

TRIP AROUND THE WORLD

TAKEN ALONE BY IRMA M. KACKERT

October, November, December 1985

MY SECOND TRIP AROUND THE WORLD

Leaving Thousand Oaks, California on Thursday, October 22, 1985, I was transported by the bus service to Los Angeles International Airport, arrived at noon. I have done this world trip once before, while working in Saudi Arabia, at a hospital in Taif. I will be 70 years of age, in a few weeks. Proceeding to Pan Am counter in the airport, I checked my medium sized suitcase and the soft leather bag (that I purchased in Turkey a few years ago), each piece has a webbed strap around it, for security in case a bag would break open. I carry a back-pack and a shoulder bag, both of lightweight nylon fabric. My "wheels", the foldable suitcase carrier, I put into the red nylon bag, for carrying on the planes. My Round-The-World ticket was processed, passport cleared, etc., and the plane departed at 1:30 p.m. for Miami, my first stop. I travel alone, have done many, many trips by air, arranged this trip direct with the airline. I will visit my friends the Swans, who worked in Saudi when I did and are now at home in Florida It's pleasant, I am wearing my light weight suit and aqua color blouse. On arrival in Miami at 9:30 p.m. E.D.T. (loss of 3 hours due to time change) in darkness, I picked up my bags, put them on the wheels, went to the Delta Airlines counter and checked them to Tampa. I now had to wait until 3:50 a.m. for a flight, as I had missed all earlier flights out of Miami. There was no place to lie down, so had to sit and read. My paperback book was "Mayo Brothers", very interesting to me; when tired of reading I rested with head back and eyes closed. I have spent a lot of time in airports, waiting for plane connections.

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 23

The flight to Tampa was short, arrived at 4:35 a.m. As I was picking up my bags from the carousel, George Swan was approaching to meet me. We have a wonderful family friendship, he and Marie have returned from Saudi and are living in St. Petersburg, with their girls Tina and Kimberly. We have all been dear friends the past 4 ½ years, while working at the same hospital in Taif. They wanted me to visit them, as I start my world trip. I spent Wednesday and Thursday with them, we all recounted stories of old times spent together on the beach of the Red Sea, and all our friends there. On Wednesday Marie made a good spaghetti dinner, served with red wine, we recounted how George had his first try at scuba diving, in the Red Sea. He later became certified, as I had done.

THURSDAY OCTOBER 24

My friends drove me to Dr. John Kerr's house (who also had worked with us in Saudi), but they are on a cruise right now. We went out to Madeira Beach, walked through the boardwalk area, I treated them to a fresh fish lunch at "John's Place". It was an interesting area, took a few pictures. We walked along the beach, and I took a swim in the Gulf waters, which were nice and warm! In the evening we all attended a volleyball game, in which Kimberly played. Back in their home, I talked to friend Ginny Marx, another friend from the hospital in Saudi. I will see her and Dr. Ralph when I go through Germany, they will be stationed there at that time. I have friends now living in various parts of the world, and plan to see them on this trip, as I was invited to do. Later on, as we sat and talked of the days working in the hospital, George called Pat, in Texas. He has no contract in Saudi right now: his belongings are still there, for he expected to go back after the once-a-year trip back to U.S.(We all did that, specified in our contracts). Now he is trying to straighten out affairs in that matter, plans to return there. I spoke to him briefly, told him I was going around the world. My visit with Swans was so great, they consider me one of the family, and I am honored. I am George's godmother, he was baptized and confirmed in Taif, Saudi Arabia, in a quiet ceremony, for no religion except Islam is allowed in Saudi Arabia. We all retired after much discussion over the way many Western employees are leaving Al Hada hospital, because of some bad situations there now.

FRIDAY OCTOBER 25

I said my farewells to Kim and Tina, as they went off to school, for I won't see them again today. George and Marie offered to drive me to Venice, Florida, where I'll see my friend Anita Schuver, for a day. I paid them for gas, and also for my phone calls. We left about 9:a.m., after I repacked all items in my bags. I traveled in shorts. I had mailed a card to Mrs. Ben Moore, in Barbados, the mother of my neighbor Dave Moore. I have arranged to rent a room from her, while I do some scuba diving in Barbados.---We drove down Rt. 41, passed the old home and museum of Ringling Brothers Circus, at Sarasota. I was in there last January, with Charlotte Kerr, when I visited Florida.

It was a pleasant drive, sunny and a temperature of 82 F. We arrived in Venice at 11:00 a.m., Anita was so gracious, was happy to see us, prepared a lunch and a glass of wine. She enjoyed being with Marie, who is Canadian, and speaks French fluently. In conversation, they learned both came from the Gaspé Peninsula in Canada. They spoke French then, to each other, a happy experience for both. After the meal, we went to the Venice beach, looked around, Anita showed me the first apartment she had, when moving here from Thousand Oaks a few years ago. George and Marie left, I thanked them sincerely for their love and care. Anita and I renewed our past year happenings, as I washed the dishes. A little later she drove me to the Greyhound station nearby, I purchased my ticket to go to Fort Myers tomorrow at 6:00 p.m. My friends from Thousand Oaks, Jessie and Wilbur VanDeventer, now live there, will meet me. Anita and I went swimming in the club pool, and I gave her some more swim instruction, said she has been anxiously waiting for me to come here and give her more instruction. She remembered what I had taught her and is doing well in the pool. In the evening we played "Rummy Q", a new game for me.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 26

This morning was spent mainly at the pool, giving Anita more swim lessons. She is doing great, improved on her breathing in the crawl stroke. She learned treading water, swam all the way to wall at the deep end; then I had her slip into the deep end and swim to the other wall. I am happy she can swim now, for she has this fine pool so handy. Back at her apartment, we talked about a tentative plan she has, of her possibly coming back to Thousand Oaks next Spring for a visit, she would ask me to fly to Florida at that time and drive her car (and us) to Thousand Oaks. She would visit family and friends, and have her car to get around – it is just an idea, don't know if it will happen. At 5:45 p.m. she drove me to the bus station, which was very close, on Highway 41. The bus came at appointed time, I gave my thanks, she was appreciative of the swim lessons, both felt we enjoyed our visit together. The ride to Ft. Myers took only until 7:30 p.m., and on arrival there, friend Jessie Van Deventer was waiting for me, she drove to their place on Pine Island, Bokeelia. We chatted all the way, renewing our long, long friendship when we lived in Illinois. The air was warm, a bit humid, rain was promised. My husband and I had been to visit them before, in Florida, went fishing in the Gulf waters. Her husband Wilbur was at home, watching the 6th game of the World Series of baseball, between St. Louis Cardinals and the Kansas City Royals, an important game. We all gave hugs to each other, every one was happy – these friends are like part of my family, glad I could visit them on my way down to the Caribbean. I watched the game a bit, Kansas City won, so there will be another game tomorrow night. Wilbur's mother, Grandma Van, is not here this winter with them, she may come down later from Illinois, and the cold weather.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 27

It rained heavily during the night, I could hear it. In the morning I used their auto to attend mass at the Church of The Immaculate Conception, about 3 miles down the road. The church was full, as usual, winter visitors swell the normal attendance. I enjoy hearing mass in various places, when I travel. During the day rain fell most of the time, so we could not go fishing, but enjoyed each other's company – has been a long time since we were together. I phoned the Pan Am small commuter line, and made reservations for the next leg of my trip to Barbados, on Wednesday morning. In the evening we played cards, as we often did when all living in Illinois, "Springfield Rummy" and "Polish Poker". We always have fun together.

MONDAY OCTOBER 28

We went fishing today, just in the bay area, tried to go through the pass and into the Gulf proper, but the waves were too high. The storm Juan was traveling toward Louisiana, this was the cause, affected the west Florida coastal area. It was a bit rainy, but not bad. I caught 3 or 4 fish, nothing very big- the ladyfish was the largest, but they are not good to eat. Wilbur took my picture with it. I swam a bit, the water was 81° F, nice and warm, sun appeared off and on. After returning to their pier, Wilbur cleaned the fish, as he always does, and after putting things away, rinsing poles, etc., Jessie and I took a ride on the

bicycles. We toured the Island, which has many more homes built on it now, than the last time I was here.

TUESDAY OCTOBER 29

We went fishing again, but got few bites, everything was quiet – no fish to put in the box! For a meal I treated them to the good hamburger and key lime pie at the restaurant they like. That used to be an empty area, but now condominiums are going up, Pine Island is being developed more. Later, Jessie and I rode bikes again, rode around different areas of new homes, and waded in the sandy beach there. This is so great, to visit my friends again, before starting on my round-the-world trip. We kept in close touch all the years I was working in Saudi Arabia. In the evening I packed my bags, to be ready for early morning departure.

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 30

Wilbur and Jess did their usual exercises while I ate breakfast, then they drove me to the Ft. Myers airport. I checked in, then we had time for a cup of coffee together before I boarded the small PBA 8 passenger plane, to Miami. The fare was \$58, this segment of travel was not included in my world ticket. Flying from Barbados to Miami, and on to Europe, will be with that ticket. Some clouds were below as we headed north, but I could see the Everglades, where I had been before on a short trip. The flight was 50 minutes, I collected my 2 bags I had left at the airport, then checked them in at Pan Am desk, to Barbados. After securing a boarding pass I took care of changing my world ticket: it had been written Miami- New York- Amsterdam- , to Miami- London-Amsterdam, I did not want to go through New York, don't like Kennedy airport. I had to argue with the clerk a bit, but did get the change, did not have to pay a fee

At 1:15 p.m. boarding began and I had a window seat. A man and wife from Trinidad were seated next to me, they were pleasant. We took off at 2:45 Barbados time (one hour ahead) and flew over the flat city of Miami spread out below. Soon we were over Miami Beach, that strip of sandy area about 2 miles from the mainland that has been dredged and filled in, to make the long area of luxury hotels. Our family stayed there on our first trip to Florida, in about 1962. Tom and Mary Lynn were with us, Judy was in college. Looking down, the Atlantic waters were aqua color close to the white beaches, then deeper to bright blue, as the water deepened, it was a beautiful sight. I love the warm waters of the world. We are cruising at 29,000 feet, was just told the distance from Miami to Barbados is 1611 miles. Looking down now could see island of Bermuda, just about 8 minutes from the mainland. Later we passed over Nassau, Bahamas, the sky was clear with just a few white clouds. I could even see the bridge that connects Nassau to Paradise Island, I have been there, about 10 years ago. Later -- looked down at a long, grey strip of land lying in the azure blue and aqua colored sea, it's edges bordered with white sand, then different depths of the Atlantic waters showed shelf-like wavy areas of light, then darker, blue water. This was an amazing sight from above. The cruise ships from Miami and New York frequent these lovely islands of the Caribbean. We passed over Grand Turk islands, then Puerto Rico. These bits of land come up from the sea, and the shallows around them look

like aquamarine gems, lying down there in the blue. It is no wonder I love the warm seas and the corals in them. I am seeing the pure beauty of nature!

Darkness came on shortly before we descended, as we flew over Martinique could see lights below. Barbados is in the southernmost group of islands, off the east coast of South America. The landing was a bit bumpy, and I was glad we were safely down on the ground. At the airport I changed a \$50 travel check into 98 Barbados dollars, the fee was 2 dollars. They issue paper money, \$1 coins, 50, 25, 10 and 5 cent coins also. I went to the tourist booth, the lady there made a phone call to Mrs. Ben Moore, mother of Dave Moore, my next door neighbor. I had made arrangements to stay at her place, called The Shelter, in St James region. All of Barbados is divided into 8 counties, each with a saint's name. It is now a British commonwealth, had been governed by Britain for many years. The natives are all of the black race, many descendents of the British still live here, have businesses, etc. I picked up my 2 bags from the carousel, went through immigration with no problem. A taxi took me, for 30 Barbados dollars (\$15) To Mrs. Moore's residence. It is a large 2 story, old island type residence of wood frame, and there is a small cottage below it, right down on the beach. Her house is filled with old English antique furniture, beautiful dark wood pieces, the dining chairs had cane seats, the buffet held many silver serving pieces. She is an 80 year old typical English lady; her speech and manner remained as you would have seen, and heard, in the colonial days, was very pleasant. She provides rooms and meals for several older ladies, who can no longer live alone in their homes, I was told later that most people call her "Sister Moore", because of her service to people. She had several black servants who took care of the cooking and household chores. I was surprised to find this setting, it was just like stepping into the midst of an old English story. The house had a wide veranda, all across the front of the house.

It was dark, and I could not see much of the immediate surroundings, but could hear the surf pounding. She took me, with a flashlight, to the cottage, where I would be staying, it contained 3 rooms and bath, there was food in the refrigerator for my breakfast and she expected me to eat dinner each evening, with her and the ladies in the big house. She said a cocktail would be served about 7 each evening, and dinner would follow. After depositing my things I went up to her house, and a black servant prepared a rum, soda and ice cocktail for everyone, then dinner was served. The beautiful polished wood table was set for all of us, with antique china, there were open salt cellars, crystal "dumbbell shaped" serving spoon rests, and eight different pieces of silverware at each place. Several of the spoons were laid at the top of the plate area, the English style place setting. The meal was fresh vegetable salad and a casserole of meat and vegetables, topped with mashed potatoes, it was all so good! The dessert was ice cream and after finishing this, we went to the veranda, where coffee was served on a square china tray, that also contained a small cream pitcher and a container of unrefined sugar. This is typical in Barbados, for sugar cane is grown here and processed into light brown, not white sugar. At the dinner table, all the ladies had their bottles of pills they needed to take, at their plates – reminded me of a convalescent home. I'm glad she gave me the cottage to stay in, she knew I liked to rise early, and swim. I do this every day at home. After finishing my coffee, I went to my little cottage, unlocked it, figured out all the padlocks she had on the doors, took a shower and retired, being thankful I had made the trip o.k., so far.

THURSDAY OCTOBER 31

I was awakened a lot during the night by the sound of waves dashing up on shore, the night air was warm and I did go back to sleep. There were no mosquitoes; I thought there might be some. I awoke at 6:00 a.m., it was light, so I did not lay very long, I wanted to see the area outside. The cottage is just a few hundred feet from the water, there is a nice sandy beach, I went out and walked along it. A very large tree, with round, dark green leaves, stands close to the cottage. I had my suit on, and soon saw a native black girl in the water, with two little children. I spoke to them, they were pleasant, said they were "bathing in the sea". I swam for a short time, the water was warm and clear, it felt very nice. After this, I walked in a different direction, away from the cottage, found there were resort hotels in that direction, and people coming out to enjoy the sea. Then I went in the water again, in front of the cottage, swam out a way and found a coral head, explored it, found it was not as colorful as corals we saw in the Red Sea. Leaving the sea, I made my breakfast, coffee, egg, bread and a banana. "Sister Moore" put the food in the refrigerator, for she knew I liked to rise early, and swim. Breakfast in the big house was not until about 9:30 a.m. She expected me to have lunch, tea at 4:30 p.m. on the veranda, cocktail at 7:00 p.m., and then dinner, with them. Since all the occupants of the house were so old, I'm glad to be staying by myself.

In mid morning I phoned a couple of places to see about scuba diving, and found one diver who would take me down, be my dive buddy, had a shop at one of the hotels. He would pick me up at 2:30 p.m., do a dive, and would return me to my place, for a fee of \$30, or 64 B.D. I made the appointment, as I do want to dive here and compare the Caribbean corals with the Red Sea reefs. Lunch was served at 12:30 p.m., prepared by the two maids employed by Mrs. Moore. When it was ready, "Sister Moore" rang a bell telling me to come to the big house. I ate lightly, as I was going to scuba dive. The entrée was cooked chicken, served to each by Sister Moore. On the large sideboard were dishes of Bajan food: cooked sliced sweet potatoes, cooked carrots, breadfruit with sliced onions, beets and white beans. Dessert was cherry pie and ice cream (I refused the ice cream), everything was very good. This was my first taste of breadfruit, it was very much like potato, was good.

I prepared my things for the scuba dive, had my own mask, snorkel, booties, then waited on the lower porch. Soon Ferguson (Ferggie) drove up in a jeep, he was a native Barbadian black man, a divemaster, who had his shop next to the Miramar Hotel. This was north of Payne's Bay, where I am staying, and on the drive passed many, many luxury hotels and resorts with spacious tree covered grounds. At his shop I met his son, who also is a diver, and his wife, who stayed in the shop and cared for equipment; they were pleasant people. Ferggie had planned to take me only to the near, and shallow reef, but when I said I wanted to compare this area with the Red Sea, and that I had dived a lot, he told his son Sylvester, to get the bigger boat ready, put it in the water. He would take me to the "best reef". How nice! He provided fins, vest, tank, regulator, depth gauge. We rode a long way out in the open boat, the air was warm but windy. It had rained about an hour before, sky was still cloudy. The tanks were put on in the water, Ferggie got in first, Sylvester, who had driven the boat, stayed in it. I then slipped into the water, having already put on weight belt, vest, etc. We were in very deep water. Sylvester put my tank in the water, Ferggie put it on me

as I tread water. Then he put his own on, we tested regulator for good air flow into our mouths, when both were ready we descended. He had said the corals started at about 30 feet depth, and we would descend to about 60 feet, gradually, and look around. I did fine, was not at all apprehensive, though had not been diving for several months. I had a bit of trouble clearing left ear, so just descended slowly until I was comfortable. At about 60 feet, I could soon see the reef, it was not a sheer wall, but was built of big, solid corals, agrapora, brain corals, no staghorn or very fine types were seen. It varied in shades of tans and light browns. There were many huge fans, colorful in shades of lavender and purple, beautiful to see. They waved back and forth in the current. Gorgonian types, similar to deer antlers, were also huge and plentiful. I wished my dive buddy from the Red Sea was here to enjoy the sights. Many bush-type varieties of sponge were all over in one area – also found tube worms on hard coral. He made one go into it's tube, then I did the same with a couple of them, this is always fascinating as you only have to wave hand near, and the "flower" disappears into it's tube. They emerge again in about 60 seconds, I have timed them.

We swam along viewing the lovely sights, but overall, I felt the Red Sea was much better, more colorful, the corals were dull here, not pristine. There were many fish around, all the kinds encountered in the Red Sea where I have been diving for 4 years. Two times I saw the long, thin one like the coronet fish, that can change it's color when frightened – this is a camouflage. At one spot where we were on the floor of the reef, saw a sea cucumber, I pointed to it, he then turned it over with his dive knife. They are strange looking, like a long vacuum cleaner hose! There was a very strong current which we had to fight all the while, and after 45 minutes I tapped Ferggie and motioned UP, but also that I was o.k., but tired. So we slowly ascended. He said too, that the current was hard to fight, was greater than usual. I had seen, and compared corals, and after a short time, the reef was a repetition of species all the while we were down. The Gorgonians were superb, but no colorful soft corals were seen, like the beauties in the Red Sea. At the surface (Sylvester had followed our bubbles, in the boat) Ferggie unfastened my tank straps, took it off, his son pulled it into the boat. He took his own off, did the same with it. Then he boosted me, Sylvester took my arms, and presto! I was in the boat. There was no ladder. Then he hoisted himself in and we returned to his stand at the Miramar Hotel, so I did get a dive in the Caribbean, which is the real reason I came down here on my trip around the world. I felt I had a very good dive buddy, he is also a dive instructor. He drove me back, was talkative, and confessed that when he first saw me wondered what problem he might have, taking me down for a scuba dive, as I was pretty old for that sport! But, he said, "you surely did o.k., and knew what your were doing".

Back at my cottage, I showered, dressed, then had tea on the upper veranda with Sister Moore, and the other "oldsters", plus one of their daughters who dropped in for a visit. I'm sure these ladies are dear souls, but it is like being in a convalescent home when I'm with them. I have taught exercise classes to wheelchair patients for several years back in Thousand Oaks, am used to being with this type population. Sister Moore has a humpback, walks with difficulty, Dot has no teeth, masticates her food so slowly, Joan wears glasses "3 inches thick" and has an obstruction in nasal passages, that makes her sort of "snort". The other lady looks like death itself, she is so pale and white, with thin white hair held down tightly with a net. Being amongst them is really quite an experience.

After tea and nice conversation with Joan's daughter, I changed into a long dress, from Thailand, and went back up to the veranda for the 7 p.m. cocktail. This time I had a rum cocktail, shaken up heartily by Sister Moore. She and I shared the shaker full, 2 small glasses each, then it was dinner time at 7:30 p.m. The black male servant comes in for the evening, he serves the dinner. He also took a picture for me, of us all at the table. Quite a memento, I'm sure. I returned to my cottage, after unlocking the several locks to enter, and wrote in my journal. I believe this is about my 57th logged dive, I'll have to enter it when I get home again.

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 1

The rain was coming down when I awakened, and the sound of the sea washing up in waves on the shore was quite loud. The rain stopped about 7:30 a.m., I arose and did my exercises and then had my coffee and breakfast. Sister Moore was going into the downtown area today and had invited me to accompany her. She had hired her usual driver, Bob, a native Barbadian man, since she no longer drove her automobile. I needed to get to the Pan Am office, to change a flight time. The rain started again as we left, and it continued off and on all day. I was able to see a lot of the city of Bridgetown, as we drove to do the errands. In a bank, I exchanged some money, and she then introduced me to a female bank officer; it seems she is very well known here. She was wearing white gloves, pretty cameo earrings, a large white necklace, the epitome of a perfect English lady.

