



50 Years of the BAA, Albuquerque 2018 World Cup,
On the Road in USA and Tsunabumi Indonesia



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Inside this Issue

Welcome to the 137th edition of the Boomerang Association of Australia Bulletin.

This special edition celebrates the 50th anniversary of the BAA and provides details about the forthcoming 50th Australian Nationals competition, which will be held April 2019 in Perth.

This edition also takes readers on a road journey through the colourful and varied culture of America, stretching from as far as San Francisco to Albuquerque, New Mexico, which was home to the 2018 World Cup. The culture of the cup as well as its technology is then

contrasted superbly with wonderful historic photos from a First Australians collection of indigenous boomerang throwers, courtesy of Earl Tutty.

This edition also includes results of the Tunasbumi competition in Indonesia and other news about boomerang events around the world.

Enjoy the read!

President: Roger Perry
Vice President: Simon Bollen
Treasurer: Nick Pritchard
Editor: Matt Barker
Secretary: Jane Pritchard

President's Report

This year is the 50th Anniversary of the BAA and we will be celebrating that with the 2019 Australian Championships. 2017/18 has been a very good year for the Association. We have had an increase in membership numbers with the drop in fee prices to all members and we hope to increase membership further by keeping the same low membership fees in 2019.

It was unfortunate that Australia was not able to provide a team in the 2018 World Boomerang Cup in Albuquerque USA in July, but Matthew Barker, Rob Croll, Chris Johnston and Roger Perry competed well in the mixed teams and Leonie and Christene Metzakis were helping out with the organisers, so thanks to all of them for their contributions.

I was in Indonesia for Tunasbumi 8 in early September 2018 and threw well to place 1st position. I also continue to see some really good throwers coming along there, plus the level of competitions and boomerang interest increases each year I return. I am very excited to have the top 2 throwers and their President Fadjar Hidajat attend our 50th celebration in 2019, along with some other International throwers.

I would like at this stage to thank all the work from our committee in the last 12 months, especially Matt for his fantastic work on the bulletin. I know he has spent many long hours sifting through thousands of photos from the World Cup in Albuquerque to come up with what is arguably a sensational boomerang bulletin of all time. A big thanks to Nick our Treasurer, to our new Secretary Jane Pritchard and to Kelly Perry as our registrar and Simon

Bollen as Vice President. Also a many thanks to Rob Croll and Bruce Carter, for their ongoing contributions and support to both the Association and the bulletin.

I hope the next 12 months will see us grow the Association and entice more members to join.

Lastly, I am sad to advise that Debbie Kennedy, wife of former Australian Team representative Geoff passed away recently. The BAA sends our sincerest condolences to Geoff and all the family - you are all in our thoughts.

Roger Perry

BAA President



Roger Perry, Lake Cachuma, Santa Ynez Mountains California



The BAA has reached its 50th Year!

Morris Maxwell, founder, tells the story about how the association was formed

In the late 50's, Ralph Sinclair took youth club members on excursions to Sherbrook Forest in search of Lyrebirds. As a neighbourhood friend, I tagged along on a couple of these trips and remember stopping by Bill Onus's shop where he would throw boomerangs out over the road to test them. The building is still there and is now a computer shop.

I recall saying on a few occasions that the experience of watching Bill gave me the inspiration to later form the Association. This could have led to some confusion as to the beginnings of the BAA. The actual formation started in the mid-sixties.

Ralph Sinclair, Dennis and I used to throw 'rangs in the park at the end of Rose Street in McKinnon. (a Melbourne suburb).

In 1963, Ralph Sinclair attended a boomerang competition run by the Harold Blair Aboriginal Children's Project at Northcote. He wasn't sure about competing and had hidden his boomerangs under the mattress of his daughter's pram. Noticing that competitors didn't seem to be any better than what he could do, he entered the competition and actually won the event.

This was an annual event and Dennis won it the following year. There was some talk about it being an Australian Championship event, and I asked a few people there about it, but could not get any definite information. Following up on this, Dennis and I attended a meeting of the Harold Blair organisation and put forward a proposal to form an Australia-wide organisation.

The Harold Blair organisation supplied a list of all their interested contacts around Australia, and following up on this, I drafted a letter explaining what we were proposing and sent this to all those listed.

Our first meeting was held at Ralph Sinclair's house in Syndal, and our first Annual meeting was held in 1969 at the Maxwell's house in McKinnon, making that the formation date of the Boomerang Association of Australia.

Morris Maxwell

Veteran BAA Member

Note: Morris has been requested by the BAA President to open the 50th year BAA Nationals competition.

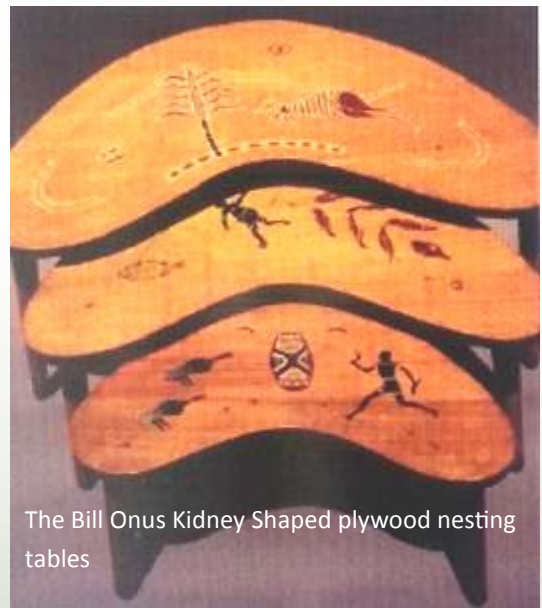
Bill Onus

Bill Onus (1906 - 68) does have something to do with the formation of the BAA. As Morris Maxwell recounted, Bill owned a shop selling boomerangs and furniture, which later gave Morris the inspiration to form the association.

Bill was an aboriginal rights activist who ran the successful "Aboriginal Enterprises" business in the southern Dandenong Ranges during the 1950's - 60's. His small shop and factory was located at 61 Monbulk Road Belgrave. He opened branches of the business in other parts of Australia and encouraged other Aboriginal people to do the same. He became well known for political activism, boomerang promotions and performances in movies and television documentaries. Through his work, he established greater social cohesion and fostered pride among the aboriginal community.

One of Bill's design hallmarks was adapting the classic 1950's kidney shape that graced swimming pools and furniture in modern Australian homes. Presented as a set of nesting plywood tables on 3 tapering metal-capped legs, the tables signalled the contemporary design standards of Aboriginal Enterprises.

This article including photographs is an abridged version of an article in the "Ridgewalk" Illustrated Catalogue 2017



The Bill Onus Kidney Shaped plywood nesting tables



The shop in Belgrave - Bill Onus pictured right.

BAA Legacy

In 1969 the BAA was formed by Morris and Denis Maxwell, with help from other Australian boomerang throwers of the time. Although there had been previous competitions called the Australian Championships before 1969, this was the date that the Maxwell brothers officially formed the Association. Leading up to the formation, Bill Onus, a famous aboriginal boomerang maker, thrower and activist, was actively promoting boomerangs through large public demonstrations and workshops and by holding boomerang competitions, including the Australian Championships all over the East Coast of Australia. It was especially sad he died the same year that the BAA Association was actually formed, as it was Bill Onus who had the original idea for the association. Bill is also honoured at the Melbourne museum for his involvement with boomerangs.

Morris Maxwell was an active committee member of the BAA for many years, holding various positions including secretary, and still holds an avid interest in the Association. We give thanks to the hard work and efforts that was made by the Maxwell's and Bill Onus and would like to give thanks also to the following legends of the Australian Boomerang history, not only in throwing but in the hard work given to our Association over the past many years:

Jack Byham, Cec Burwell, Bob Burwell, Joe Timberey, Duncan MacLennan, Brother Brian Thomas, Ralph Sinclair, Jeff Lewry, Tony Butz, Bluey Williams, Chris Henzgen, and in more recent times Robert Croll, Bruce Carter and Roger Perry.

Robert Croll

BAA Member and former World Champion



From Left: Dennis Maxwell, Morris Maxwell, Ralph Sinclair, Rob Croll - Debbie Kennedy funeral.

2019 Australian Boomerang Championships

The 2019 Australian Boomerang Championships will be held in Perth, Western Australia. We would love to see you all there to help us celebrate the 50th year of the BAA. We are hoping that founding members Denis and Morris Maxwell, along with Sam Blight who started the boomerang scene in Western Australia, will attend and open the competition.

We have had feedback from some of the International throwers that will attend, including Heikko Deiss from Germany, Takeshi Honda from Japan and are awaiting confirmation from John Flynn from USA and a few other International throwers. Rangs Boomerangs is also sponsoring 3 Indonesian throwers, including their President Fadjat Hidajat, and top 2 throwers Denis Suprana and Fahmi Amrullah.

As this is our 50th celebration we would also love to see all the old and not so old throwers attend, even if it is just to watch or go into 1 or 2 events (with the first or second event being Accuracy for which we would love to see everyone have a go, as it is the easiest event). So please do come along and meet the Indonesians and other International throwers and join in the fun.

To entice you all, Rob Croll is donating original Bill Onus boomerangs for the first 5 places and there will also be lots of other great trophies and a special commemorative 50th anniversary medallion. You are all invited and we hope you will be able to make it over to the West for a fun and exciting time and to celebrate 50 years of the BAA.

Details of the 2019 Australian Championships

- **Team Competition** - Saturday 13th April practice 9.30am and competition start 10am. Please bring your own lunch and drinks for the day. The BAA AGM will be held immediately after the team competition at 3.30pm approximately.
- **Individuals Competition** - Sunday 14th April 2019. Practise 7.30am and official start is 8.30am, finish 5.30pm. Registration cost per thrower \$20 including lunch and BBQ. \$10.00 for non throwers attending the BBQ and including lunch.
- Drinks and refreshments with Aussie BBQ after the Individual Competition, with presentations from 7.00pm. Following the presentation, there will be an auction. Please bring one of your boomerangs and/or t-shirts for the auction.

Cont...

