

PERSONAL DIARY

Detailed Itinerary and Observations

ROBERT EDWARDS

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDING PROJECT

ARNHEM LAND

SATURDAY 1 MAY –

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

Notes: a lower case 'a' used through for aboriginal/aborigines. Occasionally words such as 'native' and 'primitive' also are used. These have been retained as they show the prevailing custom at the time. I was a firm activist for the adoption of the capitalisation of the 'A' as a special mark of respect for Aboriginal Australians.

Saturday 1 May 1965 Adelaide

Today was an important occasion as I commenced my art recording project with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. In many respects it is sad to be leaving the Apple and Pear Industry as they have all been very decent to me. It seems hard to believe that my dream has actually come true after so many years of wishing to have a position exactly like the one I am now embarking on.

Andy Coulthard, an Aboriginal Elder, of the Adnyamathanha people in the Flinders Ranges is down from Leigh Creek. I took him for a drive to Victor Harbour today. Cath is not well and stayed at home. The kids all had a wonderful time and ran themselves to a standstill.

We called on Harold Sheard at Pt. Elliott. He was responsible for my first meeting with Charles Mountford who, there is no doubt, gave me sufficient confidence and determination to publish my first paper and so earn something of a reputation in the field of aboriginal art. Mr. Mountford was at Sheard's for the weekend. We all had a good talk over a cup of tea. Harold is terribly pleased about my appointment. He is a kind chap and a good friend.

Bernhard Schebeck, the Austrian linguist, went down with us. He too is in Adelaide from Leigh Creek. He is supposed to be in Arnhem Land however there has been some sort of mix up and he now intends going up north with me.

Returned home late and very tired. I could really hardly spare the time to go away all day with the preparations for departure so incomplete.

Cath is a little better. Poor dear, she has been wonderful about the whole venture. There is no doubt it would have been impossible without her support. We are all under a great strain.

Sat up late into the night making preparations. It seems a hopeless task to have everything in order before leaving.

There is no doubt today is a turning point in my life. I have been given a wonderful opportunity – I wonder what will come to pass in the months and years to come? I only hope I have the capacity to rise to the occasion. It is a great responsibility when one is uncertain of oneself and others show confidence in you.

Sunday 2 May 1965 Adelaide

What a day it has been! Every night I go to bed and flop down exhausted and say *what a day; there could not be another like this!*

Up fairly early. I heard Gregory go down to Cath in the kitchen. She tried hard to strike up a conversation with him regarding the trip yesterday. Exasperated he eventually said *I'm here to eat, Mum, not talk*. Such are the ways of growing boys!

Dr. Paul Hossfeld (retired geologist) arrived early this morning to let me go through his paper on patination. He has prepared it for the Royal Society. It is quite good. I am pleased to see him taking an interest in such subjects as over his lifetime he has developed a specialized knowledge which should be used for the good of science.

Andy Coulthard, Graeme Pretty (Curator of Archaeology at The South Australian Museum) and Bernhard arrived, then Dr. Draper Campbell (Professor of Dentistry at the University of Adelaide and Member of S.A. Museum Board). Dr. Campbell and I spent an hour or so photographing Andy using some mounted stone implements. These photographs are needed for the Stone Implement Section of the Handbook. It will be the last opportunity to add illustrations as The Editor, Mr. Bernard Cotton (Conchologist at the S.A. Museum) is insisting on having the manuscript within the next few days. In any event I will be away and unable to give any further assistance.

After various comings and goings we had a terrific rush to shower and be ready to go to St. Matthew's by 3 o'clock to have Martin, David and Gregory christened. There is no doubt it was a good feeling to be in Church again and I was very pleased to have the children christened as it has played heavily on my mind for a number of years. There seems never to be time for the important things in life.

We all had a nice afternoon tea with Mum and Dad, Cath's dad, Bob and Vivienne (Alexander) the Schultz's, Magareys, Cramonds, Kelvin and Joan Vickers (Apple Orchardist from the Adelaide Hills), Bob and Pat Bigg, Rodney (Weathersbee) and Thomas (Rapson). It was good to have so many friends around us. Many of them would like to come on the trip.