At the Pan Am office, I was able to get my reservation changed and will leave here tomorrow, and not wait until next flight on Wednesday. I have accomplished my scuba dive, and that is what I came here for. I'll spend a couple more days exploring Holland. I had arranged for a tour of the Harrison Caves in Barbados, in the afternoon, would be picked up at the Holiday Inn in the downtown area, so they left me in that area when Sister Moore was finished with her errands. She suggested I eat lunch at "The Pebbles", an open-air restaurant facing the sea, and next to the Holiday Inn. I did so, had the local King fish, breadfruit, potatoes, pumpkin fritter and some relishes. The waiter suggested the local drink of "golden apple juice", I had it, a lovely sweet tasting accompaniment to the meal. The rain had now slowed down to a drizzle, I went to the Holiday Inn lobby and was soon picked up by a person from the tour group. The drive in a bus was quite long, to reach the caves, went through the center of the island, I was able to see sugar cane fields and other agriculture. The island is only 24 miles long, and about 16 miles wide, so it is not very big. It is of limestone formation, and as rains go through the surface soil and drip through limestone, stalactites and stalagmites have been formed in the caves. These were first explored in 1967, now tourists are attracted there.

We sat in cars at cave entrance, after viewing a video explaining the formations, then the trams went on tracks all through many caves. Everyone had to put on yellow "hard hats", just in case any rock would fall. We saw waterfalls in several places, a lake, and small rivers. Entering one great hall, which was 100 feet high, we saw formations hanging from the ceiling, and also some coming up from the floor. They were truly beautiful, some looked like chandeliers. The walls glistened, as water ran slowly over them, we left the trams a couple of times, to take pictures. A friendly man named Nick, sat next to me, had a very thick brogue, said he was part Scotch, part Greek, was talkative and attentive. This was

the second “Nick the Greek” man I have met on world tours. Greek men are always friendly, to a lady alone. The tour was very worthwhile, was educational.

On return to the Shelter, I stopped in a small shop nearby and bought a Bajan doll, all handmade of cloth, with a black face and native dress. It was so cute! Will be my souvenir from this country. Sister Moore had invited several guests to tea, and asked me to join them, so I sorted a few things to pack later, changed into a long dress and went up to the veranda. There was a couple from Canada, two lady friends, and an 86 year old very proper, English gentleman. He said he was born in Barbados when it was under English rule, and speech was like that in England, hard for me to understand. Tea was served in Japanese flowered cups and saucers, just like I have with my antiques at home. Little sandwiches, cheese toast strips, cup cakes, a sponge cake, and filled coffee cake slices were served – what a selection! Sister Moore loves to have guests in for tea. I visited with everyone, then excused myself, went down to the cottage, took in my t-shirt and dive booties which I had hung on the porch, still trying to get them dry. At 7:15 p.m. went back to the big house, for dinner. We were served the usual rum cocktail by this gracious lady, before dining. Especially for me, she had the servant prepare flying fish steaks, and cucu, a Bajan specialty. This consists of corn meal and chopped vegetables made into a loaf and cut into squares for serving. Next to my plate she had placed 3 peppermint pieces, locally made, and wrapped so I could take them with me on my trip. So my last dinner here was sort of special, for me.

After dinner I paid my bill with her, and gave her an extra \$15, for she took me different places in town, and I didn't have to call a cab. Back in my cottage I undertook the challenge of getting everything into my two suitcases and the two shoulder bags, but I finally accomplished it. Knowing I will have different temperatures as I travel, I put the warm weather clothes toward the bottom, and wore the warm brown pants, brown blouse and sleeveless weskit, knowing it will be cold in London and Amsterdam. Finishing all this I showered and retired, enjoyed hearing the loud surf outside the cottage.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 2

I had the alarm set for 5:00 a.m., but awoke at 4:00, and lay in bed listening to the sound of the surf, I do like to hear it. On arising it did not take me long to get ready to leave, for I had packed everything. My dive booties were still damp inside, because of the rainy day yesterday, so I stuffed paper towels in them and hope they will be all right, for I won't see them again until I'm in Amsterdam. Damp articles in a suitcase are not good. I put the belts around the 2 suitcases, put last things in the carry-on bags and ate some cereal. The taxi driver that Sister Moore had ordered for me, was prompt, arrived at 6:30 a.m. and I was all ready to leave. I said my good-bye and thank you, to Sister Moore, and drove to the airport. This time the driver went through Bridgetown all along the south coast, so I was able to see a different area again. At the airport I paid the driver 30 BD, the departure tax of 16 BD, and checked my luggage through to Amsterdam. I did not change any money here, will do it in Miami where I change planes, and will also have to claim my luggage and clear it through customs, then it will be sent to Amsterdam from Miami. We departed Barbados at 8:45 a.m. and flew over the Caribbean islands again.

We flew at 28000 feet, I was able to see the islands below, in the blue sea. The captain announced Puerto Rico was below us: I could pick out the mountainous terrain that my husband John and I drove through, when we spent a week there several years ago. Now I could pick out San Juan, the large city, but clouds hung over the mountainous area nearby, I think that would be the “rain forest”, where it rains very often, when the rest of the island was sunny. We explored that area. Puerto Rico is much larger than Barbados, with a mountainous area in the middle, and white sandy beaches at it’s shores. The captain also announced the Dominican Republic was below, it was very long, I had no idea that it was so large and I didn’t see any large cities, part open areas and part mountains, but did note a deep escarpment at one end. It reminded me of the road in Saudi Arabia, that we had to take going between Taif and city of Jedda, when we went to the beach, it was such a steep road. As we passed over the end of the Dominican Republic below, it was an amazing sight to see the earth end, and the blue sea everywhere, as far as the eye could see. When flying, I always ask for a window seat as I like to observe everything, and today the sky was clear with just a few fleecy clouds.

Arriving at Miami from the south and east, over the Atlantic, could see Miami Beach and the bays, then the whole city, squares of streets and houses spread out below. Landing at the airport, we had to walk a long way up and down on escalators, through a great hall, and finally to customs area. I had to point out my bags, did not have to open them, a porter took them to be re-checked to Amsterdam. This was an easy clearance through customs, sometimes it takes a long time. I proceeded to the main terminal area and checked in at Pan Am counter, got a boarding pass for the next leg of my trip. The agent suggested I should sign up for the Frequent Flyer account, which cost \$25, and all my miles would accumulate toward a future ticket. I applied for it. The airport was full of people, music was heard all over, big bunches of balloons hung around, everything was festive. I learned that it was an Open House celebration, for the one year anniversary of the new airport. Many free items were being given away, there were dancers from various island countries doing the Limbo, and the Meringue, to the music of the steel bands. There were free drinks, free bananas, it was an unusual day, so my waiting time was not boring. I had time to call Marie Swan, as I promised I would: she had good news for George had secured the job he had interviewed for when I visited them last week. They are happy!

At 5:30 p.m. I boarded my next plane, a 747 bound for London and Amsterdam. It was very full. I had a window seat again, but only saw the lights of Miami below as we took off at 6:00 p.m. This would be a long flight, lasting all night. I had a German couple next to me, he was large and spread out over the seat a bit, but it was not a problem, and they were friendly. I had white wine, which was gratis with the meal. There was a movie shown, I didn’t try to watch it, just took off my shoes and put on the soft “nap socks” provided. I slept fairly well.

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 3

Breakfast came at 5:30 a.m., the sky was still dark but soon lightened and I could see the sunlight beginning to show. But a large layer of clouds was below us, we descended through it, saw land, it was England! In 25 minutes we landed at Heathrow Airport, the sky was now clear, temperature was 20C. This was quite a difference from the Miami air. We

were ushered into the transit lounge, did not have to collect luggage. I noted many Indian nationals and several Arab families also. The women had faces covered with the black mask, were wearing abayas, a man had on a black thaube, white gutra and the igol atop it – this type clothing was so familiar to me, as I had just lived in Saudi Arabia for almost 5 years. At the telephone center on wall nearby, I made a phone call to Virginia's place. She answered the phone, it was so nice to reach her easily and hear her voice. We made arrangements for me to come back to London in a few days, and visit her, she is anxious for us to get together. She is now working in a private home here. Taking off from Heathrow we flew north and east, over England, clouds obscured the view, but in a short time we were over the Netherlands, and the sky was clear, I could see many canals in the agricultural land. This flat land is below sea level, dikes are built to hold back the sea. The airport itself is 3 feet below sea level. It is an historic land, there are still houses and bridges that were built in the 16th century, seen in Amsterdam. The city started as a trading center, ships from the far East sailed here with silks and porcelain objects, also tea, and traded for goods from European countries. The West Indies Trading Company sent ships, built warehouses, which are still here in Amsterdam. The houses were built of brick, are very narrow and 4 to 6 stories high. The stairways inside are narrow and winding, so a high cornice extends from the top, called a "furniture hook", ropes are let down to a barge below holding furniture, they are tied to the pieces which are then pulled up and through a large window, to the floor desired. This is ingenious!

After landing at the airport, I took a bus to the center of town, and the train station. Here there was a very large information bureau, and I obtained a hotel room right across from the station. I wanted to be close to the old district. It was now afternoon, and I found the ticket office close by, to take a cruise on the canals of Amsterdam. We floated through them for about 2 hours, the guide aboard gave good information about the different areas, and the glass sides and dome gave very good viewing. The air was cold, sky was grey, and I hope the pictures I took will be good. The bases of a couple of towers we passed, were built in the 15th century, and high monuments were added in the 1700's. As we went under one bridge, I noted the date 1649 inscribed on it. Passing all the old, tall houses, I looked for "furniture hooks" up above, and did see them. We did go all the way out to the harbor area, saw the large cranes for loading and unloading ships.

After the cruise, I found a restaurant, had a meal of local food, called "hot meat and soose" and vegetables, plus apple cake. It was now dusk, so went to my room, showered and got comfy – then read a bit, and made my travel tape for the last country I visited.

MONDAY NOVEMBER 4

I slept soundly, awoke once in very early a.m., went back to sleep and the next thing I knew it was 8:15 a.m. and very bright outside. I guess going without sleep for 24 hours, as I traveled, made me sleep long this morning. The sky was clear, no more clouds around. After eating breakfast I went to the tourist bureau across the street (forgot to mention I did my exercises first, missed them yesterday) and obtained information about going to some small village nearby. I always like to get out of the big cities when I travel, and see some rural culture. I was told Volendam would be interesting to see, it was a ½ hour bus ride, was right on the ocean shore. The bus stop was in front of my hotel, I watched for No. 110,

got on when it came, the ticket was 8 gulden (the local money). Riding through Amsterdam, I was able to view different areas, noted that newer residences are large apartment buildings. Soon we were in the country, the land was all very flat and green, saw cattle grazing. Drainage ditches in straight lines, divided the crop areas and the grazing fields. There were very fat sheep in some, at first I thought they were pigs because they were so fat and round, but on observation found they were sheep. I guess I am used to the scrawny, thin sheep in Saudi Arabia, where their food was only dry brush and very little dry grass. There were wide canals along the road, extending from one village to another. In one small settlement, houses of brick were built along the canal, and boats were tied at each landing. I understand one can travel all over Holland on the canals. It would be nice to do that, but at a warmer time of the year.

Reaching Volendam I exited the bus and was told to walk straight ahead, on the brick street, to the waterfront. The houses I passed were made of brick, small, and looked very neat, with white curtains at the windows. I passed the POST (post office), went in, bought some stamps so I can mail cards. I then walked on, found some shops, went up the embankment road, the dike, and found more little businesses, and ships for local fishermen, tied at the docks. I passed many gift shops selling handmade lace, delft blue pottery, and local items including lace headdresses and costumes worn in past years. Four boats to the Island of Marken were moored here and I asked about going there, but was told they were in service only in warm months. It was quite cold, though sunny – I had on the red plaid wool pants, a sweater under my red waterproof jacket, plaid wool cap (that I got in Austria), wool scarf around my neck, and gloves, so I was comfortable. There were 2 men getting their nets ready, on their fishing boat, I learned they would go out very early in the morning to drop them in the sea. I talked with them, got on the boat and took their picture, they were pleasant.

Passing an open-front eatery where a man was selling fish ready to eat, I stopped, bought some fried fish. He warmed it in a little oven, served it with bread, I ate it steaming hot and enjoyed it. He had many varieties, all freshly caught, also fresh and pickled herring, and eel. Fish is the staple food here. After eating, I stopped in a gift shop, the lady in charge had on the old style black dress, light striped apron, a salmon colored necklace, typical of garments worn here in the past. She was very friendly, said she had raised 10 children, all married now – she likes to ‘be busy, be strong’, and helps out sometimes in the shop which is owned by one of her daughters. I asked permission to take her picture, she stepped out in front and I did so. On my way back to the bus station I stopped in a grocery store, as I like to see the local produce. A different vegetable was a very curly cabbage, which they cook. The clerk had some in a cold case, that was all chopped up, ready to use, he does that to save time for women when cooking their meal. I bought some local cheese, an apple, and some glassine envelopes of local spices. Many people were riding bicycles in Volendam, and I noted a man on one, he had a little child in a seat right in front of him, not in the back, as we do in U.S.A. I think that is a better idea, having the child in front. I even saw 3 people, on a bike, where a woman was sitting on a seat in back, plus the man and child. I rode the bus back to Amsterdam, feeling happy I had experienced this nice village.

The afternoon in Amsterdam was spent going through the shopping area near my hotel, and another area a few blocks distant. Entering a department store to view merchandise, all signs were in the Dutch language, but many people spoke English. Turning off the main street, I found myself on a narrow street that is noted for attracting the young people, saw many “punks” walking around. The stores displayed the latest styles of apparel the young wear – one girl I passed had an unbelievable hair style---the top of her head had hair, it was sticking out in straight sticks, the bottom half of the head was all shaved, she looked really weird. Leaving this area, I stopped in a café, with pretty white curtains in the window, and had a glass of the local Heineken beer, it was good. I was sitting next to a Dutch couple, who spoke English. They had just come back from a vacation on Canary Island, where it was nice and warm, they didn't like the cold here. It was nice to have some conversation. Near my hotel, as I walked, I stopped in another eatery and had a different local seafood, mussels. Can't remember if I had them once before, in Belgium; these were deep fried, I ate them but would not want them too often, they were served with cheese, a good bread, and wine. Now it was 5:00 p.m., I was ready to go to my room, shower, get warm and cozy, write in the journal, talk in my tape, and retire. Before doing that, though I had inquired about going back to England by bus and ferryboat, or the train and ferryboat. I will probably do that on Wednesday.

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 5

Surprise! When I looked out the window after awakening, saw that it was raining. It was such a nice day yesterday, and I planned to stay in Amsterdam today and explore more, but now the weather is against that. After dressing I went out, inquired about taking an all day tour of nearby Holland, but the agency said there were only 3 people who had inquired about that trip, the weather was bad, so it was cancelled. I went back to my room, finished packing, decided to take the train to Rotterdam, and look around that city. I put the 2 cases on the wheeled carrier (what a handy thing that is) and walked across the street to the train station, in the light rain. I was dressed warmly and had on the red rain jacket, noted the air was much warmer than it was yesterday. I bought my ticket, and took the next train, which came in about 20 minutes. The ride took just about an hour, was through green countryside and along canals, noted a few windmills along the way. The rain continued all the way. We passed the Delft area, also the Hague, where international politics are carried on.

Arriving at Rotterdam, it was still rainy and a strong wind was blowing. I inquired about a sightseeing trip in the city, was told there was none in winter, for the weather is too bad. So, I decided to take the train to the suburb of Berendrecht, where friends Peter and Ellie Siebers (maiden name Broodman) live. I had their address, but no phone number and the information clerk at the Schipohl airport had tried to find their phone number for me, by calling different Siebers names listed in Rotterdam, but she had no luck. Since I was in their area I took the 15 minute train ride to Berendrecht, and would go to their home. There was no taxi at the station, when I got off, but a lady there called one for me. The driver took me to their address in this small town, I asked him to wait for me. At their door, a ceramic plaque nearby had their names, so I knew I was at the right place. I knocked on the door, Peter answered, with a surprised look at seeing me there. I paid the taxi driver 7.70 G, and thanked him. Ellie was not at home, she works in her own dressmaking shop, where she employs 2 or 3 ladies. Peter called her, told her of my surprise visit. The reason I could not

find their number listed, she explained, is that she has it in her maiden name, Broodman. Ellie said she would come home, for she wanted to see me, I explained I had only an hour or two, for I wanted to be back in Rotterdam tonight and take the bus/ferryboat to London. Peter looked old, and not too well, stated he has pains in arms and other joints, severe arthritis.

When Ellie arrived shortly, I hardly recognized her, for her hair was now black, and she was always a platinum blonde in the years I knew them. She looked very well, said they sold their home in Rotterdam, and are renting here. Both were happy to see me, had wondered what I was doing, since leaving Saudi Arabia. This family was very good to me, when I worked there, even took me into their home for three weeks, after my accident and I left the hospital, but could not live by myself yet, gave me love and care. Eric has a job, they showed me his, and brother Fred's room, which held a wonderful collection of shells and corals from the Red Sea, all contained in a lovely cabinet Peter built. Fred is still in army service, neither boy is married yet. They were both young teenagers, when in Saudi Arabia with their parents. We spent time exchanging news of the mutual friends we had, they wanted to know where different people were, who were from various countries, employed in Taif, had completed contracts and gone to their homes. I knew of several and related news of them. Peter is not working for any company right now, would like to secure an overseas position again, but has not been able to obtain a visa to Saudi Arabia. Also, he said, not many companies are offering overseas jobs right now. He has many, many plants all over the house, and a garden outside, also a small aviary, which contains many birds. These are his hobbies. I said I must leave soon, Ellie gave me some tangerines, to eat on my travels tonight. She drove me to the train station, I bought my ticket back to Rotterdam, and caught the next train. I am so happy I was able to visit them briefly. Arriving at the Rotterdam station, I made reservations for the bus/ferryboat trip, over the English channel, the bus would pick up passengers just outside a hotel nearby, at 8:30 p.m. I had dinner in the restaurant at the station, and waited there until departure time. I could fly to London, but in my travels around the world, I like to experience different ways of transport. Hope it is not too rough, on the water! I will be let out in London at Grosvenor Gardens, which is very close to Victoria station, I am familiar with this area.

Waiting for the bus to come was a hardship, for it was very windy and cold, occasionally a rain shower came down, two other young men were taking the bus too, we stood together, were there at 8:30 p.m. Finally, at 9:00 p.m. it arrived, we got on. I had a double seat to myself, which was an advantage; I was dressed warmly for the damp, cold weather, and sometimes I was too warm, but mainly the ride was not bad. We traveled south, all the way down through Holland to the border with Belgium, where the port was located. This was Seebrugge, the departure point. The immigration officer came onto the bus and checked all passports – that was much better than having to stand in a line at airports! Then, buses, trucks, autos all drove onto the ship, the passengers had to get out first, and walk onto the ship, to either of two passenger decks. There were many lounge chairs in the main area, a gift shop, a bar, cafeteria, and theatre were also nearby for passengers, but no movie would be shown tonight. I settled myself in a large lounge chair, with a table in front of it, prepared to relax. Our luggage had been left on the bus. My rolled-up knit coat served as a pillow, I was comfortable and slept quite a bit during the night. I had taken 3 Dramamine tablets, and felt lucky, for they worked. Very many people were seasick, I could hear them

using their sea-sick bags, and I felt sorry for them, glad I was o.k. I used to become seasick, when out deep sea fishing in the Gulf, off of Florida.

About 5:30 a.m. I looked out my window and could see lights along a shore, the motion of the boat eased somewhat, and I presumed we would dock soon, but it took another 45 minutes before we did so. I bought a cup of coffee at the cafeteria, felt o.k., but noted a lot of haggard looking people, who had been sick from the motion of the ferryboat. I heard later the wind velocity was 10 knots per hour. When the call came for us to go down to lower decks, for our buses, I went on one stairway, couldn't find my bus – tried another way, same result. I was getting a little nervous, I noted a man who was on my bus, he was searching too. The call came for the trucks and buses to drive off, they went without us! The man knew what to do, just walk off the ferryboat, and over to the immigration building, for England. There we had to produce passports, fill in the usual papers for customs, pick up our luggage which was now on a carousel, and re-enter our bus. It was parked nearby. No one had to open their bags, they were placed on the bus for us. We had landed at the white cliffs of Dover, England.

The ride to London took us until 9:30 a.m., went smoothly, but traffic on the streets of the city was very bad, and slow. The sun was out but the wind was blowing very hard, leaves were falling from trees, I guess it was a typical fall day. We finished our trip and were left at the Euroways office, 152 Grosvenor Gardens, each person collected their bags. A young clerk in the office phoned my friend Virginia, for me, that was very nice. She answered the phone, told me to stay at the office, she would take the Metro and meet me there, in a very short time. I offered to take a cab to her place of employment, but she said many streets are closed today, because the Queen is going to Parliament, in this area and the traffic would be awful. I waited, and soon my dear young friend Virginia Aubry, vivacious as ever, walked in to greet me. We then went, by subway, to the residence where she is employed.

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 6

As I type this date, I recall my son was born on this day 43 years ago.