- **Venue for Saturday and Sunday** - Piara Waters Pavilion Oval corner (Nicholson Road & Broadway Blvd), Piara Waters see link and copy below.
- **Monday 15th April** - fun day and making session at Rangs Workshop, Bedfordale 11am. Fun night to be held at Southern River (off Gay St) start around 7 to 7.30pm.
[Southern River Fields](#)

All throwers and non-throwers please RSVP for the individual competition day so we can cater for the event. RSVP to rangs@iinet.net.au

Overseas and Eastern States Visitors

Please confirm your attendance as soon as possible so that the BAA can help you with cheap accommodation options plus advice on trips around Western Australia.

Follow this link to the Piara Waters Pavilion:

[Piara Waters](#)

BAA 2019 MEMBERSHIPS FEES

Membership rates for 2019 are now due, please see the below fees and support the BAA as it now enters its 50th year.

- \$10 junior membership (less than 16 years)
- \$10 ordinary membership non-competitive throwers
- \$15 veteran membership (55 years and over)
- \$15 membership all ages
- \$25 family membership
- \$10 overseas membership
- \$15 overseas memberships

Direct Deposit via Bank Details below (Australian residents only):

Account Name: Boomerang Association of Australia

Bank: Commonwealth Bank

BSB: 063151

Account No: 00904182

or

2. Paypal (includes Overseas payments):

Email: bba.treasurer.wa@gmail.com

WEST AUSTRALIAN BOOMERANG CHAMPIONSHIPS

After 33 years running the West Australian Championships, I now welcome Christene Metzakis, founder of the WA Boomerang Throwing Association, to run the event in future from this year.

The WA Championships will be held at the **Rossiter Playing Field 30-31 March**, 16 Tuberosa Road, Seville Grove.

The WA Boomerang Throwing Association has a Facebook page now under that name and they are actively involved in promoting the sport to all West Australians, particularly the aboriginal children in schools and other recreation centres. Leonie Metzakis has been working with children for many years promoting boomerang throwing. Both she and Christene are doing great work in the community and with the youth of today. The BAA commends their hard work and we hope to see some really good throwers emerge through their efforts.

Facebook Link <https://www.facebook.com/waboomerangthrowingassociation/>



Leonie Metzakis beside a WABA promotional display



Tunasbumi 8 Indonesia

I once again had a great visit to Indonesia, arriving in Jogjakarta 4 days early to practice and see some of the sites. Borobudur Temple was the most amazing, with huge symmetrical bells made from stone and increasing in size as the temple rose up to 5 levels. I also had the chance to go rafting through caves and have a throw on the beaches in strong wind.

Day 1 of Tunasbumi started with MTA but unfortunately I lost my no 1 MTA. It worked just a little too well, as it hit a really nice thermal and left the field after a minute or so and landed no doubt on some one's house.

The next events were Fast Catch and Endurance, and the wind had picked up a bit and became hot, but I was very lucky to get a little break for the 2nd round and managed to win the event with 22 seconds. As soon as my round finished, the wind came back for the next thrower (usually it is me who cops the wind!), so it was a nice change of luck for me. Endurance was very tough with a top scored of 42 from Indonesian champion Denis Suprana.

After lunch, the wind picked up even more for Accuracy with Fahmi doing best with a great score of 60 and then the last event was Aussie Round. I rigged my "Fuzzy" model with lots of bands and flaps to handle the strong wind and was very happy to win it with 64 points. Sigit also had a great round of 60.

On Day 2, we finished with Trick Catch but I didn't do very well in the swirling wind conditions. Denis Suprana did best with a score of 74. We also had the chance to all do Hunting Stick, which everyone loves.

I managed to win the competitions overall. The top Indonesian throwers were Denis Suprana, Fahmi Amrullah and Basunanda Narendra. It was so good to catch up with all the Indonesians and they continue to improve all the time, which is fantastic to see.

Roger Perry

BAA President



Tunasbumi 8 participants, Jogjakarta, Indonesia



Tunasbumi 8 - Roger Perry with top senior place getters



Tunasbumi 8 - Junior Champions with Skippy

2018 Albuquerque World Cup

We came to America for the cup and it was won by the Americans! It is a team sport the American contingent takes seriously and team member selection is rigorous, ensuring that there is not one weak element among the six chosen for the **Radrunners USA 1 team** and their performance at the cup was excellent, achieving 1st place in 3 events over the 3 day competition - Supercatch, Trick Catch and Team Relay.

The international team Boomergang were incredible, achieving a staggering total score of 24 points over Radrunners on 43 (for those unfamiliar with how the World Cup is judged, international teams come after teams consisting entirely of national throwers). Boomergang consisted of the finest throwers from Europe - Manuel Schutz, Fridolin Frost, Alejandro Palacio, Andrea Sgattoni, and Lars Overzee, who together formed an invincible unit, with 1st places in Aussie Round, Tapir Terror, Endurance, Supercatch, Accuracy and MTA Relay, and 2nd place in all other events.

In 3rd were the very competent Samurai whose efforts in Supercatch and Aussie Round was excellent. They were followed by the USA 2 team Radnocerous who took 1st place away from Boomergang and Radrunners in Accuracy and Endurance on Day 2. In 4th were the determined Rad Hot Chili Peppers with front man Gunter Moeller, who had 2nd and 3rd place success in Tapir Terror and MTA Relay on Day 1 and a 3rd in Endurance on Day 2. They were followed by the Brazilian Team BR Rangs, French, the two veteran teams Wolves of the Dreamtime (included Rob Croll and Roger Perry from Australia), and The Pricklers (included Matt Barker from Australia), and finally French Kids, who fought with greater success than their Kiel 2016 effort. It was great to see so many French children come so far from home to participate.

The World Cup was played on a wide open field that was once an airstrip and which is now used for hot air balloon events. The heat was tremendous and one of the days, which proceeded in the morning, cancelled after the temperature reached 103f. The throwers returned to the hotel to cool off in the swimming pool and rest on their beds before the evening dinner.

Between the Team Cup and Individuals, there was time out for World Cup participants to explore the side of a hill through a trail which brought observers close to protected rocks inscribed with Indian petroglyphs. The bus then took us up the winding road to Sandia Peak's tramway station. We all waited in a stuffy room until the trams

descended from the mountain tops. It was then up the side of Sandia Peak, over the great relief of the mountainside. The ride brought us close to the rugged detail of the mountain and we were all busy looking for any sign of life among the rocks and vegetation. The view at the top was breathtaking and allowed an almost complete view of Albuquerque and the miniature airstrip where small aircraft and jets lifted themselves into the air and disappeared into the haze. We finished the day out at Old Town in shops, a snake museum and restaurants.

It was difficult to really predict who would win the **Individuals World Cup Championship**, and I think the difficulty was due to



Radrunner Winners From Left: Will Gix, George Essig, James Stickney, Logan Broadbent, Richard Bower, Daniel Bower



Top 3 Teams from left: Samurai, Radrunners and Boomergang

the fact that the Albuquerque World Cup came with a special condition, a natural phenomenon which made the boomerangs behave differently. At 1600m above sea level, the air becomes less dense, which forced throwers into an extra effort where they had to tune their boomerangs and lessen their weight to ensure they came back instead of dropping to the foreground. Many battles were lost due to the phenomenon in Team play, but the Individuals found throwers more in tune with how to combat the air's thinness with additional cunning. In team, as well as Individuals, consistency across all events is key and even though

familiarity with the field provides some advantage, there are all the other factors that are more important - fitness, stamina, experience, the magical X factor talent, and for the Albuquerque Cup in particular, heat tolerance. With all of these qualities, **James Stickney of USA** achieved his first ever 1st place win, blazing through the 2 day competition with a 3rd place in Trick-Doubling, 5th in Endurance and 10th place in Aussie Round and Accuracy, points which together add up to an Individuals victory. Logan Broadbent has been trying very hard to win a World Cup but James took the cup away after Logan had an unlucky round in the disastrous Accuracy 100 event, which brought down champions Manuel Schutz, Fridolin Frost, Daniel Bower and Andrea Sgattoni, all of whom scored less than 50 points. I can recall being on the same circle as Fridolin, Manuel and Daniel, who saw several of their throws in the strong wind land outside the circle. Manuel swore in his native language, Daniel shouted in protest **“Give me some points!”** and Fridolin issued a raw cry like a man lost in the wilderness after his final throw “Aghhhhh!”. I have developed a technique of throwing the boomerang hard with inward tilt in strong wind and despite the fact that I scored slightly more points than the champions, I still finished only on 49.

Australian competitors all fought well, with Rob Croll in 32nd place, achieving a 1 point difference over Roger Perry 33rd, Matt Barker 45th and Chris Johnson’s first ever Individuals in 50th.

Highlights of the cup was seeing Logan Broadbent from USA and Roger Perry from Australia engaged in long running sprints to secure catches in MTA, watching Steve Kavanagh achieve a stunning 1st place in Aussie Round Individuals, seeing Kien Snouffer, son of Greg Snouffer fighting consistently well in his first Individuals and at the awards ceremony, a Life-time Achievement Award handed to Gary Broadbent and son Logan for their outstanding contribution to the sport worldwide and young Marie Appriou from France, who with tears of joy, received the no 1 women’s champion award for the first time.

Long Distance saw Manuel Schutz once again in 1st place on 175m after a difficult and frustrating start combating the air density, followed by Alejandro Palacio on 152m and a nice win from veteran Roger Armstrong 3rd on 112m.

The cup also enjoyed one of the liveliest nights at the **boomerang aesthetics award and auction**, during which many of William Glover’s pop art boomerangs were being snapped up.

It was overall a wonderful cup experience and a great thanks to David Hirsch with his team of organisers for making it possible.

Matt Barker, BAA Editor

Team Results

Team	Rank	Score	Nationality
Radrunners	1	24	USA
Boomergang	2	43	International
Samurai	3	62	Japan
Radnocerous	4	69.5	USA
Rad Hot Chili Peppers	5	85.5	International
BR Brazil	6	86.5	Brazil
French	7	111	France
Wolves of the Dreamtime	8	115	International Veterans
The Pricklers	9	131.5	International Veterans
French Kids	10	152	France

Individuals Top 10

Thrower	Rank	Score	Nationality
James Stickney	1	58	USA
Logan Broadbent	2	65.5	USA
Manuel Schutz	3	66.5	Switzerland
Daniel Bower	4	71.5	USA
Andre Caxeta Ribeiro	5	74	Brazil
Steve Kavanaugh	6	75	USA
Lars Overzee	7	82.5	France
Alajandro Palacio	8	86	Spain
Fridolin Frost	9	95	Germany
Richard Bower	10	97.5	USA

The World Cup in Photos

What follows are photographs taken by Matt Barker and Christene Metzakis of the World Cup in moments and action...