Dr. Campbell called in the evening – we developed the film taken in the morning. Some of the shots look quite hopeful. Campbell is a good and sincere friend. We enjoy his company very much.

It's good to get to bed again.

Monday 3 May 1965 Adelaide

Another busy day and late night. Went into work this morning as I would like to take stock of the State's holdings of apples and pears for the month before I actually leave.

Arranged with the bank for a letter of credit for £500 to operate in the Northern Territory. Insured baggage and paid my personal accident premium also the insurance on the Sturt relics. Purchased a tent, gas lamp and sleeping bag from Flavels as well as a small frig for film stocks. I hope the frig works in the field!

Obtained mosquito nets from the Surplus Military Stores and a tripod from Harris Scarfe.

Attended a council meeting of the Anthropological Society at lunch time. I wonder sometimes whether I push them along too much. It is difficult to get things done unless you are a bit pro-active.

Talked with Graeme (Pretty) for some time about his proposed stay with me in Arnhem Land later in the year.

Conferred with Keith Cook (Rembrandt Photographic Studios) in regard to processing arrangements during my absence. I feel certain he will do a good job although the expense side may be a problem. The only way to tackle this is to produce some really excellent photographs. Keith will come over on Wednesday evening as I want to show him my developing technique and discuss procedures with him.

Had a ring from Major Gore, Keswick Military Barracks about obtaining emergency rations. He was very good indeed. There will be no bother about supplying the needed stores.

Met Ron Bailey (Station Owner) in town. Had a cup of tea with him and discussed the art recording project. He and his son Andrew had intended accompanying me but for one reason and another they cannot join the party until September. He is a very likeable chap.

Checked the proofs of the photographic record books at Hyde Park Press. Anthropological Society tonight – a good evening. It is a pity to be going away when I am President.

Ken Archibald (Orchardist at Blackwood) and Dr. Campbell came in after the meeting and went over the equipment with me.

Dropped into bed exhausted.

Tuesday 4 May 1965 Adelaide

What a beautiful vehicle it is! Collected the Landrover today from the Department of Supply at Finsbury. It is a large station wagon – roomy although not well organized for packing equipment as the back seat and extra tanks rather obstruct the space. The arrangement for issuing vehicles seems rather simple considering their value. The Landrover had only 34 miles on the clock when I collected it. Petrol, oil, repairs and so on have to be met directly through the No. 2 a/c. The first oil change is at 500 miles. An effort must be made to reach this mileage before leaving on such a long journey with a new vehicle. Champions (the Agents) has a branch in Alice Springs where it can be serviced when (and if) we arrive. It is a good feeling to have such a superb vehicle to drive and if all goes well it should give excellent service.

Called on Keith Cook again today. Collected a parcel of flash bulbs and also contact prints of the photographs taken on Sunday. They are all good and will be suitable for the Handbook. I am pleased we took the opportunity to take them as it would soon be too late and a good chance lost.

Went out to Paracombe, Kersbrook and Cudlee Creek cold stores this afternoon to collect their stock figures for the month and say goodbye to Len, Merv and Mike (Store Managers). It seems a shame to have to leave when we are all starting to get along so well together. Export Romes are in full swing. It is something of a nuisance to spend time on this when there is so much to do. Never-the-less I feel obliged to help assess the position just once more before finishing.

Two maps of the Katherine area arrived from Professor Jack Golson today (Australian National University). It is well to have them. No aerial photographs.

Had a hepatitis injection – feeling fairly sore as a result. It is just as well to take precautions.

Dr. Campbell and Denis (Marfleet – Photographic Section at the State Library) called this evening. Denis is making a lined case to carry all the photographic equipment. It should be most suitable and will protect the cameras from damage during the trip. Cath and I are both very tired again tonight. It seems a great shame to be so busy when there are only a few days to go before I head north. It would be good to spend these last days quietly with the family.

