

• UNDER • THE • WIRE •

(Editorial - from centre column)

Ullapool originated as a planned village for the fishing industry by the British Fishery Society in 1788. Over the years, though fishing has declined a bit, it has turned into a major tourist centre for the north west, and is one of the terminals for the Cal-Mac ferry to the Outer Hebrides.

Part of the attraction of the area is the rugged mountainous and coastal scenery, as there's not a great deal to do indoors. Sadly, the weather was not too conducive to walking on deserted silver sands, or looking out over sparkling waters to misty islands. Get off the main roads, and it's all twisty single track with passing places. Progress is slow, and when the weather's fine, it's nice to take your time. In driving rain and low cloud, things are not so idyllic. There are a couple of big gardens locally, but who'd want to walk through a forest in the rain? The only thing for it was to head to the scattered crofting and fishing township of Achiltibuie and the Hydroponicum, or head back to the east coast where the fine weather was...

"What's a Hydroponicum?", you ask. If you watched *Gardener's World* on BBC2 a couple of months ago, you'd know. The day after our visit, the GW team were there for a brief feature on growing plants in soil-less conditions. The hydroponicum was established in the early 80s by Robert Irvine who'd given up his life in the south and wanted to run a high class hotel/restaurant in some out of the way corner of the country. Being so far from the major markets, he knew he needed to grow his own produce. But with thin, peaty soils, and facing into any south-westerly gale off the Atlantic that brought salt-lashed spray into the garden he also knew he'd have trouble with anything other than potatoes! As soil would have to be brought in, Irvine experimented using alternative growing mediums, and supplying nutrients to the plants in solution. As this seemed to work, he expanded his project to cover a wider range of products,

(continued Column 3)



(Editorial - from left column)

and built three linked "greenhouse" areas in such a way that air passes up through the three, getting warmer as it goes. In the "lowest" house, a climate like that in the south of England is achieved, and here standard British fruits and vegetables are grown. In the next house, it's a bit warmer, and the main crop is strawberries (from April to October). The final house is warmer still, and here there are lots of flowers as well as figs, vines and citrus fruit.

The plants are grown in a porous granular material in small pots set on sloping channels down which nutrients flow in solution, the plants taking up what they need. There are (only) guided tours, and for curiosity value, if nothing else, worth a visit. The cafe, and restaurant across the road, are also highly recommended. There's a small staff running the place, and the head gardener/botanist also helps out behind the counter making the bacon rolls after the tour is over!

As the weather continued in a similar vein the next day, and finding nothing else of interest to do, we headed back to Inverness and along the Moray Firth coast to Elgin and Lossiemouth (where it was sunny), then to Dallas Dhu Distillery, Cawdor Castle, and Culloden Moor, before returning to the B&B in Ullapool.

Dallas Dhu distillery is now in the hands of Historic Scotland, and is in a sort-of mothballed state, having closed down during the mid 80s slimming down of the Scotch whisky industry. To be honest, you'd be better going round a real live whisky distillery than here as it is much better to see a distillery actually working, rather than in a state of how it was ten years ago. And tours round distilleries are usually free. Perhaps in fifty years, since time will stand still here, and the remaining distilleries will have moved forwards with the times, it may be more interesting.

I suppose it does put bodies

(continued on Page 2)

Ever noticed a five digit code on your mailing labels?

Usually you'll find it on the junk mail labels. I kept seeing the number and was most curious as I assumed it was on a mailing list that was being passed around. But when the same code appeared on two completely disconnected bits of junk mail - from World Wildlife Fund and Lakeland Plastics, both of whom I have previously ordered items from - my curiosity was further piqued. So, when the same code appeared on my various computer magazine wrappers, and a subscription renewal was imminent, I added a note in with my sub cheque. My 5-digit code was "05303".

Chris Matthews, Circulation Manager at Macworld writes, "The secret of the 05303 can now be revealed! Mass mailings (such as those made by publishers and large organisations) use a Royal Mail service called Mailsort (or PressStream for magazines). This gives the sender big discounts on the mailing bill if he pre-sorts the mailing into sorting office areas instead of the Royal Mail having to do it. I'm sorry it's nothing more exciting."