The World Cup in Photos



Rob Croll, Australia



Tricycle, WBC Organisation



Laura Smucker, USA



World Cup Individuals
Champions

From Left: Logan Broadbent 2nd, James Stickney 1st,
Manuel Schutz 3rd



Gary Broadbent, Lifetime Achievement Award



Women Champions from left: Haruki Taketomi 3rd, Betsy Miale 2nd,
Marie Appriou 1st

The World Cup in Photos 2



Marie Appriou France - Warmup



David Hirsch USA, Long Distance



Chris Johnson, Australia



The World Cup held by Casey Lawrence - from left: Gary Broadbent, Casey Lawrence, Chet Snouffer, Steve Kavanaugh, Gregg Snouffer, John Flynn, Jonathon "Moleman" Anthony



Boomerang Aesthetics Competition



Roger Perry, Australia

The World Cup in Photos 3



Adam Stankiewicz, USA



Gunter Moeller, Germany



World Cup Organisers and Assistants



Jamie Kinton USA, WBC Media



Logan Broadbent, USA



Manuel Schutz, Switzerland

The World Cup in Photos 4



French Kids



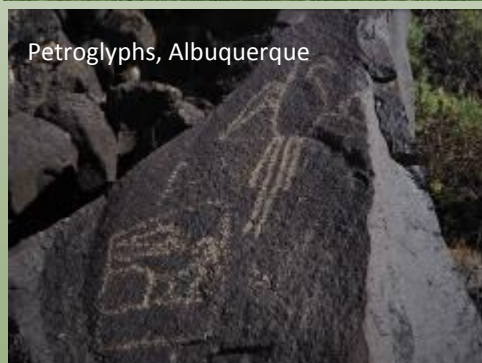
James Stickney, World Individuals Champion 2018



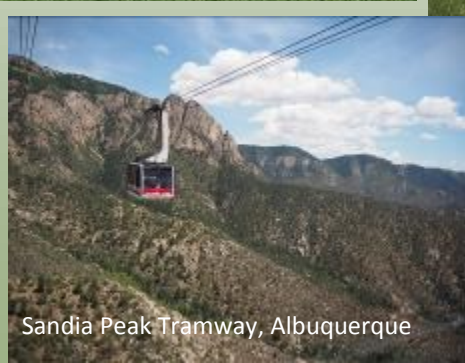
Haruki Taketomi, Japan



Gregg Snouffer USA, WBC Host



Petroglyphs, Albuquerque



Sandia Peak Tramway, Albuquerque



Boomerang Aesthetics

The World Cup in Photos 5



French Kids, Awards Night



David Hirsch, WBC Organiser



Sandia Peak, Albuquerque



Radrunners, Team Relay



Betsy Miale, Supercatch



Will Glover, Manuel Schutz, Chet Shouffer, Auction Night

The World Cup in Photos 6



Takeshi Honda, Japan



Matt Barker, Australia



Teams, WBC 2018



Wolves of the Dreamtime



The Pricklers

The First Australians with Boomerangs

Earl Tutty posted a wonderful collection of photographs to the World of Boomerangs Facebook page in October 2018, which are from a First Australians collection of documentary photographs dating between the late 1880's to the early 1900's. From the World Cup to the first people who made and threw boomerangs, this set of photographs provides a fascinating glimpse into the people and boomerangs of the past.



Dja Dja Wurrung Burraparapa Man,
Walpanumin, Victoria



Shield and Boomerang Stance

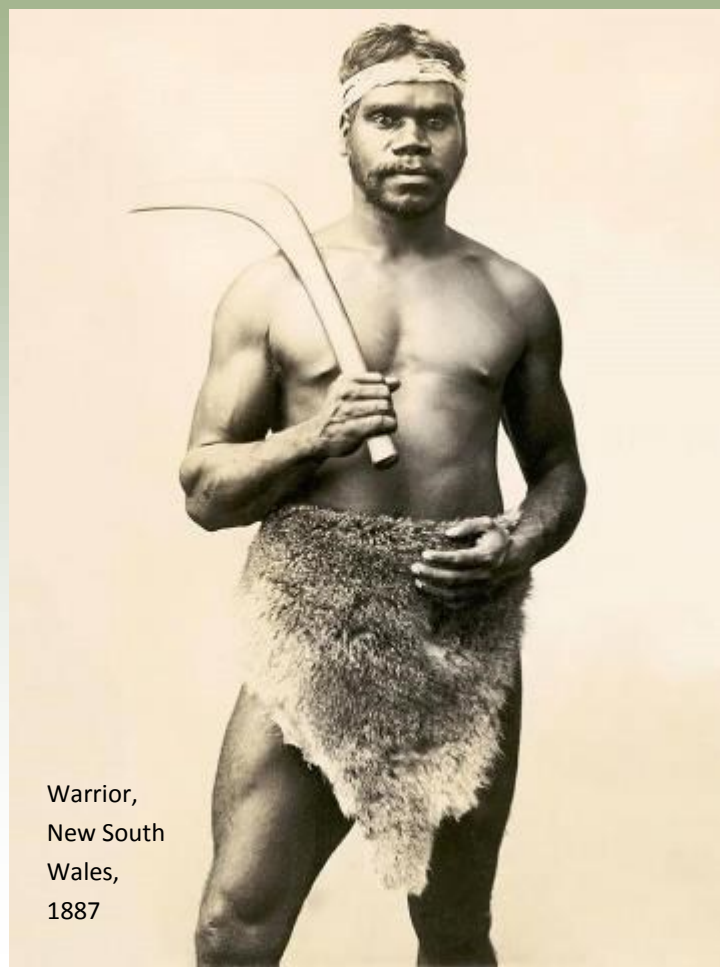


Long Man with Long Boomerang



Shield and Boomerang

The First Australians with Boomerangs 2



Sorting out Differences

On the Road in USA

A lot has been written about the benefits of travel. As Gustav Flaubert, author of the famous novel Madame Bovary once remarked, travelling makes you aware that you occupy only a very small place in the world. I think that is a bit of a defining statement for the travel experience I am about to recount here.

Most people use travel as a means to escape from the workaday week to some exotic paradise or to indulge in the Romance of a great city. Boomerang World Cups on the other hand take you to places that you would never have chosen as a holiday destination were it not for boomerangs! There is something exciting about that because it follows the same dictum by Robert Frost - "I will travel the road least travelled by". Even though our travel would include some of the most famous places in the world where tourists are commonplace, there should be many opportunities to experience those little pockets of America less travelled by, to get a sense of America, to taste the country air and the smells and understand what it is to be American without the distraction of 100 other people. I have always believed the experience of country brings you into a more intimate contact with the souls of its inhabitants.

Our July travel itinerary was constructed superbly by the World Cup organiser, David Hirsch and the necessary connections in some remote places were carefully worked out by Roger. It would include crossing several states – California, Nevada, Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico in a hire car. Our ultimate destination was Albuquerque New Mexico for the 2018 World Boomerang Cup. We would start from LA, then go up north along the coast to Monterey and San Francisco, then through the Muir Woods and Napa Valley wine region. Thence on to Yosemite, Death Valley, Las Vegas, Flagstaff, Grand Canyon, Petrified Forest, Sante Fe and finally Albuquerque, 3500m above sea level and home of the 2018 World Boomerang Cup.

After organising a hire car and settling into an LA Airbnb situated not far from the LA airport, we headed down following day to Newport CA to meet Dara Cuartas Del Real and friend Sybil Dinster. The seven lane traffic was maddening but we began to read our navigator better to avoid missing the freeway exits. The navigator would earn the special name in our journeys as "She who must be obeyed", otherwise it would mean half the day would be spent in a frenzy correcting directions.

Dara has an important association with the world of boomerangs. Her father Oscar was a renowned boomerang maker and pioneer of the sport in his birth country of Colombia and South America. We enjoyed continued, spontaneous conversation about boomerang culture over breakfast with Dara and Sybil at the luxury Pelican resort, which is among the 5 best

luxury resort locations in the world, quite a fitting place to meet Dara for the first time! Roger presented Dara with a beautiful Hunting Stick boomerang, which included his hallmark Australian coin inserts as a gift for establishing the Oscar Cuartas foundation and for Dara's contribution both to the sport and culture of boomerangs.

After Dara and Sybil showed us around the best sights of affluent Newport, some of whose homes on the peninsula fetch more than \$5m on the market, we headed further down the coast to a place called Oceanside to see Roger's business associate Dana Larrabee. Dana had a busy shop



From Left: Roger Perry, Dara Cuartas, Sybil Dinster and Matt Barker at Pelican Resort, Newport CA

which sold office equipment and boomerangs under the business name "Colorado Boomerangs". Dana presented a very different view of his involvement with boomerangs, which was more from the perspective of a business person who believes business sponsorship is inevitable for future World Cups. After a tour of the paint shop a few miles further down, Dana invited us to a lovely lunch at the Rock'in Baja at Oceanside beside the water.



From Left: Dana Larrabee and Roger Perry talking business at the Rock'in Baja, Oceanside CA



From Left: Dana Larrabee and Roger Perry at the paint shop, Oceanside CA.

Roger and I were not looking forward to the prospect of the 7 lane highway back to LA but wasn't this part of the joy of travel, to experience the taste and smells and without boomerangs, we would never have thought to travel to places like Newport or Oceanside? On our way back, we realised the immense population of California, with a significant portion of its inhabitants living in cars humming on the highway most of the time. We were caught in a bit of a jam and Roger, who is not known as the most patient of human specimens, exchanged colourful language about the beloved 7 lane traffic until it finally started moving.

By coincidence, we were back in LA for 4th July. We enjoyed a cycle tour around Santa Monica and Hollywood and the highlight for me was discovering the tar museum - yes tar - in the heart of wealthy LA! I think there are quite a number of old comical, nickelodeon Hollywood movies showing people stuck in tar pits! We then walked from Santa Monica to Venice Beach, catching moments of Americans



Venice Beach LA, 4th July

enjoying their day of Independence.