Wednesday 5 May 1965 Adelaide

Well here it is nearly one o'clock in the morning. Keith Cook has been out and we have been discussing photography in preparation for the trip. I feel more confused than ever as no one appears to agree on the basic needs such as guide numbers for certain flash bulbs and films. Showed Keith how I develop my ADOX films. It is hard to know just what he is thinking – whether he is satisfied with my technique! I really feel quite exhausted, frustrated and quite panic stricken at the thought of leaving so soon.

Took the Landrover up to show Ken Archibald. He seemed pleased with it. We put the extra spare tyre on the back door and had a good look over the vehicle. Poor Ken has been working day and night to be ready to leave on Tuesday. He looked tired.

Went to market (East End Wholesale Market) this morning and said farewell to many good friends. They are really being very nice about my leaving and some appear to be envious of my prospects.

Had lunch with Graham Lawton (Professor of Geography – University of Adelaide). Detailed my various plans and arrangements with him. He was very interested and we both had a lengthy discussion about the whole project. He feels Monty (Charles P. Mountford) is failing rather fast and from the conversation it sounds as though he

has been placed in something of a spot on several occasions lately. I owe much to Professor Lawton.

Paid a visit to the Public Library and discussed photography with Mr. Commane (Photographic Section Head at State Library). He too is helpful but somewhat technical. I am trying to write down simplified procedures to follow but fear this is all but impossible. No doubt local conditions will further confuse the issue when the real test comes in the field. Never-the-less I can only do my best. If it is difficult for me it would be just as difficult for others.

Wrote to Prof. Abbie (Professor of Anatomy at University of Adelaide) about entering the North West Aboriginal Reserve. Also a note to Jack Golson thanking him for sending the maps.

Oh well another day tomorrow!

Thursday 6 May 1965 Adelaide

The boys love going to school in the Landrover – almost as much as I enjoy driving about in it myself!

Went out to say cheerio to Ray Frewin (Manager of Ashton cold-store) at Lenswood. He has been a good friend. I did want to have a last hour with him. Discussed everything from apples to aboriginals. Called and had lunch with Brian and Mary Vickers who have also been good to me. Brian says he intends joining me at Katherine in July. I wonder whether he will?

Spent the whole afternoon working on the stock figures and Newsletter. I am afraid I can ill afford the time. However, there is an obligation to see things are O.k. before finally departing.

Peter Lewis called and talked for an hour. He is interested in my job at the museum.

Pleased to hear from Peter Hamilton (Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies) by letter and telegram that the photographic equipment and films have left Sydney and will arrive here tomorrow.

Tent and other camping gear arrived this afternoon. Some of the outstanding problems are now being solved.

Martin has been home from school today – he's not feeling so good.

Cath and I are having a moderately early night for a change.

Friday 7 May 1965 Adelaide

Pouring with rain – a real break in the season. Finished with apples and pears today. Took stock and issued the Newsletter. Things should stay in good order for quite a

few weeks. Although it has been a nuisance I feel contented in my own mind to know I have done the right thing.

Peter Hamilton has come good. A fine array of equipment and films arrived from Sydney for my use. The zoom lens, 35mm wide angle. looks a real beauty. I only hope it works as well as it looks! The Bolex movie camera is also very impressive.

Discussed photography with Reg Commene again today. He purchased a new light meter on my behalf. It should give a more accurate reading than the Western although I can hardly afford it at the moment as no salary has come through from the Institute.

The Public Library is determined to build up its collection quickly. I feel obliged to steer clear of them for this project otherwise I am certain to finish up in a complicated muddle.

Had long discussions with Kodak again this afternoon. Flash photography is my main concern as I have really done very little in the past. Spent all of this evening at Keith Cook's Studio trying out the flash light on the Speed Graphic and also the electronic unit sent over from Sydney today. Shot a few pictures with the new wide angle lens. I hope no problems show up at this late stage.