Arriving at his residence, I met Mr. Norris, the elderly English gentleman who employs Virginia, also Jane, a nurse, and Christine, a housekeeper. He has a spacious, elegant (in an old fashioned way) apartment at 48 Kensington Mansions, Trebouir S.W. 5, London. This is in the Hyde Park area. I was quite tired, and after having a cup of tea and conversation with Jane, from New Zealand, Christine, from Italy, and Virginia, from France, I was encouraged to lie down for a rest – I heartily agreed. Later on, when I got up at 1:30 p.m., Virginia had prepared a nice lunch; it was served in the beautiful dining room, with silver serving pieces. The dark wood in the room, and the polished furniture, were impressive, and I had changed from travel clothes to more dressy attire, so I felt more fit. I am making this trip around the world, with only 2 suitcases and 2 shoulder bags, so don't have a great variety of clothing with me, but did have suitable attire.

Later in the afternoon, Virginia and I walked to a shopping area nearby. The weather here was much more mild than in Rotterdam, partly cloudy, but pleasant, and I was comfortable wearing the black raincoat, with the inner lining. This area has large buildings containing

residential flats, there are no yards between the buildings, and there are 2 tall pillars at the front porches. Sometimes there are small iron railings at the edge of porch roof. Mr. Norris has the whole floor of one of these buildings, reached by the old “cage-type” elevator, which was small, and only one suitcase and myself fit into it! Virginia brought up the other one. All the kitchen cupboards, sink, etc., were very old style, nothing was modern, but efficient. The foods were prepared here and meals were served in the dining room. I had expected to take a hotel, near the residence, but Virginia had permission from Mr. Norris for me to stay with her, as she had an extra twin bed in her large room. Staying with her, would give us more time to be together, and enjoy each other’s company. After shopping, we took the Tube at Victoria station and exited at Earl’s Court, to reach Mr. Norris house. The days I spent here with her were so very happy for us, we are years apart in age, but always get along so well and have happy memories of living together in the same apartment in Saudi Arabia. We worked in Al Hada hospital there, a new one for the King, the Royal family, and the Military. We also made a trip to Egypt together, while on vacation from our jobs in Saudi. After returning to the apartment, Mr. Norris offered us a cocktail, before dinner, we had that in the living room and enjoyed conversing together. He was interested hearing about Saudi Arabia, a country with a very different culture.

Later, at bedtime I was lying on the same bed where Virginia had me take a rest after I arrived, now I was ready to retire. She showed me pictures of her grandparents and her deceased mother, told me stories of her childhood. My eyes were falling shut!! So she was going to have me get up, take the other twin bed, but I collapsed into the one I was in, said “I’m so nice and warm, I’m staying in here”. We laughed, I tossed a pillow at her, she said “I pinched her bed” – I retorted in fun that I slept a whole year on the floor at our apartment at Al Hada, because of poor, poor mattress in my room, while she had a better one. We have always had lots of laughs together, then we settled down, gave hugs, and slept.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 7

I awoke with a “thick” throat and runny nose, guess I got chilled in that cold rain before leaving Holland, plus doing a tiring trip on bus and ship, but I didn’t feel bad. This day, Virginia guided me on a trip to see the Tower of London area, and the Crown Jewels which are kept there. I paid both our fares wherever we went, and also the entrance fees, for Virginia has had some bad times in her life lately. After leaving Saudi Arabia, she married her fiancée, went to Kuwait with him,, then to Abu Dhabi, but it was a poor marriage, she is getting a divorce, and is paying for it all herself. She has just completed a course in teaching at Montessori schools, which she also paid for, and doesn’t have any money to spare. It was sunny and quite mild today, was comfortable wearing the beige jacket over a sweater and pants, felt I was experiencing good weather in England at this time of year. I took a lot of photo slides, everything was interesting.

The Tower, and other buildings, is a very old fortification and prison, where English history was made in the years 1400 to 1700’s. Political prisoners were tortured, or kept in dungeons, or sometimes in isolation in a high tower for a long time, before they were executed. One tower was called the “bloody tower” – terrible beheadings were often done in those days. King Henry beheaded two of his wives here. Also, Sir Walter Raleigh was held captive for many years in a tower, in that time he wrote the first World History book, his

knowledge gleaned from a trip he had made by ship, to America, the new land. The crown jewels, scepters, crosiers, etc., from English royalty, all encrusted with huge diamonds and other jewels, were gorgeous to behold, were in a highly guarded building. The largest jewel, I believe, was the diamond “Star of Africa”, on the handle of a scepter. The gold embroidered robes, used when a new King or Queen is enthroned, were also displayed in glass cases. Security was really tight everywhere around these objects. It was a very interesting morning, and I noted we were next to the Tower Bridge, which I took photos of, in 1980, on my first trip to London, a stopover on the way from Los Angeles, to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

We returned on the subway, in time for Virginia to prepare lunch for Mr. Norris, at 1:30 p.m. This is one of her duties. Later on, we walked to a travel agency nearby, and reserved my ticket, for leaving here on Saturday, and going to Frankfurt, Germany. In the evening Virginia and I went out for a fun night, to an American style, Texas Bar-b-q restaurant, in London! We walked there, through the London streets, filled with people. At the bar, we had a drink while waiting for a table, then we had dinner. It was a lively, busy place, with loud music, we had to talk loud to hear each other. But we enjoyed being together, also joined in singing American songs played by men with banjo, and guitar. Virginia knew all the popular songs, also speaks very good English. We walked back to the apartment, and sat awhile with Mr. Norris, he watches TV programs until about 11:00 p.m. He thought it was nice that we two friends went out together tonight. I offered to take he and Virginia out to lunch tomorrow, in appreciation for staying in his home. He offered a glass of wine, but I did have beer with my Mexican food tonight, so took none. I had the chicken burrito dinner, Virginia ordered enchilada and we shared tastes with each other – Mexican food, in London!

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 8

My voice was almost gone when I awoke – guess we talked so much last night. My nose was not runny anymore, was glad for that, really felt o.k. This morning, after toast and coffee, Virginia and I walked quite a long way, to the double-decker bus stop, so I could see some of London from the famous red bus. Again I paid the fares, was happy she could guide me on these tours. We rode past districts I had often heard of, to the famous Harrah department store, a very old, high-class landmark in London. It reminded me of Marshall Field store in Chicago, which I visited often when we lived in Illinois. We wandered around several departments, then went into the foods section – this was outstanding! There were so many different areas with breads, vegetables, dressed poultry, delicatessen, cheeses, meats of all kinds, sausages, hams hanging from racks, sides of cured pork, counters and counters full of meat, all tended by lady butchers in white coats and white brimmed hats. There were cookies, pies, biscuits, candies, dried fruits – everything one could think of, and displayed beautifully. At a café we had a health drink before we left, I had a banana shake, Virginia had carrot juice. We returned on the subway, again got off at Earl’s Court, walked the 1½ blocks to the apartment.

Mr. Norris was all dressed in a suit and necktie, ready to go out for lunch. He walks very poorly and had ordered a car and driver, to accept my invitation of “out for lunch”. He, Virginia and I rode to Covent Gardens, an old market place in London, in the luxurious car.

We passed many historic places, Buckingham Palace, Wellington House, Hyde Park, saw many statues, etc., the driver pointed out places of interest, since I was a tourist here, and he didn't want me to miss them, which I thought was nice. We walked a bit in Covent Gardens which is now a shopping area for tourists: it used to be a large vegetable market where housewives had to come for fresh foods often, there was no refrigeration then. Mr. Norris (who has business interests in the beer industry and pubs) took my arm often to aid him, in stepping up curbs, seemed very happy to be "out and about". He wanted to go into a "real" English pub, he said, and pointed one out. We had a beer there, the place was full of men, and a few ladies, who were office workers on their lunch time. He said this was a typical British pub, most of the men stood and ate, at a round shelf on pillars throughout the place. There were a few tables. Next we walked on, went into a restaurant named "Brahms & Liszt", named for famous composers. We ate lunch, the food was good, but music was too loud, so for dessert we left and went to another place across the street for cappuccino coffee and dessert. Again, he enjoyed it all, and seemed to like having the attention of two ladies, then had Virginia call for the same car and driver. We rode back by different streets, saw more places I've heard of. So, I was happy to treat Virginia and Mr. Norris, also I enjoyed seeing more of London with them. I suppose it is lonesome for this old English gentleman, a widower, and not in the best of health, to be in his home with memories of the past, and not too many friends left to visit him. He thanked me, said it was very sweet of me to give him this nice afternoon.

Virginia and I had planned on going to Mass at a church not too far away, to start at 7:15 p.m. We were just about ready to go out the door when the phone rang, and it was for me! It was some other friends who had worked at Al Hada hospital when we did, Dr. and Mrs. Britt Marie Atterhog who lived in Sweden. They had called me from their home, before I left on this trip, I told them where I was going, and gave them Virginia's phone number. They were visiting in London right now, and decided to try and get in touch with me, would be leaving on Sunday. We did have a nice conversation, talking about days together in Saudi Arabia; they had been shopping today too, were in Harrod's store about the same time Virginia and I were. Wouldn't it have been a coincidence, if we had run into them in the store? They gave me an invitation to come to their home, anytime I am in Sweden, which was very nice of them. After finishing our conversation, it was too late to go to church, so we stayed at the apartment, and I finished my packing, as I leave London tomorrow.

The weather today was cloudy and there were sprinkles off and on, but no real rain, it was just cool. This home we are in has central heat, furnished through radiators, but like most English houses, the rooms are not very warm and everyone wears a sweater. There are electric heaters too, beside the radiators, in the living and dining rooms, they don't furnish much heat. People do not seem to be as intent to modernize their homes, as we are in America, and are not bothered by any inconveniences. There often was not enough hot water in the faucet for washing dishes, more had to be heated in a teakettle – but I don't call that a hardship as I had to do that, when I was growing up. I finished packing before retiring, and made plans for tomorrow. Virginia does not work on Saturday, so she said she would go with me, on the subway, to Victoria station, then we would take a train from there to Gatwick airport, where I board my plane. That would be very helpful to me, as I have the suitcases and shoulder bags to manage.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 9

We arose at 7:00 a.m., I bathed in that big, long bathtub, dressed, and had breakfast of eggs, toast and coffee. I said my good-bye to Mr. Norris, thanked him again and gave him a hug. He did the same to me, kissed my cheek lightly, said he enjoyed talking with me, and to come again. I gave hugs to Jane and Christine, they were pleasant ladies. We put the large suitcase on the wheels, carried the other and made our way to Gatwick airport, which is quite a way out of central London. Arriving there, found there was a delay in my flight, on Philippines Airline. It was due to depart at 11:40 a.m. Virginia stayed with me, until I left about 12:40 p.m., both agreed we were happy to have this visit together. LATER: I'm on the plane now, to Frankfurt, a 747, which was quite empty and would continue from Frankfurt to India and the Philippines. It took off through thick clouds, we quickly ascended above them, flew awhile as we were served a cold lunch, and soon started to descend. The flying time was only 50 minutes, soon I could see land below, it was Frankfurt. We landed safely, and I prepared to get off, then had a big surprise! My red nylon shoulder bag, containing the wheels for luggage, and a couple of other things, was missing. On arrival at my seat, as I boarded, I had put it under the seat ahead of me, and the blue bag on top of it. Then I went to the lavatory, before takeoff. Noting it was missing, I asked the stewardess if she had taken it, she had not. While I was in the lavatory, the man in the seat ahead of me noted it, thought some passenger getting off had left it, gave it to the purser, and he handed it to the ground crew below, just before we took off. Now it was in London, and I am in Frankfurt! I was upset. The purser had me wait at the desk of Philippine Airlines, in the terminal, as the flight manager was busy with boarding passengers en route to Manila, that wait took 45 minutes. I was then escorted to the manager's office where he tried to contact my friends, Dr. Ralph and Ginny Marx by phone. I was to go by train from Frankfurt, to Landstuhl, Germany, and stay with them. Their phone number was in that red bag. He tried Information, spoke to a person by name of Marx, but it was not the right one. Then he called London 3 or 4 times, trying to find out where my bag went, but had no luck. Finally, after searching my purse, I found Dr. Marx number on a paper in it; he called, Ginny answered, and he told her what had happened. His plan was to have me stay overnight in a hotel near the airport (at my own expense), and maybe the bag would come in on another plane in the morning. I said vehemently, (1) would not travel out of Frankfurt on a train, at night (2) could not travel anywhere without a luggage carrier (3) refused to pay my own hotel bill. So, he finally agreed to get a room for me at a hotel, give me a voucher for it, and for breakfast there. In the meantime, he would continue trying to locate the bag.

A mini bus picked me up at the terminal, took me to the Novotel, a hotel near the airport, after escorting me to the baggage area and obtaining my two suitcases. I relaxed at the hotel, then went down to the restaurant for some food. It had been a stressful time. I paid for my dinner, he had not given me a voucher for that. An American couple from Pennsylvania, passengers on the airplane, had heard my problem as I stood at the counter in Frankfurt, and were staying at this hotel overnight, asked me to sit at their table. It was nice to have conversation, they were pleasant, had just been to Malta and Sicily. Returning to my room, I had a nice bubble bath, watched a program from U.S. on the TV, before I slept.

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 10

Awakened at 4:30 a.m., felt good, had slept very well. Just before I retired last night, the airline station manager called me at the hotel, to let me know my bag had been located in London and would be sent to Frankfurt tomorrow, and then on to Landstuhl by train, on Tuesday. That was very good news. So after breakfast, a very large buffet meal, I got my things together and took the mini-bus back to the flughafen (airport). There I changed a \$100 travel check into 256 deutschmarks (DM), minus 5 DM for the fee. A DM is worth about 39 cents (US). Next I inquired about the train to Landstuhl. Ginni Marx had called me at 8:00 a.m. in the hotel, I gave her the information, my bag had been located, and I would take the train today, at 12:23 p.m. They will meet me at the train station in Landstuhl. The flughafen in Frankfurt is great, for the trains also run from it, one only has to go to the lower level for a train, after arriving there by air. I have used this service many times in the past. On traveling in the mini-bus to the flughafen, I noted the beautiful colors of leaves on the trees, golds, reds, orange colors and also the vibrant green needles of evergreen trees also seen. I saw small, neat vegetable gardens that the German people like to have, whole plots of them adjacent to apartment buildings. The air was quite cool, my coat and warm scarf felt good, the sky remained grey. I purchased my ticket to Landstuhl (38DM), it was also good for the express train from the flughafen to the banhoff (train station) Frankfurt-Main, where all trains converged.

Arriving at Frankfurt-Main, I inquired for the track my train would depart from, put my cases in one of the luggage carriers (or trolleys, as the Brits say), and had no trouble at all getting them to track No. 10. I do like to look around at the shops when in a large station, and possibly buy some fruit, or a sweet, but thought I had better move along and surely be on time for the train departure.

A train came in about 20 minutes, I checked that it was the one going to Landstuhl. One must ask many times, when taking trains in Europe, to make sure you are entering the right one, because track changes do happen, after you have been informed about the one listed on the board. It was the right train, I am now seated in a compartment, second class. As we roll along the forests seen are very colorful, leaves on the trees are changing to their fall colors; it reminds me of the wooded areas in Illinois, where I grew up. They must not have had a hard freeze here yet, just frost. We passed town of Darmstadt, then Bensheim, and crossed over the Moselle river. After that the ground became hilly and I noted vineyards up on them, the vines cut back now for the growing season is over, and just the stakes stand in long rows. Little villages appear, each one has a church with a very tall steeple, and rows of small houses. The sun has broken through clouds now, is shining on my face and it feels good; real winter will come here any time now. It surely was very cold when I was in Germany last year in December and January. I spent Christmas here. The next towns noted, Weinheim, Mannheim, Ludwigshafen, Hassloch, Lambrecht, the mountain areas of Frankenstein and Kaiserlautern, then Landstuhl. Germany is a very clean country, with neat fields, yards and gardens. The houses are mainly of brick or stucco, very strong looking, and with steep pitched roofs, for the heavy snowfall. There are many modern apartments too in the larger cities, and paved highways or freeways (called the autobahn here). Forests are preserved in all parts of the country, and contain many walking paths, for hiking is a great sport, and pastime here.

Arriving at Landstuhl at 2:50 p.m., I got off the train o.k.(the conductor had told me it was the next stop after Kaiserlautern) and I asked the man on the platform where I could make a phone call. He replied there was none in the station, but one on the outside, toward the street. I found it, put in a DM coin, and Ralph Marx answered. He, Ginni and baby Christopher were at the station in 10 minutes, to pick me up. It was so good to see them again, the baby was now 9 ½ months old – I was here with them last Christmas time, when he was about to be born. Ginni went to the hospital on Christmas day, expecting to deliver, but nothing happened, and Christopher was not born until January 14, after I had left. He is a beautiful child! Ginny and Christopher had just returned 2 days ago from the U.S., to visit her parents, and is still feeling jet lag. We went to their home, which they rent while Dr. Ralph is stationed at the U.S. army hospital here, and enjoyed hearing news from each other, of our mutual friends from Al Hada hospital in Saudi Arabia. It was cold and rainy, no sunshine here today.

MONDAY NOVEMBER 11

This is a holiday in America, called Veterans Day. There are a lot of Americans living here, who work at the army hospital, where Ralph is an Orthopedic surgeon. I slept well, on awakening I stayed in bed and read a book Ginni had just received from one of our friends still in Saudi, it is new and describes a lot on the area of Taif, where we all lived. Later she told me she was up during the night with Christopher, they don't let him cry, but she plays with him, or cuddles him, till he sleeps again. Ralph was on call, for the hospital, and then had to make rounds of patients there at 11:00 a.m. There was a wet snow falling, we stayed in the house, enjoyed visiting. About 4:00 p.m. we all went to the indoor swim pools, and spas, in Landstuhl. These are contained in a nice, very large building, I was happy because I am a swim instructor, and love to swim for exercise. I swam about 20 lengths of the large pool, then played with Ginni, Ralph and the baby in one of the warm spas. It was the baby's first introduction to this place, Ralph was so proud to be playing with his son, it was nice to see them so happy. I wish we had such a nice swim facility in California, where I live. After the swim we had dinner at Ralph's favorite restaurant, he suggested I order cordon bleu Masala, I did. It was delicious, rolled veal with ham and cheese inside, then dipped in a batter and deep fried. I also had white wine and I insisted on paying for my meal. Back at their house, we relaxed a bit and they gave me the letter from friend Monika, in Switzerland, with her phone number. I had told her to send it here, as I would be stopping with this family. I then made a phone call to her in Switzerland, she wants me to stop next with her, after I leave Germany.

During the day I had called the airline office in Frankfurt and booked my next flight on this journey. I had planned to go through Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, change planes there to Delhi, India, and get to the Taj Mahal, but that did not work out. No one can be in Saudi Arabia more than 8 hours, without a current visa, I do not have that; there is no connecting plane for me within 8 hours, so I have to go a different route. They routed me to Bombay, India after leaving Frankfurt, then on to Bangkok on Cathay Pacific airlines. I will not get to see the Taj Mahal on this trip, which saddens me, but can't be helped.

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 12

The sun was shining this morning, everything was bright. Ralph had to be at the hospital all morning, I spent the time with Ginni, still enjoying memories of times together on weekends, at the Red Sea. At noon Ralph called, said he was free the rest of the day and suggested he drive us to the town of Trier, a historic place, dating back to the time when the Roman Empire extended this far north from Italy. So we made sandwiches, and drove off through the beautiful colored forests and hills. They were a riot of color, small villages appeared off and on, and also vineyards on hillsides. The vines were dormant now, in spring they will become green, grapes will appear, and will be harvested in fall for wine. We went through the Moselle river valley. Arriving at Trier, the car was parked in a 3 level garage and we walked over the brick paved streets, to the nearby market place. This space remains as it was in the 14 and 15th centuries. The town is very ancient, was founded by the Roman emperor Augustus before the time of Christ. Constantine the Great, built a huge brick basilica in 02 AD, and it still stands; we went into it. Though it has been partially destroyed at times through wars, ravaged by fire, it has been rebuilt always, is used as a church today. We went through it, noted the arched windows, typical of Roman architecture in past history.

The old houses facing the market place are 4 and 5 stories high, with baroque ornamentation, and statues on some of them. A weather-beaten stone cross stands in the market, it was put there in 928 AD, and still stands. There were flower merchants with some chrysanthemums for sale, really large and beautiful, also a few stands with vegetables such as squash. Striped canvas provided cover over the stands. The air was quite cold, but above freezing – Ralph carried Christopher in a back pack, all bundled up so he would not be cold, the baby was happy all the time, never cried. This day reminded me somewhat of last year, when Ralph, Ginny, Stefen and Anna Dreml and I spent a day together at the Kris Kringle Fair in Heidelberg, Germany. Ginni was pregnant with Christopher at that time. After walking around, we stopped in a Conditori (sweet shop). I had apricot pie, and also shared with Ralph, a bit of Black Forest Cake, a specialty here. Yummy!!! In another shop I bought a tiny silver feeding spoon for Christopher, for they had lost theirs in moving, also an implement for slicing the top off, of a soft boiled egg, as a memento of the day. Ralph liked that. We walked to the end of the market, where a very large portion of the wall surrounding the city in past days, was still standing. It was called the Porta Negre, or black gate, and entrance to the city, the wall was built by the Romans, was about 25 feet thick at the base, amazing that it still stands. I took pictures there. It was a wonderful day, they were both in a festive mood, said it made them feel good to have me go out of my way, from Frankfurt, to visit them. Being out in the cold, fresh air was good for all of us too. We arrived home after dark, had supper, including the kohlrabi I purchased at the market, and cooked for them. Neither had eaten it before, both liked the flavor very much. When all finished with dinner, I washed the dishes and let them relax with Christopher. I read awhile, then retired.