Jill and I took a few days out in the middle of July to try to wind down (though it didn't really work) and escape from the chaos that was work, the house and garden. We headed north up the A9 to Inverness, getting there in a little over three hours. Not so many years ago, before the major renovation of the A9, the same trip might have taken five or six hours. From there we headed out across the Black Isle (not sure why it's called that) and north westwards to the west coast and the small fishing/picturesque town of Ullapool.

(continued in column 1)

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Cost:	5p per page plus postage

Under The Wire is produced on an Apple Macintosh Plus computer, and printed on an Apple LaserWriter IINT.

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(Editorial - from Page 1)

like Historic Scotland and The National Trust in a dilemma. The buildings, bequeathed to them, often in poor states of repair, are preserved (and repaired) for future generations. But if the building is not inherently interesting, and an obvious tourist attraction, is it worth the body (HS or NT) spending money on it?

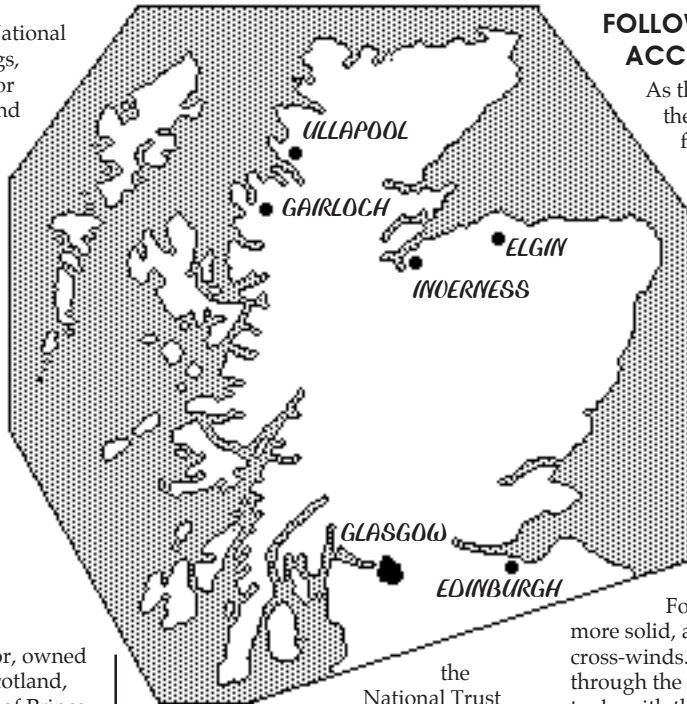
Cawdor Castle, home of the Thane of Cawdor since 1370, made a legend in its own lifetime by a bit of free advertising courtesy of one William Shakespeare, is still in private ownership, and as we arrived just too late for last admission at 5.00pm, there's nothing to report. It's located about ten miles south east of Inverness. It looks to be an interesting castle with extensive grounds.

Not far away is Culloden Moor, owned now by the National Trust for Scotland, and the site of the defeat in 1746 of Prince Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie), and the effective ending of the Second Jacobite rebellion. A large new visitors centre has been built to cope with the many visitors, but the bleakness of the moor (land managed to be as close as believed during the battle), the simple stones marking the clan graves, and the marker boards indicating where each clan began the battle, has much greater impact in its simplicity than any man-made memorials.

After a final night in Ullapool, we headed south around the coastal route to Gairloch, planning to stop off at the world famous Inverewe Gardens. The weather had improved and at various places we stopped to take in the view out over the islands and straits towards the misty island of Skye. The trip was spoiled by a French family travelling and stopping at the same spots. Their youngest kid seemed to have taken a dislike to any flower, or large plant, and with a short length of stick was brutally, and callously, destroying the wildlife.

In fact European tourists came over quite badly on the trip, especially the younger element. In Ullapool, there were a bunch staying at the Youth Hostel (located on the main street) who were having a water fight on the pavement and in the middle of the road, with no concern for anyone else who might be walking, or driving, by. I know these are the minority, but they are the ones who stick in the memory.