Met with Graeme today. He seems to be busy. We didn't coincide too well. Arranged for Ken and Rodney to come out on Sunday afternoon for discussions about the trip. The next day or so are certain to go quickly. Before I know where I am there will be hundreds of miles separating me from my friends and loved ones. The strain is becoming increasingly great at the moment. It is frustrating to be so busy when more time should be devoted to the family.

Had my last injection at lunch time. All the precautions possible have now been taken.

The days are going terribly fast. It won't be long before we set out. Once away time will go quickly too.

Saturday 8 May 1965 Adelaide

Took the boys to see a film this afternoon – the theme, perseverance in the face of adversity, was most apt. We sat in the front row which was a dreadful novelty. Still, we all enjoyed it. There is no doubt it is great to have a family.

As we drove off from the theatre three fire trucks sped past – we followed in great excitement. It turned out to be far more exciting than expected as there was smoke pouring forth from the top storey windows of Cravens store. As we watched ambulances, police and other vehicles gathered. It was all very exciting although we spent some precious time watching it all.

Denis brought in the camera case he has been making for me. It is lined with foam rubber and is really excellent for the purpose.

Cath went in to town to buy a few more things while I started packing. My departure is so dreadfully near now. I feel as though I would like to turn back the clock but I certainly cannot. Poor Cath is being brave but neither of us are feeling particularly happy about parting for so long.

Checked over my affairs. It is a comfort to know we have all our arrangements quite well organized. Since selling out at Marion we have a little money invested which would see Cath and the boys through for quite a time should any disaster occur.

Graeme and Sandra (Daniels) called tonight. It was good to see them. They are, of course, interested in the project. They appear to be very satisfied with married life.

Spent time examining the camera equipment. I hope it all works properly and some good results are obtained in the North. The success of the photographic side of the project will depend more on past experience than anything I can pick up at the last minute.

The hour is late once again. I fear I will be exhausted by Tuesday.

Sunday 9 May 1965 Adelaide

Things are pressing around me now. People insist on calling and really just waste the time needed so badly for preparations.

Ken came down this afternoon and we started packing the Landrover. Most of the food is stowed away and providing I can buy two or three more ex-army boxes there won't be any great difficulty although the poor old Rover will certainly be loaded up.

It seems dreadful to be so busy when it would be nice to spend more time with the family. I am going to miss them all very much indeed in the weeks to come. I don't look forward to tomorrow judging from the long list of jobs to be done. There will be a few good-byes that pass unsaid in spite of all my efforts to see everyone and clear up all the various matters in which I am involved.

Dr. Campbell called twice – he now has all the photographs for the Handbook so this at least is in reasonable order. I sometimes wonder just what the final publication is going to be like.

Rodney called this afternoon – all enthusiastic to start tomorrow. It really is too much to be bothered with someone else when I am so worried about all my own arrangements. Mountford is the limit inviting him to go with me.

Rang Ken Maddock (an Institute supported Anthropologist) tonight. A two hour delay on the line. He may fly to Katherine to collect his field note books – coinciding his trip with my arrival. He will then hand over his caravan to us which will serve as a base

camp. It would be a distinct advantage if he is able to help in this way as he could introduce us to the locals and really put us on the right track.

Tried a black and white film in the Bessamatic. It was a complete failure which rather perturbs me at this late hour. Preparations for extended field trips like this really should have the most earnest attention to every detail. The late arrival of photographic equipment and lack of time to give it adequate testing is exasperating and could result in loss of precious time and photographs.

Guess I'm tired and grumpy tonight!

Monday 10 May 1965 Adelaide

The eve of departure. There is no excitement just sheer and absolute exhaustion resulting from another hectic day. Oh what a day! Cath and I both went to town this morning to make last minute purchases. Everything is so terribly expensive. We are not used to buying so many things at once – you notice the high costs when you go on such a spree. I am concerned at the amount spent although I cannot see any way to further economize. Photographic equipment is expensive too. Still for good results one must have good cameras and accessories.

Called to see George (Holman) – proprietor of George Holman Antiques. Took him for a ride in the Landrover down to the Keswick Barracks to collect the receipt for rations then to several disposal stores searching for packing cases. George is a good friend and an understanding one. Wise with the experience of life. We both enjoyed the drive. Nothing gives greater pleasure than to make people happy.

