

58
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Dearest
Eva, Andrew Rebecca MaddyStephen:

Here I am again at my typewriter in Sayan after five months without touching a typewriter, but I find that the typing skill I developed when I was young has not deserted me. I'm quite surprised. And I'm relieved that the typewriter doesn't seem to have suffered much in the Bali atmosphere over the period of my absence... except that the ribbon has dried out quite a bit.

I've been back in Sayan since September 18, but have stayed lazy since the first few days activity in cleaning up the place, and several weeks of leisurely visiting and searching for company and excitement. But Bali in September and October is very quiet this year: there are few tourists around, and no major Balinese festivals that I've discovered. Apparently there was no real dry season in Bali this year; it rained throughout the year, and so now the Balinese are getting in three or four rice crops a year instead of the usual two. That keeps them busier than usual, and is one reason why the village here is so quiet. Everyone is fully occupied during the day: schools multiply, and more kids are going to primary school, while more continue on to intermediate and high schools; more are leaving the village to work for high wages in Denpasar, or to attend special vocational or technical schools there. Some even move to jobs as far away as Surabaya and Jakarta. Wages have doubled or trebled this year, prices rise considerably every time I go away for a few months: so the cost of living here is rising fast. This makes a big difference to me because the exchange rate for Australian and American dollars has risen only by a tiny margin. It now seems that the cost of finishing my house here will be twice what I calculated only in January this year. I should press on and finish it before prices rise again, but the real wet season is on us again, and anyway I'm not in a house-building mood at the moment.

I'm very happy at the prospect of spending a month with Stephen and Eva, and am looking forward to seeing both of you on December 17, the date you set in your latest Telex and letter dated October 2nd. The telex and postal systems are both working very well indeed: letter dated October 2nd arrived on my desk in Sayan on October 7th, but this was lucky in as much as the Hotel chap has been picking up mail from Box 15 more often than usual.

I'm not enthusiastic about the safety of travelling in Israel or to and from it, so I worry about your safety there, from terrorist incidents and from full scale war... so bear the risk in mind and do whatever you can to minimise it. Egypt may not be entirely quiet after Sadat's assassination, of which I heard from the BBC news to which I listen every morning at 5 AM whenever I go to bed at a reasonable time. One can only hope that any unrest in Egypt will not be directed too near tourists, but incidents in Israel could well be specifically aimed at tourists.

I am still uncertain of where I'll be over the two months and one week remaining until December 17th. Still no word from the U.N. Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT) people in Nairobi. It may be that their silence means that the Ethiopian job has fallen through. I've been cabling them at weekly or so intervals but so far they have shown their usual inefficiency and discourtesy in not communicating. I'll go down to Denpasar tomorrow to post these letters, go to the Bank Bumi Daya about money, collect some slides and photographs, and cable U.N. again. If I don't get anything satisfactory from them within a week after that, or maybe by October 17th when my current 30 day Visa expires, I may not bother to renew my Visa, but might fly to Thailand and spend some time up in the North at Cheng Mai, which everyone tells me is a beautiful place, before flying to Cairo to meet you on December 17.

It's possible that the job in Nicosia, Cyprus, may still eventuate. That was scheduled for November 20th to 30th. But I'm beginning to believe that it too will fall through, or that the U.N. will finally offer me both Ethiopia and Cyprus, beginning in mid- December ... in which case I shall have to refuse them.

In Singapore, I bought for Rebecca a Canon Telefoto Lens. It's a Single Ring Zoom Lens, an FD 70 to 210 mm f/4. It is equipped with a macro mechanism for low close-up magnification.

The Lens Number is 122290. I bought it from Peter Chew's in Supreme House on Penang Road, one of the respectable major "department stores", and have a 12 month world wide guarantee for it from the date of purchase, 17.9.81. I discovered that Singapore small shopkeepers are up to all kinds of tricks, and that one gets lower prices and better quality stuff from the larger more respectable shops. I shopped for a Sony 2001 computerised digital radio for accurate short wave tuning ... and found that the smaller shops were cunningly offering but not mentioning, radios that had been bought in Japan, and came with Japanese instructions only, and world wide radio guide books in Japanese, without any world wide guarantee; or else they had extracted the world wide radio guide and had sold it separately. They then offer the inexplicable, unwarranted machine for a higher price than Peter Chew's, which came all complete. To shop well in Singapore, one needs to concentrate fully on it, going the rounds from morning until after dark, for about 3 days altogether, and not buy anything until the third day, after one has compared prices, alternatives, packings, instruction books and guarantees at a large number of places and bargained at each place.

This trip I stayed at the famous Raffles Hotel, which I had often wanted to do. It's comfortable, fun, medium priced, and down near the city centre away from Orchard Road tourist centre, nearer to the serious shops used by Singaporeans. I can recommend it.

Singapore prices were 30 % cheaper than the prices I paid in George's Duty Free Shop in Sydney last March. My Major purchases were:

Eva, Andrew, Rebecca and Stephen: 8 October 1981

3

	Singapore Dollars	Australian \$
Canon 70-210mm F4 Zoom Lens	420	180
Nikon 80-200mm F4.5 Zoom Lens with Canon Lens Case thrown in	850	363

I considered buying other brands of Lenses which fit Canon and Nikon Cameras, such as Vivitar Lenses, but decided I didn't know enough about their good and bad points, so in the end decided to play it safe and buy Lenses made by the people who make the cameras. One really has to be awfully well read and knowledgeable about products to shop in Singapore or Hongkong. Only when one is in a shop and confronted with an incredible range of products, with many different models by each manufacturer, that one realises how little one knows about such things.

Nikon Lens converter (two times); this will
convert my Nikon Lens to a 160 to 400mm telephoto
zoom lens

260	111
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Sony Radio ICF-2001 AM/FM/Short Wave
with computerised digital tuning

410	173
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Silver Mini Hi Fi Portable Radio Cassette Model 8000
with equalisers built in, like a top
quality home hi fi set-up, but
miniaturised

570	243
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The only little snag has been that when I arrived in Denpasar on a direct flight from Singapore, the Customs men were waiting to pounce and put the radio and hi fi set into Bond, for me to take out with me when I leave Indonesia.

So now I have some delivery problems... how to get the Canon Lens to Rebecca and what to do with my hi fi set. I could solve both these problems by coming on to Sydney... airfare cost \$750 US; but I haven't any other practical reasons for coming to Sydney, except of course to see you all again... but since I don't have anywhere to stay and no business there, I tend to think I'll probably leave the Canon Lens until Eva and Stephen return to Sydney in mid-January... which means I've got to lug it to Egypt and you've got to lug it back; with the Hi Fi, I suppose I could take it back to Singapore and ask someone there to store it for me for a few months.

All would be wonderful if I could find someone I could trust going from here to Sydney... but I'm a bit isolated here in Sagan, and there are few "tann" (Guests, or tourists).

THINGS FOR EVA AND STEPHEN TO BRING WITH THEM FOR ME:

PLEASE BRING MY GERMAN SANDALS WITH YOU; I miss them a lot.

PLEASE ALSO BRING WITH YOU VARIOUS PAPERS WHICH HUGH DONOVAN OF LAURENCE AND VARNAY WILL GIVE YOU. These will include the Reamble Company Tax Return for 1980-81 and my own personal Tax Return which I will sign and post back to Donovan from Egypt... Andrew can countersign them before you bring them with you, and Royd can affix the Company Seal. Andrew could sign them after they reach Sydney again, but it would be better if he could pick them up from Donovan and sign them as alternate Company Secretary before you bring them with you.