

GRAPEVINE

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Grapevine is the newsletter of the Perth International Dancers. The Group meets Monday evenings at St Margaret's Church Hall in Nedlands (Cnr Tyrell & Elizabeth) and Saturday mornings at the John Leckie Music Hall in College Park off Melvista Ave. Monday evenings begin at 7pm with a 75 minute dance lesson, followed by general dancing until late. Saturdays begin at 10am with a 1 hour dance lesson before morning tea and general dancing. For more information please call John (9427 4258 (wk) or Martin (9326 6077 (wk)).

President's Report – AGM

Palenque

We had a busy and successful year in 2006.

The Perth International Dancers started the year with many performances – with the Last Five Coins in Northbridge, Swan Valley, Mandurah, Fairbridge Folk Festival, and without the Last Five Coins at UWA, Nannup Music Festival, Fairbridge Folk Festival and the Mundaring Performing Arts Society.

There was a very successful "Bring a Friend" Night on a Monday at the end of May, and then at John Leckie Hall a Bring a Friend morning at the end of July was followed by a 6-week beginners course. Sara and I taught this year's Beginners' course which was fairly successful – as it has made regular dancers of a few new attendees.

André van de Plas visited again in July for a very well attended workshop at St Margaret's and a workshop to teach children's dances to children and teachers in the Hills on the Friday prior. This was also very successful by all accounts. Thanks to Jenny Currell for organising the Friday session. Speaking of which, Jenny continues to teach on a Friday morning, and numbers are building I believe.

Following on from the Beginners Course, I began teaching in Fremantle on a Wednesday night, to a small but enthusiastic group of dancers. It is winding up this Wednesday 29th Dec, but I expect it to re-commence in February 2007.

The big celebration for the year was the 30th Anniversary of international folk dancing in Perth. This was held at Point Peron on the weekend of 11th November. Lot's of people put in huge effort to make this a terrific success. Thanks particularly to Pam Massey for her efforts in organising the organising committee, and the big effort she put

into contacting many past members. A big thank you also to the teachers who made the weekend workshops such fun despite the slippery floor. The group benefited from Jenny (and Penny's) trip to Armenia in May at the first workshop of the weekend where Jenny taught Armenian dances. Eve revived several old favourite dances at the second workshop after lunch. Thanks also to Sara and John who with Eve and Jenny taught the Beginners Party dances workshop before dinner. We missed you Laurel to lead some of the French dances when Russell and Mark from Last Five Coins played in the evening. Special thanks to Jenny for the beautiful Pearl Anniversary scarves and Jennifer and all the other members who helped create such a beautifully decorated atmosphere for the dinner. Sorry if I missed anyone. In summary, I think a good time was had by all and I want to thank everyone for making it such a fun weekend.

Other things to mention:

- The church are planning to re-surface the floor at St Margaret's and we have been liaising with them to try to ensure that the floor remains a suitable surface for our use – not too slippery.
- The Committee intends to transfer music onto a laptop system at some point – a sub-committee will be working on this in 2007.
- Other suggestions for 2007 are welcome, particularly comments regarding the weekend away at Pt Peron. Did you enjoy it, would you like to do similar again?
- We seem to have managed through our first full year of higher rent quite successfully without putting prices up, with generally good attendance and membership levels.



A Quarter of a Century – some tributes

This year marks the 26th year that Peter Fallon has been the Group's Treasurer. He was the inaugural Treasurer and has supported the Group as Treasurer since then, balancing our books and a lot more besides.

Peter – many, many thanks for your outstanding efforts and contribution to the financial and general wellbeing of PIFDG. Your 26 years of devotion to the Group have been remarkable, and we thank you. Now hopefully you can find some time for leisure – dancing, cycling, swimming, piping, movie-going, reading, sleeping – whatever takes your fancy. It's Time. Peter – we salute you. Leone.

To the one and only Peter ,

It feels quite strange and somehow sad to know that you are no longer going to handle the money in our beloved group, but that the way life wants it to be.

Your contribution and help over two decades to PIFDG and to me personally are beyond words.

You were and still are a real treasure even without been the treasurer.

Thank you so much for everything, Peter, shalom Sara

Draft Teacher Schedule 2007

	Mondays	Saturdays
January	Palenque	Sara
February	John	Laurel
March	Eve	Sara
April	John	Palenque
May	Eve	John
June	Laurel	Laurel
July	Jenny	Laurel or Jenny
August	Eve	Jenny
September	Laurel & Pal.	Palenque
October	Sara	Jenny
November	Palenque	John
December	John	Jenny

Subject to change

Is it all in the Words? Part 2

Here we continue with our series that looks at the words that accompany some of our regular dances to see if they make sense, are cryptic, romantic, perceptive or inspiring? Last time we featured Muhtarin Oglu Ali, a Turkish dance that André van de Plas taught us a couple of years ago.

This time we look at Somogy Karikazo from Hungary, a dance that we've performed many times and danced a number of times with The Last Five Coins.