Had quite an interesting experience with the Army. All nice chaps but disciplined to follow correct procedure which is frustrating when you are in a hurry.

Talked for some time with Mr. Mountford. He now invites himself up in July to photograph Delamere! Wonder what John (Mulvaney) will say to that? There is no doubt he has been kind to me but I cannot help wondering what motives lie below the surface in this present instance.

Ken Archibald and Dr. Campbell were waiting for me when I arrived home. Dad and Mum also came to tea. All helped with the packing. Poor Landrover will have quite a load. Dad is negotiating to sell his share of the winery. I am very pleased. He looks much improved. I hope the whole business is completed quickly.

Rang Roger about printing of Survey Report. Met Keith Cook in town at Barry's (Colour Photographic Laboratory) place to examine colour flash trials. They look hopeful but not as good as I had wished. Went to see Dr. Hossfeld. He also is a good friend. Had my first view of Katherine Gorge – Paul had a slide of it. He also gave me some maps of the area. These are very good. He wants me to find him some agates which occur in the Katherine region. Burnt a switch out in the Rover – hope this is not an ill omen. Continued packing until 1 am. Tomorrow we move off. I wonder what is ahead of me in the weeks to come?

Tuesday 11 May 1965 The Pines Northern South Australia

The stress of preparations and departure from home, family and associates is beginning to be left behind. It still seems like make believe and I am unable to grasp fully the fact that we will keep on travelling North for another 1600 or so miles. There is no doubt it will be an interesting and novel experience. I am curious to see just how it all works out.

Poor Cath looked so sad as we left. It is a great sacrifice for her as well as being an added responsibility. At the same time. I hope she will settle down to a steady routine and have something of a rest with me and all my constant demands far away.

A last minute hitch. No permit has been received to enter the reserve to photograph Cave Hill. Dr. Campbell was so perturbed. Still it cannot be helped. I should have approached this matter in the proper way weeks ago. There were so many things to do that something had to be missed and the outcome is negative. I am disappointed as it would have been a good opportunity to try out the equipment.

Left Adelaide at 9.30am. The actual itinerary as carried out today is as follows:

Departed Adelaide 9.30am	mileage 253
Arrived Port Wakefield 11.30am	mileage 320
Arrived Snowtown 12.30pm	mileage 352
Arrived Port Augusta 3.15pm	mileage 458
(Oil Change, vehicle checked 11 gal. petrol)	
Depart Port Augusta 4.30pm	mileage 458
Arrived The Pines (on Arcoona Stn.) 8.00pm	mileage 569
Miles Travelled 316.	

The late start this morning meant a late drive this evening to reach the planned destination. The young chap here was good to us and has allowed us to use the shearers' quarters for the night. As a stove was available we had a welcome hot meal.

Ken and Bernhard are congenial and helpful companions. I feel we will all get along fine in the days ahead.

Tomorrow will be a big day as we have a long distance to travel and the road is believed to be bad. The Rover is going well – I hope it keeps it up as it is a great asset to have a reliable vehicle. The country has a slight tinge of green as 50 points of rain fell last week. This is helping to keep the dust down on the road.

Wednesday 12 May 1965 Lora Creek, Northern South Australia

It is 12.15am and we are camped on the banks of the Lora Creek a tributary of the Neales. These creeks run into the western side of Lake Eyre. Mt. Willoughby Station homestead is a mile or two back down the road.

It has certainly been a big day – we have travelled many hundreds of miles – more than at any time previously as far as I am concerned.

Itinerary for today:

Departed The Pines 8.15am	mileage 569
Arrived Kingoonya 12.45pm	mileage 687 (118).

Rodney had trouble with his exhaust pipe. In the end we had to cut it off.

Departed Kingoonya 1.15pm	mileage 688
Arrived Coober Pedy 6.15pm	mileage 880 (192).