Over 120000 visitors find their way each year to an impressive garden in a remote corner of the west coast of Scotland. Inverewe, now in the hands of



the National Trust for Scotland, came into being during the second half of the last century. From a barren wasteland, devoid of soils and vegetation, has grown a beautiful woodland and walled garden, covering many acres. Though the early pioneering work in establishing the garden (everything, including soil, had to be brought by boat) was carried out in the late 19th Century, work has continued on since that day. The gardens seem to have their own microclimate, with warming effects of the Gulf Stream, and the resulting lack of winter frosts. To provide a framework for other planting, the original owner, Osgood Mackenzie, planted trees - Scots fir and Corsican pine - as a windbreak, and then added thick hedges of rhododendrons, and gradually a wide range of more tender trees was introduced. There's plenty of shady walkways through the woodlands, and visitors can take as long as they want to amble back and forth in the leafy coolness. Over the years plant species from around the world have been established here in a number of themed areas, between which various guided trails snake.

The west coast of Scotland is one of the most beautiful parts of Britain. It is well worth the extra effort required to get there, even if the weather is poor. With road improvements it is now much more accessible, and so long as you book in advance (even a few days seemed to be enough) during the early Summer months, or take the chance of using the local Tourist Office "Book A Bed Ahead" scheme, finding accommodation shouldn't be a major problem.

FOLLOW-UP ON THE CAR ACCIDENT

As the last issue of *UTW* went into the mail we got word through from the insurance company that the car had been officially written-off, and this meant we were able to start looking for another one. The decision has now been made and we're now running round in a Rover 216SLi. It's certainly quieter than the Escort, and since it's got fuel injection and is a Honda engine, is certainly a good bit smoother and more powerful. The design is also some five or six years on from the Escort, and so far, we like it.

For driving, the car feels a lot more solid, and sits the road better in cross-winds. The engine pulls better through the gears, though that's probably to do with the fuel injection.

I still feel a little anxious coming out of busy junctions - what with the knowledge of the accident, and trying to get used to a new car. But I'm sure I'll soon get over this.

The insurance company have made an offer for the Escort which I've accepted. Meanwhile we're planning on putting in personal claims against the other driver, while she's put in a similar claim against me! The nerve of it ...

I had a spate of headaches a few weeks back, while Jill continues to wear her collar when she's travelling on the bus. Otherwise things are settled back pretty much as normal.

Our thanks extend to those of you who wished us well in our recovery, or sent cards. Additionally, it seems as though a few of you found the write-up both disturbing and interesting. Thanks for your comments.

SUBS received from

John Breakwell, Paul Richardson

UNDER STARTERS ORDERS

As a result of a lack of time and a reducing number of players, Simon McInnes has decided to fold his horse racing game. The players have been sent letters with this issue of the zine. Thanks to Simon for running the game on in face of declining interest, and to the players who stuck with it.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS etc

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ALBUM REVIEWS

- Folk Heritage triple CD
- Cooking Vinyl Sampler CD
- Hannibal Instrumental CD sampler

Some months back I was browsing in the local HMV and found a triple-CD set called Folk Heritage for about £15. The CD's are also available singly at about £6-7 each. The three chart the development of the folk/folk rock/folk roots/roots rock scene from the sixties through to the present day. Each CD has been put together from the back catalogue of one prominent label of the period.

Material on Volume 1 is taken from the legendary Mooncrest label. Most of the material dates to the early days of folk-rock, thus there's a heavy emphasis towards Steeleye Span, Fairport Convention, Sandy Denny and Martin Carthy.

Topic Records provide the sixteen tracks of material for Volume 2. The label has been a major player on the folk scene, bringing the likes of Ewan MacColl, June Tabor and the Albion Band to prominence. As the music world saw punk come and go, Topic set up Special Delivery Records to enable it to broaden their musical interests. Clive Gregson and Christine Collister, Blowzabella, Richard Thompson and Ron Kavana were amongst those with their roots in the folk scene, but writing contemporary songs, who made early appearances on the label.

In the mid 80s, at the peak of Thatcherism, when stadium rock was in, and punks and goths were out, and the traditional folk scene was in the final stages of rigor-mortis, Martin Goldschmidt and Pete Lawrence teamed up to start Cooking Vinyl. One of the first albums released was Michelle Shocked's Texas Campfire Tapes. Recorded by Lawrence around the campfire at the Kerville Folk Festival in Texas for the price of a C90 tape and one set of Walkman batteries, the growth of both Cooking Vinyl, and Michelle Shocked, go hand in hand. Subsequent releases on the label include work by traditional folkies turned rootsy, or modern, such as June Tabor, the Oyster Band (who are just as likely to play songs by The Clash, as they are to play traditional folk tunes), Andy White and harmonica man Rory Macleod. The label also brought roots artistes and styles from

around the world to a wider audience - Flaco Jimenez (Tex-Mex accordion) and The Ukrainians (formed by former Wedding Present member Peter Salowka in order that he could back-track to his Ukrainian roots) are just two examples.