Somogy Karikazo [Hungary]

*Eva, my heart, Eva, the plum tree is now ripe,
Underneath are spread plums, we'll pick them up by dawn.
If only this dawn, would last a long time,
So that our love, would never end!
Love, love, cursed suffering!
Why didn't you grow, on every leaf?
I came here to do the karikazo,
Should my sweetheart be here and,
Should his arms and legs break by any chance?
I would be the one responsible.
What is the worth of a fellow's life?
Who always keeps his hands in his pockets?
He is afraid to embrace the girls,
Because he thinks the pox will take him.
A red apple fell into the mud,
Fell into the muddy puddle,
I'll take out the red apple and wash it,
And kiss my sweetheart a hundred times.*

Source: www.dunav.org.il/dances

So there you have it romance tinged with a hint of STD perhaps, with touch of Isaac Newton and some good motherly advice thrown in – ‘Lazlo take your hands out of your pockets’!! Did that apple actually fall from the plum tree? Do they do lots of grafting in Hungary, or could that red apple be metaphoric perhaps?! And why would his arms and legs break? Are they insured for this? And one last thing -- I thought Somogy Karikazo was a ladies dance, did ‘he’ dance it!



PIFDG 30th anniversary celebrations! by Martin

Point Peron Camp, at Rockingham, was definitely the place to be over the week-end of 11th/12th November for our 30th Anniversary celebrations. Almost sixty attended, including members, ex-members and potential members.

The week-end started on Saturday morning with Jenny teaching some dances that she'd learned in Armenia earlier this year. Nice but really tricky stuff!! Cameo workshops were a feature with Eve focusing on some of the dances that have been taught and re-taught the most over the years – these included Sej Sej Bob, Cmo Tsoani and Floriçica – well the simpler first part anyway!!

The pilgrimage to Pt Peron was a touch of déjà vu for anyone who attended the residential week-end workshops we used to hold at the old (now demolished) camp that was right on the point. Some of us went for a walk on the Sunday morning and we thought we found some of the old camp's remains. Nostalgic lumps of concrete! Nice cycle-ways though, with really nice sea views!

All the catering was included which was great as we could just focus on the dance. After dinner on the Saturday, Eve related the story of how the Group started and there was a nice tribute and some thanks from Sara followed by a song for Eve written by Leone and sung by her, Nina, Pam Gunn, Pam Massey and Debra - see words below.

Yes we did dance in the evening, including Somogy Karikazo with what must have been a record circle of women. Later-on Russell and Mark (two of the Last 5 Coins) joined us to test us out with live music – where did those extra few bars come from in Mazurka?!

After an energetic and late Saturday night the Sunday morning was a bit more relaxed with videos of some old Red Faces sessions. Two of the classics were Paula and her fabulous Charlie Chaplin routine and us lads with their rendition of the Sugar Plum Fairy – tutus and all! Tchaikovsky eat your heart out. There were also all the old, and some new, photo-albums and a nice montage by Pam Massey of hundreds of old photographs. These led to a lot of “who's that?”, “look at him/her” and quite a few ‘Oooh's and Ahhs’.

All-in-all it was a great week-end. Very relaxing, nice accommodation, great catering and a wonderful setting. Well done to all those who helped in the organization. It was a job really well done.

Who's for a return visit next year?

A Song For Eve

Once upon a time a little English girl
Took lessons from her mother at the ballet school
A tiny ballerina at a tender age
She could now be dancing on the London Stage

But Then she said it's time to leave
forgot to mention her name was Eve
Studied and travelled and married on the way
And went to live in the U.S.A.

....
Eve took part in a dancing class
In the State of Louisiana
When to her surprise, before her very eyes
They danced in a Folky manner

So Eve collected all the dances she could learn
And brought them to Australia for us to learn in turn
Dancing all around the hall from dusk till dawn
And Perth International Dance was born

Eve springs around like a young gazelle
With her lovely daughter
Such wonderful dances she has taught
But she can keep three buckets of water.

Used to dance in ballet shoes – now she's wearing sneakers
And music plays so loud and clear
Through great big purple speakers.

To be sung to the tune of Alunelul

The above song was written by Leone and sung by her and her helpers at Point Peron. Thanks and well done Leone!

André in 2007 Anyone?

The dance group has hosted André van de Plas as a visiting teacher eleven times since he began his Australian tours. He was with us in July and he was with us in 2005 on his 21st trip Down Under.

Next year he will be in Australia in late July and could visit Perth 21st / 22nd July.

At this stage we have advised him that we give him a miss this year, unless he is willing to hold a one-day workshop. This year he did a day-and-a-half workshop for us, as he wanted to be with his family in Sydney to watch the World Cup!!

So if you want André to visit Perth and teach us next year then please let one of the Committee know. Tell us if you favour him running a week-end workshop or three-sessions over 1½ days. We need to confirm with him soon so that he can book the flights and get an early-bird price.

List of Dances Taught in 2006

Dance name	Country
Daichovo	Bulgaria
Mazurka	France
Zaruy Bob	Bulgaria
Savila se bela Loza	Serbia
Jovano Jovanke	Bulgaria
Ridee Six Temps/ Huit temps	France
Mazurka Sticks	France
La Sarabande d'Amour	France
Suite Dardoup	France
Malka Moma se Molese	Bulgaria
Cu se Procu Nedelya	Bulgaria
Hora Cimpulungului	Romania
Cherkezko	Bulgaria
Izgreyala e Mesecinka	Bulgaria
Guzelleme	Turkey
Souvevu Ni	Israel
Delilo	Turkey
Jegg Gikk Meg Ut I Lunden Grønn	Norway
Hora Mauntera	Israel
Pertski Chocek	Macedonia
Swedish Masquerade	Sweden
Poloxia	Romania
Drjanovska Racenitsa	Bulgaria
Guzelleme	Turkey
Lamiita	Romania
Souvevu Ni	Israel
Sapari	Israel
Hora de la Batai	Romania
Hai	Israel
chut chut	Turkey
Kolubarski Vez	Serbia
Hora Banateana	Romania
Kostilata Thessalia	Greece
Cumajle	Macedonia/Gypsy
Hilulat bar Yochim	Israel
Ovive Yerk	Armenia
Msho Kochari	Armenia

