

ENFLASH

April '75

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD
CARTE D'IDENTITE INTERNATIONALE D'ETUDIANT / CARTA DE IDENTIDADE INTERNACIONAL DE ESTUDANTE
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CELIAD
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USA
Celia D. L...

No A4
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Photo



Photo

Bearer
Titulaire

Wife
Femme

Sex
Sexe

ENFANTS
Date de naissance

SIGNATURE OF BEARER
SIGNATURE DU TITULAIRE



PHOTOGRAPH OF BEARER
PHOTOGRAPHIE DU TITULAIRE

Issued at
Delivré à
Kuala Lumpur
6 November 1973

and valid for five (5) years therefrom.
et valable pour cinq (5) ans à partir de cette date
An Officer duly authorized under Section 1 of the Passports Act 1938-1966

Angela Mill
and Date of Birth
et Date de Naissance
5 feet 4 1/2 inches
Taille
5 feet 4 1/2 inches
Colour of Hair
Couleur des Cheveux
Black

CHILDREN
ENFANTS
Place and Date of Birth
Lieu et Date de Naissance

PERTINENT STOP PRESS

1. Bill Wallace arrived Addis 25 April.
2. U K unemployment now almost 1,000,000.
3. U K at time of budget this month has an annual balance of payment deficit equivalent to 5% loss.
4. U S concedes that spectacular communist successes in S E Asia have been due largely to the brilliance of their logistics and communications despite long distances and modest rear echelons.
5. En route report just arrived from Brian Wallace Kabul - "Both tanks have been leaking slightly from plates underneath - Afghan diesel seems to have cured this!"
6. Nichols and Moore just telexed AOK on arrival Khartoum.

29.4.75

LONDON

Sorry to be repetitive, but apologies for no March edition of ENFLASH, lack of which is owing mainly to the sad loss of staff members Caroline, recently married, and Jill, who returned to South Africa at Easter; and it's taking a little extra effort from those left in London to keep systems running, whilst at the same time meeting and interviewing many smashing, interesting and well qualified females.

However we have now made the necessary decisions and over the next few weeks we will have three new London staff to ensure we keep the Company heading in the direction it needs to go in the next few years. The persons concerned are Australian Angela O'Hara and two Americans Celia Low and Ann Meagher.

Angela, as she puts it, "has been on and off the road for the past ten years" most recently spending two years around Asia. She was lucky enough to crew a 50 foot schooner which she picked up in Queensland, Australia, to be chief cook and bottle-washer, in between sun-bathing, swimming and sail-changing, and sailed round north Australia to Darwin, then on to Timor and up through the Indonesian Islands to Singapore, with a three month stopover in Bali. From Singapore it was mostly overland for South East Asian viewing. Then almost two years later back in Darwin for a three month work stint to earn some money, leaving that town just one week before the Christmas cyclone to return to London via India and Moscow.

Celia spent most of her life in San Francisco where she was a student at the Berkeley Campus when she first heard of overland travel - by way of an advertisement in the college newspaper for the Mother Africa Group. As overland travel is relatively unknown in the States she signed herself onto this trip not realizing that any companies such as EO existed. The Mother Africa trip, although slightly disorganised, was a great success and they met a few EO trucks heading north. Celia left the trip in Tanzania and hitch-hiked through Kenya with some friends. From Mombassa she took a ship to Bombay and spent a short while there before flying to London. She says the most interesting thing about Africa for her was being exposed to cultures about which she had previously known very little.

Ann says "working for EO will be very different and exciting after the education racket" Her travels include landrover tripping around the States and Europe and meeting Merle Friedenberg in Germany where they decided on an African trip, which in turn became two Africa trips, the first of which covered North Africa and the second East Africa. Ann said "hitch-hiking to the Serengeti, waiting for buses with the Masai, and a non-moving train from Mombassa to Moshi will always be vivid memories, but perhaps not as much as on the London-Kathmandu trip in 1973 with intrepid leader Johnno Wells making it an unforgettable experience "You're 20 minutes late, and we can't wait !"

At this time of the year we have nearly all our vehicles on the road and when the May 6 Kathmandu-London and May 13 London-Kathmandu trips leave, there will be only one vehicle standing still, which is 223 BGF in Kathmandu.