Cooking Vinyl, who contributed to the third of the Folk Heritage series, have also brought out samplers under their own label, and the 1993 Sampler Volume 2 is superbly priced at £2.99. For about 70 minutes music you get 18 tracks by different artists on the label. Some of the tracks are previously unreleased, making it worthwhile getting if you are a collector of, perhaps, rare recordings by those artists. There are also a couple of duplicates of songs from the Folk Heritage CD, but that's OK. In general the artistes are essentially the same, though with some of the more recent signings to the label. - Awatinas, Bhundu Boys, Tom Robinson, Honky Tonk Cowboys, Weddings Parties Anything - but overall the feel is still very much the same.

Inevitably with sampler albums/CDs there's going to be a couple of tracks you can easily live without. The great thing about them, though, is you can sample a wide range of artistes at relatively minimal cost. From that, you can then pick and choose those you want to investigate further. And with good CD players, you can always program the player to skip those tracks you don't like!

While getting the latter out of a local Our Price record store, I noticed that for £4.99 you could get the Hannibal Instrumental sampler CD. Featuring instrumental tracks from artists from all four corners of the world, this too is an ideal introduction to the work of artists on that label. The range is quite breathtaking. From the opening notes of the first track featuring didgeridoo and guitar, through to the final notes some 70 minutes later, the CD takes you on a whirlwind musical tour through Spain, Bulgaria, Hungary, New Orleans, Mali and Britain (and back again) through the works of Vujicsics, James Booker, BJ Cole, Muzsikás, Toumani Diabate, Danny Thompson, Fairport Convention and Ivo Papasov.



With so much else included this issue, I'll only mention briefly the musical events we attended during this year's Edinburgh Festival. It's a three week orgy of cultural events, with complete abstinence for the other 49 weeks. Groups seen this year included Findask (who's fourth album has just been released, though the material is not anywhere as good as the first two), the Poozies (their first album

just released, and well worth it for the cross fusion of harps, rock 'n' roll and Gaelic waulking songs), Sileas (the harp duo who are half of The Poozies doing traditional Scottish pipe and fiddle tunes), June Tabor (a fairly depressing set of songs accompanied by fiddle and accordion), Capercaillie (Gaelic folk rockers who played in a standing room only smoke-hazy circus tent on the top of the Calton Hill), and Love and Money (a sit-down concert by a four piece, Glasgow-based, sensitive, out of the mainstream pop/blues/country group, assisted by guests on pedal steel guitar, harmonica and vocals, covering recent albums and (I think) early material from the early 80s).

A musical compilation tape can be yours on request for the cost of a tape and postage (about £1.25 I guess).

Three other events deserve slightly more coverage, however.

Mark Morris Dance Group

(that's the Dance Group choreographed by Mark Morris, and not a Morris Dance Group)

We went partly because Jill likes modern dance and ballet, and because I was intrigued to see how the music of Michelle Shocked might be used by a modern dance group. Michelle Shocked (and bassist Rob Wasserman) played three (specially written?) tracks similar in style and content to Michelle's Texas trilogy of songs from the Short Sharp Shocked album, with some step dancing tunes in between. It worked on a certain level, but I felt the dancers were detached from the music, going through the motions of their routines. There seemed a lack of commitment in places. Jill felt this even more so during the first routine, set to Bach's 'Jesu Mein Freude' - an excellent choral performance by Schola Cantorum (an Edinburgh based, world travelled, choir) - feeling that the musical style and the modern dance didn't meld very well together. It was only in their final piece, performed to a violin/piano duet in four parts by Lou Harrison (modern classical) that we felt they found their true niche. Inevitably it is the responsibility of the choreographer to match music to the strengths and weaknesses of his dance group. And his preferred style. Mark Morris may be well regarded in the dance world. His performances and choreography are often controversial. With this though, he just missed the mark.