Sarba din Nord	Romania
Vana Tsgnors	Armenia
Habaal Shem Tov	Israel
Hora Fun Moldova	Israel
Taraban	Japan
Azul Cielo	Argentina?
Hastayim	Turkey
In Gradina Lui Ion	Romania
Kamishitsa	Bulgaria
Sofia Suite	Bulgaria
Makedonsko Devojce	Bulgaria
Buçimish	Serbia
Andre's children's dances	Various
Andre's revision	Various
Yaldati	Israel
Sitno Zensko Horo	Bulgaria
Twee Emmertjes Wasser Halen	Holland
Hkinoor Kneeman	Israel
Pogonisos	Greece
Troika	Russia
Chetvorno Oro	Bulgaria
Adana	Macedonia
Taraban	Japan
Mi Itneni Of	Israel
Acai Bney Teiman	Israel
Holech Uva	Israel
Od Yavo Shalom Alienu	Israel
Benya	Israel
Ahava Pshuta	Israel
Koce Berberot	Macedonian
Bordeiasul	Romania
Chopi	Israel
Briuletul de la Birca	Romania
Sabrali sa se Sabrali	Bulgaria

Dances are in date order as taught through the year.

Those in **bold text** were taught by Andre at his workshop in July 2006.

Talking Turkey with Martin Williams

OK, I know it's Christmas but we're not talking cranberry jelly here – but tales of our recent 6-week trip to Turkey.

The last time we visited Turkey was in 1997 when we combined our visit with a trip to Bulgaria to join Belço Stanev for a holiday of dance. That trip included a circuit around western Turkey and this time we thought we'd be a bit more adventurous. One of the triggers was the news that Tony Hoar and some of his sailing friends were looking to fill some berths on a chartered yacht for two weeks along the Turquoise Coast on the Aegean Sea. So we built our trip around that.

Turkey is a big country and we travelled over 5,200 km on their wonderful bus system from Bodrum in the south-west, to Kars and Ani on the Armenian border in the north east, before heading south to İşak Paşa Palace on the Iranian border, south to Van and on to Şanlıurfa close to Syrian border. We then flew back to Istanbul for a few days to recover and prepare for the flights home.

If you've never been to Turkey you may think that six-weeks sounds a bit excessive – but if you have been there you will know that the country has a great richness of culture and a variety of landscape to suit any traveller. The old cliché that it's at the 'crossroads' of Europe and Asia is a truism. So many major civilisations have left their mark – there are ruins from any number of rulers including Roman, Greek, Hittite, Selçuk, Ottoman, Persian, Pontic, Armenian and Georgian. Lots of the ruins are very well preserved too. Couple this rich history with a people who are famously hospitable, a wonderful cuisine, great weather for a lot of the year, good value hotels and a well organised, cheap and extensive transport system and you have all the ingredients for a great holiday.

The population of 75-million is predominately Moslem, and one of the first things that you learn as a traveller is to try to choose accommodation away from a mosque. Not always possible but it does avoid the early morning call to prayer which happens before sunrise and is a lot worse than the kookaburras that wake us up at home.

There are mosques everywhere in Turkey and there seems to be a race between the mosque builders and the apartment block builders, both making a bid for that large population. The mosques and the flats seem to be built to a formula with the main parameter being the size. The blocks of flats don't have much style – just concrete blocks, sometimes a different colour

from their neighbours. Too often these blocks are built right next to historic buildings with no feel for aesthetics which is a huge shame as it ruins the feel of the old cities and there is a lack of individuality.

The weather was superb for the whole of the six-weeks, although we did have some lightning on the top of Nemrut Mountain which was interesting!

Here are some details of the main places that we visited . . .

We flew into Istanbul on a long-haul Turkish Airlines flight from Singapore, and after a wait of a few hours we flew east to **Kayseri**. Shortly after take-off we passed over the historic centre of Istanbul and the view of the Bosphorus, the Golden Horn and buildings such as the Blue Mosque on that bright sunny morning was one of the key images of the holiday – it was just spectacular.

In **Kayseri** we took a taxi to the local *otogar*, the bus station, and caught a late bus to **Malatya** – the direct flights were all full. The longer than planned journey and the late arrival on a Saturday night led to probably the only agro of the holiday – all the hotels in our price-range were full.

The key reason for the pilgrimage to Malatya was to visit **Nemrut Dağı**, described as one of the star attractions of Eastern Turkey. The reason being that on the top of the mountain, at about 2,200m, King Antiochus (who?) of Commagene (where?) built a tumulus, well a big pile of stones actually, and two terraces with large statues of himself, his queen and gods such as Apollo, Helios and Heracles. One terrace faces the rising sun and the other faces the setting sun. That was all before the Romans and since then there have been a few earthquakes so that the heads of the statues now litter the site. The heads themselves are up to 2m high and the whole place is eerie and wonderful. The idea is that you walk up from the valley and visit the summit for sunrise or sunset. We cheated and stayed at a hotel near the summit on the north side and got a mini-van to the summit for both sunset **and** sunrise. Our tour group included Koreans, French, Turks and a Greek guy and were really great. English being the common language. The reason for going there early in the holiday was the mountain's reputation for cold nights. We need not have worried as the overnight temperature when we were there was about 25°C. So we didn't need to carry those thermals around for 6-weeks after all!! The main problem we faced was the electrical storm and the evening

rain that kept sweeping in. It was quite wonderfully atmospheric and evocative though.