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 13

Christopher cried during the night, as he usually does, they have not trained him, for Ginni gets up – Ralph thinks they should let him cry a few nights, it is time to get him on a

schedule. They'll work that out. I plan to leave here today and go to Lucerne, Switzerland for a few days, where I'll see Monika Schnarwiler, a friend I knew while traveling in the Philippines a few years ago. Ginni and I, with Christopher, went to the train station in the morning to check schedules, then went on to the U.S. hospital base commissary, to change some money. I used \$77.92 to get 200 DM. My rail ticket from Landstuhl to Frankfurt to Lucerne was 189.40 DM, I paid that. I also mailed post cards and a letter here, could use U.S.A. stamps, at this post. Then we went into a toy store on these grounds (so many things are available here, for Americans stationed at the hospital), where I purchased a horse-on-wheels, Christopher's first riding toy. His birthday will come soon. Back at the house, I finished packing and prepared to part, gave big hugs and kisses, all had enjoyed the presence of each other. Then they took me to the train station, I bought my ticket, and departed. I had made a phone call to Monika, she and her friend will meet me in Lucerne when I arrive there.

On the train, I had to change at Basel, Germany, to enter Basel, Switzerland, had to walk up and down big stairs to do so – also had to change at Mannheim. Riding through Germany I noted more truck garden areas, not as much forest here. I had to ask each time I had to change trains, an elderly couple sitting near me warned me that there were 2 cities named Basel, so I would not be confused. The immigration officers did not check my passport, I saw them go through the train – last year they did check it. Ginni had made me a lunch to eat on the train, she is so thoughtful. After entering Switzerland, I could see snow on the ground, though it was now dark.

I arrived in the large city of Lucerne at 7:20 p.m., and got off the train o.k. with my 2 suitcases. As I stepped down, I could see my friend Monika and her fiancée walking toward me! It is so nice to have someone meet you, in a strange country. Monika looked the same, though I have not seen her since 1983. Warm hugs were shared now by all. There was 4 inches of snow on the ground, as we made our way to the bus, they carried my bags for me. The big fir trees were covered, and streets and walks were slippery with icy slush, was glad we did not have far to walk. Monika has a small car but did not want to drive in the icy conditions, she lives in a suburb of the city, just a 10 minute ride on the bus. She rents a flat on the fifth floor of a very nice, old building, built so strong to withstand the cold, snowy winters in Switzerland. There was no elevator, since this building was almost 100 years old, but a very wide stairway, with railing topped with beautiful, shiny oak wood. Her apartment was tastefully decorated with memoirs of many different places she has traveled in the world, we recalled many of them as we ate a candle-light supper, and sipped a glass of wine. I had a feather-bed cover on the bed in my room, and she gave me a hot water bottle to have at my feet, and keep me warm all night. Shades of my childhood!! My mom often did the same for me on cold winter nights.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 14

I slept so well, and awoke to the sound of church bells ringing nearby. What a pleasant sound! I love to hear them, when traveling in Europe, I never hear them anymore where I live, and they stopped the ringing in Illinois, before we moved away, because people living in apartments complained the bells woke them too early in the morning. All through childhood and early adult life it was a custom to ring the bells at 6:00 a.m. After a

breakfast of coffee, bread, honey, cheese, fruit juice and tangerines, we departed to go to the cable car station, and ascend to Mr. Pilatus, which overlooks this area. Monika gave me her big, sheep-wool lined boots to wear, as she said the rain boots I carried with me would not be good on the icy walks. She was right, I needed them and she had another pair. As we got to the station, found that the cable car was not running, because of the fog surrounding the mountain top, visibility was zero. We then took a bus to Lucerne town center, she planned to visit another mountain area, but the cloud cover was thick there also. We then walked through the old part of downtown, which is beautiful, across the covered bridge over Lake Lucerne, to the market place, and around the beautiful buildings dating from the 15th century. Many of these still have the paintings on the outside, depicting life in those days, and also artistic decorations. If any had been damaged in past years, they have been reconstructed in the manner they were built. Lucerne is a great city to explore, in summer beckons many tourists. Monika took me to the Lion Memorial, a carving of a lion on the sheer face of the lower part of a mountain, it commemorates the courage of Swiss army men, when they were losing a bloody battle to Napoleon's army, near the time of the French Revolution.

While walking we met Rennie and his wife, a friend of Monika and her brother, they were on the island of Boracay, in the Philippines when Monika, brother Hans, and I were there in January 1983. We all had coffee together in a quaint little shop, visited for awhile, then Monika and I looked into some of the stores nearby. I bought a very nice pair of leather walking shoes. After taking the bus back to Monika's area, we stopped in a grocery store to get food for dinner, I shared the cost of everything, also I picked up a packet of dry Bernaise sauce to send to daughter Mary Lynn – maybe she will like that, as she does much cooking. In the evening Monika's brother, Hans, came to visit. He is recently married and is building a new house. He looks the same as he did in 1983 – he said I did also. We had fun discussing all the travels in the Philippines, and swimming and snorkeling in Boracay island. 'Twas nice to renew friendships. Again, I slept with the feather comfort and hot water bottle, rested well.

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 15

This date was my husband, John Kackert's, birthday, we always celebrated it. May God rest his soul.

I awoke early, arose at 7:15 a.m., dressed and went to mass at church nearby. The bells sounded so nice, in the clear cold air, the church is a very large one and has just re-opened after a renovation. Of course, I could not understand the priest, for he spoke the Swiss-German language, but I enjoyed being at mass. Monika had taken 2 days holiday, while I was here, but today the other lady who worked in her place, was ill and Monika had to go to work. While I was in Germany with the Marx family, I read the new book they had on Taif, Saudi Arabia, and found it great. So today, decided to send money to the Al Masief Bookstore on Shubra Road in Taif, and purchase it. Monika's friend offered to walk with me to the post office here, I sent (certified mail) 4.20 Swiss Francs and the order for the book. I hope I receive it!!! After that her friend offered to walk with me in the near area, and up into the snow covered hills beyond the houses. We walked up many, many steps, passing gardens of houses, some which still had fall vegetables in them, but had been

caught in the first snowfall. Some huge cabbages had crowns of snow 3 and 4 inches tall, on them – also some swiss chard stuck up out of a small snowbank. A few rosebushes still had blooms on them, quite chilled looking indeed, and leaves that were covered with snow. When we reached the forest path, covered with fallen autumn leaves and snow, we found a huge tree that had fallen, its root system tore a huge crater in the ground, we had to walk around it. It was all beautiful, and the long walk was invigorating, I really liked the exercise. Monika's big snow boots were perfect, I wore the red rain jacket with a sweater underneath the tan vest, I was comfortable.

In the evening Monika had her car, and she and I drove to the town of Olten, about 40 km away, to her sister's apartment. Marliss is a nurse, a single lady, and had asked us over for a visit. She is a devotee of classical music, we listened to Mozart's "A Little Night Music" while she served us apple custard pie she had made, and coffee. What a pleasant evening!. As we returned to Lucerne, the autobahn was clear of ice and snow, driving was quite safe, and we could note castles here and there on hillsides, they are lighted at night. As we neared Monika's apartment, we heard music in the corner restaurant, the "Krienshallen", she suggested we go in and have a "Swiss coffee". This is a very light coffee, served hot in a tall glass mug, a jigger of apple schnapps is added. We had this drink while we listened to the musicians playing local music, on an accordion, a bass fiddle, a clarinet and a percussion piece. The sounds, oom-pa-pa, oom-pa-pa were very nice. After a short time we returned to the apartment, and to bed.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 16

Slept very well, under my big quilt. I had the hot water bottle again, and I also kept my socks on for warmth, for the quilt is a little short for me, and sometimes feet protrude a bit. Monika's apartment is a very economical one for her, less than an approximate \$100 a month. The beautiful old house is 100 years old, her apartment is on the 5th floor, and has a toilet and sink, but the shower is on a lower floor. She showed me to it, explained how to put 2 coins in the hot water meter, for a shower. This little inconvenience did not bother me, I found no problem going up and down the curving big stairway either. I'm going around the world on a small budget, and find accommodations differ in various countries. Compared to many places, Americans live in luxury.

The open market place downtown, continues on Saturdays until Christmas, and we took the bus there, to look around the lakeside and watch the many swans, ducks, gulls and birds swimming and hopping around. We went to a bakery, obtained some dry bread to feed them. It was such fun! Sometimes a gull would perch on the back of a swan, trying to get a piece of the bread, also they would fly right to my outstretched hand and take the bread from me. Monika took a picture of them doing that. We enjoyed it all, though it was very cold, temperature of 30 F., and we soon went into a café to warm up with hot coffee and a croissant. There we met Terry, a friend of Monika's who was at Boracay Island when I was there. We had a pleasant chat together, then walked to the beautiful old Jesuit church nearby, which had the 2 large onion dome steeples. This architecture is from Russia and Greece. The interior was so beautiful, had deep rose color marble altar and pillars, a shade not seen too often, also some very large paintings, really a magnificent structure from the middle ages.

Returning on the bus to her apartment, we had lunch of some very tasty cheese, yogurt, apple slices and coffee. Later, I went to the department store close to her street, looked at merchandise, but only purchased a notebook, writing paper and envelopes, also some Swiss chocolate, an item that is exported in great quantities from this country. There were many interesting things I would have liked to purchase, but carrying them half way around the world, is not a good idea. In the evening I phoned Benny Beutler in Zurich, reached him right away, and we had a nice conversation. I will not visit them in person, on this trip. He was happy to hear from me, will convey my best wishes to his father and mother.

In the evening we went out, were supposed to meet Rennie, he had planned to show us slides from our time together, on Boracay Island. Going to the small café, after picking up Marlis, Monika's friend, we were told that the slides were not ready, he was sorry. We went to another eating place, but soon noted it was not the best environment; after eating the pizza we ordered, left there for it was noisy and some of the characters seen told us this place was not our "cup of tea". Monika wanted to find a place with good music, and where we could have a Swiss coffee while we rested. After looking a short time, she selected one, the music was provided by 4 people, 3 men and a lady piano player, it was a family-type café. We were seated at a large round table, where there was a man and wife, local people. They were very friendly, though did not speak much English. The lady looked so much like my good friend from long ago, Susanne Tossing, the resemblance was remarkable, and they talked with Monika about the celebration of "Fashing", which Susanne and I celebrated every year. It is the European festival similar to Mardi Gras. It was a fun evening, we had a couple of drinks, the last one courtesy of the Swiss couple. Monika said we were having an early celebration of my 70th birthday, which comes up in a few weeks. I'll be alone in Thailand, or Singapore, at that time. We walked happily back, through the cold night air, and at the apartment soon retired.

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 17

This date is my eldest child's birthday, Judith Ann. I'll never forget the 36 hour labor, to bring her into the world, but it was certainly worth the effort.

I slept soundly, heard the church bells ringing at 7:00 a.m. It was just getting light. I arose, started sorting articles and packing them in a suitcase. At 8:50 a.m. I heard the bells again, saw people below walking up the hill to the church, so I went out and attended Sunday mass, which was a joy to me, even though it was said in the Swiss language. Following mass, had breakfast, good Swiss cheese, ham, bread, honey, and a lot of conversation. What more could one ask? And to top it, I was with good friends. During breakfast, Albert Beutler phoned me, from Zurich (Benny's father). Benny had told him last evening, that I was visiting Monika, Albert phoned here last evening, but we were out: if he had reached me, he would have made a plan to drive here this morning to Lucerne, but now it was too late, so we just had a phone visit, also with Ute, his wife. They will come to the U.S. some year, to visit me.

The next few hours were spent packing. I gave my tan, warm suit to Monika, also the black coat. I need room in my suitcase, and after leaving Germany, will not have any really cold

weather. She was happy to get them, we are the same size, she does not have much income right now, is trying to save money to pay for more education in the health field. At 1:00 p.m. Monika and a friend accompanied me on the bus, to the train station, they got me safely on the proper train to Frankfurt, where I will connect with my air flight to Bangkok, Thailand. I am seated comfortably in a compartment, riding through snow covered Swiss countryside, and forest. We also went along Lake Lucerne, now very wavy, snowy, cold looking. There are small boats moored at piers, for the winter, looking deserted, and useless, with their crown of snow. In summer the tourists flock to this area, for the beauty of lake, mountains, and castles. The old, very large, Swiss farmhouses are built in one with the barns, for animals have to be cared for there, and once I saw a tunnel through the deep snow, out to the animal yard near the house. Benny Beutler lives in Kloten, has an apartment upstairs in an old farmhouse with the barn attached, as you enter the covered area to his doorway, the animal smell is prevalent. The winters here are very cold, and snowy, the animals have to be protected, they are part of life for humans. After passing through the northern part of Switzerland, the snow lying on the ground was much less, and by the time we reached Basel, at the border with Germany, the bare ground was visible again. The sky was leaden grey. A few flakes of snow were falling as we left Lucerne, they had the promise of more, and heavier, tonight. As we entered Germany, the immigration police were on the train, went through slowly, but did not ask for my passport. On another trip a few years ago they did, as I went from Germany to Luxemburg. Arrival at the train station Frankfurt-Main (bahnhof) was at 6:20 p.m. I had no trouble getting off the train with my 2 bags; should mention here that I had to pay 8 Swiss francs extra on boarding for this was the special "intercity", or non-transfer train.

At the bahnhof I put my luggage in a cart, and searched out the tourist and information office, near track 21. I missed it the first time around, then went outside, followed the signs, and found it. The lady clerk there booked a hotel for me very close, for 76 DM. It was just across the street, on Muenchenstrasse, but I did not walk right across the busy street, instead took the underpass. I must have come up on the wrong corner, and wandered around the block for 10 – 15 minutes, looking for the Palace Hotel. Areas close to train stations are not always the greatest, but nothing bad happened as I pulled my cases on wheels, clickety-clack, over brick walks until I spotted it. It was a nice hotel, had a good bed with the usual feather comforter, private bath, and was close to the train station.

MONDAY NOVEMBER 18

I slept great. Upon arising early I did my shower and shampoo, dressed and went downstairs to first floor, where the breakfast was served. That is included in the room rate in most hotels in Europe. Next I checked out and walked over to the station: it was COLD but I did not have far to walk. I had given Monika my warmest clothing, but double layered sweater and jacket, and I was o.k. I needed to take the train back to the flughafen, to get my flight. I put 4 DM coins into the ticket machine, 40pfg change came out, with my ticket. I felt proud, for this is the first time I have done this without some help at the machine, and I also got the proper train. On arrival at the flughafen I secured a cart for luggage and proceeded to the upper level and the Pan Am counter. I am using my Round-The-World ticket again. The first thing I was told at the counter, changed plans, for I am still on "hold" on the next leg of the journey, from India to Bangkok, Thailand. Later on, I was called to the

counter and told that all was o.k. so they gave me a new ticket, and I checked my bags through to Bangkok. I had time to phone daughter Mary Lynn back in California, got through right away, it was good to hear that all was well. I used the phone system in the depot, where they take a deposit, direct dial your number, and call you to the booth when it is reached. This service is usually provided in large airports in foreign countries. The cost was 7DM 60 pfennig.

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 19

The trip to Bombay was long, and tiring. We left Frankfurt at 12:20 p.m., arrived Bombay, India at 1:30 a.m. where I had to change to Cathay Pacific airline. Arriving at Bombay, there was no one to direct passengers to their next flight. I walked around in the terminal, searching, suddenly found I was downstairs in the customs area and knew this was wrong, for I was in transit, and not leaving the airport. There were 4 other passengers from the Frankfurt flight also searching for Cathay Pacific, and finally after asking several times from the Indian personnel (who did not speak very good English), we were directed by persons from Air India to go down to the baggage department, and identify our luggage. They took our passports and tickets, said "just wait". We did, uncomfortably, hoping they were directing us properly. Finally they returned with our boarding passes and passports, and now we had to accompany them to "the gates of hell", the baggage area. What a mess it was there! It was packed with people, everyone trying to get to the carousel and collect bags, pushing and shoving. An Indian woman wearing a sari, fell on the moving carousel, as she tried to pick out a bag, she wasn't hurt, someone helped her. Finally, after a long time, we had all selected our bags, I also got my folded luggage carrier, which I had checked this time. The men from Air India, satisfied each had identified their bags, then checked them on to Bangkok and ushered us to our departing gate for the next flight. What a hassle we had been through!

On the Cathay Pacific airline, my boarding pass had assigned me to Business class, which is an upgrade from economy class. We were served a 3 course meal, on a linen cloth under the tray of food, real silverware, and just extra nice touches. A choice of wine was also available, gratis. I was very tired on the flight, after the confusion in Bombay terminal. We made a stop in Dubai, to take on passengers, and we were allowed to get off the plane, go into the terminal, and look at the shops. I was so happy to walk through the terminal, see the local residents dressed in their regular garments of white thaube, and gutra on their head, it made me reminiscent of my work in Saudi Arabia the past few years, where this is the regular style of dress. The signs all around were in the Arabic language, plus repeated in English. Dubai is much more Westernized than Saudi – it is one of the Arab Emirates, countries on the Arab peninsula. I used American money (for I had no more Saudi riyals) to buy a towel with Arab proverbs on it, also bought some post cards. Leaving Dubai, we flew on to Bangkok. From now on, I will not be visiting with any friends, for after leaving Europe, I have no acquaintances in the countries where I will travel. I'll be strictly "on my own".

Arrived in Bangkok at 11:25 a.m., 23 hours after leaving Frankfurt, and my body was tired, but I really didn't feel too bad, for such a long flight. I filled out the customs papers, collected my bags in a very orderly baggage department where there was no problem, and

Thai people were very polite and helpful. Next I wheeled the bags outside the terminal, where I knew travel personnel would be standing, and offering tours, and hotels. There were 3 or 4, and I spoke with them, selected a driver who would take me to a business class hotel, and also would offer tours. Before we left the area in his car, he took me to a bank just across the street, so I could change money. In this country they use the baht, which is worth about 4 cents, U.S. money. He then delivered me to the Century hotel, I registered and got a room. He suggested that after I rest a couple of hours, he and his brother, also a tour guide with certification, would take me to some temples which I want to see. So, at the appointed time, 2:30 p.m., I was down in the lobby, they were waiting for me. They drove to the Presidential Palace group, in Bangkok, an area enclosed by a wall and holding many beautiful oriental temples, also the one where the new king is enthroned. I paid for the tour, it included admission to this area. Both young men were very knowledgeable, polite, and courteous. There were temples completely covered with gold leaf, the jade Buddha temple was covered outside with tiny pieces of mirror glass, semi precious stones, and gold leaf, all put on by hand. It was so beautiful! Inside is the Buddha, carved out of one piece of green jade, about 1000 years ago. There were also figures of persons in past history of Siam, ornately decorated with semi precious gems and gold, some figures were small, and some taller than the roof of the temple. Everyone in the world should have the opportunity to see this place, there is such artistic beauty here. I took a lot of slides, then ran out of film, but could purchase more. It started to rain lightly, but it didn't bother us; we went into the marble temple, all constructed of grey marble, and having the curved roof line of Siamese architecture. The roofs were of round ceramic tiles, colored in green and blue. I was amazed at the beauty of the temples, and landscaping, with many bonsai trees. Following this trip I was taken back to my hotel, had dinner in the restaurant, and returned to my room. I wrote in this journal in the evening, but kept falling asleep as I wrote – guess being without much sleep on the long flight caught up with me, so I retired.

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 20

I really was not coherent as I wrote last night, was really over-tired. As I ate dinner last evening I was going to order white wine, but all they had was a bottle of French chardonnay, at 400 baht – this price was too much for me, so I had a glass of beer with my meal. I don't drink the water in most underdeveloped countries where I travel, but it is safe to drink beer (according to instructions for world travel), for it is pasteurized when bottled, also it is so acidic that microbes don't live in it. One must have fluid intake, the local Singh beer is good and answers that requirement. The waiter told me they do not make wine in Thailand, except "corn wine", which is used in cooking.

I had slept very well, awoke just before the 6:00 a.m. call I had requested, for I made a reservation yesterday to go to the floating market, on the Chao Phaya river that flows through Bangkok. I was picked up at 6:45 a.m. in the hotel lobby, by a young Thai woman who worked for the Misimpex travel bureau. That is the same escort service I had, when I was here before in 1982, they were very good. The driver of the car took us to the river, near the Oriental Hotel, where we boarded a boat with about 20 other persons, all tourists. There was a roof, to protect us from the sun – or rain, the sides were open for viewing, the tour escorts were also on the boat and described areas we passed. I had taken this river trip before, but again, found it very interesting. The river is very wide, and swift, and serves

as a highway for the many boats and barges that use it for transport, and also people live on some of the houseboats anchored in places, they are called “the boat people”. Along the banks are wooden houses built on stilts, half in the water, half on land behind them. The fronts facing the river are open to view, the weather is always warm here, sometimes there were wooden shutters that could be let down, against a rain storm. Ladies do their laundry right on the front porch, scrub the clothes against the wood floor, and rinse them in a tub of water, or in the river. Then they are hung on poles extending from the porch roof, or on lines strung there, articles were flapping on almost every house. They bathe, in the river, steps go into the river, right from the porch, I noted one man doing this, scrubbing away with shampoo lather on his head. Another human sight was seeing a little girl of about 2 years, getting up off a little potty, in plain view, she wore no clothing. Usually little ones wear only a tee shirt, no diaper or pants, until about age 3. The Thai people are very clean, scrub their pots and pans, wash their clothes often, are not trashy or dirty like people in some of the countries I have been in. Huge ceramic vats stand on the porches, water is taken from the river and placed here, or rainwater is caught from a gutter on the porch roof. The latter is used for cooking and washing white clothing, river water for bathing and washing dark clothing: our guide said they put alum into a vat of river water, let it stand, and the dirt will settle to the bottom, leaving the water clearer and without dirt. The river itself is quite muddy looking. The ceramic vats are made by hand, locally, using clay.

