

# 'You can get there from here & back again, but it ain't easy'

(Editor's note: The following is the third of a four-part series featured weekly in the Gazette-Times. The author, Kay Anderson of Heppner along with her husband Frank, an area wheat rancher, recently traveled to India, as well as other countries, and has written an account of their interesting trip.)

By KAY ANDERSON

We next flew back to Delhi, feeling really dirty as we had been out about seven days this time. We stayed overnight, took what clean clothes we had left and flew off to Katmandu, the capital of Nepal.

As we left New Delhi and India for the country of Nepal, Raj asked me if I would help him to buy some perfume for the women in his family, as he wasn't allowed to buy in the Duty Free shop with his Indian passport. So, with my passport and his money we bought some very nice cologne. He told me he wanted to take it to his sister's wedding which was to take place in about two weeks. He also confided that his family still believed in arranged marriages, and that his sister had never seen the man she was to marry. It had been arranged by the families. His older brother, also very highly educated and a high officer in the Indian Army, had seen his wife for five minutes before their marriage. I then asked Raj, who is well traveled and quite a cosmopolite, if he could do this. He said his family would probably find a girl who would share his interests and his travels. I then asked him what would happen if he married someone he chose, and he said, "I could, but it would create great social problems within my family and probably would not be accepted for some time."

The hotel in Katmandu was the most luxurious we had seen. This was where Frank caught the head cold which the rest of us had already been troubled with.

Sightseeing in Katmandu was a unique experience. There are many Hindu Temples, all occupied by monkeys, goats, buffalo calves, and all disgustingly filthy. But we were always able to lift our eyes to view the beautiful Himalayas just above us.

The valley in which Katmandu is situated is just below the foothills of the Himalayas and is a very beautiful, lush valley in which wheat, barley, and various other grains, including a great deal of rice are grown. Each hill is terraced clear to the top so that every inch is used. The people here are still living much as they must have 2,000 years ago. They plow with water buffalo that pull a wooden stick, and break up the clods with buffalo that pull a horizontal wooden bar. They still winnow grain by throwing it in the air and catching it in flat wicker baskets. This work seems to be done mostly by the women.

We learned more about Hindu Temples than we ever wanted to know in the first place, but were taken to one temple in which there lived a living goddess, to whom they make sacrifices of goats and buffalo calves and worship as a deity. For a contribution of a few Rupees we were

allowed to see her for a few minutes. years old, dressed in crimson with a crimson ribbon in her hair, lots of khol around her eyes, and other makeup. We were told that she had been selected from a certain caste when she was four years old. She was to live in the temple,

never to go out, and was worshipped as a goddess until she reached puberty, at which time she would be returned to her family and replaced by another four year old. We were also told that she was now, in the "enlightened" years—allowed to marry. But in the old days it had been

believed that anyone who married an ex-goddess would die very quickly. Before that period of time, I came to the conclusion that when she ceased being a Goddess she was sacrificed in some Hindu rite. I thought she looked like a sad little girl. The next day we were

fortunate enough to obtain seats on a plane that makes an hour's flight alongside the complete Himalayan Range, and hopefully we got some great pictures. I was less impressed with Everest than some of the other mountains as Everest sits back farther and doesn't look as high as it really is.

To be continued



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