Göreme is so special that we just had to return. We'd been there in 1997 and this time we stayed in a cave that had been chiselled from the volcanic tufa. It was really cool, in both senses. We warmed ourselves up with a four-hour guided tour of the local valleys, ending up at Love Valley a place full of very phallic fairy chimneys.

While in Göreme we took a *dolmuş* to **Kaymaklı** to visit one of the more than thirty underground cities of **Cappadocia**. The 8-underground levels date from 4000 years ago and in times of invasion the whole population would disappear underground where they lived for up to 6-months until the threat went away. These truly were underground cities with food stores, water and wine stores, kitchens, sleeping quarters, hospital areas and mortuaries. They are amazing places.

From Göreme we took an overnight bus to **Bodrum**, almost 1000 km via Konya, Isparta, Denizli and Muğla. We didn't like Bodrum, it was brash and noisy, the traffic was awful and it was hot. Yes I know that Turkey should be hot on 25 August but it was unrelenting and our map was not good. Perhaps we'd not slept on the bus as well as we'd thought! We left our packs at the bus office and eventually found a hotel not too far from the *otogar* – the good news was that it had a pool. The room wasn't brilliant but the pool was nice – close to 30°C, mind you so was the room! After an evening walk around town and a couple of *Efes* lagers we had as good a sleep as was possible in a hot room with friendly mosquitoes.

This was one of the few places on holiday that we encountered mozzies, which was interesting as we were taking Chloroquine tablets. The areas in the SE close to the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers do have malarial mosquitoes, hence the Chloroquine. We saw very few mozzies – come to think of it for most of the holiday we saw virtually no wild life at all, very few fish, very few birds, certainly no storks. Istanbul was the exception – fish and birds everywhere, especially pigeons and sea gulls!

From Bodrum we took a short *dolmuş* ride to Turgutreis to join up with the crew for 2-weeks sailing around the **Turquoise Coast**. We had hired a 'bareboat', ie no paid crew and captain, just us. Turgutreis is in the southern Aegean Sea and has a fabulous new marina, basically built because Bodrum could not cope with the number of boats and tourists. Bodrum to Marmaris by road is about 165 km. We bay-hopped around the Gulf of **Gökova** and the peninsulars of **Datça**, **Bozburun** and **Hisarönü**, dodging most of the Greek islands

along the way. Most days were clear blue-sky days. One day was stormy with 30 kt winds but generally the wind was too light to sail, which was disappointing. Tony spend a lot of time learning Japanese which was hampered when his electronic dictionary got damaged in the storm.

The yacht, a Bavarian 44, had all mod cons and 3-double berths and 2-singles for the 7 of us on board. Other than a couple of stops at Datça where we spent three nights in total it was motoring, swimming, berthing, a meal in a local restaurant, sleep and move on. Berthing usually involved dropping an anchor and backing up to the jetty, or using pre-laid lines. A couple of places we moored alongside at a jetty and only once did we use the anchor. As it turned out that anchorage was not a good choice as we had gales all night and spent too long checking the GPS to see how far we'd dragged the anchor and letting more chain out!

We danced at a couple of the restaurants and at one, in Çokertme, they insisted on us doing a load of dancing once they realised that some of us were dancers. A good night was had by all, especially by our two lady crew, who unfortunately left the boat after the first week. Many of the bays we stayed in only had one restaurant so we were a bit of a captive audience and we paid accordingly. The coastal scenery is superb, mostly very dry with little vegetation. And the sea was warm, clean and, well – turquoise really.

After two weeks on the yacht we left Marmaris on an overnight bus, waking up after 880 km in **Ankara**. We stayed there for a couple of days, visited the Anthropological Museum and wandered through the old castle area which was fascinating. It didn't feel like being in a capital city that had a population of over 4m. There were ladies hanging wool across the streets to dry and grade, there were gypsies and crowds celebrating a *sunnet*, a circumcision ceremony with family groups, singers and musicians winding their way through the narrow streets, just part of their life – not put on for tourists. The surrounding area of old Ankara town was just a random and crazy maze of houses, crowds and noise. The hotel had a lift, our first, although most of the first evening there was a power cut – which coincided with a football match!! We climbed the stairs using our head-torches!

We then headed NE through the suburban sprawl, across grasslands and through rocky valleys to **Amasya** for 3-days of relaxation. Set in a nice ravine by the Yeşilirmak (green river), Lonely Planet describe it as 'having a feeling of

independence and civic pride and deserving a prize as one of the prettiest towns in all Turkey'. We agree. It had been the capital of the Pontic kingdom and the tombs of their kings looked down from the cliff across the river to the north. The streets were graced by colourful horses and carts from the local farms and by balanced family groups. There were graceful old buildings including a mental home built in 1309 that treated its patients with musical therapy, and about 10 mosques and *medreses* that were nicely restored. Throw in the wide riverside walks, bridges, a hilltop citadel, a few museums and the ubiquitous statue of Atatürk and it really was one of our favourite places. We had *chai* – tea in the street with some local ladies and had lunch compliments of some workmen at one of the mosques.