As we neared the market area, men or women in small boats, were selling local produce, fruit, vegetables, household items, cooked rice, etc., they would paddle right up to the porches and ladies selected what they needed. I saw one older man, in his boat he had cooked meat, and pork ribs for sale. Mangos, coconut, papaya, bananas, lychee, rambutan and a different type of orange, all grow abundantly, very close to the river. There is plenty of rain here, and a tropical climate. We landed at the market place, walked around and noted the variety of products displayed, also some dry rice and grains that are grown here. We also made a stop at a large shopping area, with hand made articles from the Thai people, saw so many beautiful, artistic things, carvings, fans, jewelry, items too numerous to mention. I bought 2 white metal opium pipes, a little smaller than the ones I have at home, will use these as gifts. Again, I bought a drink of fresh coconut water, which cost 10 baht. They cut the top from a fresh, pared coconut, put a straw in it, you drink the delicious sweet water – it is very refreshing. The next stop was at the snake farm, a tourist attraction, where people watch Thai young men work with snakes on a circular walled platform. They display how they milk the venom from a snake, also bring out a huge python, which is so long it has to be held by 4 or 5 men. I saw this done last time I was here, so I just sat on a bench and rested. Returning to the boat, we went on, passing so many temples on shore, some were in beautiful shape, some were dilapidated: the guide said there are 28,000 temples in Bangkok, they are everywhere!

After the boat trip, the driver appeared, took my guide and me to a jewelry shopping mart. Many semi precious stones are found in Thailand, are made into rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, etc. I did not buy anything this time, have a ring purchased here before, with a sapphire stone. On returning to the hotel I rested, felt happy I did the tour again, for this time I took many slides, had a better camera than on my last trip. Back at the hotel I rested, also inquired about going to the island of Koh Samui, off the southern coast of Thailand. Monika’s brother Hans was there a few months ago, said it is undeveloped, like

Boracay in the Philippines, and has corals nearby. There is no airport, one must take a local bus, overnight, and then a boat to the island. The hotel manager was very helpful, I got a reservation for this evening, will leave from a bus station across town, at 8:00 p.m., arrive next day at 11:00 a.m. He wrote out directions for a tuk tuk driver, to take me to the bus station, and had the name of the bus I would board. I don't speak Thai language, and in the less populated areas, might have trouble finding someone who spoke English. In Bangkok there is no trouble finding English speaking people. I can leave the large suitcase and one bag here, not carry all my luggage with me. I had a delicious dinner of local fish, prepared with cooked vegetables and pineapple over it, and a plentiful spicy sauce covering all. The ever present rice was also served, I ate it all! I still had time to walk around a bit, looking for interesting photo shots, did find (in the Chinese section) 2 craftsmen working on construction, by hand, of the beautiful Chinese coffins, consisting of 2 pieces, very ornate and beautiful. Only the wealthy can afford these.

After all preparations for leaving, I took the tuk tuk, my ticket and handwritten note, to the bus station way across town. It was a wild ride, dodging through traffic, but the driver delivered me safely. The "tuk tuk" is the local transport here, really a golf cart vehicle, with wide seat across the back, used as a taxi. This was a large bus terminal, there were 25 different windows, to purchase tickets, all signs above the window were in Thai language, not a sign of English anywhere. A pleasant clerk read my note, then took me to a window, for my destination; I purchased the ticket for 258 baht. This would take me south through Thailand, to water's edge, where I would purchase a ticket for 40 baht, on the ferryboat to Koh Samui. It was a very busy place, people waiting on benches, children dashing around, calls would be heard every few minutes for a bus that was leaving. When using bus transportation in foreign countries one must have directions for the destination and ticket, in the native language, for not much English is spoken, in out of the way places. At airports, there are always some who speak English, it is not a problem. I find it more interesting to go places by bus, with local people, one sees the real life that way – besides, I can't go to Koh Samui by plane, there is no airport or service.

After arriving at the bus station, and purchasing my ticket, I sat on a bench and waited. About 7:50 p.m. the girl at the window I used to purchase, motioned to me that my bus was about to leave, I should go out to Bay No. 1. I did this, showed my ticket to the driver, he shook his head, no – there were about 15 buses loading up at this place! I was perplexed, said "take me to the right one". He understood a little, took me to a man who was directing the departures; he took me to bus 991, tagged my bag, checked my ticket again, and helped me into the bus. It was a luxurious, air conditioned one, with a young woman hostess on board. She helped me find my reserved seat, which had a blanket and pillow on it, said there was a toilet room at the back. It was the Asian style, as most are in this area. There was a young Thai man seated next to me, he spoke a tiny bit of English, smiled a lot. Each passenger was given a boxed snack, a cooked chicken leg, chips and a cupcake, also a bottle of coke. We departed soon.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 21

I wonder if this is Thanksgiving Day, in the U.S., I don't have a calendar with me, and lose track of the days. I slept quite a bit in the bus, as we traveled, the seats reclined back.

About 3:00 a.m. the hostess awakened everyone, gave each a moist towelette, said we were stopping for food at an eating place, and to stretch legs. It was a roofed, open air restaurant, serving Thai food. I was not hungry, just ate an apple and walked up and down in the area, for exercise. We started up again, and I slept until 5:45 a.m. when the hostess came around with another towelette, and coffee. That tasted so good! I really felt good, though my ankles had swelled a bit, from being seated so long. The sky was just getting light, I could see coconut palm trees all over, outlined against the sky. It was a beautiful sight, and I noted the last star disappear in the daylight, as I have seen so often when camping at the beach or mountains, in Saudi Arabia. There is a half-moon up in the sky right now, also a familiar sight when camping. At 6:30 a.m. we made a stop at the town of Surithani, many passengers got off here, as did my seat partner, this was his home. We then drove on again for another hour or more, and came to the shore of the South China Sea, and the ferryboat. The surrounding area was lush and green with trees and flowering bushes. Low mountains were in the background, we had passed them in the night.

At the ferry stop there was a restaurant, I had more coffee with toast and fruit, it cost 64 baht, equivalent to about 64 cents, U.S. It costs very little to travel the native way here. I sat at a table with 2 girls from New Zealand, they had been to Koh Samui once before, told me a lot about it. After about an hour, the bus drove right onto the ferry, our luggage stayed on the bus, and we departed. Now we floated over the beautiful light green sea, tall islands rose from it here and there. I have often seen photos of this part of the world, never thought I would be here enjoying it's beauty. The air is pleasantly warm, the sea is smooth, a breeze keeps me very comfortable as I sit on the rear deck which is covered, to protect from the hot sun. There were fishing boats here and there as we proceeded, the long, narrow ones that the local people use. Fish is a mainstay of food served here, also chicken. I am so glad to be enjoying this ride, also feeling good after the long overnight trip. Most of the passengers are Thai people, but I noted a group of about 15 Europeans (most from Germany) on board, who have come here to enjoy the tropical climate. This area is a part of the long "finger", or southernmost part of Thailand.

The boat trip ended after about 2 hours, we landed on the island of Koh Samui. There were several people waiting to offer bungalows, at different small resorts. Our bags were taken off the bus, each claimed their own. I said I wanted to stay at a place near the corals in the sea, and went with a gentleman who said he had this at his resort. The two girls from New Zealand also decided to go with him. He had a mini van in which he drove us onto a dirt road for a way, we barely made it through 2 mud puddles, and actually got stuck in the 3rd one, not far from the bungalows. Memories of camping in Saudi Arabia, where we often were stuck in the sand of the desert! Finally, when the car refused to start, we got out and walked, but then he got it started and picked us up, it stalled again, we then walked the rest of the way, which was not far. Well, that was not a very good start, but the resort was fine: there was a large restaurant building and 8 or 10 bungalows with thatched roofs, scattered here and there under palm trees. Each one was one room, with a bed and chest, front porch, and what I call true luxury in this setting, a private bathroom with toilet, sink and shower, across the back part. My bungalow is right at the water's edge, about 100 feet of grass and sand separate me from the sea, I have a beautiful view of tall, rocky islands rising from it, quite a way out.

After a refreshing cup of tea and a large fresh fruit salad, of tropical fruits, I put on a bikini and went for a swim. I had been told it would be shallow a long way out, then there would be corals. I had on mask, snorkel and fins, swam out, found corals down in about 6 to 8 feet depth. The water was warm, not totally clear, for this is at end of monsoon season here. Corals of many types appeared, large formations, coffee-table shapes, brain corals, but most were grey in color, not brilliant as I found in the Red Sea – the corals there are fantastic. I am spoiled, by all the scuba dives I did there. I spent the whole afternoon either in the water, or relaxing on the sand – then discovered I had lost the key to the padlock on my door! I had tied it to the strap of my bathing suit, the twine holding it had probably come apart as I did many surface dives, viewing the corals. I felt stupid when I had to tell the girl in charge at the resort, what happened. She came to the bungalow with a young man, he pried the lock off, opened the door, later brought me a new padlock, said “these things happen”. The swollen ankles I had as a result of the long bus ride last night, went back to normal as I swam. The exercise in the water always makes me feel good.

At dinner in the main building, I was told I am swimming in the Gulf of Siam, which is part of the South China Sea. There were about 7 different varieties of fresh sea food displayed, all heavily iced, you could choose which you liked, they prepared it to your liking, either local Thai style or other choice. I chose one fish and it was served in local style, with cooked vegetables and a delicious sauce over it, very nice and spicy – delicious! Rice was also served, and different drinks. I talked quite awhile with the girls from New Zealand, and also 2 girls from Switzerland, enjoyed the evening, then retired.

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 22

I had arranged to take a boat trip today, to the Marine National Park, which had been arranged by our host, Caesar, another couple staying here had also signed up, so we all left the resort at about 8:30 a.m. Driving the 3 miles into town, we again hit the large mud holes in the road, but made it through them this time. Arriving at the ticket office, found they were not open yet, waited for that to happen, then found out that the boat goes out tomorrow, not on Fridays. So I decided to stay in the town and explore a bit. I like to see the local way of life here, and walking around slowly is the best way. This is the only town on the island, there are quite a few little tourist shops where operators gain their income. I stopped in one of them where a little old lady was in charge. She sold items of clothing, I bought a bathing suit cover-up, made from printed flour sacks, the words “wheat from Australia” were very visible, interesting that they use these sacks for material. I asked to take her picture (she did not speak English, I used sign language) and she seemed very pleased, sat on a little stool immediately, for me. Evidently the people here do not believe they will lose their soul if they have their picture taken, as the African’s do. I walked through the open market, there, for sale, were fresh meats, chickens, eggs, vegetables of all kinds, spices, hot peppers, baked goods, and stalls of prepared foods. I bought and ate, a snack of flat strips of chicken, which were held between 2 strips of bamboo and cooked over charcoal – they were so tasty! One woman sat behind baskets of dried fish, many varieties, the large ones had been split open, smaller ones were dried intact. I took her picture, she also had a couple of watermelons for sale.

At noon, when Caesar came into town again for ice, I rode back to the resort with him. He goes to the town at 8 a.m., 12 noon, and 3:30 p.m. and people at the resort can ride with him, at no charge. While in town I had spent all the money I had with me, even borrowed a little from another girl staying at the resort, to buy a hat and a bottle of water. I paid it back to her when I got more of my money from the safe in the lodge. Passports and large amounts of money should always be kept there, when traveling, for safety. In the afternoon I again went into the water, swam around and found another area with much more coral. The visibility was better now too, it was a pleasure to swim slowly over the formations, noting some colored yellow and light green, white "coffee table" varieties, lettuce type fire coral (that sting your skin if you brush against it), and some varieties new to me. There were many fish too, saw the butterfly fish with the long proboscis and striped vertically in orange and cream color, it was so pretty. I spent a long time out there, grateful that I could be viewing all these things again, as I had done so often in the Red Sea. Maybe it will be the last time for me to be in the warm waters, where the pretty corals grow.

At sunset, the family that put out the long net, beat the water with sticks to drive fish into it, were out in front of my cottage again. The man walks with a limp, does not go into the water, the wife and 9 year old son work with the net, a little 3 year old boy walks along with the father. It is nice to watch them, but they don't catch very much. The sunsets here, right in front of my cottage, are magnificent: the fiery red against the dark clouds that gather far out over the water, makes a picture for artists to paint. I have seen so many beautiful sunsets, camping on the beach at the Red Sea. I do enjoy nature!

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 23

Again, I had a wonderful night's sleep here in the palm thatched, bamboo bungalow. This is a delightful place to spend a vacation. The boat trip to the Mui Koh Angthong National Park was scheduled today, so at 8:15 a.m. I was ready to leave my little house and go up to the van. Before I left, I used the bottled water to mix a chocolate milk drink (powdered), had a biscuit with marmalade, banana, and a Nabisco chocolate covered cookie. The other couple, who were from Australia, went too, we were driven to the pier, and the boat moored there. We had to climb over the railing of the boat, and drop down to the deck, typical local style, no gangplank here. I went to the upper deck, sat there, and enjoyed the lovely view of the coconut-palm covered island of Koh Samui, and the sparkling water in the sunlight, as we pulled away. The island is high in the center, and covered with trees and low bushes. The ride took 2 ½ hours, we noted numerous islands that rose sharply out of the water, were of steep rock, high in the center, and covered with luxurious growth, a lovely sight. These are preserved from development. When ready to make our first stop, the boat anchored out in deep water and we were transported to the island shore in a long, narrow, native craft that was powered by a motor. It was tricky climbing over the rail and stepping down into the bobbing craft, but I made it o.k., even with my back pack (with camera, towel, etc.) and the green mesh bag with snorkel, mask, sandals and hat. On reaching shore, we hopped out into the shallow water and walked to the beach. On this island we were told there is a fresh water lake way up on top, called Crater Lake, to get there one had to climb 300 meters, on crude, ladder-like steps, through narrow rock formations, and then again on more steps, but of a little better construction. I made it all right. The lake was formed by a

volcano that erupted many years ago, the crater filled with rain water through time. It was very large, we were up high, the view around was fantastic, worth the climb.

Returning to the beach I went into the sea and snorkeled among the coral heads. There were a lot of them here, all kinds of formations. I noted a large grouper, hiding, by sitting on a coral quietly, and waiting for a small fish he could nab. This is their way, they blend in with the corals behind them, their coloring is a camouflage. I saw many sea cucumbers, on the sandy bottom, the long black ones, and some sea urchins. These are always seen in warm seas. I did a lot of dives downward, often holding on to large coral, so I had better views of the sea creatures. My finger tips and thumbs are very scratched from this, I missed having my diving gloves with me. There were a couple of German young men snorkeling near me, I showed them a couple of interesting creatures, told them their names and habits when we were at the top of the water. They had done only a couple of dives before, and were very interested.

Leaving the island again, in the little narrow boats, we were taken to the ship, and given a box lunch consisting of crabmeat and rice, slices of tomato, cucumber, 2 bananas and a bottle of water, surely tasted good. We went on, passing many tall islands, covered with luxuriant growth, and jutting up sharply out of the sea. One time I noted a few small thatch-roofed huts near the water's edge, a fishing boat, and a couple of the long, narrow craft nearby. Then we stopped at a large island, it had a trail to the very top and we were told the entire marine park could be viewed from there. I chose not to walk up on it, but go into the sea again and view the corals. There was the same variety that I had noted on the previous visit, and I found a huge sea anemone, pink in color. It was curled up, and surprisingly, no clown (or anemone fish) were near it. They are immune to the sting of the anemone, and sometimes swim right down into it's tendrils, for safety. We had a two hour time slot at this island so I had plenty of time to enjoy the sea. I finished my swim, dried off with big beach towel (the air was very warm), and put all the gear for snorkeling into the bags; next we were taken to the ship, and started our return to the village of Nathon, on Koh Samui. This really was a delightful day, doing the things I like, the cost was minimal, only 150 baht, about \$6.00. I was in the sun a lot, but don't think I burned, was careful with sun screen.

Our host Caesar, was waiting for us at the dock. He took me to the travel agent in the village, I wanted to change my next flight to Monday – that will be from Bangkok to Hong Kong. He also secured a ticket for me on the ferry boat, from Koh Samui to Bangkok, when I leave here. It is not easy to reach this island, since there is no airport, but it surely is a delightful place to vacation. Caesar had his usual errands to do in Nathon, we accompanied him, didn't arrive back at the resort until after 6:00 p.m. I quickly showered and dressed, then went to the main lodge for dinner, I chose prawns with garlic, peppers and rice, it was excellent, also had a bottle of beer. The meal was only \$4.00, the cost of the beer was as much as the prawns. I ate with the Australian couple and 2 young men from Belgium who are staying here. It was a pleasant evening.

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 24

I slept so well, awakened at 6:45 a.m. to a beautiful sunrise, clear sky, said prayers of thanks for this great trip. By 8:00 a.m. I was out in the sea, snorkeling around and enjoying the up and down motion of the waves, the buoyancy of the salt water, and the much better visibility today. I will be leaving here tonight, so stayed in the water for a long time, there were no other swimmers, I had the sea all to myself! Then I had to leave the water, go back to my bungalow, shower, shampoo, dress, and pack my bags. Had to be ready about 11:30 a.m., to ride into town, pick up my air reservations, and tickets on the ferry. I had time to buy a couple of t-shirts and skirts – also got some rambutan, the local, hairy, red fruit that looks like a huge strawberry. To eat it, one must peel the covering off and eat the white, solid, portion that has a nut inside. I do enjoy the taste, have had them before, in Thailand. Before returning to the resort, Caesar made a stop at the ice factory, it has to be purchased every day for the resort, and we watched a man bring 2 huge rectangles of ice down a chute, shove it over in front of a power saw which cut it into squares. Then he threw them into a hopper which chopped it into pieces, which were poured into a gunnysack: before closing it, 2 bags of fresh seafood were placed on top of the ice, then the bag was drawn shut with a long needle and twine. This is the way the resort keeps food fresh, there is no electric refrigeration.

Back at the Cococabana resort, I waited with the Belgian boys and the Australian couple, until we were all taken to the ferry landing, to resume our journey to Bangkok. Later – I am on the ferry now, enjoying the balmy air, sea breeze, and watching the islands disappear from view. When the ferry reached the mainland, all passengers hurried off, they knew where the bus was, and to hurry to obtain a seat. The Belgian young men, Australian couple and myself were a little slower, then when finding our bus, discovered the seats were all taken, we had to stand. This was a bus that took us only to the town of Surathani, there we had to find the air-conditioned one that went to Bangkok. A man gave directions, said “just walk to the corner, turn left, you’ll see the bus”. Well I didn’t feel those were very good directions, and as I was obtaining my bag, from the rear of the bus, a tuk-tuk driver came up, said “air-condition bus”? “come with me”. So I climbed into the tuk-tuk, with another woman. He drove away, I was a little alarmed for he seemed to be driving far, but then he let the other woman off at a bus, and drove on with me. He took me to the office for the “air-condition” bus, and I secured my ticket. The driver only charged me 5 baht, I felt it was worth much more for he delivered me to the proper bus line, there are many that go to Bangkok, and no signs in English.

While waiting for bus departure, I had time to go to a store and purchase four new batteries for my tape recorder. The female clerk didn’t speak any English, but knew what I needed as I showed her the recorder. They cost 16 baht, and I also purchased a film. A man was preparing a delicacy nearby, on the sidewalk, he took a sweet dough, patted it into strips, on a flat board, shaped it into an X, and fried it in oil that was heated in a big wok. It was delicious. A young boy helping the man, brought a pot of tea. I always enjoy eating the street foods, and in Thailand, people are always “cooking on the street”. I boarded the inter-city bus, when it was time for departure, the call was made in English.

MONDAY NOVEMBER 25

The all night ride was good, I was comfortable. A stop was made about 2:00 a.m. at a roadside restaurant, then drive was resumed. I expected to be discharged at a bus station, but passengers were all let out at a street intersection, in the dark. It was 5:45 a.m. and already many people were on the streets, some getting little stands ready where they would cook food items for sale, or preparing a stand to sell vegetables, also people waited on corners for a bus, were on their way to work. A tuk-tuk driver was nearby, I wanted to ride in one, made an agreement with him to take me to the Century Hotel, for 90 baht. A taxi would have cost at least 150 baht. He drove very fast through Bangkok streets, trucks were coming into town with the early morning products for the market, and other kinds of conveyances raced along beside us – we bounced along, my hair was flying in the wind, but I was enjoying the experience. At the hotel, the desk clerk welcomed me back, I asked him to retrieve the bag I had left here, also asked if I could use a room to freshen up, before going to the airport. He had a lady attendant unlock the dressing room area of the swim pool, for my use. Finishing there, I also purchased stamps so I could mail several post cards and a letter; everyone is helpful and courteous in Thailand. After paying for the stamps, I only had \$2.47 left in small money, the cab fare was going to be \$2.50, but the clerk said that would be fine. This is my 3rd trip to Thailand, and I think I like coming here often, because the people are so helpful, friendly, and always anxious to please. They call their country “the land of smiles”.