Jung Chang and Christabel Bielenberg

An interesting pairing of authors saw us head for the Book Fair, set in a series of tent in Charlotte Square. Jung Chang (author of best seller "Wild Swans") and Christabel Bielenberg (author of 'The Past Is Myself') for a 90 minute head to head

(continued on page 5)

CITY & SUBURBAN MOTO-MORINI TURN 5

GAME NOTES

Oh me miserum. I seem to have really made a mess of the Finance Table last time, as well as not including a couple of junction payments. Thanks to David and Ulf who spotted the errors, and made me look at the adjudication again. Hopefully this is now the correct version!

- Omitted payments by PEMBS and LOTS to JIR for B02 and C25
- Cost of PEMBS parallel building between D31 and E12 (that's why it was underlined, David)
- Income for E12 split between PEMBS and BWR
- The addition of PEMBS finances left them in the red

DEVELOPMENTS

New Towns : B05, C01, D05, D21
New Green Belt : A06, D14

GAME NOTES (2)

• D14 looks to be a most popular park, with three of you making sure that it was not turned into more of that depressing and sterile urban sprawl.



COMPANY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Turn 4 revised)

Player	BF	- Build	± Pay	+ Rev	- Dev	= CF
Clive Davenhall	10	-4	-	+10	-1	= 15
Ulf Jiretorn	8	-6	+2	+7	-6	= 5
David Watts	11	-12	-3	+6	-6	= -4(-5)
Bill Becker	10	-6	+2	+5	-6	= 5
Eoin Rutter	9	-6	-	+5	-6	= 2
Iain Smedley	10	-6	-1	+5	-6	= 2

TRACK BUILDING

Player	Company	Colour	Builds	Town	Green Belt
Eoin Rutter	INT	Brown	(A05)-B05-C21-D14	B05	A06
Iain Smedley	LOTS	Green	(A06)-B04; (D34)-E05-F52	D05	D14
Clive Davenhall	METRO	Red	(D21)-E25; (E32)-F23-F24	D21	D23
Ulf Jiretorn	JIR	Purple	(C01)-D01-E01-F01	C01	D14
David Watts	PEMBS	Orange	None	-	-
Bill Becker	BWR	Blue	(D23)-E22; (D23)-E21	D23	D14

† - see Game Notes below

COMPANY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Player	BF	- Build	± Pay	+ Rev	- Dev	= CF
Clive Davenhall	15	-6	+1	+10	-6	= 14
Ulf Jiretorn	5	-6	-	+11	-6	= 4
David Watts	-5	-	-	+8	-	= 3
Bill Becker	5	-4	-	+9	-6	= 4
Eoin Rutter	2	-12	+0	+6	-6	= -10(-12)
Iain Smedley	2	-6	-1	+10	-6	= -1(-2)

TURN 6

GAME NOTES

A couple of notes relating to last turn first. In the report, I noted that JIR built E01-F01, when in fact he built E01-F02 (town). As he builds E01-F01 this time, no need to rub the lines out!

David, see above comment re JIR's line, but also note that BWR links in to E22 (turn 5) and LOTS linked in to B04 (turn 5) and F52 (turn 5).

DEVELOPMENTS

New Towns : C14, D25
New Green Belt : C04, C22, D01, E24

PRESS

- Derail the METRO!
- Park it, Jive Clive!
- Hey, watch David fly off the edge of the board.

GAME NOTES (2)

• Clive ordered (A05)-B04-C22, but this was not allowed due to there being two rail lines in B04 already.

PLAY ORDER (7)

Clive, Ulf, David, Bill, Eoin, Iain.
Town planning available in rings A to E (during turns 7 and 8)

TRACK BUILDING

Player	Company	Colour	Builds	Town	Green Belt
Iain Smedley	LOTS	Green	(E05)-F53; (B04)-C22; (C23)-D11	-	E24
Clive Davenhall	METRO	Red	†; (C15)-C14	C14	C21
Ulf Jiretorn	JIR	Purple	(C25)-D03; (E01)-F01; (D36)-E02	D03	C22
David Watts	PEMBS	Orange	(A04)-B11-C13-D23	-	C04
Bill Becker	BWR	Blue	(E22)-F33-F32; (C11)-D25	D25	D01
Eoin Rutter	INT	Brown	(C21)-D13-E32; (C15)-D16	C21	D03