After indulging in the great teeming metropolis of LA and realising the overwhelming benefits of Uber travel after a night of imbibing for July 4, we were both itching to get on the road to explore the American countryside.

We started out early morning before the LA traffic, driving up the coast, stopping briefly for a beautiful



A house, Santa Barbara CA

morning throw on one of the beaches. We drove past Malibu to Santa Barbara, known for its many houses with red tile roofs and white walls. What struck me about California, something I did not expect, was the large Hispanic population, but it was after all these people who created California. It's whole iconography is very much rooted in America's history with the Spanish explorers. We drove by a whacky Santa Barbara house painted green, over which there were paintings incorporated into every panel, perhaps a defiant reaction to all things red tile and white walls?

Our route then took us through the Santa Ynez mountains, which was the start of that ultimate wish to taste the smells of American country. We got excited because it was where the road trip really began. The sense of aloneness with the American wilderness, and the car a solitary, air-conditioned hibernacula hissing along the quiet roads.

Lake Cachuma offered spectacular scenery of the distant mountain ranges and the nearby reservoir. It was then on



Matt Barker, Lake Cachuma, Santa Ynez Mountains CA

to the Danish village of Solvang, established by early Danish-American settlers in 1911. Solvang offered us the first taste of regional wine and excellent Danish pastry. I was sated for a half hour devouring the most divine Danish lemon cake, though we were surprised by the unwavering wine

tasting fees. The wine we tasted, however, was very promising and we were looking forward to exploring the wines in Paso Robles and Napa Valley.



Solvang, CA

Our first country stay was in a Quality Inn in the small town of Buellton. An old timer opposite the hotel was selling vintage Belair cars. We were contemplating shipping them home in containers but figured it might be quite expensive!



Vintage Belair, Buellton CA

In Buellton at night, Roger received his first taste of my 10.30-11pm poetry readings before bed-time, after enjoying a wonderful steakhouse. The repertoire included but was not limited to the surreal imagery of Jim Morrison and the dark prophetic poetry of the earlier American poet Robinson Jeffers, both of whom were appropriately chosen for their images of the American wilderness, but poor old "Doc Roj" was in no mood to listen to the profound music of Jeffers or the dark visions of Morrison and from the other side of the room over the rattling air-conditioner, "Matt, I wanna get some sleep!". I had to respect his efforts in negotiating the right lane on American roads all day, so we retired comfortably after a wonderful first day of tasting the country air... and Morrison.

Next day we enjoyed tasting some of the Paso Robles wine at the Vina Robles winery, which for those interested in wine, offered one of the best wine tasting

rooms I have ever seen but more important, the wines across the whole range were really quite wonderful and Roger and I were quietly making comparisons between Californian grapes with those used in the famous Barossa Valley in South Australia. American wines have a decidedly French influence in terms of their naming conventions. Shiraz in Australia is referred by the original French name of syrah and uncommon to Australia was the "jammy" Zinfandel and the smooth, spicy Petite Syrah, which Paso Robles and the Napa Valley grow in abundance.



Roger Perry tasting wine at Vina Robles winery, Paso Robles CA

I thought the Petite Syrah a little gem so purchased 6 for the after World Cup celebration, particularly for the French, who regaled me with their wines at the former World Cup in Kiel, Germany.

Wines tell a whole story about the wine makers history, their business struggles in the region through the generations, the difficult and successful vintages (years), but above all their wine making craft. While we tasted the range, Roger and I would enjoy listening to the story of the wine makers experience. Vina Robles, for instance, was created by two young Swiss men who started the winery only recently and learned very fast.

After Paso Robles, it was then on the Route 1 towards the Big Sur and Hearst Castle. The time after Paso Robles was too short to include both, so after taking some photographs of the famous castle built by a tycoon and a reclusive madman, we headed towards the Big Sur, which offers a great winding drive through to Carmel-by-the-Sea. As soon as we got 8 miles up, we were told the Sur was closed due to a mud slide, so had no choice than to backtrack to route 101 which took us to Monterey. It was a "bummer" to put it mildly but the days end was saved by the quaint hotel where we stayed, which was formerly a boarding house for missionaries. The hospitable, good natured manager offered us two free glasses of wine when we arrived and we had a good but expensive seafood meal just up the road. At the restaurant, an Australian woman recognised our voices from home and we had a good talk about America and her joys of living in Monterey and Sydney at different times of the year. She asked us a question that would be asked by many people, including even an old hobo at a dilapidated pub along the Turquoise Trail near Santé Fe, "What do you think of Donald

Trump?”. Our response was a little less than enthusiastic and I guess that came from our wish not to bring discussion of politics into the sanctity of our holiday experience - you usually leave discussion about politics at home. We answered as best we could, though the woman (a middle-aged academic), including her partner, clearly showed distaste for all things “Trump”, and surprisingly, this was the view even among true country Americans throughout our journey through the West where you would expect he would have support? It seems to suggest Americans are embarrassed about their new President and want to be sure that foreigners like us have not lost respect for them. They secure their self-respect by disparaging Trump.

Monterey was a very charming place and after seeing it, I can understand its popularity among tourists. It offers spectacular scenery, excellent seafood and has a late 19th Century charm of brightly painted wood houses and fishing shacks. It’s hilly aspect includes up and down lanes where musicians play on the kerb side and while walking to the restaurant we were able to look inside a hall where some very tidy dancers were rehearsing during twilight. It is the home of Clint Eastwood who apparently owns Pebble Beach. Monterey provided the setting for John Steinbeck’s



Carmel-by-the-Sea, Monterey CA

Francisco”, an excellent city for car chase scenes! When we got there, it was very much as I had imagined, though real Americans are not like the stereotypes you see in Hollywood movies! We settled into the Intercontinental on top of Nobb Hill, which offered unobstructed views of the city from the 19th floor, but I remembered the \$7 bill for a bottle of spring water, and the expensive car bay in the basement, but this was after all San Francisco - the hotel was superbly located.

We did a bus tour through the city and got off at Haight and Ashbury, home of Woodstock and the beat poets of the generation. Plumes of recreational smoke issued out from windows and shadowy nooks. I bought a few copies of the Haight Ashbury literary

journal from a dusty old hobo for a few dollars to read some of the San Franciscan poetry. Some of the verse was well thought out, but the more derivative echoed familiar themes of dystopia, drugs, poverty, street life, death and of course love and the loss of it. The tour included the great Golden Gate, a tremendous engineering marvel that has been beautifully preserved and which every day withstands the dynamic forces of San Francisco Bay’s powerful undercurrents.



Roger Perry on the verandah of Centrella Hotel, Monterey

novel Cannery Row.

You don’t go as far as Monterey without seeing San Francisco. I was looking forward to seeing those steep streets that caused cars to fly over intersections in the classic movies “Bullit” with Steve McQueen, the Dirty Harry series and the old tv series “The Streets of San



Haight and Ashbury, San Francisco

San Francisco for its summer can get remarkably chilly. I had to buy a jumper from a second hand shop in Haight to shield myself from the knifing wind. The famous fog that shrouds San Francisco Bay loomed for most of the morning until the sea breeze and the strength of sun at midday dried it up.



Matt Barker pointing at Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco

We left San Francisco after two nights, passing through the Golden Gate into the Muir Woods, which was a welcome return of bringing oneself into an intimate contact with the world of nature. We stopped at a point and ventured down a track through the Muir Woods. The air was fresh and cool and the great trees towered above us. I began to realise country in America was on a grand scale not made for man but for creatures as big as dinosaurs. There were trees with enormous trunks that grew from deep cavernous divides beyond where the eyes could see and the hills and mountain peaks



Muir Woods near San Francisco CA

were endless. Doc Roj found the pebble covered terrain along the slopes challenging for his injured knee, but with his usual tenacity, followed me until we came to a natural clearing surrounded by the tall woods on all sides. We drank in the fresh air and enjoyed the tranquillity. I said pithily, "Beautiful here

isn't it Doc Roj?". "Sure is", he said. Doc Roj is not very patient for long periods in one place and he recalls to mind something Robert Pirsig said in his philosophical road book "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" - "The point of the journey is not to arrive". Doc Roj for the most part just loved being behind the wheel to keep moving, but among the Muir Woods, he appeared awestruck and enjoyed the rare beauty of these tranquil woods.

We moved on to what has become customarily known as one of our favourite pastimes, wine tasting, and to top it off, we were going to be tasting with James and Pearce Stickney, both of whom are studying vinology and who have established a wine making business in Washington CA. James Stickney is also a very talented boomeranger who later became the World Individuals Champion at the Albuquerque World Cup after a brilliantly sustained two days of play. Roger organised a rendezvous in the Napa Valley area. However, as luck would have it, there were two roads of the name "Skagg Springs Road" in Napa and our dear lady navigator directed us to the other one where the Stickney brothers were nowhere to be seen. After realising the error, Roger and I couldn't quite believe our misfortune, but we were grateful nevertheless to be heading towards the right "Skagg Springs" to the Gustafson winery, situated on an old sheep ranch 1800ft above sea level. We waited there until we saw two figures with pencils and notepads walking towards the tasting room under the heat of the midday sun. I was excited about the prospect of wine tasting with the two young wine professionals!

About American wines we learned much and I should have learned good wine tasting etiquette from the Stickney brothers and Roger, who were using the spittoons, but I found the wine too good and downed with pleasure every glass.

Gustafson Winery, Napa Valley CA. From Left: Matt Barker, James Stickney, Pearce Stickney, Roger Perry



We moved on to Stags Leap, a much bigger winery in the heart of Napa Valley. Their wines were exceptional but so

too was the price! Stag's offered us a tour of the winery and I enjoyed the pleasing legend of how it found its name. It was a tale passed down by the Indians of a soaring, leaping stag the pioneers tried to track down without success. They eventually saw the stag leap over a v-shape divide between two craggy rocks, which we were able to see from the winery. Wine tasting is more than about wine. There is history, legend, mysticism and the story of trials and hardships.