Heading north to **Samsun** and along the Black Sea coast, one of the main images was of hazel nuts drying in the sun. They were laid out on pavements and on roads that seemed to have been closed just to cater for the harvest! The coast road led us to **Trabzon** where we visited **Sumela Monestary**. Hanging onto a high cliff above a wooded valley, this old Greek complex seemed to be full of ghosts of the past, an eerie but beautiful place.

Further along, the coast is very overdeveloped and scarred by new road works, apparently to cater for the trucks coming from the nearby border with Georgia and Russia. At **Hopa** we headed inland and got ourselves invited to a wedding in **Artvin**. The evening was interesting – all the guests drank water, there was a cardboard multi-tiered cake that was symbolically cut by the bride and groom and everyone pinned money on the happy couple. We joined in the dancing, Turkish disco really, but there were some great dancers there and we are in the wedding photos and videos!!

Leaving **Artvin** we climbed and climbed along more roads that had scarred the landscape and marvelled at the foundations of a new dam that is destined to flood huge tracts of the spectacular **Yusufelli** and **Barhal Valleys**. We were heading up into the **Kaçkar Mountains** where we stayed in a small pension on the side of a valley. We watched our backpacks being winched up from the side of a stream and disappearing to a terrace where they served the meals. Most of the **Barhal** houses had these winches and we watched the locals put fruit and veg. on them and others winch up firewood for the winter. We stayed near an old Armenian church and later walked up to an even older ruined one in the upper pastures – the *Yaylalar*. A picnic lunch by a rushing mountain

stream was a highlight of our stay and we finished it with a large apple that the friendly locals had given us. It was very sad to think that most of these areas will soon be under water and the people resettled.

Leaving **Barhal** we headed east through spectacular river gorges towards the town of **Kars**. We also passed through the ubiquitous army roadblocks where all identity cards and passports were checked. Orhan Pamuk, who won the Nobel Prize for literature this year, wrote a book set in Kars. We were there to visit **Ani** that had once been the capital of Armenia with a population of over 100,000. All that remains now is a rolling plain with the walls of the city and the shells of a number of churches, a cathedral and a mosque. Oh yes there are also watch towers, on the Turkish and on the Russian sides of the border. The whole massive site is so very stark and confronting.

From **Kars**, which had some of worst pavements I have seen (and that is saying something in Turkey) we headed south along the border, through more roadblocks to **Doğubayazıt**. On the way we passed **Mt. Ararat** and what seemed like a million sheep trying to cross the road while the *dolmuş* tried to dodge them. We stayed in what was the cheapest and best value hotel of the trip, \$AUD20. We had a great view from the room over the mountain with its different moods as the sun and the clouds came and went. With its shape and the snow it looked just like Mt. Kilimanjaro – at 5137m it's about the same height too. We were there to visit **Işak Paşa Palace** about 5 km out of town, past the army base of about 20,000 military which bristled with tanks and other weaponry. The Palace, which is close to the Iranian border, is in a mixture of styles including Selçuk, Ottoman, Georgian, Persian and Armenian. It is set on a terrace overlooking the plain surrounded by cliffs, with a mosque and an old Urartian castle dating from the 13th century BC. Words cannot describe the beauty of the whole place – it just has to be seen to be believed.

After the Palace we took a van to **Van** on the lake, Lake Van that is. Up to then we'd done really well health-wise. It goes without saying that we'd had a bit of Turkish tummy and we'd had the occasional imodium sandwich but at Van Pam got really ill with something like amoebic dysentery. The problem was aggravated by the fact that Ramazan had just started, so finding an open chemist or a doctor that could speak English was a bit of a problem. Actually, in that part of Turkey finding anyone who could speak English was a

problem! After an eventual trip to hospital and an antibiotic drip, a saline drip, a prescription for 5 lots of pills and a few days near the loo, Pam was a lot better!! The problem was we needed to move on – we'd already booked and paid for an overnight bus and a flight back to Istanbul. While Pam rested in the hotel I had a trip 65 km out of town to **Hoşap Castle** which was closed when I got there. I got a lift back with two French ladies whom we seemed to keep bumping into. I also visited **Van Castle** and Old Van.

We had intended visiting **Diyarbakır**, the capital Kurdistan (if the country existed and they had a capital) but we just ran out of time. We took a bus to **Şanlıurfa (Urfa)** where they dumped us at the side of the road about 5am. It was still dark, although we'd already missed the call to prayer! Not a good introduction but we loved Şanlıurfa although Pam was still really ill. We were both very worried.

Şanlıurfa is where Abraham (Ibrahim) was thrown into a fire for displeasing the gods. Myth has it that the gods turned the fire into water and the coals into fish. The picturesque Gölbaşı area of town still has the pools and the fish. It's a fabulous city and being very close to the Syrian border the ethnic mix is amazing. You are just as likely to hear Arabic or Kurdish being spoken as Turkish. It was lovely but very, very noisy.

And so finally back to **Istanbul** that we had flown into some 6 weeks before. We stayed in Sultanahmet in a hotel where over breakfast we could look out over the Sea of Marmara and watch the ships entering the Bosphorus. It was less than 5-minutes walk to either the Blue Mosque or the Aya Sophia, and yes we could hear the call to prayer from both. They were about 10-seconds out of phase which was even more off putting than one call to prayer – which we'd quite got used to by now.