† - see Game Notes below

COMPANY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Player	BF	- Build	± Pay	+ Rev	- Dev	= CF
Clive Davenhall	14	-5	+4	+9	-6	= 16
Ulf Jiretorn	4	-6	-	+14	-6	= 6
David Watts	3	-6	-1	+8	-1	= 3
Bill Becker	4	-6	+1	+10	-6	= 3
Eoin Rutter	-12	-6	-4+3	+10	-6	= -15 (-18)
Iain Smedley	-2	-6	-3	+11	-1	= -1 (-2)

PLAYERS

Clive Davenhall, Flat 59, Stoneygate Court, 298 London Road, LEICESTER LE2 2AJ
Ulf Jiretorn, Västergatan 12B, 332 32 GISLAVED, Sweden
David Watts, 102 Priory Road, MILFORD HAVEN, Dyfed SA73 2ED (0646 692752)
Bill Becker, 1515 Ridgewood, JENISON, Michigan 49428, U.S.A.
Eoin Rutter, 233 High Street, EDINBURGH EH1 1PE (031 226 5214)
Iain Smedley, Top Flat, 170 North Gower Street, LONDON NW1 (071 387 8687)

BUS BOSS
NEVAL – BB108USA
 TURN 10

GAME NOTES

Apologies from John Breakwell, who has got himself married and moved house since last time (new address on page 2), and can't find the last report in the midst of the chaos. No word from Frank though. Almost considered a holdover, especially since I messed up run 29, which was, in effect, illegal as San Diego is already a gateway to Mexico! I'll rejig the remaining runs and include a ninth run in turn 12 to replace 29.

RACES

No	Route	TECTIC	DIS	NAFF	BOSS	SLICK
27	Milwaukee - Kansas City	+3	-	-	-	30-3
28	Atlanta - Tampa	-	15+2+	-	15-2+	-
30	Jacksonville - San Antonio	-	-	-	30	-
31	Billings - Knoxville	+3	10-4	+1	-	20-4+4
32	Denver - Albany	-	20+1	-	-	10-1
33	Chicago - El Paso	+3	5-2	-	9-5	16+4
34	Memphis - Indianapolis	-	-	+2	20	10-2
35	Minneapolis - New York	-	30	-	-	-

NOTES: † means these companies tied, and the points were shared out between them, odd halves given to the team with the lower score at the time.

ROUTES PURCHASED

David Watts - Buses On States Services - BOSS - Yellow
 San Francisco - Portland

Bill Becker - Dispatch Illusion Service - DIS - Blue
 Salt Lake City - Portland

Eoin Rutter - St. Louis Indianapolis Cincinnati Knoxville - SLICK - Black
 Spokane - Portland (must be the place to be); Dallas - Houston

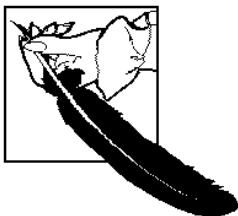
FINANCES

	Start	Races	Builds	End
TECTIC	72	+9	-0	= 81
NAFF	95	+3	-0	= 98
BOSS	169	+67	-8	= 228
DIS	181	+77	-10	= 248
SLICK	224	+84	-10	= 298

ROUND 11 RUNS

You may enter up to five races each turn - 9 new races this time.

36	New Orleans - Houston	41	Reno or Las Vegas - Spokane
37	Cincinnati - Richmond	42	New York - Tulsa
38	Albuquerque - San Francisco	43	Detroit - Omaha
39	Dallas - Duluth	44	Phoenix - Charlottesville
40	Cleveland - Salt Lake City		



Doug Rowling goes into

INTO THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES

Someone organising the Northern Territory Top Half folk festival managed to get the equivalent of an Arts Council grant to pay Morris (or Rapper) instructors to go up and teach. Actually it cost me rather more than that once I had made up a couple of sets of Rappers [rapper swords] as well. I'd have been cheaper paying the whole fare myself.

Anyway, Darwin (in winter) was great. The "wet" monsoon season having ended a couple of months ago, everything was green and wonderful. I rather like the

town, whether I would retain this feeling having gone through the build up before the wet, I don't know. High temperatures, high humidity and pretty unrelenting. Still, it was great when I was up there.