Cheers, Johnno

ASIA

Kathmandu-London, 25 March

1 Vehicle

Approximate EDA Esfahan: 6 May

The KM left Kathmandu with a group of 24 including Tony Barnes and Bill Wallace. After a fairly straight forward run to Delhi they visited the Corbett National Park en route to Srinagar, though as yet we have not heard how successful the detour was. Tony will return to Kathmandu from Kabul to organise the departure of 6 May, with the help of Martin Whitehead (an ex EO'er of last August) a newcomer to the team. Brian will continue to London with the KM.

London-Kathmandu, 13 May

1 Vehicle

Ian Way recently flew back to London from Buenos Aires and is obviously in fine shape. Ian is taking the May trip to Kathmandu with the blue fire engine. As we had to cancel the June departure through lack of support, Ian will be taking the only vehicle to Asia from London until August.

Following is an interesting discussional letter from Keith Miller, who brings to it a lot of experience in Asia with EO and others. I personally share a great deal of his opinions about our present situation and trip weaknesses. What we do about it is a pretty difficult one to answer. Below his letter I have made some comments. ALJ

A Few Ideas On Asia by Keith Miller

17.4.75

It seems to me that for some time now we have been offering a compromise in Asia between a cultural tour and an overland expedition which doesn't really satisfy either end of the market.

At one end of the scale some clients read our brochure and see all the places we stop to see "Taj Mahals", Red Forts etc, and ignore the fact that there is about 12,000 miles and 80 nights camping to "be put up with". They would probably prefer a coach trip were it not for the expense, they rarely have much interest in crossing deserts or the Hindu Kush as the dust gets in their eyes.

The same brochure for the same trip can be read entirely differently however. The other people who come expecting a rugged overland experience (something like Africa) are also disappointed to find us covering 250 miles a day on good tarmac. The only chance of them having to push is if the driver makes a blunder when camping or if the battery won't start the truck in the morning.

Granted we do nip across the Iranian desert - two days of fair road with a few corrugations. We advertise the north of Afghanistan, but how often do we go there. For one reason or another (usually time) it often gets omitted.

These ideas are obviously a generalisation but I think they are quite valid. They're also the reason, in my mind, why a good "Asia group" is such a rare thing these days, because very few are getting what they expected. They're almost certainly getting value for money, but perhaps not in the correct way. If we are to continue using expedition vehicles, then we need to make full use of them and run the trips as an expedition as we used to. It is no use using a truck and trying to compete with Penn and Sundowners - there's no way we could compete when they're putting 40 in a vehicle which is more economical to run and instead of paying for food and accommodation as we do they pick up 15% backhander on everything the passengers spend whether it is lunch, hotels, coca cola etc.

As we're using trucks we must continue to be fully inclusive and camp. But as I don't think we can compete with coaches we must be sure that we make full use of the trucks. Anywhere we can get off the road we must do so. Not just if time allows, but as a matter of course. The trip literature could make this clear and perhaps backpedal a little on the "tourist spots" and places of interest and put more emphasis on the experience and pleasures of the travel through the countries. Africa may be short of architecture etc, possibly Asia has too much.

This approach should go a long way to satisfying my second category of people. The problem is what proportion of our customers lie in each category. Probably too many lie in the first category to be ignored. What to do with them is the next problem.

I do not believe many of them would be very happy in a truck whatever we do. I certainly feel they need a different type of trip from the one I've just outlined. Our present run is too hard and dusty for them so they certainly wouldn't be any happier with a roughed up version of it.

Vehicle ? - I don't know. Have a look at a Toyota Coaster minibus. Bigger than a Transit, it may be one answer. Very popular here, quite a lot in Nepal, Pakistan etc. Don't know about UK.

Again I'm not suggesting competing with Penn etc on their own ground. No one that I know of offers an inclusive run of our nature using a coach or minibus. In these days of inflation, non-inclusive trips must be getting very expensive. We would have to use a few camp sites and perhaps some cheap hotels, but it could still be as all inclusive as possible. Perhaps faster and a more accurate itinerary but visiting all the tourist spots. Much easier to actually run people round cities and sites than a truck too - probably save time that way.