In Istanbul we hit the souvenir and the tourist trails with renewed fervour to make the most of the last few days of our holiday. We spend these days visiting the Blue Mosque, The Yeni Mosque, the Grand Bazaar, Kariye Church, tripped on some ferries, did lots of walking around the old and the new towns and across the Galata Bridge.

One thing that struck us was the disgustingly inappropriate dress that so many tourists, men and women wore to enter the Blue Mosque. This, more than anything else seemed to demonstrate a change since '97 and the difference between east and west.

Check out the map of our travels and collection of thumbnail photos on a separate sheet

Some Thoughts

The Turks just have to be one of the most hospitable peoples in the world. We were offered so many cups of *chai* – tea, and so many meals it was unbelievable. We did accept many of these but we could not say yes to them all and we had to be very careful not to offend people.

We were very happy with the hotels that we stayed in. They were mostly one and two star budget places. The average price that we paid for accommodation was less than \$AUD40.

The transport system was fabulous. The buses were fast and really good value. We travelled 5200 km by bus – at an average price of 12 cents per km. The drivers and bus boys were all good.

Other drivers and driving in general were not so good. Town driving involved lots of noise, tooting and shouting and the not so occasional motorbike on the pavement! Pavements were usually a bit of a hazard anyway as they are invariably uneven with lots of rubbish on them and more than a few things to trip over!

Drivers all seem to have phobia that other road users may not have noticed traffic lights going green. Everyone toots when the lights change. In some cities traffic lights have a countdown on the red and on the green. Pedestrians get them too. Great idea because you always knew how long you had to cross the road before the cars got the green light. The theory broke down somewhat in practice in that the cars always seemed to start a few seconds early, and of course the drivers still tooted constantly.

The only quiet time was during Ramazan, immediately after sunset when everyone went home to break their day-long fast. It was an uncanny quiet – a quiet that ended about one-hour later when everyone came out onto the streets again and the decibel level went up again, and stayed up for most of the night.

We loved eastern Turkey, where we met a lot of Kurds who were very quick to stress their culture and their history, and to welcome us to their land.

So to end this saga – no we did not get avian flu and we did not get blown up; although there were several bombs during our stay. Perhaps that threat explains why we met so few tourists. The tourists that we did meet were invariably French, with a couple of Germans and interestingly some Israelis! The only Poms that we met were in the lager soaked fly-in/fly-out resorts in the west such as Bodrum and Marmaris.

Overall we had a great time and yes we would love to go back!

That is assuming the greenhouse effect doesn't kick in – overall we flew more than 27000 km, and we must have used up a lot of oxygen.

Finally: I'd worked myself to a frazzle & my candle met in the middle several weeks ago, but I pushed on, out 6 nights a week, working 2.5 days p.w., preparing house, garden, life.....Didn't actually start packing things up till the day before I left! Couldn't bear to take down my duck lights & my 2CV's off the mantelpiece! (but what a bonus when I got here & found 2 more 2CV's on my bedroom windowsill here! – one is a pencil sharpener. Of course).



So on D. Day (that's 'D' for 'departure') I had lunch at 4pm after racing to bank, phone calls packing & sending myself a 17 kilo cardboard box of things I couldn't part with. \$142 with Aus Post, sea-mail. Frank came round with his digital camera for me to do inventory photos once I'd finally got the house ready to hand over – 2 hrs before I left it – THEN I ate, showered, washed up & vacuumed. Brian stayed & took my keys when I finally locked up & said goodbye to Puddy, at almost 11pm. I hadn't stopped at all. Not for a moment. I felt

my legs should be a few inches shorter as I'd been rushing around on them for so long!

Drove to Hibbles – Citroënella's hiding place. Hanny chatted on.....I was too exhausted to take it in!

They drove me to the airport. As I inched my way forward in the check-in queue I tried to re-arrange myself so it looked as if I wasn't carrying so much hand luggage, cos the limit is 7 kilos; one piece, plus a handbag. My laptop is 4.5kilos, & that was before I started stuffing all the left-over bits of paper, address books etc I found at the last minute & slid in the laptop bag pockets. I was flying to Brunei where it's hot, & on to England where it's cold. What to wear? EVERYTHING!! The summer gear underneath, & long cords, thick polo-neck jumper, fleecy sleeveless jacket, & a zip-up sweater on top! On the inside of the sweater are 2 large pockets in which I was trying to stuff my handbag in the left pouch & water bottle in the right pouch. I looked like the Incredible Hulk! That left me with the 22 kilo suitcase, my bum-bag, a small ruck-sack on my back & a bulky video camera bag, all visible. Still a bit over the top I thought, but my hand luggage was never checked queried, or even glanced at! - Despite the big sign up at every check-in desk saying '7 kilos & 1 piece of hand luggage only', & a conscientious family behind me going on & on about it.

I went straight through. In the departure lounge I got chatting with a young Chinese-Brunei man who's been at Uni in Perth. He was very pleasant & told me lots about Brunei. No alcohol. No night clubs. Not much to do. Going through Immigration the X-ray machine picked up a metal object in my luggage & I was plucked out of the queue & questioned. He described it as an arch shape, & I couldn't think what it was till he triumphantly pulled it out of my toiletry bag & held it in his hand. "Oh that's my tongue scraper" I cheerfully said. Well, he almost dropped it like a hot potato, & he let me go *immediately!* (have tongue scraper *WILL*

travel)!...all be it about 43 mins late, as if 3.10am wasn't late enough!