Darwin has a lot more soul than Canberra, a bit of History, Cyclone Tracey, the World War 2 bombings, whereas Canberra has had the soul excised from it by planners. It [Canberra] is also a city almost entirely populated by Civil Servants, which is not a very good

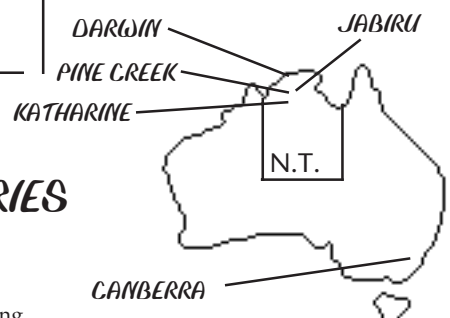
(Edinburgh Festival 1993 - from Page 3)

conversation. But the experiences of these two women, two generations apart and from opposite sides of the world, followed quite similar paths that were far from the cosy sofas where they sat.

Chang was raised in China during the Mao years, and recounts of the hardships faced by three generations of her family. Bielenberg, an Englishwoman who married a German in the early 1930's a went to live with him in Germany during the rise of Hitler and through the war years. Both women spoke of their admiration for what each other had gone through, and how they faced up to their memories in writing the books of those turbulent, and restrictive times.

Garrison Keiller

Keiller performed (read) four monologues from his forthcoming book 'A Book Of Guys'. Lake Wobegone lies in his past, and, separated from his wife, he's now turned his eminent writing (and performing) skills to the topic of men. And their perception of life. He talked of the cowboy, torn between the freedom of living on the range, and his desire to settle down; he recounted a tale from his schooldays when he entered a talent contest; of Omo, the wolf boy, who spent much of his youth growing up with and understanding a pack of wolves, only to find it difficult to adapt when the wolves turned him out, and he returned to the world of man; and of the philosophical interplay between Don Giovanni and Figaro, the latter married to Suzanne, the former employed as the pianoman in a low-life bar. The show lasted nearly three hours as Keiller kept the audience entranced with his clever way with words and wry observations on life. A most enjoyable evening.



start either.

Several days in Darwin, then off to Jabiru, about four hours drive, in Kakadu National Park, near the Ranger Uranium mine, the only reason for its existence. One half is occupied by miners, the other by Officers of the Supervising Scientist. The "town" boasts one pub, supermarket, a post office and a hotel in the shape of a crocodile. You only get the

(continued on page 6)

(Northern Territories - from Page 5)

impression of this from the air though, and that impression is rather spoilt by there being an enormous swimming pool about where the gut ought to be. It would be a great venue for live action Snits Revenge role-playing.

Next day was a trip around Kakadu and in particular Ubirr Rock, one of the most famous Aboriginal rock art sites in Australia, dating back n thousands of years. The art is not really terribly wonderful. It's rather difficult trying to pick red ochre artwork against red sandstone especially when viewed from light into dark, as most of the art was under cover (which is why it is still exists at all).

What really set off Ubirr was the lookout from a finger of red sandstone jutting out into vividly green wetlands as far as the eye could see over almost 270° of horizon bounded only by bright blue sky and dour cliffs of dark old red sandstone forming the edge of the escarpment. The view was made more impressive because it is approached from the back of the finger with no view out until you hit the 40 foot diameter rock platform and BANG you are gob-smacked. On closer inspection the wetlands are covered in egrets' heads poking out of the reeds, and you realise the place is teeming with life. Awesome. I know of no viewpoint that rivals it bar the Roman fort at the western end of Hardknot Pass in Cumbria which is similar in scope, but not really in content.

The evening was a Folk/Morris session at Jabiru Club. Ted Egan, a noted Territory singer was there and sang a few songs. He plays an empty beer box (beer is bought in a "slab" of 24x375mm bottles/cans, and the box is what they are sold in). It would have been a "lock-in" in Britain, but "early closing" in Jabiru. A real shame since it was a great evening, and the rapper even worked out with a totally scratch team.