If we really sold the "inclusive" bit we could probably take quite a bit of business away from coach people, and keep the people we might lose by making the truck trip harder.

I'm not suggesting a bus and hotel tour for geriatrics. We may know that a truck is still the most comfortable vehicle, but can we still sell it to sufficient people. Penn, Sundowners etc carry a lot of young people (especially from Australia who don't realise how much hotels etc are going to cost them. - Obviously Trail Finders aren't pushing the inclusive bit as hard as they could. All the more reason to get down there and do it ourselves. With money getting tighter everywhere, but especially in Australia it seems, I think the more we push the value for money bit "inclusive" trips can offer, the better we will do. At the moment we are hardly holding our own at a time when we are offering better value for money than anyone else.

How many vehicles westbound from Kathmandu this Spring? Last year Intertrek put out five trucks (25 passengers each), in the space of ten weeks westbound.

That about covers that side of my thoughts on changing current programmes. What else could we do? I believe in offering options in the way a car manufacturer offers an ordinary model and a deluxe one. Usually about £150 more for two-speed wipers and cigarette lighter, nicer carpets and a bit more chrome. Everyone goes for it. Especially on late summer and autumn departures from UK we have the vehicles "dead" for a considerable time in Kathmandu. This time co-incides with the best time of the year for touring India. On the end of these departures, or some of them we could offer a couple of weeks extra round India - we hardly touch it at the moment. The vehicles wouldn't need to be full as all you have to do is cover drivers wages, costs, and depreciation. The vehicles would be doing nothing otherwise.

Perhaps one tour could end in Ceylon instead of Kathmandu or something. The extra time would look like even better value for money - the profit on it could be much higher!

Especially if we had a couple of minibuses out there in the winter, a quick series of "whistle bang" tours of India, (Pakistan, Kashmir, Nepal perhaps) tours from Delhi if flights could be got cheap enough.

Presumably if we are bonded by the end of the year we will be able to sell through any agent we want, ABTA or not?

That's about it for now! These are obviously just ideas with no proof that they will function - if kicked around over a pint of beer I feel something could come out of them which could benefit the outfit and perhaps put us back on the map in Asia - we're not really doing too well just now.

Thanks for the time spent reading them. Keith.

1. Vehicle deployment is already more complex than desirable and a really good case can be argued for a standard type vehicle Wren Park based for use in Africa and Asia. There is alot to be said for a policy that sticks as closely to this as possible.
2. Brochures cost a lot of money - more than one Asia trip compounds the printing costs, can confuse the marketing and increase the risk of empty seats and of manipulating people.
3. Surely, as Keith says, we have got to have much greater influence in Australian promotion and we have got to go out there believing in the product. Keith has not discussed the trip beyond Kathmandu. If - what an if - we could quite soon go overland to Singapore, wouldn't that, especially if we were the first, pull the whole thing up by its bootstraps !
ALJ

SOUTH AMERICA

Northbound, 10 April 1975

1 Vehicle

Approximate EDA La Paz : 6 May

After Ian and Bruce had spent many weeks doing quite major repairs on VXX 207, our only running vehicle in South America, Bruce left Buenos Aires with a group of 19 to lead his first trip north after doing the Southbound with the guidance of Ian Way. Unfortunately the first communication which is from Asuncion indicates that he has mechanical problems, but as yet we do not know which end of the truck is giving the trouble. Bruce is planning to travel well south from Asuncion before heading west towards the Andes.

Projection

One vehicle - one driver in South America !

To put it bluntly, if we don't do more in South America we will inevitably do less, and soon. And less than we are doing is nothing, surely !

Ian Way in particular has been behind our continued presence in South America, taking part as he has in the last three completed trips. Bruce is now maintaining that presence on his own with his second trip.

We have got to get to grips with the needs of a good South America programme as soon as possible and half measures won't get us very far. We have to produce the vehicles and develop the sales - decisions to this end are going to have to be made soon. ALJ

AFRICA

Trans Africa Southbound, February

1 Vehicle

Approximate EDA Addis Ababa 26 April

Bill Wallace has made good time through the Sahara and has taken the first of our vehicles to cover the section between Njamena and Khartoum. Sudanese permits were awaiting Bill on arrival at that Embassy in Njamena and as Bill's group already had their visas they soon headed off for Abexche. However, as luck would have it, they were delayed four days waiting for a military escort.