I was able to get booked on an early flight to Hong Kong, on Thailand Air, for which I was grateful. I could not use Pan Am, for it does not have a flight Bangkok / Hong Kong. My Round-The-World ticket uses several airlines, for no airline flies all the way around the world, and when buying the ticket, the participating lines will be outlined on your itinerary. After boarding, the hostess gave each lady passenger, an orchid to pin on their clothing. How nice! Again, I say, Thai people like to please you. The flight was very good, excellent food was served, with a complimentary glass of wine. Arrival at the Tai Chek airport in Hong Kong was at noon, I secured my baggage in the orderly airport, and obtained a hotel room through the tourist desk. It was called the International Hotel, in the Kowloon part of the city. This is very near the great shopping area, walking distance to everything. At the airport I changed \$300, received 2360.40 Hong Kong dollars. I took a taxi to the hotel, got settled in my room, then walked out into the busy streets, where there are multitudes of shops, selling everything! I love to explore, look around, noted that prices were quite reasonable on items. I didn't buy anything, except a small bottle of white wine which I will have in my room. I sometimes enjoy a glass before retiring, and don't like to go into a hotel bar by myself. If I don't finish the wine, I leave it for the maid, when I leave. While out I had dinner in a Chinese, small restaurant, rice with beef and vegetables, and I ate it all with chopsticks. Now it is time to retire.

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 26

I slept so well, awoke at 6:45a.m., did some exercises before I dressed, then went down to the hotel restaurant for breakfast. A man from Brazil was seated at my table, he spoke English so well, I thought he was from America, but said he was here on a business trip. It was nice to have conversation, someone to talk with. Today, I planned to take the bus trip

around Kowloon and Hong Kong, and up to Victoria Peak. That is the very high part of Hong Kong island. Kowloon is the mainland side, which is the great shopping area. Ferry boats cross the water constantly, it is very inexpensive to ride them. I was picked up at the hotel at 8:50, joined others going on the bus tour. It was a very good morning! We drove through the tunnel, from Kowloon to Hong Kong, (it was interesting to know this has been made), picked up a few more people, then started up the steep road. The last time I was here, I saw only Kowloon, saw more of the mainland, and then took a trip into Communist China, now I wanted to explore Hong Kong island. There are very tall skyscrapers built all over, people live in them, there are over 5 million people in Kowloon and Hong Kong, the land space is small, so structures have to go upward, to house everyone. Many new office structures, and bank buildings in Hong Kong, are very beautiful. We went first to Aberdeen, the old fishing village, saw the sampans, many fishing boats, and houseboats where people live their whole lives. Our guide quoted "people are born on the sampan, work on them, cook and eat there, make love, and die on their boat". Sometimes I noted lines high up, across the entire houseboat, holding dried fish, curing them in the sun. Fishing lines often went into the water, from the deck, I even noted a small wire pen which held two chickens, they provide eggs for the people. One man poled along in a small boat, he sold vegetables to the boat people, his way of earning a living. In the very center of the sampan area was the huge floating restaurant, several stories high, and containing eating places from various countries, was brightly decorated. I really enjoyed seeing all this, took a lot of photos.

Next we stopped half-way up the mountain, at Stanley Street, a shopping street, I bought a few things. This was started as a little market, years ago, because people who lived on the upper part of this area, did not like to have to make the trip all the way down to purchase articles. Now, it is a flourishing market place. We were given 45 minutes to wander here – I kept looking at my watch off and on, then noted it had stopped, and everyone else was on the bus. I hurried back to it, found I was 10 minutes late – was embarrassed, and apologized. Continuing upward, we saw elaborate gardens, homes, and apartment complexes. We passed the Governor's house, but were told that he had not lived in it very long, for didn't like the fog that was so prevalent up here. He located elsewhere. The view from the top was fantastic, looking down on skyscraper filled Kowloon and Hong Kong, and over the ocean below where there were ocean going ships, fishing boats, and the ferries going back and forth. Returning down to sea level, we again went through the tunnel under the bay, to Kowloon, it was about 2:00 p.m. I had lunch, then decided to buy a large suitcase, so I could put my small one in it, plus all the articles I have purchased. I am allowed 2 suitcases on planes; I have had one, plus the leather duffel bag. After eating, had Chinese pork and noodles (which I ate with chopsticks) I spent the evening resting, and watching TV. There are 3 stations that use English language – this is the first time I've watched TV, and had much communication with world events, since being in Hong Kong.

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 27

I slept great again, don't think I even moved in the bed! Did my exercises upon arising, am glad I feel so well, and I think exercise helps keep me that way. The first thing I needed to do today was to re-confirm my flight out of here, to Singapore, had to go to the Pan Am office to accomplish that. I found my way there, by looking at a map, and asking directions,

it is located in the Empire Center, a collection of beautiful new skyscrapers that are not very far from my hotel. The Tsim Sat Tshu shopping area is adjacent to the newer buildings that house banks and offices, it's all a very busy area. I did get my confirmation, also asked at the baggage department if my folding wheeled carrier had been located, since it had not appeared with my suitcase, but it was not found. Now I wanted to take a day trip to Macau, on the mainland of China, but which belongs to Portugal. That country came by sailing ship many, many years ago, and laid claim to this portion of land, have governed it since. I walked to the Starr Ferry at the waterfront, bought a ticket, and rode across the bay to Hong Kong, from Kowloon. The business part of Hong Kong is all very tall skyscraper buildings, many very new, and expensive hotels. The walk was not very far to the Macau Ferry building, which is brand new, it has escalators which take you up two floors to the emigration area, passport is checked, then you enter the large hydrofoil anchored there. This is the ship that "floats" over the water, very fast.

The ride to Macau took about 1 ½ hours, we passed the anchorage area just outside Hong Kong harbor where there were hundreds of ocean going ships anchored. There was also an air-craft carrier there; shipping business at Hong Kong is known as one of the busiest in the world. We also passed numerous small islands on the journey. Arriving at Macau waterfront, I took a bus (paid 1 HD) to the center of town. This was an old, old settlement of China, but when the Portuguese took over, they brought Christianity, and the Spanish influence is noted in buildings, plaza areas, churches, etc. Buddhism is still practiced, I noted several temples in Macau dedicated to Buddha. Most of the buildings were very old, and not kept in good repair – there is a large gambling casino here, it draws many people from Hong Kong and Kowloon, was quite a beautiful building. My objective was to stroll through the streets, noted some were very narrow, had living quarters on upper floors, for laundry was hung to dry on balconies there. People walked among the shops, doing their business, a couple people I noted had the wooden stick across their shoulders, from each end was a basket carrying objects. This is the typical far east manner to transport foods or other things. I did get a photo of one lady.

I found a beautiful old church, not elaborate like European cathedrals, called St. Augustin's, went inside. It needed some restoration, noted the Spanish influence in the statues of saints, and paintings on the walls, reminiscent of works done in the 1700's, when the Portuguese came. The church was situated high up, on a hill. After visiting there I went down to the center again, noted a small eating place, a Chinese lady was preparing food right near the front door. I entered, noted her bowls of fish balls, greens, flat noodles, she was also preparing a folded dough, with a cooked meat filling inside. I can't speak Mandarin, or Portuguese (the languages spoken here) so pointed toward a table, then to my mouth – she understood, pulled out a chair, motioned for me to sit. I did so, she brought a large serving of the foods she was cooking, the fish balls and greens were in a soup, then she brought the "dumpling" type of the meal. It was all very tasty, I ate the solid food with chop sticks. To pay her, I simply held out a handful of Hong Kong dollars (which I had been told were used here), she took some money, left the rest. I don't know if she took the right amount, or too much – and I didn't care. I enjoyed the meal and her hospitality.

In the English newspaper that I had read at the hotel, I noted there had been a hi-jacking of an Egypt Air plane, and 58 people had died. I felt my children would be worried when they

saw this on TV, knew I was flying around in the Far East, so asked direction, then found the telephone building in Macau. Here I knew I could place a phone call to California. I called my son Tom, reached him (it was 2:00 a.m. there), told him I was fine, enjoying Macau, on the mainland of communist China, and Hong Kong. It was good to hear his voice, he was glad I called, will relay the message to my daughters, and wished me a "Happy Birthday Mom", my 70th will happen in a few days. What a marvel is the telephone! I walked into the gambling Casino, looked around, but did not intend to participate, just noted the place was very crowded. It was quite lavish. Next I hired one of the tri-shaw drivers, to cycle me down to the hydrofoil landing. The tri-shaw is the local way of travel here, named so because of it's three wheels; a bicycle frame and one wheel in front, a basket seat in the back, over 2 bicycle wheels. The driver rides this, it's patterned after the rickshaw, where a man runs and pulls the cart. These are rarely used anymore, the only place I have found them, is in Calcutta, India, in the very poor section of the town. The air was warm now, the sun had come out off and on – this morning it had been cool, I needed my light jacket.

The long ride over the water, back to Hong Kong, was relaxing. It was just dark when we arrived, lights were on in the skyscraper buildings, and up the mountainside. What a beautiful sight! On arrival, had to go through immigration again, have passport stamped, then I walked slowly toward the Starr ferry. On reaching there I marveled at the sight before me, five battleships sat in the Navy yard, close to shore, each had long strings of lights on it. Some other ships had lights, the steady succession of ferry boats plied back and forth from shore to shore, the bright big moon was shining up above, I will never forget that sight as I rode on a ferry to the Kowloon side. Everyone should see Hong Kong harbor at night. To extend my time in the area, I purchased some chicken, rice, a vegetable, a carton of milk, sat down at the promenade, and ate it. There were very many people around, all seemed to be enjoying the spectacular evening. Then, it was back to my hotel, and the end of another nice day, on this trip of seeing the world.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 28 THANKSGIVING DAY IN U.S.

There is no celebration of this holiday today, here in Hong Kong, but I said prayers of thanks for my well being, on this long trip. Since my flight out of here is not until 10:30 p.m., I made a reservation to go up to Ocean Park this afternoon. I had breakfast in the hotel, then re-packed the suitcases. I put the small leather bag (which was too full to contain anything more) and purchases I made here, into the large new one I just bought. Since I will only be taking airplanes the rest of my journey, I won't have to lift them on or off trains. I checked out of the hotel at 11:30 a.m. and waited in the lobby until picked up by the tour guide – suitcases will remain here until I return this evening and then leave for the airport.

This was a most worthwhile tour! We were taken by bus through the Aberdeen tunnel, past the fishing village, and up high to the start of the park grounds. Here there are all kinds of amusements, rides, a building with a wonderful shell collection, a large aquarium several stories high, and in a circular form. It is filled with hundreds of fish, corals, sea creatures, etc., these can be viewed from the outside walkway that extends from the top story, all the way to the ground, it was huge. There were sharks, sea turtles, all kinds of tropical fish moving gracefully through the water, which was nice and clear. Next we entered a cable car, which took us to the very top of the park, the view over the ocean below was fantastic.

We did not have time to partake of any amusement rides, but up here was a huge tank of sea water, and a show was presented with performing seals, some dolphins, 3 excellent female swimmers doing water ballet, and also 3 men performing dives from a high tower. The men were an American diving team. There was also a killer whale that leaped out of the water, and I caught that act on my camera. The announcer for the show spoke mainly Chinese, but occasionally put in a few English words, like “wow”, or “great”. After the presentation, we had to leave, and went down the mountain on the opposite side. Here was an escalator, called the longest one in the world, we had to leave one, and get on a second one as we rode down. The views were great, seeing Hong Kong and the mainland side all spread out below. It was a really different adventure, on those escalators, and when reaching the ground level, we were taken back to our hotels. Ocean Park is a wonderful place, if you are ever in Hong Kong, don't miss it

It was 6:00 p.m. and dusk, from the hotel I walked to a church near Cameron Road that I had seen, to say some prayers of thanks. I found there was a mass to start soon, so I attended it, was said in Chinese language. I have heard mass said in Japanese, when in Kyoto, also in these languages: Philippino, Malaysian, German, Swiss, Spanish, Luxemburg. This was a happy Thanksgiving Day for me. Afterward I ate in a restaurant, went to the hotel to claim my suitcases, took a taxi to the airport. The fee was 16HD, that left me with only a few Hong Kong dollars, and some change. On checking in, I was surprised to find I was charged for excess weight of my baggage, 8 kilos, which cost 256 HD. So, I had to change more money, obtained 296 HD for \$40 US. There was also the departure tax of 120 HD, but I had set that aside earlier, was prepared for it. I guess I'll carry the small bag on the next leg of my flight, won't check it. Security in the airport was very tight, more so than in other terminals I have gone through, but that made me feel a bit safer. The size of the carry-on bag was determined by a wooden framework it had to fit into, anything larger had to be checked. The plane left at the scheduled time.

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 29

The flight from Hong Kong to Singapore was only 3 ½ hours, a meal was served shortly after takeoff, and I slept after that. Arrival at Singapore airport was 3:30 a.m., a bad time in view of the fact that the tourist desk does not open until 7:00 a.m., and I could not get assistance for a hotel until then. On international flights, one does not always have a choice of departure and arrival times. I checked my large black suitcase in the “left luggage” area, kept the small one and the leather bag with me, put them on a “trolley” (that is the term used here for a luggage carrier), and then laid across 3 chairs in the waiting area. I put my large beach towel under me, laid my head on my backpack, and surprised myself by sleeping until 6:00 am. This is the new, large, and very beautiful terminal, there were quite a few people spending the night – some even laid on the floor. The ladies room had extra large stalls, some with a sink in them, so I freshened up there, then looked for a restaurant. The only one open was ethnic Chinese – I went in, was seated. In true oriental style, ladies in authentic dress, came to each table, pushing carts loaded with Chinese food. She asked me (by name) which one I wanted, but not knowing their names, I chose to have dim sun and coffee. Dim sun is an assortment of good things, I had dough, folded over and filled with cooked meat, and a hot, crisp sweet fried dough, with a hot sauce poured over it. Both were suggested by the hostess at my table, and they were really good – this is not my usual

breakfast; I had expected to try dim sun while in Hong Kong, but had not done it, so now I experienced it in a very high class restaurant, with beautiful décor. There were about 15 or 20 Chinese people dining, I was the only Caucasian patron.

After eating, I went to the money changer window, which was now open, and changed \$100, received 205 Singapore Dollars (SD), a little better than 2 for 1. Next, I obtained a hotel from the now-opened tourist desk, and after asking, found I could take a bus direct to town for 80 cents, compared to a taxi, for 20 SD. There were very few people on the streets yet and I figured I could travel o.k. with my suitcases, the bus driver directed me where to get off at a taxi stand, here I took a cab to the hotel. This is not as fancy a hotel as I had in Hong Kong, but has a private bath and air conditioning, and is within easy walking distance to the waterfront. After getting settled, I showered, then laid down on the bed until 12:30 p.m., by that time I felt rested and looked up some tours. I decided on a Singapore harbor cruise for the afternoon. The air was pleasant, I walked down to Clifford Pier, found the ticket office, things were familiar because I was here in January 1982, while I was still employed in Saudi Arabia. At that time I stayed at the Cockpit Hotel, which was near Orchard Road, a shopping area, but much further from the waterfront.

The boat trip was on a Chinese junk, I sat at the stern, in the sunshine. I prefer this type craft instead of the regular tourist boats – a young couple from Japan, the only other tourists, sat near me, spoke English very well, he was a tour guide in his country. They were pleasant, asked about my family and children. He said he had no mother, and could I be his mother for today? It is nice to have conversation, when traveling alone for an extended time, and a photo of us was taken, on my camera. The Chinese man who handled the tiller (a large, long pole that steers the junk) sometimes sat on it as he pushed it to left or right, was interesting to see him maneuver it. We went through the anchorage area outside the harbor, there were many, many ships waiting either to unload, or pick up cargo. This is the second busiest port in the world, I was told, and there were smaller craft plying back and forth also. We passed several small islands around this peninsula, St. John, Sister, and a few more whose names I didn't know. Sentosa Island is a recreational area, I was there in 1982. Returning about 5:15 p.m. to the pier, I walked slowly back to the hotel, stopping in a restaurant on the way. At the hotel I tried to phone Ann Thatcher, a friend of my daughter's, who was now living with her husband, in Singapore. It had been agreed that I would contact her when I arrived here. I received no answer, will try another time. A light rain started in the early evening, so I did not leave the hotel, but retired early after writing in my journal, about today's activities.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 30

This is the last day of the month, and this time was always very cold where I lived in the Midwest of the United States. Here the weather is warm, about 23 C., and humid. Singapore is a city-state, was an island, but now is connected to Malaysia by a road. It gets very hot here in the summer months, is about 1 degree north of the equator. After breakfast at a small café near the hotel, I studied my map, also asked questions, and found my way to the Shanghai-Hong Kong bank on BrasBasha Road, not too far away. I needed to change a larger sum of money, exchanged \$300 for 726.77 SD. The rate is good for Americans, not so good for Canadians and English. It is always best to change money at a

bank, not at the hotel, which charges more. Last evening I did contact Ann Thatcher, and we arranged to meet about 5:00 p.m. today at the Raffles Hotel, will have the famous drink together, called "Singapore Sling".

After finishing at the bank, I walked a long way to Arab street, in the old part of the city, wanting to explore there. I noted street names like Malay, Manila, BenCoolie, and on the map noted "Little India". In the olden days, people from certain countries settled near each other, named the streets after some locale they remembered. Many buildings in the older part are being torn down and replaced with modern ones. The old style architecture, with roofs extending out over the sidewalk, is vanishing, whole blocks of buildings are being demolished to make room for new hotels, or office buildings. I am glad I have been able to visit here while some of the old, historic buildings remain, have seen so many changes, since I was here the last time. This is a huge trading metropolis, and "time marches on", there is modernization everywhere. I walked past the old St. Joseph church, went in for a brief visit, noted a plaque "Portuguese Mission – Founded 1825". The building is beautiful, still in the old style.

On my way toward Arab street, I passed through an area of Chinese shops, small stalls with people making different crafts. In one, a boy was painting flower designs, in very bright colors, on a chair, some were finished and were beautiful. As I was on a side street in that area, I heard chanting, saw a very large tent with many people sitting inside. I stopped briefly, also noted a big truck parked there, it was brightly decorated in blue frilled paper, and there was a sign on the side in English, "Undertaker". In the front part of the tent there was a white wrapped body lying on a low platform. The people near the front part of the tent had on light colored simple hats, all of the same shape, I gathered this was a funeral; I did get a picture of the truck, but did not want to linger near the tent, and possibly offend the mourners by my presence. Later on, as I was mentioning this to a lady from Singapore, she confirmed my thought that it was a funeral, and the mourners do wear those hats – it is a Chinese custom here. Singapore is populated by people from many countries, they bring their particular manners and way of life, group together, speak their home language.

Next, I noted an Arab restaurant, just a small roofed stand, advertising mutabach – their sign was spelled "murabah" – I have eaten this good food often, while living in Saudi Arabia, so entered and sat down. It is a thin dough shaped in a rectangle, cooked ground lamb, onions, a little oil, seasonings are dropped in the middle and the dough is folded over. It is then fried slowly, on both sides, and cut into squares when finished. It was delicious, brought back memories of the many times I ate this at a place we called the "Dirty Thaubé", with Dr. Montgomery and Dee, back in Taif. The place was torn down later on, when new buildings were started. As I ate, 2 young Muslim girls came and sat at my table, ordered food. They had the dress typical of this area, faces were open but their heads were covered in a fringed white scarf, similar to what the Egyptian Muslim women wear. I asked to take their picture, they smilingly obliged, I was a little surprised that they agreed, and thanked them. Looking in the shops in this area, I did buy a Batik dress for granddaughter Shannon. The sun was very hot, as I walked back to my hotel, arrived there about 12:30 p.m., and rested after a refreshing shower. On the telephone, I tried to get

information about a trip to the country of Bali, there is a 4 day trip, it leaves here on Friday, would have to think about that.

After resting I went to the library, just across the street from my hotel, asked for some books with information on coral, but found mainly "Oceanography" texts. Found one "Wild Wild World of Dangerous Sea Creatures", that was so interesting, and I had already been exposed to some of them, in my scuba dives. In a huge book store, up the street a bit, I found a great, large book on "Fishes of the Great Barrier Reef", would like to have purchased it, but it was too heavy to carry, as I am traveling. Nearby I found a YMCA, it had a McDonald restaurant in it too, was a large place. It was lively, and just like the U.S., it had Christmas decorations all over, even a decorated Christmas tree. I enjoyed a hamburger and hot fudge sundae, a change from the rice and noodle diet that is prevalent all over Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Japan. A rain shower had started, I waited it out in the restaurant, then walked to my hotel, changed into a long dress and walked 5 blocks to the Raffles Hotel, where I was to meet Ann Thatcher. I arrived first, then Ann came – it was interesting to meet Mary's friend, in this far away country. I had never met her personally, just spoke with her. She told me of her husband's work in this country, their fine living quarters in Singapore, and having maid service available at very little cost. We had a "Singapore Sling" drink together, famous for the elegant Raffles Hotel. It would be their first wedding anniversary tomorrow, her husband was still working this early evening, so I treated and made a toast to their marriage. She had to leave soon, I decided to stay, and treat myself to dinner and the cultural dance show at the Raffles.