Had a look around the town. The people all appeared to be pretty rough. Bought Cath an opal and some pieces for the boys. A very interesting shop dug into a hillside to simulate an actual digging. We decided to press on for a few hours as we lost ground this morning due to Rodney's broken exhaust pipe.

Departed Coober Pedy 7.15pm	mileage 880
Camped Mt. Willoughby 11.00pm	mileage 988 (108)
Total Miles Travelled 418 miles (734).	

There have been recent rains. Encountered some wet patches making it necessary to deviate a little here and there. We were fortunate in choosing the alternate, but longer road to Coober Pedy as we were told there were 12 cars and a bus bogged on the short cut. It is surprising that there is still so much dust between the wet patches. The Landrover has performed admirably but, unfortunately, is getting a "used" look which seems a great shame. Dust has filtered into every crevice.

The country is poor at the best and pathetic at the worst. Dying Mulga trees, a few nice Myalls but for most of the entire run it looked very poor. Quite a deal of red sand and some likely camp-site of which our present location is one. It is a long way from home. We have come 734 miles – it is a big run. I hope the cameras are ok. It is essential to pack all things well.

It still seems to be an unreal experience but confidence is improving a little and interest will increase with more to see tomorrow.

Thursday 13 May 1965. Mulga Park Northern South Australia

We promised ourselves a shorter run today – it certainly didn't seem to be! This was probably due to a number of stops to look at the country which has become more interesting.

The itinerary for the day was as follows:

Depart Mt Willoughby 8.30am	mileage 988
Arrive Wantabella Well 11.25am	mileage 1098 (110).

Looked over a camp-site adjacent to extensive clay pan. Collected a few implements.

Depart Wantabella Well 12.00 Noon	mileage 1098
Arrived Everard Park Turn Off.	mileage 1105 (7)
Arrived Everard Park 2.15pm	mileage 1150 (45)
Depart Everard Park 2.20pm	mileage 1150
Arrived Kenmore Park 4.20pm	mileage 1209 (59)
Arrived Ernabella 5.30pm	mileage 1233 (24)
Arrived Mulga Park 7.30pm	mileage 1293 (60)
Total Miles: 305 miles (1,039).	

The first part of the journey this morning was through monotonous country similar to yesterday. It was all very dry. We appear to have come beyond the limits of the recent rains. Just before Wantabella Well we passed a large encampment of aboriginals – about fifty in number. It is tremendously interesting to see these people. They are very jolly and waved heartily as we went past. The first *Triodia* was noticed about the same time and the country changed quickly. Large tabletop hills were seen in the mid-distance and once on the road to Everard Park there was much of interest. Outcrops of metamorphic and intrusive rocks were scattered across the plain. The homestead is located in a beautiful position backed by hills. The gums along the creek were rich and green after the dry dusty, barren country traversed for several days. One has to have a specific purpose to come so far into this country as there are many monotonous hours of travel. On leaving Everard Park we crossed through the Musgrave Ranges. It was in the late afternoon with the sun sinking behind the hills. The whole massive range lit up in a brilliant pink light as far as the eye could see. The valleys between the hills are broad and flat while the hills themselves rise steeply from the surrounding plain. Modelled in the evening light it was an experience well worthy of the effort to come so far.

Crossed the border into the Northern Territory late this evening. It was just on dusk and we stopped and drank each others health in good red wine. The journey on to Mulga Park was 30 miles along the most horrid road with deep corrugations all the way. On arrival we met David and Joyce Fogarty. They are a nice couple. They made us most welcome. It was good to enter a house again and talk to civilized people.

Good news - a telegram was waiting from Cath to say we can enter the Reserve providing we obtain permission from the Superintendent. This we intend to do tomorrow. I am more than thrilled with this news as it is most desirable that we try out all of the camera equipment. Cave Hill is such a suitable and rich site for that purpose. The Fogarty's told us the aboriginals from all adjoining areas are gathering here to hold a corroboree. This sounds exciting although it may be impossible for us

to stay long enough to witness it. Tomorrow will be a full and exciting day. I have quite forgotten what day of the week it is! Time is of no consequence in this remote region. It is difficult to realize fully that this is now my career. Every now and again I start to think of *going back to work with the Apple and Pear Section* and then I realize this is not to be. It is really terrific and I feel a calling to do much in this new field.