Stags Leap Winery, Napa Valley CA. From Left: James Stickney, Pearce Stickney, Roger Perry



The Yates Winery provided another story about those hardships. It offered a more intimate experience with the wine maker, as it was a family winery at which we were the only visitors. The wine maker at Yates was a strong, resilient woman whose family has survived the Napa since the late 1800s. Recently, wine makers in the Napa endured the great fires through the valley, losing valuable business caused by spoiled grapes and smoke penetrating the stored wine, which left wine makers short of a vintage. Napa is another world away from the wine growing regions of Australia, but both share the same vicissitudes, and on many levels, the Australian and American ways of life bear many similarities. Both are New World colonies, both experience similar temperatures and both are superb examples of the phenomenon of new world human endeavour and conquest on great continents.

After thanking the Stickney brothers for a great day tasting wines in the Napa, we headed on towards Yosemite National Park, one of the greatest wilderness areas in the world, which was for me something of a pilgrimage because I discovered the beauty of Yosemite through the great American landscape photographers Ansel Adams and Edward Weston, both of whom would spend whole days together photographing rocks, streams, waterfalls, rivers and trees, which thankfully still survive today after the early preservationist work of John Muir.

Stags Leap Winery, Napa Valley CA. The V-shape divide over which the legendary stag leapt can be seen in the background.



It would be impossible to describe the scenes of Yosemite when we got there, after a long drive through the country from Sonoma, where we stayed. It was on a grand scale, prehistoric and other worldly, the home of the dinosaurs, with immutable rocks like Half Dome soaring to great heights, appearing like dramatic earth gestures. We got out of the car to look at Half Dome but Roger appeared unimpressed. "I'm not too excited about this rock to be honest". It was his funniest line on the whole trip, which confirmed my suspicion that for Doc Roj, "The point of the journey is not to arrive", it was behind the wheel to keep moving! After enduring my fascination for a whole hour photographing the great rock and waxing about its infinite grandeur, which according to Roger's philosophy, was after all just another rock but a big rock, we moved on to see the great waterfall and took a long walking tour down to the valley floor to be among the towering sequoia trees. Roger was captivated by the great trees after a disappointing encounter with rocks and a photograph of him before a tremendous trunk shows the sheer scale of the vast sequoia woodlands, some of which was burnt out by a recent fire.

We were intending to stay near the perimeter of Yosemite at a camp site frequented by black bears that raid vehicles at night if food is left. We shared a few jokes and thought it might be a bit of fun to see a keen black bear, but as the day crept into the later hours of the afternoon, we decided to



"Monolith", Face of Half Dome, Yosemite National Park CA



A Stream, Yosemite National Park CA



Roger Perry before the great Sequoia, Yosemite National Park CA

continue driving onwards. We stopped at Lake Tenaya and dipped our aching feet into the cool water, ruminating a while before saying farewell to the great Yosemite. It was then on to another part of famous America that would offer a landscape that would be in stark contrast to the titanic relief of Yosemite - Death Valley.



Lake Tenaya, Yosemite National Park CA

Death Valley Boomerang Challenge

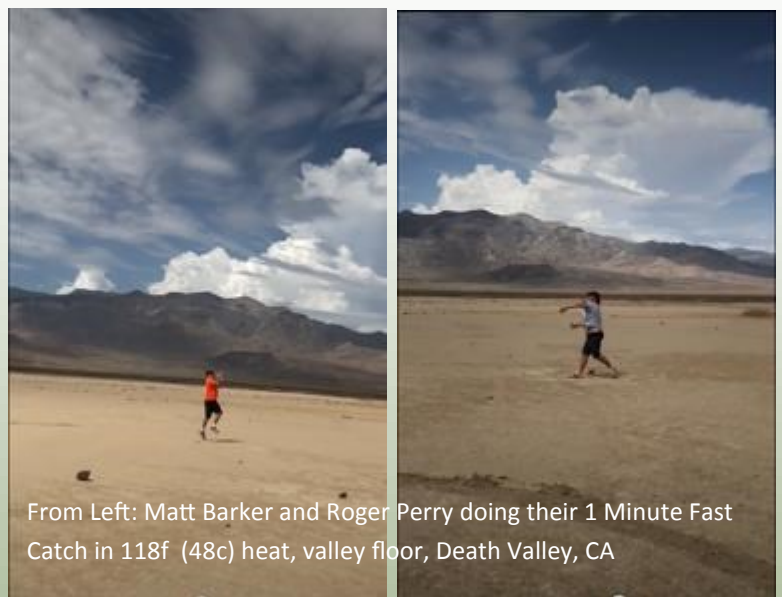
From the monumental scenes of Yosemite to the desert wilderness of Death Valley, which has its own rare beauty. As treacherous as the day is long, dotted sporadically with dry scrub, creosote bush and desert holly. Despite the valley appearing lifeless at first sight, there are many species of plant and animal life that live somehow over this seemingly lifeless Mars like terrain. We had to think about contingencies before we set out to travel through it. We gave the hire car special attention, checking all of its vital functions, namely water, and we needed to make sure we had enough of our own water in the back seat in the event that the car overheated and broke down, as it would mean possibly being stranded for hours before rescue under unforgiving heat. But somewhere we still felt brazenly confident. Before we left LA, we talked about a crazy boomerang challenge when we got to Death Valley. The challenge was to get out at midday when the sun is bearing down hard and we had to be in the deepest part of Death Valley where the valley's temperature is hottest. And the challenge was to do one minute of Fast Catch. I was reluctant at first and told Doc Roj that he was crazier than me. By the time we had everything we needed and on our way, Roger was still excited about doing it. Though I had reservations at first, I gathered the necessary resources from that well of the crazy animal that dwells within. "Yes, we are doing it!", I said. Entering the valley is a great drive. I thought it would reveal itself slowly along the Route 190 approach, but

there was a point along the highway which met a rise and from its apex, Death Valley presented itself on all sides, a great tract of desert and distant mountains. We got out of the car at a point in the road we chose randomly to taste the air and feel the mounting heat. This was America's desert, far from home but similar in many ways to the desert surrounding the Uluru site in central Australia.



Matt Barker among the scrub, Death Valley CA

We drove along the flanks of mountains and around curves, descending deeper and deeper into the valley floor while the temperature monitor in the cars dash incremented slowly. The road began to flatten out and on each side, the desert floor lay spread out into the beyond, vast and lifeless. "Ok, lets get out", Roger said. We drank some water and armed with our Fast Catch boomerangs, opened the car doors to enter a wave of simmering heat which penetrated every pour while the sun threw itself down hard on our hats. Being



From Left: Matt Barker and Roger Perry doing their 1 Minute Fast Catch in 118f (48c) heat, valley floor, Death Valley, CA

native Australians, we were more than familiar with this type of heat and knew how to manage it. Roger was up first. I started recording, but his phone began to malfunction due to the intense heat, so I drew out my own. "Are you ready recording!?", Roger said. He was starting to feel the

the oppressive heat and was understandably impatient. "Ok, go!". His round was fast, tight and well controlled, losing only one catch. An excellent effort! My iPhone felt very hot but it was still functioning. I

passed it to Roger and ran to the throwing spot. I thought, "Don't lose one, otherwise it would mean running out to collect it and running back". I started out and that first throw was just like home in summer, just a bit hotter. The boomerang behaved, making its return at just below shoulder level, that first catch, one little victory, setting off the round in a continuous rhythm. Then the

hands became slippery with sweat and when that happens you lose grip and throw the boomerang higher. Despite one coming down too low for the catch, I got all of the throws back. We then headed straight for the car, which we had kept running. The air-conditioned interior was our life support system. Without the car, it would have been two deaths in Death Valley! We set off again but I was still feeling slightly manic after that crazy round of Fast Catch, so had to get out again and throw one Aussie Round. Roger said, "Ok then, let's do it", after some initial reluctance. The challenge was to throw a long Aussie Round and catch it, otherwise it meant throwing again until it is caught. We threw and caught well, though I needed to do a bit of a sprint to catch my fast falling heavy weight.

We were then back on the road, feeling jubilant and cock-eyed about our boomerang victory in such an intractable desert and headed towards Zabriskie Point, superbly photographed in a 70's film of the same name by Michaelangelo Antonioni. When we arrived, it meant doing a good walk up to the lookout and Roger was less than enthusiastic due to his disinterest in rocks. "Make it quick", he said. I had to smile and said "Poor old Doc Roj with me and my crazy obsession photographing rocks". But at Zabriskie, the sight was not about rocks alone. Together, they appeared as a wonderful series of wave-like formations whose water carved sides appeared as dark stripes like those on a

tiger. The heat was tremendous and a young girl with her parents was using the available shade under an information display to keep away from the menacing sun. My Olympus camera was hot and the image display began to wilt a little

so I worked very quickly to capture the best aspects of the Zabriskie landscape from where I stood before the heat finally became too much to humanly withstand. This was the Badlands, a place where life is scarcely to be seen. Inhuman, unearthly.

We then headed off towards Nevada where we were going to stay, not in civilisation as it

should be described, but in a kind of artificial paradise in the middle of a desert - Las Vegas. On our way, we passed Lone Pine, the site of the historic atomic bomb trials. We were startled when my phone began to sound an unfamiliar alarm. It vibrated wildly and emitted a loud Brrr! Brrr! Brrr! I withdrew it from my pocket and the message read "Warning, flash flood approaching. Slow down and take precautions." We could see an ominous set of very dark low hanging clouds with flashes of lightning over the valley fast approaching. I said, "Doc Roj, we've got a storm coming!" It seemed absurd and remarkably sudden, but apparently, as I researched later, it is the flash floods that bring the small examples of life to this desolate place. We thought by driving fast, we could outrun this threatening flash flood but it was inescapable, hitting the car with tremendous force and the rain was torrential. Roger slowed down and we drove through it with caution while the blankets of rain fell in a torrent and the car buffeted. I guess dynamic landscapes must also bring dynamic weathers!