On the plane I found myself next to a young 21 yr old Aussie male who looked 18 but seemed to be a seasoned traveller, confident, & a fountain of knowledge. *He* asked *me* if *I'd* heard of the film *Inconvenient Truth!* Turns out he helps Josh Byrnes out, & as we talked more about the environment he slowly toned down as I gained credibility with my environmental knowledge.

Brunei is on the same time zone as Perth, & we arrived at 8.30am or a bit after. Flying in, it looked smaller than Perth. I remember flying in about 30 years ago (it was a Wednesday) & looking down on wooden houses on stilts & thinking it looked fascinating. Then in 1997 I passed through again, & looked down at brick & tile suburbs. Bugger! I thought. Too late! Now I'll find out....

I didn't go through Immigration but headed straight down a spiral staircase to the Transit Room. When I booked my flight they said apologetically 'there's an 11½ hr wait at Brunei'...."GREAT"! I said. But the thought of 2 night flights & of not being able to sleep sitting up prompted me to check out my options & I made inquiries about somewhere to sleep for a few hours. The transit rooms at the airport are cheaper than anything else they knew of at Brunei Airlines in Perth "but it's only a shower & bed" she said. I asked her if it was like the 'cupboards' in Japan & she laughed & said no. Then it would be fine. I just need to be horizontal. Well it was better than I expected! It was a decent bathroom that provided soap towel & even bidet!! I slept in a double bed. Horizontally. 2 hours of blissful *quality* sleep! I did have my alarm clock with me (& thought to take out the batteries before boarding the plane going tick-tock)!...But I woke naturally at noon to the sound of boarding calls. NB. I noticed in the plane loo was a facility to dispose of razors, & I noticed a passenger go in with his razor, yet they still served up food with a plastic knife...& metal fork).... I paid I think Brunei

\$30. to keep the room 8 hours as there is no left luggage facility & I didn't want to lug the Incredible Hulk outfit around Brunei in the heat on my City Tour!

Somewhat refreshed, I locked the door on my bags & ascended the spiral staircase in search of food. I found a little café with a friendly Philippine woman with a good S.O.H., & I had a coffee, sandwich, & aspirin for my headache. Then I found the City Tour desk & told the woman I'd booked the 1.30pm tour. She told me to meet her there at 1pm. At 12.55pm I went back there & saw a sign saying *Gone To Lunch. Back In An Hour.* Just before I began to panic she turned up, true to her word, saying "I said I'd be here". She took me through Immigration. All to myself. Not only not a queue, but also she had to *find* someone to immigrate me! It was prayer time, & a time no planes come in or out. There's always *one* though, isn't there!!

Freshly stamped, she led me through to the main entrance lobby of the airport where I was to wait for the tour bus. When those automatic doors opened I was very glad I'd left my I.H outfit in the room!! Phew! It was hot and HUMID out there!! The few people who came in were wearing jeans & clothes that I'd have melted in. Mostly it was cleaners slowly sweeping & buffing the already shiny floor.

My desk tour-guide disappeared but came back about 10 mins before the bus – time for me to ask her some questions about Brunei. I was the only passenger from the airport & went by mini-bus to a hotel to pick up the others. Usually there's only a mini-bus crowd, but today we had to transfer to a bus. I scored the single front seat – an advantage to travelling alone! It was a 4 hour tour of the city & surrounds, & cost Aus\$75. It was a good tour too. Our 42 yr old tour leader who came originally from the Philippines in 1986, chatted cheerfully, telling us lots of facts & stats, with a little bit of gos thrown in about the Sultan's love-life, though I got the feeling that the Sultan & his family are somewhat revered. My still

camera decided to play up just before I left Perth, with just enough time for me to buy a disposable. I videoed a lot of the info, such as 70% Muslim etc, all living in harmony. Some very grand mosques, with gold leaf dome roofs. We saw the Palace entrance, but equally interesting was the man sitting on top of the water tanker with a hose, watering the plants as it slowly drove along, & the woman with the umbrella putting a note (parking fine)? Under someone's windscreen. The fountains & decorated footpaths outside these grand buildings, & inside a museum displaying all things royal, including a golden carriage & scores of model police in black uniform (Ghurkha's)?, & scores more in red uniform 'from the villages', all there to *pull* the carriage, as horses would in Pall Mall! It was an awesome sight! There was also a display, like looking into a large dolls house, of the rows & rows of red velvet chairs lined up in a grand hall for the Jubilee! 'Such opulence' is what I thought. An over-the-top display of wealth. It is a wealthy country. Oil & gas, mostly off-shore, is its main industry, & go-well-go SHELL has the monopoly. Wages & costs sound similar to Perth, if not slightly *less*. And they don't pay taxes! "What we earn we can keep" he said. The Sultan provides the opportunity for all citizens to buy land interest free, with 25 years to pay it off. There is not a rich & poor area. It's all mixed. There are many big houses, with neighbouring old wooden houses. The city 'centre' is small - just a couple of roads really, & nothing big or particularly high. Because it was a Friday, the Islamic holy day, all was quiet. Apparently the roads are usually congested. Everyone has cars. Because they can afford it. Very few ride bikes. Foliage is tropical of course, & it reminded me of a small Singapore.. The tour took us around the city & through semi-rural areas, passing several mosques, stopping at one, stopping outside the Palace, & going to the Crown Jewels of Brunei display & a museum of many things including the oil & gas industry & Islamic art. Then it took us to the Borneo River where there were lots of little water taxis buzzing about. We