Bill reports that there is only dirty fuel available between Njamena and Khartoum. The group expected to leave Khartoum on the 18th after Bill had pushed ahead with March southbound permit applications.

Trans Africa Southbound, March

1 Vehicle

Approximate EDA Kano : 2 May

Major rear Differential problems in Morocco and inefficient airlines have delayed this trip for ten days. Parts were flown from London to Bob in Oran and after many hassles with customs and Moroccan border officials, Bob finally managed to get the parts and vehicles together and complete the repair - Bob advises that the group are really great.

Trans Africa Southbound, April

1 Vehicle

Approximate EDA Fez : 17 April

On the 19th we waved goodbye to Fred Glaser, in our latest M Type, the pair of which have been running round the continent doing promotion work for most of February. Fred has four staff on board of whom we've been seeing much of over the last few days in the London office : they are obviously determined to help Fred make this a great trip.

Trans Africa Northbound, 4 February

2 Vehicles

Approximate EDA Ndjamena : 4 May

Led by John Finch Davies, Malcolm Gascoigne and Phil Sheard.

This trip was delayed in East Africa whilst Tony Jones was in Khartoum sorting out their vehicle permits. The group left Nairobi on Friday 4th and we received a cable from Addis on the 10th saying all is well, since when we have heard from Khartoum that he has met Bill Wallace. John tells us that DHV is running like a sewing machine hope it keeps up to its reputation John.

Trans Africa Northbound, 25 February

2 Vehicles

Approximate EDA Khartoum : 28 April

Steve and Chris appear to have a great group, thirty of whom attempted Kilimanjaro and sixteen made it to the top. Bad times were had at the Moshi YMCA where alot of luggage etc was stolen - looks as though you did everything possible Steve except run your own guard. With Janine's assistance this group had all paperwork complete in record time and were last heard of in Addis Ababa on the 18th.

Trans Africa Northbound, 25 March

2 Vehicles

Approximate EDA Nairobi : 27 April

Ray Wolfe, Richard Sasse and Steve Kelly are obviously getting on well together, and apart from stolen passports in Dar es Salaam (in view of the surrounding circumstances we won't count it in the Safety Award), group and progress appear to be good despite the fact that they're getting soaked every day. Spirits must be high as twenty people intend to climb Kili. Keith Miller is having a break at the Trade Winds Hotel in Mombassa and the plan is for him to take over from Ray after Nairobi.

THE YEAR IN RETROSPECT ETC

There are a lot of people in EO who, as recently as last August, were not, and there are others who were elsewhere in EO when we in London were able to take a long look at the programme that lay ahead. We looked at our operations through until the end of the financial year which ends at the end of this month.

The one thing that became apparent above others was that we were going to become very stretched at times, especially during a first period before Christmas and even more during a second in the closing months of the Company's year. It was clear that everyone was required to play an important part and that we were at great risk (to quote the August ENFLASH) "of shooting our bolt" during the first period of pressure and of just such a situation having repercussions during the second.

Appreciation of this fact allowed us to prepare for it to an extent, and people in the Company realised the need to "pace themselves". However we have not succeeded quite as we may have hoped, and we have seen many problems that in one way or another have persistently prevailed. Many of us have become very tired, and quite a lot of good men and true (for this or other reasons that have some of their roots in this reason) have left us.

In no section of the outfit have things been as easy as we might have hoped, and although in retrospect the satisfaction of success maybe proportionate to the difficulties overcome, it has meant that our fortunes are somewhat less than we might have hoped for at the close of a year in which so many people have put in so much.

However there are many pointers for anyone who wants a view of where all this hard work could take us, and at long last I for one am more confident that we're not wasting our time - OK - if we are, then it's our own fault, simply for losing faith, losing our determination, what someone I know calls "losing our growl". I've seen it happen before - over the years, more times than I like to recall.

Dynamic people involved have understandably clashed against one another and although this should not be ignored, it should be seen in perspective. It is upsetting when these things happen, but they do happen in the best of teams - in fact they are part of the vital interaction of vital people - but what it is when people can no longer see it this way. There are very few of us in EO who couldn't benefit quite a bit from more effort to get along - and a bit more philosophy when we can't!