After surviving the storm, we were excited about staying 3 nights in Las Vegas in a luxury hotel with a good breakfast, swimming pool and bar. It was a chance to recuperate as the legs and feet were still aching after walking for long periods about the wilderness in Yosemite. Situated in the Mojave Desert, Vegas really began in 1931 with the construction of Hoover Dam, which brought a great many young labourers for whom casinos and theatres were built by the mafia. The early mob influence allowed Vegas to thrive above the law, a city of excess, hedonism and indulgence, acquiring the well



Zabriskie Point, Death Valley CA

known saying “What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas.”, until the 60’s when Howard Hughes turned Vegas into a family city. My last visit was in 2008 with Roger, his son Grant and “Big Boy” Gary Mitchell after the Seattle World Boomerang Cup, staying at the Stratosphere tower hotel, where we enjoyed the food and casinos, swimming pool and city adventures.



Hofbrauhaus, Las Vegas, Nevada

From Death Valley, it was a wonderful journey into Vegas where the flat earth on each side of the road provided a view of the sprawling metropolis during our approach. We checked in at the hotel and enjoyed a lovely swim and free cocktails when as chance would have it, the German restaurant “Hofbrauhaus” was situated on the other side of the road from the hotel complex, the very restaurant we visited 10 years ago for a wonderful night out and which is an exact replica of the Hofbrauhaus in Munich. We enjoyed a night in this Oktoberfest atmosphere of beer, music, weiner schnitzel and paddle spanking, where both sexes would brave a hard whack on the posterior by a waitress wielding a paddle, which was part of the restaurant tradition. I can recall the both of us drinking 2 very large glasses of beer, surviving them easily after a day in Death Valley. The music really added to the atmosphere of this unique restaurant experience and it was a great first night out in Vegas. The memory of good food and beer and the eccentric German flavour of the place would bring us back to the Hofbrauhaus on our final night, when we both agreed to subject ourselves to the paddle spank. Unfortunately for us,

our waitress was a big, powerful girl who didn’t stop using all of her strength to wield the paddle!

Las Vegas recalls to mind the Dubai Mall, particularly Caesars Palace, and it was difficult to say whether it was a beautiful sculptured paradise or an ugly example of capitalism? Politics aside, the long shopping mall and hotel is an architectural marvel, with artificial skies and cloud configurations painted over large dome enclosures, which kept shoppers insulated from the outside heat that was tremendous.



Caesars Palace Shopping Mall, Las Vegas, Nevada

Even though Vegas and its charms are inviting, there was a real urge to get away from the city excesses and return to the great wilderness areas, where you can listen to your souls communion with nature, and perhaps nowhere could this be more truly felt than to be surrounded by the Grand Canyon.

The drive from Las Vegas to the Grand Canyon towards Flagstaff, a town well known for its proximity to the Grand Canyon, would take us along the famous Route 66, which in its heyday brought migrants to the west, stretching from as far as Chicago and finishing in Santa Monica LA. Business thrived along the route until the installation of the Interstate Highway which offered a faster journey time, leaving the business along 66 struggling to survive. Now essentially a tourist attraction, it offers a series of whacky souvenir shops containing icons and colourful anachronisms of the historic route. We passed old service stations, classic 50’s diners and supply shops, and stopped at several that were particularly

inviting for their outside museum displays of old police cars, trucks, mannequins and petrol bowlers. One of the stores was run by a weathered swiss woman in her 60's who was selling good coffee, perhaps it was her way of supporting the old route by keeping people awake on the roads. I enquired, "So what brought you here?". "I came here in the 60's from home and never been back since", she said, in a voice that suggested that there was nowhere else in the world worth living than right here on 66 selling souvenirs and coffee. We explored several of the shops stocked well with souvenirs, model cars, and antique motorcycles. We wouldn't have experienced 66 completely unless we enjoyed a good lunch at a classic American diner, so we stopped off at one sporting an array of long rectangular windows, upholstered booths and retro décor in classic American red and blue.



A souvenir shop along Route 66, Arizona



Classic American diner along Route 66, Arizona

After a satisfying meal at the diner, we headed towards Flagstaff, a wonderful historic town with an old lumber mill, hotels and a colonial early 1900's Riordan Mansion. When we got there, we settled into the hotel, but it took some figuring out to discover that Old Town was not visible from where we first started on foot and a flash flood made the underpass to Old Town unpassable. We had to wade through the large puddle on foot through



Combi van covered in graffiti along Route 66, Arizona

the underpass to get to the other side around which Old Town suddenly appeared. We drifted through the lumber mill and explored the old shops, eventually settling into a wine bar managed by a fine looking young host who provided us with valuable information on how best to approach the Grand Canyon from the south side next day. We enjoyed some excellent wine while Roger extracted valuable information from a local willing to help, and while the young hosts sheepish girlfriend sat patiently sipping a spirit nearby. Later we settled on an excellent sushi restaurant that offered us a light meal after multiple imbibing and food indulgence in Vegas, and the beer was



Old Town Flagstaff, Arizona

only \$2. Next day, we had a refreshing breakfast at the hotel, then set out on the road towards the canyon. Again, the road offered unobstructed scenic views on both sides which allowed us to see the canyon on the left slowing looming up. We entered the road towards the great canyon. The road began to send us up into the great rocks until the canyons appeared, which over 5 million years, has been slowly carved out by the Colorado River. We stopped off at a site where Indian women were selling souvenirs, and we paid a small fee for the preservation of the canyons and to the native Indians who treasure the canyon naturally as a sacred



Grand Canyon, Arizona



Approaching storm, Grand Canyon, Arizona

canyon as a sacred site. As you would imagine, the canyons were sheer spectacle, and their scale made one aware of ones insignificance in a landscape that was vast



Girl sitting before canyon,
Grand Canyon, Arizona

and unknowable. The canyons reveal themselves in their infinite shape, great depths and changing colours. An approaching storm or flash flood made spectators wary but they continued nevertheless to dwell among the rocks along the trails near the canyons edge. After a series of winding roads, we reached the tour centre, which offered bus trips. It was swarming with tourists and parking was difficult, but we found a spot eventually and joined a long queue for the bus. The bus wound its way along roads that came perilously close to the edge, the irascible driver unperturbed by the approaching storm. We got off at several spots to take photographs, and the canyon view allowed a clear all round perspective of the entire shape of the oncoming storm, dragging a blanket of rain from its tail, surrounded by clear blue sky and white cloud. I had to wonder if this was a rare sight or something that those who inhabit these parts see day after day mid-summer? The storm did not reach us thankfully, veering off towards the south end where we came.

After seeing a good part of America already, there is so much more country to discover, a seemingly endless supply of wilderness, which made me return to the remark made by Gustave Flaubert about travel, that it makes you aware that you occupy only a very small part of the world. Nowhere is this more true than on the great continent of the Americas, which covers 9% of the earths

surface area.

After falling drunk with magnificent scenes of the canyons for a good part of the day, we headed back to Flagstaff along Route 180, passing Bedrock City, a Flintstones themed amusement park, which was an affectionate reminder of the



Bedrock City, near Grand Canyon, Arizona

whacky scenes along Route 66. There was still time in the day to stop off at a Trading Post selling souvenirs, Indian rugs, leather belts and boots while an Indian mannequin outside attracted visitors.

Back in Flagstaff, Roger's first ambition was to go bald for



Flash Flood, Grand Canyon, Arizona

the Albuquerque World Cup. I stretched my legs and did some exercises in the nearby woods beside the carpark for 40 minutes until the new Roger emerged with a pink, shining dome for his head dress. He was delighted as much as I was with his new clean look. We finished the day on a tour through Riordan mansion, a lasting example of houses built

during the innovative Arts and Crafts movement of the early 1900's for the Riordan family, owners of the local lumber mill and designed by architect Charles Whittlesey. I loved the uniqueness of this home for what were leading edge innovations for its time - the first example of a "lazy boy" chair, wooden door hinges, a swing chair in the living room that could be turned 180 degrees to face the window in summer, a refrigerator that sent melted ice water down to the wash room and a surfboard shaped dining table.



Riordan Mansion built 1904, Flagstaff, Arizona



Dining Table, Riordan Mansion, Flagstaff, Arizona

We thanked the tour guide, a young man who was studying history at the nearby university. He walked us through the entire house and brought the whole history alive with his detailed knowledge of the Riordan family and house innovations.

For the evening, we returned to the wine bar for pre-dinner drinks and thanked the fine looking young man behind the bar for providing us with an invaluable guide to the Grand Canyon. Flagstaff was an unusually quiet place. We appeared to be the only tourists in a sleepy town that has tremendously cold winters and which echoed a quiet loneliness. We enjoyed the relaxed pace and conversation with the locals. The people were friendly and willing to talk at length. We had a kind of

tapas meal in a restaurant the young man at the wine bar recommended. The restaurant was situated above a real estate agent on the main street. After walking up a drab flight of stairs, we entered the restaurant décor and were immediately enveloped in the dim light. The wine list was incredible, virtually a wine from just about every region of the world and the food was reasonably priced. We ordered some locally produced wine and chose from the menu. A couple opposite were interested in our accents, offering tentative glances at first until Roger initiated conversation with a rain of words. The pretty young slender woman was educated and well spoken, and her partner a lumber jack type, who offered some ideas for the following day, one of which was a visit to the Petrified Forest and instructions on how to get there, which was the most desired since it was on the way to Gallup, New Mexico, where we would be staying for the night. I loved sitting back enjoying the wine, the food and valuable conversation we had with these two locals who said Flagstaff's quiet was a relief from living in the big smoke.

