

Around About By Justine Weatherford

Around About French Polynesia

There were 15 persons from the original touring group of 22 who had traveled about New Zealand and Australia who flew into Papeete, Tahiti, in the late afternoon of February 17. January and February are the warmest months in this part of the world which stays warm always. We were told the temperature was in the mid-90's, but because of the great humidity it seemed a great deal hotter to us who visited there from Idaho and Oregon.

We all had so enjoyed our stay in the two British Commonwealth countries where we felt very much "at home" and where, with slight variations, everyone spoke the same language. French Polynesia is very different; we really knew we were foreigners because we didn't speak French or the native dialects and because our money had to be converted into francs instead of other dollars and cents. The rate of exchange that week was between 136 and 140 francs for each American dollar; however, I felt prices were higher out in Oceania.

You, like me, may not understand that in the South Pacific there are three main groups of islands between just north of 10 degrees latitude and 40 degrees south latitude. These three spread-out groups are called Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia. Micronesia (meaning small islands) is the smallest of the three areas and is north-westerly. Micronesians may have wavy or woolly hair—those who live closest to Asia have Asian characteristics such as high cheekbones and straight hair. Micronesia includes Guam and Wake Islands and the Mariana, Caroline, Marshall and Gilbert Island groups.

We had already visited in New Zealand, the largest and most southerly land area of Polynesia, which has a minority population of Maori peoples who had migrated there long ago from other islands. Hawaii, Midway, Tonga, Western Samoa, American Samoa, Pitcarin Island, Easter Island and the following groups are in this third large area—the Line Islands, Marquesas, Tokelau Islands, Kermandec Islands and the Society Islands (French Polynesia.) People here are generally attractive, fairly tall, have light brown skin and straight to wavy hair.

Our stay began with our arrival at the International Airport very near Papeete the late afternoon of February 17, and lasted until we flew off to Los Angeles the morning of February 22. We spent part of an afternoon, two nights and a fine full morning in and near that old city.

Our first late afternoon I rode the truck-bus from the Maeva Beach Hotel (out beyond the airport) into the city where I looked around at the shops, bought a few shell necklaces from street stalls, and saw the spacious open-air flower and vegetable market before returning to the big, modern hotel where we attended a banquet and floor show that evening where native dancers performed their fire dance.

The next morning we were taken on a bus tour of much of the island. The big feature of the tour was a stop at the "Musée Gauguin" and its surrounding gardens. I bought a few postcards and a booklet at this Gauguin shrine on the west coast of the island. We were taken back to Papeete just after noon where we had a fine noon meal in one of the top cafes. I enjoyed eating fish and was pleased with the filet of mahimahi sauted with mushrooms which I had ordered.

By mid-afternoon we boarded the "Majestic Tahiti Explorer" our cruise ship at the Papeete city dock, and shortly after 3 p.m. we were off to view other islands. The attractive, modern ship carries 85 passengers and a crew of between 35 and 40. I spent my three nights aboard most comfortably in a private, air-conditioned stateroom. The meals were excellent, and I really enjoyed visiting with passengers from England, Canada, Germany, Japan, Bora Bora and many parts of the U.S.

We cruised past many volcanic and coral islands, all with lush tropical vegetation. The three islands (all much smaller than Tahiti) which we visited were Moorea, Raiatea and Bor Bora. We had several very interesting shipboard programs and loved traveling through the blue-green, very clear waters between the islands.

On Sunday, February 19, we made a morning, bow landing on a small coral island where we beachcombed, sunbathed, or swam or snorkled until noon when the ship's crew brought a great picnic meal ashore. That afternoon we pulled into the dock at Raiatea where we had a short time to shop and then were taken to the famous Hotel Bali Hai where we walked through the colorful gardens and were entertained by a troupe of child dancers. We returned to our ship for dinner and an evening program.

The ship moved during the night, and the next morning we were approaching spectacular, volcanic Bora Bora. We were ashore there all day, taking a circular tour viewing native homes, brilliant flowering trees and shrubs and the little coconut husk fired power plant. By lunch time we were at the lovely, large, beachfront Hotel Marara where we enjoyed various leisurely afternoon pursuits after lunch. I took my first glass-bottom boat tip into the lagoon here and was so thrilled to look down at lovely colored coral (pink, violet, blue and green) and to see a variety of strange shaped and brightly-colored fish swimming under the boat.

In the early evening we left Bora Bora in a water taxi which took us to the Air Polynesia Airport on a coral island almost an hour away where we go aboard our flight back to Papeete and to Maeva Beach Hotel where we spent our last (fifth) night in Polynesia.

The next morning we were again on Qantas for the long flight back to Los Angeles which we reached after dark on Wednesday night, February 23. When we all cleared the huge airport we moved to the new Marriott Hotel nearby. Some of the group left us there, but most of the tour group boarded United next day and flew to Boise via San Francisco. I flew onto Medford, spent two nights and restful, pleasant days there, and then drove my car home to Heppner on Saturday, February 25.

My south sea adventure was so satisfying. I know I learned quite a few things about this far-off part of the world, and I hope some of you have enjoyed traveling with me vicariously.

Chamber of Commerce learns about Nat'l Ag Day



Vickie Wagenblast of Lexington presents Heppner Chamber of Commerce President Harley Sager with a Wheat League Cap during chamber luncheon last Tuesday.

Wagenblast was at chamber to tell members March 21 was national agriculture day. "I wanted them to know the importance of agriculture not only in our area, but all over the country," she said.

Chamber members were also treated to pieces of this year's official Wheat League cake for dessert.

Dist. 20 Rebekahs meet at Heppner lodge

Members of the area Rebekah lodges held their District 20 meeting on March 16, at the Willow I.O.O.F. Hall in Heppner. The meeting was conducted by chairperson Louella Harris. The meeting was attended by Una Makin, Oregon State Rebekah Assembly president; Leon Wilson, grand master of I.O.O.F. lodges of Oregon; Sharon Magden, Rebekah Assembly vice president; Joan Blatter, Rebekah Assembly secretary; Virginia Peck, Rebekah assistant marshal; Helen Gottman, past Rebekah assembly presi-

dent; Francis Eddy, Rebekah Assembly jewelry chairperson; Margarite Wilson, Rebekah ambassador of Good Will; Hilda Yocom, district deputy president of District 20; Donna Fortenberry, Rebekah Assembly fraternal press chairperson and district deputy president, District 20B; and Ruth Bergstrom, District Deputy District 20A. Informatiave instruction for the lodges was presented by President Una Makin and her officers. Many presentations were made honoring Presi-

dent Una and also the symbols of the Rebekah Lodge. The members selected Bunchgrass Rebekah Lodge No. 91 to host the 1985 District

Meeting with Ione being the location for the meeting. Ruth McCabe was selected to be the chairperson.

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BEEF CUBE STEAK LB. **\$2.69**

JOHN MORRELL
SLICED BACON 1-LB PKG **\$1.69**

HYGRADE WEST VIRGINIA WA
BONELESS HALF HAMS **\$2.29**

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