We ought to make this one area where we are trying to improve.

Costs :

When only a year ago everyone in EO knew we had our backs to the wall and that the pundits and prophets had written us off, every effort was made by everyone to make every penny count. Since then we have been caught up in this extraordinary spiral in which any old fashioned sense of the value of money is about as quaint as virginity !

Nowhere in EO do we appear to have succeeded in holding our costs in check. In London our costs are going up dangerously quickly, its terrifying : cost of postage, telephones, rents, rates, petrol, fares, electricity has gone through the roof. Our plan to combat it may have been to cut back, in fact what we chose to do was expand a bit and go for getting a much greater proportion of our bookings ourselves. This we have done, the year's bookings are looking very strong indeed and easily the majority we have got ourselves, saving thousands of pounds in commissions.

No such luck (or whatever) is available to effect our fortunes at the sharp-end, and here expenditure has soared to an even more serious level with little sign that we are containing it.

Indications are that our trading margins at present are no wider than last year, and this is dangerously small by any successful standards, especially in such a high risk enterprise like ours. We've got to realise that we are in an inevitably risky business, and that we've got to cut out unnecessary costs at the same time as investing in better equipment and in developing higher standards of professionalism.

Hygiene en Route :

The revolting interior condition of many trucks on arrival at the end of trips should leave us in little doubt that cleanliness and hygiene en route leave a lot to be desired. This is one respect in which I have seen standards slowly fall for quite a while.

Present standards are not the ones we should be satisfied to pass on to blokes joining us this year. Acceptance of present standards is almost certainly linked to the considerable increase in cases of hepatitis, and probably other medical problems - the 'trots' for example seem to be accepted as a fact of life en route - they never used to be, and weren't. The standard of cleanliness has a direct bearing on the whole well being of the group and irrespective of how good or bad the group is, proper cleanliness will make it better - you must insist on it and set an example - it is not part of the job to piss up against the back wheel and get thrown two apples from out of the back (one for your map-reader), nor to turn a blind eye to washing up left until the morning, nor to avoid looking in the larder knowing full well that you'd then be obliged to get shirty about the mess. Let's get these trucks cleaned up. Good indicators are the state of the stove, the state of the coffin, the state of the larder and the state of the various small containers.

Drugs :

One or two Safety Awards may have to be delayed until passenger complaints about drivers using drugs have been investigated. The drivers concerned have been advised. Don't let's fall out over drugs - I'm sure anyone aware of the risks to Encounter would agree that if present warnings are not heeded we shall have to take more drastic action, and I shall see that we do. While we are on the subject, Algeria has introduced severe penalties against drug offenders (including execution in some cases). Recently at least a dozen Brits and a dozen Aussies were imprisoned for terms between 8 and 15 years.

The Safety Award :

It is taking the expected time for the value of the Award scheme to show up. One way in which (unfortunately) it is manifesting itself is that we are having to consider penalising deliberate disregard for its contents. The cost of tolerating people sitting on the tilt frame for example will end up not being just token penalisation but being answerable for allowing something bloody stupid to persist - and I'm quite prepared to urge the the dishing out of pretty final medicine before disregard is at the cost of life.

Whether or not you agree with the Safety Award in principle or agree with all its points, all of us in EO are obliged to accept its "do's" and "don'ts" to the best of our ability. If we don't agree we should speak up, but we are not being true to the trust that is put in us if we simply ignore it. Examine it again, you might more clearly see it's purpose, you might think it ought to be improved or simplified; you might simply realise that you've got some guidelines that might help you run a better, more professional trip, bank a bit more money and have the satisfaction that it's within you to meet pretty high expedition standards.

Australia :

By the end of May I expect to be in Australia and look forward to giving you a better idea of what I think we should be planning to do out there and how we should go about it.

We are determined to settle down to producing an ENFLASH at the end of each month - but then some of us have heard that before.

One last word: in the first week in May EO will have more vehicles with more people on the road at one time than ever before. For Christ's sake TAKE EVERY KIND OF CARE.

Cheers

TONY

BOOKINGS 1975/76

As At 29th April 1975.

1976

[illegible]