This afternoon we passed a herd of cattle being taken along the road by stock-men. They had pack horses and really looked like a scene from a movie. Bright shirts, native stockmen and all the trimmings.

It is very interesting to see places which have until now been but romantic names. My impression of Australia is becoming more realistic. It is a great experience.

Ken started a dialogue about the ability of the country hereabouts to fatten stock – best place in Australia. Around the next corner were some dead carcasses – much to our amusement.

Had a good view of Mt. Woodroffe today. The highest point in S.A.

After all the thought and preparation it is difficult to realize we are now over a 1,000 miles from home with everything still going quite well.

Friday 14 May 1965 Mulga Park Northern South Australia

What a busy, interesting but frustrating day it has been. Once again it is late – 12.45am. Ken and Bernhard are still up listening to the tapes they made today. These record stories, words and the conversations of an old half-cast Aboriginal named Tommy Dodd, who acted as our guide at Cave Hill.

We set out in the Landrover at 9.00am for the Musgrave Park Aboriginal Reserve – a distance of 42 miles from Mulga Park. The Superintendent, Peter Gratton, is a particularly nice young chap and was very helpful. It was a great relief to find that we were welcome considering the complications of obtaining permission for entry.

There were several aged aboriginal men at the Reserve homestead. One had just walked in from distant Giles. He had a wonderful face – quite typical of his race. His hair was tied with string and he had a beautiful beard. They were all happy and laughing. I must say I feel drawn to these people in whom I have been interested for so long but have not had the opportunity of making close contact. One of the young kiddies playing football was dressed in one red plastic shoe – nothing else. He said this was his kicking foot!

The journey to the Reserve went through thickets of Mulga. There was a noticeable improvement in the undergrowth on the Reserve where cattle have not been grazing. However the difference was not as great as might have been expected. There is a terrible drought on at the moment.

The day was clear and pleasantly warm. The flies persistent and unpleasantly numerous. The Cave Hill site is located in a large weathered-out cave in an extensive rocky outcrop. The paintings are fascinating. Most complex with many designs superimposed one upon the other. There were several animals of post European origin. The photography posed some problems as the new wide angle lens only opens up to f8 making it impossible to see the subject on the ground-glass screen. It was only just possible to focus in the centre with a magnifier. Dust, flies and various distractions made things difficult. My own lack of experience in flash worried me and I greatly fear the results will be unsatisfactory. What a business it is. Here I am wanting so much to do a really good job and finding all sorts of complications to deny me the satisfaction of achieving a really worthwhile outcome. I didn't stop for lunch – worked consistently through the day but I wonder to what end?

Left the cave at 5.00pm and drove back to the Musgrave Park homestead to return Tommy Dodd. (Tommy Dodd was both Mr. Mountford and Mr. Tindale's guide in this and the Ayers Rock area). The aboriginals gathered round and Ken recorded some songs on tape. Too late to take photographs. This was a great pity. Did some trading and ended up with five carved lizards!! Not particularly elegant but I am so soft when it comes to trading with these people. Also purchased quite a nice spear-thrower together with a short spear from the old man from Giles. He demonstrated how to throw the spear. Not a good attempt. However being my first experience of spear throwing I was most impressed and thrilled. One old man had his hair all tied up with string and wore only a jumper. He was a grand old fellow. Chatted away to me for several minutes. I didn't understand a word he said but it was an enjoyable conversation for us both. The experience is wonderful – The Musgrave Ranges and its people.

Returned home just after 7.00pm. As we approached Mulga Park there were dozens of glowing fires in the camps of the many aboriginals who are gathering here for an initiation ceremony. The fires of the initiates were noticed away from the main group. It was a thrilling experience to see a sight which must have been common throughout Australia in long past times. As we drove through the camps 20 or so young children ran along behind the Landrover – singing and laughing happily. The Fogerty's had a roast dinner ready for us which was most welcome. Tomorrow we visit the camp. I wonder what this experience will be like?