The next day we set out towards Gallup with the idea of the Petrified Forest as a pass through attraction. I took over the wheel to allow Roger to have some rest and a sleep. I observed the hire car had a slight camber to the right which forced me to compensate by steering slightly left to avoid the car veering onto the roads edge. We were both thankful at least that the reputedly reliable Toyota Camry survived Death Valley. We entered the park and paid the park officer \$25 at the check-in. The name of the park is given to the petrified wood which have been crystallised for 225m years by ice since the Mesozoic era, or age of the dinosaurs. At the park centre, we strolled through the exhibit of protected petrified wood in their natural habitat, which allowed you to closely observe examples transformed into crystallised rock. Further on was the excellent remainder of a fallen petrified tree trunk, where nearby rocks were covered in Indian petroglyphs (drawings and symbols inscribed in rock). It was fascinating to think that this particular tree existed at a time when dinosaurs roamed the valley. Unique to the park is the phenomenon of blue mesa's, which we encountered at various points. The colour of the mesa's would change, depending on the strength of the lights reflection on their sides, ranging from light, smoky blue to deep cobalt. We enjoyed a break from the heat in the cool atmosphere of an idyllically situated adobe house perched on a hilltop overlooking distant hills and mountain ranges. We had a good look at the Indian art on sale then went downstairs and bought ice-cream to cool down and to admire the splendid view the house offered. At this point I realised my mind was held in a kind of suspension after experiencing so much of the vast tracts of American country, because it hadn't enough time to process and absorb all the scenes and yet

before me was new territory to explore, stretching to infinity in all directions. To return to the car, we had to first of all pass again through the Indian art exhibit, feeling slightly uncomfortable because the Indian salesperson, who was son to the Indian artist, was eager to make a sale and Roger and I bought nothing. And the house leaves an affectionate memory of the elderly Indian man who served a long waiting queue with ice-cream, doing so at such a languid pace, seemingly

Petrified trunk, Petrified Forest, Arizona



Blue Mesa's, Petrified Forest, Arizona



Adobe House, Petrified Forest, Arizona



Roger was eager to get moving to Gallup. I began to realise Roger's slight impatience had some definite advantages, in that we never arrived late anywhere to keep to the schedule of our itinerary! After a pleasant drive through open road, we arrived in Gallup, a city named after the rail-master David Gallup and whose surrounding wilderness provided the setting for American westerns made during the 40's and 50's. We unloaded the luggage at the hotel and cleaned up, then headed to the famous Richmond Trading post, which sold Indian Navajo art, jewellery, rugs, and cachina dolls. The shop was immense and contained a gallery of hanging Indian rugs, one of which was a 1920's Navajo original worth \$200000USD wholesale. I was staggered at the prices of the rugs. We were not permitted to take detailed photographs but those shot from a distance were acceptable. The trading post was enclosed in metal cages to prevent theft and at night, the windows were protected by metal blinds. I was keen to purchase a cachina doll as a memento but the dolls the post sold were very expensive for their meticulous detail. We found another trading post further down the street, which sold dolls that were cheaper but of less quality. I settled on two Hopi Indian cachina's made of cottonwood after bargaining with the salesperson.

In the evening, we had sirloin steak and beans at El Rancho



Richmond Trading Post rug gallery, Gallup, New Mexico

oblivious to the growing impatience of his customers. We enjoyed the remainder of our park excursion but

on route 66, a hotel restaurant decorated in western furnishings with a history with Hollywood actors, including

Ronald Reagan, who stayed at the hotel during the making of one of his westerns. The food was good but less than wonderful, though El Rancho itself was a charming hotel and we took some time wandering through the ground floor looking at the eccentric furniture, which included a chair made from buffalo or bull horns and in which wagon wheels are apparently used in the rooms as bedheads.



El Rancho, Gallup, New Mexico



Chair decorated in horns, El Rancho, Gallup, New Mexico

The next day meant travel to our ultimate destination, where the odyssey through South West America would end, when the life as traveller becomes the ambition of a sportsperson. We were both looking forward to uniting with the boomerang fraternity at the Marriot hotel, but we gave ourselves two days in the city to unwind and

prepare in an Airbnb situated near Old Town. The drive from Gallup to Albuquerque was straightforward and without difficulty, though we observed the traffic mounting steadily as long container trucks soared along the highway.

We were looking forward to meeting Japanese champion Takeshi Honda, who would be staying with us at the Airbnb near Old Town. My first recollection of Albuquerque was having a very cheap hamburger lunch at a busy 66 Diner. We were both hungry and the food was served by a flurry of Hispanic people behind the counter. It was the cheapest burger at \$4 and I enjoyed the spicy bean accompaniment. Roger anticipated that spicy, hot food was going to be the new normal for the 2 weeks in Albuquerque and I laughed when he gave me that clownish look of displeasure.

Albuquerque, 1600m above sea level, is historically renowned for producing cork and today, it is known for rock concerts and sporting events such as hot air ballooning and women's kick boxing. The Rio Grande winds its way through Albuquerque, which the locals and tourists use for white water rafting. A large underground aquifer supplies water to the city and the great Sandia Peak looms above Albuquerque in the distance. It is a city created out of past conquests. Mexicans claimed independence from the Spanish Empire in 1821 and in 1848, The Mexican north became the American South West when the expansionist forces of the United States invaded Arizona and New Mexico. Even though today it remains part of United States territory, the Spanish charms and Indian and Mexican presences are found everywhere, in nearby Santé Fe and at historic mission sites, ranch houses, Indian villages and forts. Albuquerque is a clean, civilised and well managed city. I was impressed with the manicured gardens, which were attended with meticulous care, even under interconnecting underpasses and along the sides of the motorways.

We found the Airbnb, unloaded luggage and drove to the hotel to collect Takeshi Honda. Roger and I were excited to see the Japanese champion again, which symbolised the end of our travelling odyssey and our time together on the road through American country and the start of re-uniting with the boomerang family. After affectionate embraces, we packed Takeshi's luggage in the car and drove to the hotel where boomerang legend Steve Kavanaugh and son Caden were staying. I can recall the big box of cherries which Steve had in the room. We enjoyed an exchange of jokes, witticisms and reminiscences with "Stevey K" and his colourful character as the streetwise hipster and king of "cool and chilled", which Steve in the heat of competition would maintain with dignity and grace on the boomerang battlefield. We welcomed Steve and Caden to share in our first evening in Albuquerque at the Airbnb, sharing news and developments, which included a growing concern that the

heat in Albuquerque may prove challenging. However, stoicism overcame apprehension and in the great boomerang fraternity tradition, courage, endurance and tenacity were the key qualities for all participants who survive the cup from start to finish, and that means enduring heat in the midst of competition over 100f!



Roger Perry, Takeshi Honda, Santé Fe, New Mexico



Painted Pillars, Santé Fe village, New Mexico

Next day, Takeshi, Roger and me set out on a drive to the historic town of Santé Fe, one of the great tourist attractions of the south west and home to many local artists. Finding parking in the village area was a challenge but we chanced one spot under the shade which was only vacated moments before our approach. We enjoyed roaming the adobe styled shops, which we found quite expensive. I was still after that quintessential Indian rug but those done by native Indians were terribly expensive

and perhaps overpriced. I settled, however, on a saddle rug that was made to support the American Indian College Fund, consisting of a beautiful set of geometric shapes, almost Aztec in style, in ochre coloured red and black, whose size and pattern would fit neatly into my décor at home, where I am developing a kind of mini art gallery in the stairwell. We had lunch in the famous square, where sandwiches really look like hamburgers. I had an "All business" chilli soup, Takeshi had a pulled pork "sandwich" and Dr Roj his usual burger. Santé Fe was a hive of tourists. After we walked



Old House, Turquoise Trail, New Mexico

through the square looking at souvenirs at markets and metal art installations that were incredible for their imposing designs and craftsmanship, we decided on a novel way of driving back to Albuquerque along the Turquoise Trail, a route 66 journey through old town wild west. We stopped and had beer at the Mine Shaft Tavern and the



Mine Shaft Tavern, Turquoise Trail, New Mexico

tough American blond waitress shared some colourful legends about the tavern in its heyday, because I had to point out the bullet holes that I could see, which penetrated the rafters. "This place has seen plenty of wild times", she said. Further on, we stopped at some small towns selling jewellery and miscellaneous items. Takeshi bought a cachina

doll for a few dollars and I strolled through the trays of old bits and pieces just browsing. We walked along a street where apparently the Young Guns movie was shot, and there was a dilapidated old bar which had two old hobo's sipping beer. In fact, it looked more like a derelict house but the old hobo assured us there was beer to be bought inside. He looked at us curiously and it wasn't hard for him to work out that we were tourists. He asked that same question quite a few American's had asked us along our travels, "Hey, what do you think about our President Trump?". Roger was again least enthusiastic to say anything, and we felt a little uncomfortable because there was a moment where we wondered what he and his buddy might do if we gave him the wrong answer, but I replied with what I thought was the best response I could find, "I think American's deserve a better President". Then he rattled, "I tell you I really don't like him", he said. "He's gonna ruin this fine country". "Well I hope it doesn't come to that", I said. I think I was as weary as Roger was on the subject of Trump who for me is only a temporary phenomenon on the political horizon and would be remembered only as a momentary bubble in America's future history, so after saying our farewell and good wishes, we moved off and wandered through the rest of the street where there were these interesting old abandoned stores with dusty windows and peeling paint.

We drove the rest of the way along the trail until we got to the highway again and on the way back to Albuquerque, I had to think how far we had come, not only in terms of miles travelled but in experience gained. My journey with Roger was now at an end and thoughts began to centre on preparing oneself for the World Cup. The three of us were excited about the prospect of seeing everybody again. I now understand more about the soul of American's and the country they inhabit, and it's a vast country, some of it lonely and abandoned, but real American's are resilient, proud, hard working people ready for anything. The country has made them that way, particularly Mary Yates at the Yates winery in Napa Valley, who for me, epitomised that resilient, stoical American spirit prepared for anything that the rugged country threw at her. There was so much more to see of this great American country that I will probably never see, a fact of every mortal traveller. People encountered disappear into memory but a spectre of them remains forever in the infinite crossing of souls.

After the Cup

I still had two more days in Albuquerque after the cup had finished to remain with what has become known as the phenomenon of "World Cup stragglers". My original

intention was to travel home with Roger but due to an error Qantas made in my travel itinerary, my departure date gave me two additional days in Albuquerque. Roger and I shared a lot of valuable experiences together and with a firm handshake we said farewell. "See you back home hey!", Roger said cheerily, after I dropped him off at the airport with Italian champion Andrea Sgattoni. With his cowboy hat over his bald head and with two big cases, Roger disappeared with athletic Andrea into the airport activity.

I returned to the Marriot hotel to find Steve Kavanaugh preparing a large Ford RV he hired, for a trip to Santé Fe with son Caden. Steve kindly offered to take me for the trip to Santé Fe and return with his partner Erin to the hotel with Kenny Barr, who was inside the hotel somewhere. Gunter Moeller, Kevin Overzee, Jerry Leu, Ricardo Bruni Marx, and Takeshi Honda were preparing themselves for a trip to the Grand Canyon with David Hirsch. We agreed to catch up in the evening for drinks at the Marble Brewery with the 2018 World Champion boomeranger James Stickney, Daniel Bower and young Kian Snouffer. I felt my holiday wasn't finished just yet and I was looking forward to trying the range of brewed craft beers to finish the day! I chanced upon Kenny Barr roaming the hotel. After preparing our carry bags, we joined Steve for the RV trip. It was a colossal vehicle, almost as big as a bus, replete with shower, toilet,



kitchen, living and bedrooms.

