Koala

That afternoon we visited a Koala Park close by and learned a lot about them, even got to pet "Grandma". There also was a number of dingo dogs, they are very lovable and don't bark. We called the airlines to confirm our flight to find out we had made a mistake on our timing and had one more day in Australia and one less in

Fiji. We decided to drive north from Sydney for half the day and then head back.

Before leaving Sydney, we went into a jewelry store close by. We bought a beautiful pair of Australian opal earrings for me and a stone to have made into a tie tack for Jack. Showing our passport and airline tickets afforded us a better price and no sales tax. Of course, it was a lot cheaper than here at home.

December 12th we failed again to order our breakfast to be sent to our room, so we went hungry until we found a place to get a bread roll and a pint of orange juice. We took a side road to a small village called Brooklyn, just in time to catch the mail-boat trip up the beautiful Hawkesbury River. The mail-boat is the only public transportation for people living along this river as there are no roads, only very rugged mountains that the river runs through. I can not even describe the fun and the lessons we learned on that boat trip that day. After our boat trip and a lunch of fish and chips we took a scenic trip around to Old Sydney Town, a reconstructed town of Sydney depicting life as it was in the old days. Being the last day in Australia it was a fantastic day. We cannot compare New Zealand with Australia: they are both unique.

Fiji

On Friday December 13th we arrived early at the airport to check in our car. The export tax was \$20.00 each compared to \$2.00 each in New Zealand. Leaving at approximately 3:00 p.m. our flight to Fiji was about 8 hours with a stop in Auckland, we landed in Nandi, Fiji around 1:00 a.m. The hotel sent a car to pick us up, the hotel was 5

miles from the airport and about the same from town. We did not get much sleep that night but when we woke up that morning I felt like I was living a dream. Our hotel was located on a hillside with a beautiful view of the countryside and the ocean, we could see forever. Outside our window were the most beautiful flowers and trees that I had ever seen. We had breakfast at the hotel restaurant, as we did all our meals while there. The temperature was in the 80s both day and night.

We arranged for a bus tour in the afternoon, but took a cab and spent the morning walking through the shopping area of Nadi with only one street that is 5 blocks long. All the shops closed at noon, so the street is packed with people and cars. The shopkeepers are all East Indian. Jack did buy a carving from Jack's



The Queen of Fiji

Craft Shop. Our cabbie came back to take us back to the hotel. We spent the afternoon on a bus tour of the countryside, (the bus was air conditioned – no windows – just like the restaurant and most of the buildings there). The guide was an Indian fellow and was not the best driver and with the dirt and gravel roads, it was a rough ride.

The countryside was a lot different than we saw in the other countries. The main crops were sugar cane, rice, pineapple, and tapioca, plus many types of fruit trees and every kind of tropical flowers. There were many small farms and villages scattered about, I even saw them plowing with water buffalo. The vegetation was a lush green and this was the dry side of the Island. On our tour route we past five Indian weddings, they all had signs out “Everyone Welcome”. We stopped at an Indian Mosque, we had to take our shoes off and walk across a very hot tiled courtyard. The inside was very interesting.

We also stopped at another Fijian village that a hurricane had gone through three

years before. There were still signs of destruction, the rebuilding process was really slow. The Fijians have a village chief who lives in a large house in the center of the village and what the chief says goes. They are a very happy, loving, and friendly people, enjoying life in its simplest form, and always have a big smile for you. The Indians are more serious, not as friendly, more business minded, and they run all the businesses.

I think all the people that worked in the hotel were Fijians, and I liked all who I came in contact with. I really liked the waiters in the restaurant, they and the cops on the street all wore white skirts. The only Fijian words I learned was bula (hello) and vinaka (thank you). They all spoke very good English.

The last night there we had a great feast and were entertained by a Fijian concert and dances at the poolside. Their dress was so colorful and with their reflections in the pool that it made it twice as beautiful. Jack and I got to join in on the last two dances. FUN!



Fijian dancers



The King of Fiji

The last day of our vacation finally arrived, Our flight was at 11:45 p.m. We had to make every minute count, so we checked out of our room which was really nice, put our luggage in the baggage room and booked an all day boat cruise out to the island of Mana, a small resort island. We saw an old ship wreck on a reef, the aftermath of the hurricane three years prior. The boat tied up to the small pier and we and four or five others were left on our own to do whatever. We soon found out that we couldn't get lost. It took only 15 minutes to walk across the island and an

hour to walk around it, which we did. One side was calm and hot, the other windy and the surf was wild. We had lunch in the only hotel, and again there was all kinds of food. After a big meal, we just laid around under the grass huts and had fun beach combing.

About 3:00 p.m. the boat returned to pick us up, the trip back was very pleasant with the crew entertaining us with beautiful singing. We got back to the hotel about 6:00. We still had time to waste so what else is there to do but eat? So we did. Then on to the airport. Flying from that part of the world makes for a very long day. We had a one hour stop in Hawaii but couldn't leave the airport because of customs. We arrived in Los Angeles at 5:15 and San Jose at 7:10. We left on a Sunday and returned the same day. By the time we made the hour drive home we were two tired turkeys. Jack had to go to work the next day. I was retired, ha, ha.

Home Sweet Home

Five weeks and it was all over but the memories, just like my dream world of fairy tales. I hope you enjoyed the trip with us, I hope you didn't get bored and went home. I am sorry that it was so long but I left a lot out, there was so much more that I would have liked to have added. There were just things I had to write about. This was the same as two vacations in one, as we did not go on one in 1984.

Well back to the real world. It was only nine days before Christmas. There was so much to do to get ready for Christmas, shopping, cards to get out, tree to put up and so much more to do. But I think we got it all taken care of, maybe not in the fashion that I usually did things, but I was still on cloud nine!.