Next day was a boat trip on Yellow Waters. Impressive. Saw a few crocks, one of about 11 to 12 feet, difficult to tell since most of the tail was submerged. The trip was a case of boat moves thirty yards and there is a different kind of birdlife. Herons, kingfishers, a Jabiru (the only stork native to Australia), sea eagle, magpie geese, Australian darter, more egrets, more crocs. Like the view from Ubirr Rock, but down in the teeming life, rather than the airy heights looking down on it.

The evening wasn't so great. Like Powerhousecon or a big Damside bash - 19 people in two large rooms at Mary River Ranger Station. The crowding wasn't so bad but we shared the room with a clock which struck Westminster chimes every quarter hour and then had a party on the hour. Yeurgh!

Uneventful day's travel to Katherine, a Morris/Folk gig that evening, then back to Darwin. Not uneventful. We went through Katherine Gorge, or at least 3 of the 13 linked gorges. Would have been more fun in canoe. Actually a bit disappointing; quite impressive but not really interesting being driven round by someone else. The musos (myself included) played the boat back to the start point in the first gorge which was quite pleasant, except the only nautical tune we knew was Portsmouth Hornpipe.

Then back to Darwin. More Morris at Bougainvillea Festival. Camel tastes a bit gamey. Buffalo is much like beef but tougher, and Barramundi (a fish) is excellent. Beer is served in coolers in the Territory, an expanded polystyrene holder for the can (or bottle of beer). The rapper was a disaster having been reasonable up til then.

Then it was fly back to Canberra to start work. All told a great holiday. We also passed through Pine Creek, a mining village on the Stuart Highway. Open cast low grade gold. Streaks of white through grey rock (quartz in granite?). The place boasted a Hard Rock Cafe, but the rock they were referring to was granite. The park had interesting old mining equipment including a description of gold extraction :-

- 1 - crush gold ore
- 2 - allow crushed ore to flow/mix over a table labourers keep covered in mercury
- 3 - gold and mercury form amalgam
- 4 - boil mercury off amalgam to recover gold, presumably condensing mercury afterwards.

Heavy metal poisoning or what? I couldn't conceive of anything much worse if I tried.

Since putting together all the preceding pages - except the games - Jill and I took ourselves off to ...

GUERNSEY

one of the Channel Islands.

Guernsey is the second largest of the islands and measures 3 miles by 8 miles. There's one major town (St Peters Port) and the rest of the island is a mixture of

**LETTERS**

Doug Rowling :

"Thanx for the continuing supply of *UTW* and congrats on the new house, even if it is difficult to concieve a Barrett

house as good sized. In Australia the houses tend to be wooden, or latterly galvanised channel with brick veneer outside to keep the weather out, acres of glass and plasterboard mostly everywhere else. The roof is tiled with nothing beneath the tiles except the joists.

The house here progresses; 3 rooms virtually complete, a fourth started and the garage wired up. All jolly good fun, and the work done at Damside standing me in good stead for the work being done here laying slate and timber and terracotta floors; the list is huge. There is a good place round here though, where you can get real timber - oak, teak, mahogany, rosewood. I have indulged myself somewhat.

Don't count on me writing too frequently - life is like that. But thanks for the zines you send me - they do make me feel as though I haven't entirely lost touch with life as I knew it."

WOL: Thanks for the article/letter. I hope I've got all the name spellings correct. Did you ever get involved in any way with the Australian games hobby, Doug? Are you planning on coming back to the UK for World DipCon next year? Would be good to see you if you do?

small fields and spread out housing and villages. Nowhere can be said to be uninhabited (except maybe the airport - which is probably the largest uninhabited area on the island!

Weather was pretty poor for the week, but we were staying at a hotel with a fine restaurant, so we didn't have to venture far to stay well fed.

Took a bus trip round the island one day, and visited a few of the crafty establishments (wood carver, gold/silver smiths, etc). Surprised by the narrow, twisty roads, with high banks and hedges on either side. Maximum speed limit anywhere on the island is 35mph. Though it's regarded as a retirement getaway and home for tax exiles, there seemed to be a lot of run down houses when we would have expected better. Too busy for a "get away from it all" location for our tastes. Give us the west of Scotland any day!

DEADLINE FOR UTW 13 ORDERS – 19th Nov. 1993
(City & Suburban Interim Deadline 29th Oct. 1993)