boarded a boat big enough for all of us, & crossed to the water village where 30,000 people live in old wooden houses on stilts IN the water. These are the middle class, not the poor, & you cannot buy a house there – it is passed down to family members. Some don't *want* to leave. They loose a few houses to fire every year. You'd think it would spread like the Great fire of London! We got off the boat & walked along the unguarded jetties – maybe this is why they don't have alcohol; it would be very easy to walk off the edge!! Houses are very varied in their decoration, & the most attractive ones had bright paintwork & many potted plants. We went in one family home, where afternoon tea was put on. Black refreshing tea in a glass, & a rice thingy wrapped in a green leaf we were told to peel off. Biscuits, & the Asian 'jelly', coloured & flavourless. It was a privilege to see inside their home. Mum & her 7 kids (big families are common here); big home, wooden floorboards & ceiling need some maintenance! Looked out of the window & saw chickens in a cage over the water, & a cat in another cage. There is very low crime rate in Brunei, & the village people leave their cars parked on the other side of the river with no problem. It was then back to the boat & bus, back through the city to drop some passengers off at their hotel & the rest of us to the airport. Back through Immigration & down the spiral staircase for another shower! Gathered my goods & chattels around me & went off in search of food again. Another snack with the friendly Philipino waitress.

In the departure lounge the 21 yr old whipper-snipper approached me & said he thought he was sitting next to me again. But he wasn't. I had a more mature young woman from Sydney who's a costume designer with a theatre company. She loves her job & she was an interesting & positive person to sit beside! We did a little sleeping & a lot of talking (I know you'll find that hard to believe)...

I thought we were flying directly on to Heathrow, but we actually went to Dubai. Yes, Sue H.S, you were right!! Wish I'd known; I

could have stopped off & visited your daughter after all!! Some passengers knew we were going via Dubai, but another family from Perth who also booked with Flight Centre, were as surprised as I was! There was a storm out at sea & we had to fly *round* it. We did encounter a little turbulence, & saw lightening in the distance (does lightening strike planes)? Going round this storm was quite a detour – we were travelling W/S/W to K.L!! So about 20 hours after leaving Perth we were about 5 hours flying time away from it, 34,000 feet above KL! As my travel-mate said, ‘we’ve used our fuel quota’! Eventually, from the northern peninsular of Malaysia, we started to head N/W, finally in a direct line to Dubai. I’ve flown over & touched down in Dubai & Abu-Dhabi before, but foolishly never gone beyond the transit lounge. So much has changed in the last 30 years; from desert to city! There’s the super-highway that links the Arab Emirates now, & from the air I could see this road well lit, in an almost straight line, across a vast expanse of sand. It was the middle of the night, although I don’t know what time Dubai time. Dark anyway!! Until we approached the city the only traffic on the road had yellow flashing lights & I suspect were road sweepers. The traffic built up nearer the city, & wow! What a big city!! Dubai is now bigger than Perth, or certainly looks it from the air! And so *busy*! We were only there to refuel, but we all had to get off – fortunately *not* with all our hand luggage! As we filed out, someone was there to collect our boarding passes from Brunei. I couldn’t find mine, so they asked for my ticket. I couldn’t find that either!! Never did, so I think they must have taken it at Brunei as I had a one-way ticket & maybe *they* thought we were going straight through to Heathrow too!! Fortunately, they accepted my *itinerary*. I walked through the big & busy airport, & back around to Gate 8, to go through Departures. At the desk they gave me my itinerary back in exchange for their boarding pass. In the departure lounge young whipper-snippet came up to me again & asked if he could take my photo to show to Josh Byrnes, so Josh would

know who the ‘hello’ was coming from! At the entrance to the plane they asked for my boarding pass... They didn’t seem too perturbed that I didn’t have one & just shrugged & let me on! I slept almost all the way to Heathrow. Even through a meal!! I didn’t read one single word of anything the entire journey, & I slept better than I have ever slept on a plane before! I’d been so tired for *weeks*, that I shouldn’t be surprised, but the blindfold I wore over my eyes for the first time I think helped too. It’s really dark in there!!

Heathrow 6.30am local time. Whipper-snippet caught up with me again there too. I made my way to the National Express bus station, now at least, with a new *inside*, waiting room, still in designer grey, like the rest of Heathrow. My bus to Bournemouth left at 8.15am. I had 45 mins to wait, so it took me an hour from landing time to the bus station, & I’d gone straight through, but by the time you’ve been to the loo, exchanged money & waited for your luggage, time flies doesn’t it! Train from Bournemouth going west, I noticed so much WATER! The babbling brooks in full flood, just about bursting their banks! Fields awash! And Australia in a drought....

Got out at Wool, as there’s a taxi there & not at mum’s station. The taxi man said yesterday was a hurricane, pouring with rain, & the roads were flooded (several days later now & the wind is still out-of-character howling). But on my arrival, & bits in between, only puddles & blue sky. (well blue for England)!!...

Walked into mum’s place at 11am. 39 hours in transit. Felt like I hadn’t been away it is all so recent & familiar.

End of Adventure !!