Patrons were seated in the ballroom, a buffet style dinner was set on long tables; it was lavish and plentiful, curried beef, salmon, chicken, roast beef, several vegetables, relishes, fresh tropical fruits for dessert, plus cake and ice cream. A very good dinner! The show followed, very graceful young women and men performed the cultural dances of this area, clothed in glittering costumes of their country, Indonesia, Malaysia, China, India. The gold braid, sequins, beautiful materials with gold threads interwoven, made the costumes breathtaking in appearance. I wished I had brought my camera, and tape recorder for the music. I sat next to a lady from England – she told me she has to go back, reluctantly, to England tomorrow, it will be very cold there. The show ended about 9:15 p.m. and I was able to walk to my hotel, which was not far, there were many people on the streets, which were lighted very well. The Raffles Hotel was founded 125 years ago, is still very elegant and it is a tradition that when visiting Singapore, you must go there and have a drink. The original building is still in use, the whole block of buildings nearby have been torn down, Old Singapore is slowly disappearing!

SUNDAY DECEMBER 1

Slept very well, awoke just before 7:00 a.m., on the last day of my 69th year, tomorrow is my birthday. I took time to do my usual exercises, before dressing, and going out to attend mass at the church of the Good Shepard, the large edifice just a block from my hotel. The mass was said by the priest, in English today, the last time I was here and attended this church, it was said in Mandarin, one of the languages heard often in Singapore. The church was full, some people had to stand in the back; the huge organ up in the choir loft was played - it made the mass seem like it was in days past, before many changes were

made, and people now participate verbally. The old customs prevail here, the communion rail is still present and people kneel there to receive Holy Communion, on the tongue, not in the hand, as is done in America. This is the first place, in my travels, where I have seen the old customs still prevailing. After mass people went into a side yard, food and coffee were being served there; I didn't notice this until I was past the fenced area, or I would have gone in too.

After having a light breakfast in a little café (I had so much food last night) I decided to go to Sentosa Island for the day. I put on a swim suit, a cover up shift over it, and walked toward Clifford Pier; passing that, I walked more to where the cable car went over to the island – walked, and walked, thinking I should soon be at the World Trade Center, where the cable car was based. I finally asked someone, found it was still over a mile distant on this street, but I was directed to just take the next bus that came by, it would deliver me to the Center. I did so, found the ticket office, bought my fare. The cable car leaves from the 13th floor of a tower, goes across the bay, to Sentosa Island. It was a thrilling ride, up so high in the air, the view of bay below, Singapore spread out beneath us, was fantastic. There were 2 young ladies in the car with me, both spoke English, told me about the attractions on the island. Leaving the cable car, I entered the monorail that circles the entire island, it gave me views of the beaches, the inland swim lagoon, the lovely gardens of flowering shrubs and tropical plants, all trimmed neatly. I also had a map, naming different attractions. I spent the afternoon at the beach, swam in the salty water, laid on the sand; it was partly cloudy and once a few drops of rain fell from a cloud nearby, the air was warm. I totally relaxed for a couple of hours - I will hate to give this up when I am back home, have my regular work to do, and swim in my chilly pool!

Riding back on the cable car, I told the events of the afternoon on my recorder: a little rain fell again as I rode. The sky was dark with a silver lining at the cloud's edges, really a pretty sight. On getting off the cable car, rode the elevator to ground level, found the Food Fair nearby. This is a collection of booths which serve foods from many countries, cooked right there by people from that country. It was orderly and clean (as is all of Singapore, called the Clean, Green city), I checked on the Japanese, Chinese, Muslim, Arab, Mandarin and European foods, and lured by the good smell, chose the Arab mutabach again. This time it was served with a curry sauce and cooked lamb pieces, it was excellent, even better than the last one. I also had a glass of the sweet, hot tea, just as it was served to us in Saudi Arabia. It is always served in a glass, not in a cup. Back at the hotel I showered, did some hand laundry (I carry clothing of nylon, that dries quickly, needs no ironing), then was ready to lounge on the bed, read some informative articles, and write. Another nice day, in the South China sea, and Singapore.

MONDAY DECEMBER 2

Happy Birthday Irma! 70 years ago today I came into this world – I surely don't feel that old. I did my floor exercises, can still do 15 legs over head and touch toes to floor in back, plus 15 sit ups and straight leg stretches, while seated. This morning I treated myself to breakfast in the Palm Court, at the Raffles Hotel, a garden restaurant, with orchids on the table, excellent service, a pleasant atmosphere. After leisurely enjoying the food I hired a trishaw driver to take me all the way to the Peninsula Hotel, (the trishaw is the three-

wheeled bicycle type carrier used as a taxi). This was another treat, I don't usually employ that type transportation. Not finding the office I wanted here, the driver offered to take me all the way to Serangoon street, and nearby area. That is the Little India part of Singapore. I wanted to walk, and explore there. First I stopped in a travel agency and arranged a trip to Indonesia, for 4 days, leaving tomorrow. I have not been in that country, it was not on my agenda, but being so close, I plan to go there. The girl also confirmed my departure later on, from Singapore to Hong Kong, then to Tokyo, Japan, and to Honolulu, on Pan Am airline, the origin of my Round The World ticket. I am nearing the end of my long journey, which has been wonderful.

Serangoon street is the area where people of the Hindu religion settled many years ago, there are many different sects in India, all are represented here. The buildings are still the very old ones, shops and stalls along the streets carry items made by local inhabitants, food stalls emitted the smell of curry powder and other spices. Many were displayed in large glass, covered jars, I bought 1 SD worth of curry, it had such a great smell, also saw coriander, turmeric, chile powder, cinnamon. In one stall two men were grinding different kinds of beans, and other spices, which they would sell. This is the Far East, the land where different spices grow. It is so interesting to walk along, and see the cultural customs of different countries. I knew the main temple of India, the Perumal temple, was in this area, and wanted to visit it, found it on the map. As I arrived there, the tall, arched, decorated gateway "rajah gopuram" was closed, and I could see by the tented covering of the temple, and scaffolding, that repair work, or some kind of construction, was going on. I was very disappointed, very curious, wanted to have a look inside for I had read much about it. I wasn't sure how to, or if, I should try to get in, walked on the side street, stood, observed it from there. Hindu men, and women in sarees, were walking in the narrow street where I stood, not paying any attention to me. I noted a man open a side door of the temple wall, he stood there, was very, very dark skinned, with the typical Indian features. I walked to him, and by sign language, asked if I could enter, said "temple". He motioned me to follow him, over piles of sand, hoses and tools. The construction was indeed going on (there was scaffolding against walls, and tarpaulins of blue and white stripes covered some areas). It was lunch time now, and some workers were lying down, resting. An artist from India was making a statue, about 30 inches high, of a goddess, the wires extended from ends of the arms, the hands had not yet been added. He was dipping a small brush in water, and shaping, smoothing the eyes, I was excited to see him at work. Nearby I noted a group of Singaporeans, a woman speaking English, and several men, one had a video camera, another had light standards. I asked the lady if I could take a picture of the artist, she said "certainly" – then said "there is a finished statue over there", guided me to it. It was a goddess, the same size as the one being created, it had a snake around the neck! I got ready to take the picture, found my 35 mm film was ended, so I snapped it with Instamatic camera, after they moved into a better lighted area. The Instamatic does not have flash. Then the lady told me they were a camera crew from the local television station, and come here periodically, to record the reconstruction being done for a documentary, on this temple. She asked me if I would like to see a finished portion, and could I climb a scaffold, for it was way up high at the top of the temple. I said I could, and would be pleased to do so. She led the way, up the flimsy scaffolding, made of bamboo poles, tied together with rope, we went slowly way to the top. On planks there, the artist's pots of paint, and brushes were standing, I had to walk carefully not to step on them. It was a beautiful

altar, all finished, and many statues of gods and goddesses, brightly painted, encircled it. I wanted a good photo, so quickly changed film on my 35mm camera and took a picture. Then, she asked if she could take my picture, in front of the painted area, I happily said, "yes". How lucky I am, to be here at the same time as this camera crew, and get way up here at the finished portion. This was a real birthday present, not many tourists get to see inside the temple. Speaking of birthdays, I remember last year I was scuba diving in the Red Sea on that day. We carefully descended the shaky scaffolding, and I followed the crew out, she asked me where I was from, why I was traveling the world alone, and how long I would be here, I told her I was leaving tomorrow for Indonesia, thanked her for her assistance in filming inside the temple. At the many Hindu festivals, processions start from the Perumal temple, penitents celebrating Thaipusam, their bodies pierced with steel hooks, carry steel frames decorated with peacock feathers, as they walk to Chettiars temple about 3 kilometers distant. They are in a trans-like state, and seem to not have any pain.

In Singapore there are Sikh Hindus and other Muslims, people of many kinds of religions. The women often have a small jewel on one side of their nose, some have the red dot in the middle of the forehead. There are Muslim mosques, Hindu temples, Chinese temples, Buddhist temples, and many Christian churches. Missionaries of many faiths have been here, for the past 150 years or more. After the temple visit, I walked back toward Bras Bahas road, stopped in a little park that I passed, sat down and taped the story of Serangoon road. Suddenly it rained, but luckily there was a covered bus stop right across the street, I went there and waited until the shower stopped, which was not very long. I was not far from the travel agency where I had been earlier, so stopped in and picked up my flight tickets, etc. for tomorrow. I feel this was a very lucky day for me – and speaking of luck, last night I played solitaire 3 times, and won 2 of them, that's unusual. I carry a deck of cards, use them once in a while in the evening. I must mention an unusual event today, as I was heading for the Sarangoon street area, and waiting for a stoplight at the intersection, a girl across the street waved, and called out my name. It was Vivienne, one of the girls who stayed at the Cocobana resort on Koh Samui, while I was there. We talked a bit, she is leaving for her home in New Zealand, tonight.

TUESDAY DECEMBER 3

I awoke early, at 5:30 a.m., as the new day starts, listened to sounds from outside. I turn off the air conditioner before I fall asleep, prefer to hear the local sounds from a cit coming alive. It was light soon, a street sweeper was outside my hotel using his long, palm frond brush to gather leaves in the street, I heard the swishing sound. There are no mechanical street sweepers here, men or women perform these tasks, they wear the large brimmed straw hat, do keep everything neat and clean. Women also do gardening, in the parks or boulevards. The buses start running about 6:30 a.m., and the streets are busy. This will be departure day for me, I leave for Jakarta, Indonesia. This country was not on my original plan of places to see, but as long as I am so close, I decided to go there. The four day excursion trip I reserved, through the travel agent in Singapore, with hotels and meals, was almost the same price as airfare alone would be.

Yesterday I made a “dry run” to where I would catch a bus to the airport, noting if sidewalks were o.k., if I could pull my suitcase, on the luggage carrier, over them. They were all right. I packed up, placed the small case on top of the large one, belted them to the carrier, and set off. As I went down a curb, the frame bent a little from the weight of the luggage, but didn't hamper the operation of the wheels. At the bus stop, the one I needed came along very soon – I took the suitcases off the carrier, lifted them on board, paid my 80 cents, sat down and relaxed. It is many miles to the airport, through the suburban area, and along the east coast shore, which is kept like a garden area, many flowering plants and shrubs seen the entire way. I enjoyed the beautiful ride, and couldn't believe one could make this trip for only 80 cents, instead of the 20 dollar taxi ride. I am a great walker, and pulling my luggage was not a chore.

I arrived at the airport early for my flight, but had planned it that way, don't like to be hurried when checking in for a flight. The new airport is so beautiful and well organized, so much better than the old one, and I believe, the nicest one I've been in on this trip. I checked the small leather suitcase at “left luggage”, took the large black one with me, also the red carry-on bag given to me at the tour agency, with their name on it. This will identify me to the tour guide who will meet me in Jakarta airport. The flight to Jakarta, capitol of Indonesia, was 1 hour 45 minutes, we were served a cold lunch, and white wine. On arrival, went through immigration, did not need a visa here, just show passport. In customs area they opened my red carry-on bag, looked inside, but did not open the large suitcase. As I walked out of customs, an Indonesian lady, standing behind the fenced area, waved at me, called my name, said “I'm your guide”. She was Yanti, showed her credential, had me wait briefly while she located two more people for the tour. The terminal building in Jakarta is quite new, built in the manner of houses in Jakarta, open sides, lovely hardwood floors all over, but it was small, compared to Singapore. After Yanti located the other people, we were driven in a van, to a large hotel, it was 20 stories high, had a huge lobby with ornate chandeliers, the gaudy teardrop crystal ones. On the way into the city, we had driven through areas of poor houses, shantys with corrugated metal roofs, messy yards, motorcycles standing around – it must have been the poorer part of town. The hotel was very nice, had a doorman, dressed in oriental suit, greeted us as we went in. My room was very large, really a small suite, had full bath, two double beds, a large wardrobe, desk and chairs, an upholstered settee, coffee table, and refrigerator. The lamp fixtures were of carved wood, Indonesian designs and paintings were placed here and there. The carved furniture was typical of crafts in the Far East countries, all done by hand.

There were 5 people in our party, when Yanti had us meet in the lobby, prior to going out for an Indonesian dinner. It was at a Muslim restaurant, an open air structure, had a small stream of water running through it, with fish swimming around, and a wooden walkway to cross over it. The food served: first chicken satay (on a bamboo stick) with bean sauce, a whole fish prepared with mixed vegetables over it, and a large krupuk (this is the rice-flour thin wafer, similar to a potato chip), soup, and tea. There were 2 different hot sauces, one was sambul, like my Syrian friend used to make in Saudi, and is VERY hot, the other was a soy-type sauce. I enjoy eating foods in different countries, really like to experience the different cultures. After the meal we were driven through “Ancol Dreamland”, sort of a Disneyland, but did not stop to participate in anything. Next we went to the beach area and stopped, many young girls were around, two young men from Malaysia, in our group, said

they wanted to stay here for awhile. The next stop was a park, with handicraft open stalls, where paintings, all kinds of crafts were offered. It was quite interesting, I enjoyed the handiwork and artistry.

Nearby was an open amphitheatre, a stage, and curved rows of seats made of brick. We seated ourselves, amongst the native people, there would be a puppet show presented here. This is the kind where the puppets are on sticks, not strings, a production shown for hundreds of years, in this part of the world. How neat, that we happened to be here right at this time, and could watch. There was no admission, the seats were filled with people. On the stage were several musicians, with local instruments, 2 women, who spoke for the puppets, and the puppet stage – behind this were the people who held the sticks with the puppets, which were dressed in clothing of this country. One man played the rebok, a stringed instrument that stood on the floor; he was seated on the floor and pulled a bow across the strings, a man had some flat drums he struck, another one had a different type of percussion instruments. There were about 6 different characters of puppets, who were moved around by people holding the sticks, and obscured from view, under the puppet stage. They were telling a story, the women speaking the puppet parts, used inflection, different range of voice for male and female parts, squeaky voices, etc., in telling the story. Yanti said these players had come from a different part of the province, she did not understand the dialect, and could not tell us the story. But it was surely interesting to watch this local type of amusement. The puppet show started about 7:00 p.m., Yanti said it would continue all through the night, probably would last until dawn, and was a great treat for local people, was always well attended. We left the show about 10:30 p.m., as we walked past the craft booths, Mr. Chiu, a Chinese man in our group, bought a whole set of the bamboo musical instruments, the angklung, native to this area. He was fascinated by their sound. I retired soon after reaching the hotel, so happy with this adventure.

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 4

I awoke to the sound of roosters crowing, there are some directly across the canal, which goes alongside the road my hotel is on. A small flock of chickens live there too, I see them pecking the dirt. Activity outside was already starting, men were pushing carts of vegetables down the street, one man carried the pole across his shoulders, with a basket on each end, in one was a small stove and pan, the other had packages of food. He will probably set up shop somewhere near the market place, and cook food items to sell. I watched the activity for a while, then did my exercises, and went down to the 6th floor to take a swim in the outside pool there. It was lovely, felt so good! I had breakfast in the dining room of the hotel, next to me were two American men, we entered into conversation. They had been working on a construction project in Java for 5 weeks, had finished the job and were leaving today for California. They offered to give a phone call to my daughter Mary, when they reached home, I asked them to tell her I was o.k., and would be home around December 9. How nice of them to do this. When traveling in far away countries, and you hear someone speaking your language, it is normal to converse, ask where are you from, etc.

Our tour of the city this morning took us past the President's house, a beautiful white building, set in green lawns, and fenced all around with alternate white posts, and green

bushes. An important visitor from Thailand was coming today, and the fencing was entirely festooned with red and white bunting. It looked stunning! My impression of the city, coming through those poor areas as we entered, was much improved when going through the business area and nicer residential broad streets. There were many modern high-rise buildings, banks, hotels, shopping centers, and schools. We visited the National Museum with Yanti as our guide, gave us information about the cultural objects and customs of the country. It was full of interesting objects, wood carving from the old style houses, small models of huts people lived in years ago, musical instruments, ornate head dresses, costumes, jewelry, knives, and dressed puppets. There were the wood ones, which we had seen, also the flat, punched leather ones, which are used as shadows against a cloth screen which is lighted from behind. I could have spent a lot more time there, to absorb knowledge from their past history. I love to learn about different cultures. We went into another area, there were many dioramas which portray the history of the islands of Indonesia – there are very many, some are not modernized at all. Groups of students were listening to instructors, about past history. Next we went to a park, it had a huge monument type building, on the top was a tall pylon with a cone shaped top, covered with 350 kilos of gold. It glowed!

Lunch was at a restaurant serving Indonesian food, we also ate some mangos which Mr. Chiu had bought at the market place we passed. Then we visited a business, where batik printing was being done by women, on cloth. They took a small pipe, dipped it into hot wax, applied it a little at a time, making a design or pattern. The cloth was then dipped, by men, into several succeeding vats of water, then dried, it was interesting to watch, the pattern stayed on the cloth. Next we returned to the hotel, picked up our suitcases, returned to the lobby, and at 2:30 p.m. boarded a large bus, and departed the city to see more of the island of Java. Our first stop was at a large park-like area, where they had models of the ancient houses, lived in by tribes people in the past. In 1975 the president's wife gave money to build large replicas of historical ways of living, it was interesting to see them, note the carving on the houses, note their tribal customs, etc. I was upset though, when I found I had let the flash button on, the battery in my camera was dead, I did not get any photos. The next stop was a bird sanctuary, it had all the different, colorful birds that are found in the islands, it was noisy, as they made their calls. We then stopped at a lovely place where there was a temple for the Bali religion. We watched as little girls were learning a beautiful, slow dance, in the open sided building. They were so graceful, danced in time with the music being played on local instruments. I had been able to purchase a slide film at a store Yanti showed the driver, so I did get a photo of the temple.

Now we started a 2 1/2 hour drive, through agricultural areas, saw vegetables growing, there were banana trees here and there. After the first hour we left the flat land and started ascending a mountain road, passed small villages, noted people standing near the road edge, visiting, also saw some boys playing a soccer game. The road twisted and turned, the scenery was beautiful. As we neared the top, the air was much cooler, I noted several signs for hotels and figured this must be a resort area. The wealthy people in Jakarta can come up here, vacation, and escape the heat of sea level. I noted a golf course at one of the hotels. All roadside signs were in the Indonesian language, except HOTEL was in English. 90% of the population are of the Muslim faith, I noted their dress was the usual garb the Muslims wear. The girls and women wear long dresses and a white shawl,

covering their head and hair. Their faces are not covered. The men and some boys, have the long cloth skirt, wrapped tight at the waist with a big fold in the center. Sometimes as they walked along the road, I noted some pulled the skirt, from the back, between their legs and tucked it into waistband in front. The men wear a black, rimless, round hat. Mosques, with the onion shaped dome, were seen often.

As we ascended above 4000 feet elevation there was much fog, visibility became less, the road was narrow and winding. Our guide announced the bushes seen on the steep hills, were tea plantations, much tea comes from Java. Even though it was misty, the scenery on this trip up the mountain, was beautiful. Soon we arrived at our hotel, a first class resort of bungalows; there were tennis courts, volleyball court, swim pool, and a playground area, everything was landscaped very well, groomed with flowering plants here and there. The bungalow I had was for 2 separate families – I had a small kitchenette apartment, a family from Singapore had the other side, it was all very nice. After getting settled went to the restaurant up toward the reception area, had a choice of Chinese or Indonesian menu. I chose Chinese this time, the food was served at a large, round table, with the revolving center, just like the Chinese restaurant in Taif, where I ate often. My meal was a whole fish, rice with a sweet sauce, shrimp, mixed vegetables, prawns fried in butter, soup, and tea. Everything was very tasteful, I ate a lot. As I left the restaurant and walked back to my bungalow, it started to rain, and I heard it rain during the night also. Breakfast is to be served in a building next to the pool, at 7:30 a.m. I am glad I am taking this tour of Java, I am learning very much, and seeing a whole different culture. This country was under Dutch rule for many years, also was taken and held by Japan, during the Pacific war of the 1940's. It is now a free country again. Protestant and Catholic missionaries played a large part in getting the country nationalized – this is acknowledged in the dioramas we saw in the museum. Education is very important, but must be paid for by parents of the children. The people have a pleasant disposition, seem to be “smiley”, and happy, many of the younger ones speak some English, but signs on roads and on businesses are in Indonesian. I have noted many Chinese people, as we travel through the country. Jakarta is a trading center for the Middle East. Islam is the main religion, but all others are allowed here.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 5

I was awakened about 4:30 a.m. by the prayer call from a mosque, it sounded nice in the quiet mountain air, brought back the many times I have heard it while working in Taif, Saudi Arabia, for nearly 5 years. A light rain started falling about 5:30 a.m., continued off and on all through the day, I was told it may rain almost every day here in the mountains. December is in their rainy season. Breakfast was served in the small restaurant next to the big pool, and after eating I went to the reception office, to see if they could call the tour office for me, and try to get a reservation for a flight to Bali. I would like to go there on Friday afternoon, when I leave Jakarta, it is not far from this country. I did not plan to go there, on my world tour, but now would like to include it.