Caden and I were in the rear, seated on rumbling benches with seatbelts while Steve steered the big vehicle with confidence along Route 25 to Santé Fe. Kenny if I recall correctly was with Erin in the red VW Beetle. I did point out that parking in Santé Fe was difficult and when we got there, I think Steve was glad that I gave him the advance warning. We tried several times to park the long RV, which did not sit comfortably among cars along the narrow streets, then there was a car park for RV's which charged a ridiculous amount for the day. We gave up in the end and headed straight for the caravan park just 5 minutes from the city which Steve

had pre-arranged. It was a welcome relief from crowded Santé Fe, which Kenny unfortunately missed but which I had already seen. Steve looked tired and wanted a break. We were all feeling that euphoric weariness after the world cup, which takes 2-3 days physically to recover from. Steve parked the RV and connected it to the park facilities. Kenny and I went on a walk through the park trail with this crazy intention to find rattle snakes! Kenny is a wonderful character in many respects and like Steve, he presents as “cool and chilled”, and virtually everywhere he wore a bandana over his dreadlocks. I found him really easy company with a good sense of adventure. We talked about doing a day trip together following day and he suggested some wonderful ideas, one of which was to travel to an old Indian mission, which Roger would have loved. We enjoyed the beautiful quiet, brushing through the scrub over the ochre coloured soil, finding rabbit holes and snake skins but there was no sign of any movement or anything alive except for the rustle of insects. I enjoyed the solitude of just being with Kenny over this tiny pocket of American



Me, Steve, Kenny and Caden in Erin's Red Beetle, Santé Fe, New Mexico

wilderness.

After a relaxing day with Steve, Caden and Erin, Kenny and I headed back to Albuquerque with Erin. I remembered being in the rear seat, drifting in and out of sleep while Erin and Kenny in the front maintained lively conversation. I was slightly embarrassed not being able to participate but that post-cup tiredness held its grip. We thanked Erin for returning us to the hotel and waved goodbye as she headed off home in the red beetle.

We joined the stragglers for the evening at Marble Bar, taking the hired vans used for the cup for one last trip. While we were all seated outside together, we could see an approaching flash flood and my phone alarm went off. There was a sudden flurry of activity, the people at the food van warned us to quickly take cover, then the hail came down real hard. I remember my hat taking a firm hit by a large ice pebble, then more pebbles came down

in a tumult, drumming the roofs and ricocheting off railings, tables and chairs. We all ducked for cover under the metal stairwell frame. It was fascinating, something the American stragglers had seen before, but which held me in suspense



Dan Bower, Takeshi Honda and Kenny Barr, tasting the craft beer at the Marble Brewery, Albuquerque, New Mexico

until it was over.

We moved on to another bar where we talked and drank until late. Gunter Moeller, IFBA President, was buoyed up with excitement about the following days drive to the Grand Canyon with the other stragglers. I said to him that it is an experience that will remain permanently in memory. We drove back to the hotel and it was a chance once again to congratulate James Stickney for his world cup Individuals win. It was a splendid finish to my time with the stragglers and I wished them well on their travels.

Next day, Kenny and I headed off in the hire car to the Quarai Mission site 1.5hrs drive from Albuquerque. It was a wonderful drive through mountains and past farming property and the temperature began to cool quickly. Kenny, from Ohio, Cleveland, sat peacefully, absorbing all the scenes and since he was American, he provided good advice to me while driving. When we got there, it appeared we were the only visitors. After a wander through the exhibit, we headed out to the ruins, taking good notice of the rattle snake warning signs. The mission is linked to important historical developments in the 1600s and is one of the best examples of an Indian trading village, which fell under the dominion of the Spanish conquistadors, who submitted the Indians to brutal punishment or death if they failed to show gratitude or follow mission ceremonials. We walked inside the old

Franciscan church ruins, which had scaffolding up along the great walls. Kenny drew a Fast Catch boomerang out of his bag and threw the boomerang in a lovely elliptical circle, making sure it wouldn't hit the nearby walls. He was very good at executing the throws, keeping the boomerang under tight control.



Ruins of Franciscan Church, Quarai Mission, New Mexico



Church Interior, Quarai Mission, New Mexico



Kenny Barr holding rattle snake skin remains, Quarai Mission, New Mexico



Cactus along the Spanish Corral Trail, Quarai Mission, New Mexico

Kenny and I took a stroll along the 1 mile loop named the Spanish Corral Trail. I felt I had come to everything I hoped my trip through America would allow me to experience, being the only visitor in a remote pocket of America without the distraction of 100 other tourists. Here, Kenny and I were alone and I shared a cigarette with him on a rock beside a stream. This stream was the reason the Indians had settled here and I imagined Indian women coming to the stream to fetch water and to wash and bathe. Somewhere their spirit lingered and I was among them. It was a beautiful piece of country and I was glad that my final day in America was to be at this site, once a home for native Americans before the arrival of the Spaniards. Kenny and I were keen to spot a rattlesnake but all we found were small lizards and the occasional hare bobbing up then hopping off. It was hard to believe that among so many rattle snake skin remains, no live rattle snake was to be seen? I enjoyed the activity of birds rustling in the branches, and according to my notes, we saw blue grosbeaks, woodpeckers and the yellow breasted chat.

We were hungry after the mission and headed back to the Albuquerque town centre for a diner and to find some trading posts that Kenny was keen to look at. He knew Albuquerque well, which made driving easy. The food of course had inescapable Hispanic/Mexican influence and I settled a lot of the time on beans in a spicy sauce while Kenny enjoyed a burger.

At one of the trading posts, we both bought a cachina doll and I settled on a few t-shirts for my little daughter at home. We finished the day together at a bar to cool off after the unremitting heat, then I took Kenny to the airport for a warm farewell. Kenny brought a day of final magic to my travels. The Indian mission was the most fitting conclusion, something that will definitely bring me back to the wonderful scenes of America.

Matt Barker

Other News

World Cup 2020 in the Planning Stage

The next world cup will be held in **Bordeaux, France**. Initially the plan was to have the competition in Paris, but according to Michel Appriou, World Cup organiser, the venue was not feasible logistically and financially.

The current plan is to have the cup played at the Ancien Aerodrome de Cabana, the same fields that were used for the 2011 European Cup.

Michel requires another month to plan and find the best rates possible.

The Work of Listyo Bramantyo

Listyo Bramantyo of Indonesia is making some great competition and decorative art boomerangs. Listyo has really refined his boomerang making and is now regarded as a real master craftsman. Below are a few examples of Listyo's work.



Fedde Engwerda

Fedde Engwerda, former National boomerang champion of the Netherlands, passed away in late January this year.

Well known for his "catch it or fetch it" slogan, Fedde had many visits to Australia. His house had Australian things everywhere. His favourite song was "I am Australian" and he loved "Home among the Gum Trees".

The Boomerang family world wide has lost a great ambassador for our sport.

Bruce Carter

BAA Member

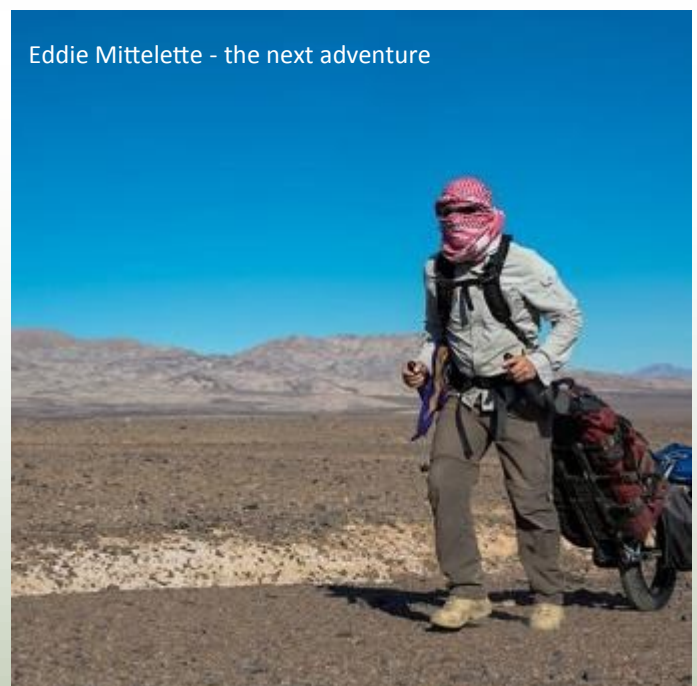
Eddie Mittelette - The Walking Adventure

Eddie Mittelette, who joined the Australian team named OzFrogs for the World Cup in Seattle 2008, is preparing for another Australian adventure.

A few years ago, Eddie embarked on a cycling tour from Perth to Darwin, after working at the Rangs Workshop and staying with the Perry family to earn some cash. He wrote a travel book titled "Aborigine" about his travels, beautifully illustrated with photographs, which won awards back home in France.

This time, Eddie returns to Western Australia late April to walk with a specially designed trailer to carry water in the far north of the state. He will start the adventure in Broome, then walk to Derby. He will then continue his trek following the Fitzroy river, known as crocodile country, where many people have perished, mostly through lack of water. It will be just the end of the wet season. The route will then follow the Fitzroy River from Derby along small tracks and return up towards Fitzroy Crossing, following the river northward to focus on the significance of the river to the Nyikina people, with whom he is in contact with a woman Elder and academic.

We wish Eddie good luck and look forward to seeing him arrive safely back in Perth to celebrate this great achievement. - *Roger Perry*



Upcoming Overseas Competitions

32nd Annual Gateway Classic - 25th May, Waterloo, Illinois, USA

European Championship - 8-11th Aug, St Gallen, Eastern Switzerland. Individuals price: 250 euros

US Boomerang Nationals - 16-18th Aug, Heroes Park, Boise, Idaho

And that's a wrap!