We drove higher up the mountain road, after checking out of the resort, through conifer forests, small villages, and tea plantations. Growing vegetables seems to be the occupation of most people, passed nicely tended fields of cabbages, tomatoes, carrots,

lettuce, peppers, corn and lettuce. The products are for sale along the roadside, from small stands along the way. It seems as though everyone is selling something, also plants, flowers and nursery stock were seen for sale. In the rural areas most houses were made of concrete blocks, each had a lawn and gardens of flowers around it. People don't have automobiles, but stand at the roadside waiting for transportation in the bus system, which is a small truck, with seats along the side, in back. This takes them to the different villages in the mountains. Some use motorcycles, or scooters, for transport: a family of 4 can be seen riding along on the motorcycle, the father will drive, mother sits sideways on the back holding a child, another one can be in a wrap on her back. They have no money for autos.

We stopped in a small town, at a food store, our guide wanted us to be able to buy Indonesian food. A huge glass jar held pickled mangos, I had a taste of one, it was o.k., but I did not buy one. I did purchase a rice cake that was wrapped in a soft, green palm leaf, that was tasty, also I bought candy made from nuts and sugar. Our guide passed around some thin rice cakes, like wafers, also nut flour crackers, these are items of local food. I purchased 3 avocados for 100 rupees (10 cents) from a man who came to our van, others were selling small baskets of strawberries, also mangos. They all wore the round, brimless, black hats, typical for Muslim men. There were often beggars, with crutches or canes, who stood and watched us. I could purchase batteries for my camera, in one shop, so now could take more photos, I did get one of the pony carts transporting people in the town.

Next we went on up the curvy, narrow road, to the volcano at the top of the mountain. It was so chilly, and foggy, could hardly see the road ahead. Arriving at the site of the volcano, I could not see down in the crater at all, so walked down a water course, quite a way. The fog was less here, and I could see how the earth was scorched and blackened in the past, but here and there was growth of bushes or small trees. This was probably because the volcanic deposit was reverting to earth, through time, and also because they have so much rain, it will now support growth. I walked back up to the top, and much to my surprise, I could now see down into the crater – wind had blown the fog away. It was a dull grey, deep hole, and steam was rising from a crevice below. The air had a strong smell of sulphur, the sloping sides went down to the wet surface below. Now I was reminded of the many trips we made, in Saudi Arabia, to the volcanic crater in the desert north of Taif, would camp there, walk down the very steep sides, to the dry bottom, which had a crust of salt. I am always very interested in nature.

Leaving here, we started down the mountain, it was very scary for it was now raining hard, the road had sharp, hairpin turns, was narrow. Other buses came toward us, sometimes it seemed there was not room for them to pass, didn't know how they would maneuver this feat, but our driver had a young man stand in the open door, look ahead, call out when he saw a bus coming. Once, the young man had to go out, assist the oncoming bus to back up to a little wider spot, so we could pass. But, we made it all right, though did see a bus down in a gully, it had rolled down off the road. No one was around it. The weather improved as we descended, as did the road. Our lunch stop was at the "Paramount Golf Course & Resort", a luxurious facility. The scenery here was outstanding, air was clear, terrific views abundant in every direction. The landscaping at the resort was very professional, everything was neatly groomed, I noted a worker, wearing the large, coolie

hat, sweeping a lawn area with the swishy broom. I never dreamed there would be such luxurious places up in these mountains.

Another stop on this mountain ride, was at a hot springs, where very hot water gushes from under the ground, not far from the volcano site. It flows into a pool, the bottom and sides are of smooth rock, the temperature of the water in this first pool is 42 C., really hot! From there some flows into a second pool, water temperature is 38 C.; there were rustic dressing rooms, for anyone who wanted to experience the thermal pools. It was raining quite hard now, I contemplated whether I wanted to change into my bathing suit, and go into the pools, was undecided, but then thought I had better experience it in this country, and did so. The first pool was too hot, I only swam back and forth several times, then entered the second one, which was better, was comfortable. The water contains sulfur, comes from an underground volcanic source. The people here use it for therapeutic purposes. I was glad I experienced it here – have been in hot springs in Switzerland, which were very modern, pools were enclosed in large buildings.

Continuing our trip, we again rode through the countryside, saw many people working in the tea plantations, even though it was still raining. They had wide brimmed straw hats on, and a large piece of plastic over their back, were picking tea leaves. At one spot I saw men lifting large bags from the ground, into a truck, guess this was the collecting station where pickers brought their filled bags. At many places along the road, especially near the vegetable fields, were crude stands where produce was sold; in the villages were market places – it seems everyone was selling something, and I guess this is how they provide their living expenses. School children were evident everywhere, after mid-afternoon, wore uniforms of a white shirt and colored pants, or skirts for girls. The elementary children wear one color, secondary grades wear a different color. In the rural areas, children walk along the road on their way home from school, sometimes had their arms around each other. I didn't see any teasing, or fighting with other children. We made it all the way down the mountain road without any mishap, though many times I held my breath at a hazardous spot, and to myself, complimented the driver. Now we reached a good road, that led to Bandung, a university town, and our hotel stop for the night. I again had a suite, 2 rooms with twin beds, full bath, and daveno and chairs in the next room. The price posted inside on the door, \$95 was part of my tour, which is a wonderful one, I am experiencing so much on the island of Java.

FRIDAY DECEMBER 6

Slept very well, remembered it was St. Nicholas day, it was a holiday for us when I attended St. Nicholas school, as a child. The hand laundry I did last night was all dry this a.m., I did my exercises, felt good, and ready for another interesting day. Our suitcases were taken down to the lobby at 8:00 a.m., I had breakfast in the dining room and we departed on the bus, shortly after, for more exploring in Java. Bandung is quite large, not only has the university, but also the summer palace of the president, and many shady residential streets. But, at the outskirts were many very poor, small houses. During the morning drive we ascended mountain areas, the scenery was beautiful, sun was out, we passed cleared areas of vegetable gardening, everything was neat and orderly; then descending a bit there was a rushing river near the road, water thundered over rocks, then became a waterfall.

Driving upward again, at 5000 feet elevation we were amongst tea plantations: now I asked for information. The leaves on the bushes are picked at 6 to 8 months growing time, if taken before that the flavor is not good, 3 crops (the leaves grow again after first ones have been picked) is all that is allowed on the bushes, then they are cut down and new plants put in. We saw fields of dry bushes, next to them were cleared fields, and the reddish ground was ready to be re-planted. The leaves go to a drying, and processing plant, to be exported.

Coming down to a lower elevation we saw many, many rice paddies, for miles and miles. Men and women were working in them, the men had wide, rake-like tools, were stirring up the muddy soil preparatory for planting, women walked in the mud and put in the rice plants. Further on, we came upon the full-grown rice plants, the clusters of grain hung heavily at the top. These fields were very dry, the plants were tan color, were ready to be cut. Some women cut them off, made small bundles, tied together with twine. They spread the bundles alongside the road, to dry further, then they are threshed by hand, shaking the bundles over a screen and collecting the rice kernels. These are spread over a large cement area, dried more, then the rice is bagged and either further refined, for white rice, or sold as brown rice. No machines are used here to produce the rice, all is done by manual labor. At the Bandung lunch stop, after I finished my meal, I ate the last avocado, which I purchased in the village – it surely tasted wonderful, was properly ripe.

We arrived back at the Jakayarta Towers hotel, in Jakarta, about 2:30 p.m. I immediately checked with Mr. Fong, and the agency did have a flight reservation for me, I leave for Bali at 5:00 p.m. today – just a 2 day trip, because that is all the time I have. A man from the tour office brought the tickets to the hotel, I paid him \$225 for the round-trip airfare and hotel. He then took me to the airport, and I had to hurry, barely made it to the plane, an attendant helped me with baggage and through emigration process. This plane was going on to Sydney, Australia. On arrival at Bali terminal, a man working with the tour agency I used, met me, had a voucher and asked for mine, this identifies someone meeting you in a new country. He drove me to the resort right on the beach, the Bali Sanur Bungalows. I was assigned Villa #2, just a few steps through the fenced area, to the beach beyond. There was also a large swim pool, so I had pool and beach, and tropical sea, all of which I love. It was dark when I arrived, got settled in my villa, then took my flashlight and walked to the sea, just a short distance away. The air was nice and warm, a perfect tropical evening.

SATURDAY DECEMBER 7

Fell asleep last night to the soft sound of waves lapping on the shore, such a pleasant way to end the day. I felt very refreshed, on awakening at 5:30 a.m., to daylight – it was dark when I awoke at this time, in Hong Kong, but now I am below the equator and it is light earlier. I lazily stayed in bed for awhile, enjoying that luxury, then soon I heard rain, but it did not last very long. By the time I exercised, and dressed, the sun was out, and I wore shorts as I would be exploring the beach area. There was a coffee and snack bar next to the pool here, I went there and enjoyed a pot of coffee, served nice and hot, and with milk. I walked along the beach, noted a couple of food stalls, people serving local, cooked food, so I sat down at one and ate. They were very friendly, and I like to patronize them, and also taste their native dishes. This was a family, and the mother asked me to take a picture of her

little girl, about age 4 or 5. I did so. Since it was sunny, I figured I had better get photos of the area, and not lie on the beach all morning, or go swimming, so I walked all the way to the Bali Beach Hotel, a very large one. It was very modern, had a bank and a post office in it, I changed a \$50 travel check there and received 55,900.75 rupiahs, the name of their currency. I wanted to take a bemo, the 3 wheeled vehicle used as a taxi, to the town of Denpasar, which is the capitol, and explore. It was not very far away. As I walked out in front of the hotel, a taxi driver (with an auto) offered to drive me to Denpasar, to some temples, a museum, a market, and give explanations, for 2 hours, the cost would be 14,000 rupiahs (less then \$7.00). I agreed, and was glad I did so, for he showed me much more than I would have seen, by myself. Now it was very hot, and sunny, perspiration was on my brow, but I enjoyed seeing, and learning. At the Balinese temple, which was in a park-like setting, the gate was closed to automobiles, because a dignitary from Malaysia was there today, but I could walk in and take photos. The Balinese religion is prevalent here, their temples are completely different than the Buddhist temples, or the Muslim mosques. They are very graceful looking, feasts are celebrated, honoring their gods, and the temples are used for prayers and offerings. In one, with open sides, little girls were learning a dance, to the local music, from an older lady, I was told it was supplication to the gods. The Balinese believe in reincarnation, have strong superstitions. Their burial practice is cremation, with the ashes then spread on the sea. Another ceremony consists of close family members (over age 17) lying, one at a time, on a platform in the temple, their teeth will be filed a bit. One of their gods has fangs that are curled, and stick out, is evil, the filing is symbolic so the person will not become evil.

I wanted to see cultural dancing, the driver told me he knows where it will be done tonight, by local people, he will pick me up at 5:30 p.m., and bring me back to the hotel when it is over, he really was helpful, and knowledgeable. After the tour was finished, I put on a bathing suit and went into the lovely, clear, warm sea. This is the best water yet, for clarity and comfort – but my mask and snorkel are back in the suitcase I left in Singapore! Didn't bring them, for I didn't expect to come to Bali, but even without my mask, I could see some coral, though I did not swim all the way out to the reef, which I am sure was beautiful. I lazily swam around, then walked the beach for a long way, in the tropical air, and the waves lapping at my feet. It clouded up, a light rain fell, but stopped very soon. At one of the food stalls I sat down and ate "betog", a chowder with fish balls, noodles, and some chilis to make it spicy hot, also had pieces of coconut in it. It was very tasty, but my eyes watered, and nose ran, the effect of the spices. But, I like that type food; visited with some people from England while I ate, they said they come every day from their hotel, and eat here because the food is so good.

Attired in my bathing suit, with towel around my waist, and travel hat on my head, I wandered along the beach toward the hotel, came upon a mama water buffalo and her baby, who were on the beach also. They just looked at me, but kept on their way. More local color! Back at my villa, I showered and dressed, then it did rain very hard. At 5:30 p.m. I walked to the office, the taxi driver was there, waiting for me. I had a rain hat, wore it tonight. He drove me, through heavy rain, to the bamboo building where the dance / story would occur. It had a brick, elevated stage in the center, a huge candelabra with candles, was on it, about 50 young Balinese men wearing short, checkered skirts entered, and sat on the ground around the stage. There were tiered seats for spectators, all around the

circular building. The event was called “KECAK DANCE”, or the “monkey dance”, one of the most famous Balinese dances. It is done at sunset, tells the symbolic story of an evil king who has captured the wife of an Indian prince: the seated men chant, wave their arms in unison all during the story, and a group of monkeys (dancers) aid in the rescue. This came to Bali in the 11th century, with Hinduism, the Bali people blend Hinduism with ancestor worship, which has created the Bali religion, it rules their lives. The dancing is taught by one generation, to the next, and is done at feasts, and other gatherings. Luckily, the building had a roof, for it rained hard during the performance. I was so happy I experienced the event, through the taxi-driver guide, who waited for me and returned me to the resort. His fee was 14,000 rupiahs, ticket for the show was 1500 rupiahs (about \$1.25). The hotels have cultural dancing, on some nights, but charge much more, I did go to the cultural dance show in Singapore. The rain stopped as I arrived back at my villa, I was ready to relax, play a couple games of solitaire, and retire.

SUNDAY DECEMBER 8

Awoke early, the sun was shining, birds singing, the sky was blue, palm trees waved gently – a lovely sound and sight. I walked along the beach, after having coffee, to the Bali Beach Hotel, mailed some post cards there, and started back. I had my tape recorder with me, and as I approached a couple of young men getting tiny worms from under the sand, I spoke to them. One spoke some English, told me they were bait, for fishing, also asked me if I wanted to go out in his boat, he takes tourists, for money. I declined the offer, but asked if he would speak on the recorder, tell me what he got, down in the sand. He did so, I thanked him. Then I had my breakfast, on the beach, from the wheeled food cart. Some sprouts were laid in a bowl, shaved coconut on top of them, cubes of a spongy vegetable, (something like a potato) that had been fried in a wok, some chilis, were added, and a peanut sauce was spread over all. On top of that was a large rice wafer, the krupuk. It was so good! very spicy, but good. The krupuk is bland, and bites of that reduce the spicy effect. This was my last meal in Bali, strictly local food.

After walking a little more, and enjoying the waves at my feet, I returned to the villa, showered, dressed for travel, and packed my bag. I hate to leave here, my visit was too short – Bali not only has a very nice shoreline, lovely beaches, coral, but there are interesting places to see. People keep the old culture and religious customs, and the town of Denpasar is not very westernized. I checked out at the office, got a taxi to the airport, which was not crowded, was an easy departure. I was on Garuda, the Indonesian airline, it took me to Jakarta, the airport there is quite new, and beautiful. Walkways to the different gates, are shuttered, the breeze wafts through open wood framework, and I had time to sit a bit, below the equator, with the sun on my face, enjoying a last look at the lawns and flowers all around. They made a lovely picture.

We arrived in Singapore about 8:30 p.m. Sitting next to me on the flight was a young lady, Mala, from India, and her sister, they told me so many interesting things about their home country. At a wedding, the bride wears a red sari, embroidered in gold, a large dowry must be given by the bride’s parents, to the groom and his family, also at the engagement party, the bride’s family gives the groom suits of clothing, and hampers of gifts. Sometimes the dowry can be as large as \$10,000. The bride and groom go to live with his parents for

several months, or even years. When a child is born to them, they then may get their own home. She stated that if I was going to be staying in Singapore, she would have me come to her home, and would show me a tape of a wedding, but I am just changing planes here and will continue my trip to California. I felt I was fortunate to have these interesting customs described to me.

I spent the night in the terminal, on the departure floor, could not stay in the transit area because, after securing my suitcase from the carousel in baggage area, I had to go to the “left luggage” desk and pick up the 2 cases I left there when I went to Java. This is a real convenience, when traveling in foreign countries. Knowing I had an early departure flight, I found a series of 3 chairs where I could lie down. I put my large beach towel under me, to soften the curved chair seats, rolled up a sweat shirt and put it under my head – it wasn’t the most comfortable spot, but I did sleep some. It was noisy at times, for the cleaning crew, with the big floor-cleaning machine, came by as they did their work. At 5:00 a.m. I was up, brushed teeth and washed, in the roomy women’s changing space, then secured the 2 suitcases with belts, made them ready to check in, for my flight to California. I will carry the small leather case, so will not have to pay overweight fees again, as I did in Hong Kong. I put belts around my suitcases, making it easy to identify them as they come around on a carousel, also to keep them closed, in case the zipper would break. I have learned luggage is handled very rough in baggage departments. I put my luggage into a “trolley”, pushed it toward the counter to check in. I had one more picture to use, in my camera, an airline employee was walking near me, I asked him if he would snap a picture of me, and my luggage. He said “certainly, but come a little further this way, where there is a good spot for a photo”. He pushed my “trolley” toward a mural of Singapore, on a wall, in front of it was a trishaw. He had me sit in it, luggage next to it, and took my picture, that was a nice gesture, for the end of my trip all around the world.

MOMNDAY DECEMBER 9

At the Singapore Airlines counter, I had no trouble getting ticketed –I had the previous reservation, made by the tour agent in Java, just needed to get the boarding pass, check luggage, (all the way through to Los Angeles) and board the plane. The Round The World Ticket has been wonderful, it was good for 6 months, I could stay as little, or as long, as I wanted, in each country, when ready to leave, call the airline office and get a reservation for my next country. The travel has to be continuous in one direction, either east to west, or west to east, one cannot backtrack. Boarding began at 7:15 a.m., we departed soon after that and flew toward Hong Kong, the air was clear, could see water below. Breakfast was welcome, orange juice, an omelet with peach and pineapple slices on it, a sweet roll, hash brown potatoes, coffee, and fresh tropical fruit. It tasted very good, I had a good appetite. The captain announced “we are flying over Malaysia”. I could see green forests, know there is a lot of jungle in this country, occasionally tigers are noted in remote places, also there are many rubber plantations, with huge trees that they tap for the sap.

On arrival at Hong Kong at 11:30 a.m., everyone had to enter the transit lounge, we had 1 hour and 50 minutes to wait for a plane change, so I wandered about the shops, then decided to call my daughter Mary Lynn’s home, in California, let them know I am on my way to Los Angeles. Granddaughter Jessica answered, was happy to hear from me – she will

let the rest of my family know, said everything was fine at home. I gave Mary my arrival time in LAX, was glad I contacted her. Originally, I had planned to stay a couple of days in Hawaii, but now, since I spent that time in Bali, decided to go directly to LAX from Hong Kong, though we make a stop in Hawaii. Re-boarding, we continued to fly, were over Taiwan and I could see populated areas near the shoreline, then dense forest on the mountains toward the center of the island. One time, on a trip from Hong Kong to Japan, I landed in Taiwan, but this time just fly over it. – Later – We are nearing Tokyo, according to the map shown in our cabin, it is sunset, we are above the clouds and the sun is red, as it sinks down into the grey sky. Our stop in Narita Airport, outside of Tokyo, was a short one, we had to enter the transit lounge for a brief stop, could leave our hand-carry bags on the plane. I visited a bit, in the lounge, with a group of Californians on their way home also, one was an orthopedic surgeon who lived near my area, in the San Fernando valley. He was buying beer for his group, also got one for me, we all toasted each other, for a good flight. It was fun visiting with Americans, at the end of my world trip. I bought stamps, in the gift shop, could pay for them in U.S. currency, in these last months, have used all kinds of foreign money!

Returning to the plane, we took off, soon a very nice dinner was served. Since no one was in my row of seats but me, following the meal, I stretched out, had pillows and blankets, and I slept ALL NIGHT.

TUESDAY DECEMBER 10

I awoke with bright sunlight shining in the plane window, really felt good. After flying a few more hours, and being served a breakfast, I could see land below, we were arriving at the California coast, near San Francisco. I could see the city, and the bay below. Then we turned south, I could vision the California coast all the way until we turned inland, I saw the San Joaquin valley, then on toward Los Angeles. I'll bet we went over my home town, Thousand Oaks, about 50 miles from LAX airport. I am safely back in U.S. after a wonderful, very educational, trip. The clouds appeared just before we landed at 4:45 p.m. (Asia time), or 11:45 a.m. Pacific time. The landing was smooth, getting baggage and going through customs was the easiest I have ever experienced. The agents only asked questions this time, " how long were you out of the country", "what was the nature of your trip", never had to open a suitcase, that was a relief. In America, there is a charge for the luggage cart, to wheel your luggage out – everywhere else I used an airport, the luggage carts were free, I got one. My luggage all arrived promptly on the carousel, I pushed it to the customer service desk, picked up a form to send in, and get credit for all the miles I have flown on this trip. I'll be able to make more trips, using those earned miles. Outside the terminal, found the weather was 55° F, quite cool.

Home again in U.S, after a wonderful trip!!!!

Typed on computer by Irma Kackert – years later at age 88