Distance travelled today – 119 miles: total miles 1158.

Saturday 15 May 1965 Mulga Park Northern South Australia

We are living in the enclosed veranda at the old homestead at Mulga Park. It is very comfortable compared with sleeping out in the open. Our beds stretch along in a dormitory fashion and we cook, eat, sleep, write and do all things in this one convenient place. Gear and gadgets are laid out all over the place making it more convenient than packing and unpacking the Landrover in the open.

The Landrover is performing very well indeed. So far I cannot complain. It is comfortable and gives a good ride over the rough roads – and some of them really are rough.

A hotter day today. So far the temperature has been perfect. Warm, pleasant, clear dry heat. Not unreasonable today but the trend is towards hotter days and colder nights.

Today we went over to the aboriginal camp. It was a fascinating, exciting experience – full of interest. Tonight we are completely *skun* as we have been trading! Giving sweets away, matches, cigarettes and money for photos, spear throwing and boomerang practice. What a day. We are all quite exhausted.

This morning we pulled up near the group of little lean-to huts scattered indiscriminately over the light, red sandy soil. The area was once a Mulga grove however the aboriginals have gradually denuded the whole area. What trees have not been cut down to make wooden implements and souvenirs have been burnt. Ashes were spread all over the place. Each little wurley had its glowing coals. Set apart behind a low brush fence were six fires arranged in a line where the initiates had been sleeping on the previous night.

The children were the first to come to us. We coaxed them with sweets. I placed a seven pound tin on the bonnet of the Landrover and opened it. Oh boy! After that it didn't take them long to notice us! It was like bees homing in on a honey pot as a hundred kids of all ages and sizes made a bee-line for the vehicle. To our astonishment most of the sweets were consumed paper wrappers and all. The late comers arrived on seven or eight donkeys with two and three kids on each! Added to this practically every adult in camp who was able to walk descended on us with a great array of items for sale. Boomerangs, spears, digging sticks, lizards, snakes, fish, woomeras, waddies etc. The bartering was great fun – the first request would be for £5 – the next 2/-! I would seal the deal for 4/-! The seven pounds of sweets went in a flash and all we heard after that was "lolly, lolly, lolly, lolly".

Took a number of photographs. General camp scenes and some close-ups. This was sometimes free but often *two bob*. I simply could not satisfy all the requests. There were some marvellous faces. Once again it was difficult to keep anyone still long enough to focus the camera.

We retreated at lunch time almost completely exhausted by the hectic experience.

One grand old man, Peter, called me aside. After sending all the children off he very carefully pulled a dirty little bundle from his pocket. He glanced around to see that nobody was looking then we both sat down. With some ceremony and serious faces the bundle was unwrapped and two churingas were revealed. In his own language he described the meanings and offered them to me. I bought them not because I felt they were really genuine but because of his earnestness and apparent sincerity. Besides one cannot resist trying to be helpful – a little at least. It was quite thrilling.

Had a ride on a donkey much to everyone's joy and amazement. It certainly could not be said to be dangerous as the greatest effort was required to make the little animal move at all.

The camp, with each family set a little apart with their own shelter and the whole group making up a substantial part of the local tribe, was quite a sight for my inexperienced eyes. No doubt identical scenes would have been seen around Adelaide in the 1840's and 50's and in every other part of Australia at different stages in history. It is so tragic to look back on the difficulties that have confronted these people since the arrival of Europeans. Their complete disappearance from the general scene must always be felt with much regret by thinking people.

Without exception all those we met today were happy laughing people and gorgeous kids with their unkempt appearance and fly invaded faces.

One could not help feeling like an inquisitive tourist. Never-the-less it was a soul searching experience. Our interest most certainly went much deeper than inquisitive curiosity. It was thrilling to see *Primitive Man* in his natural setting and living his natural way of life except for the dreadful old clothes which they would be much better without. Alas I do not know the solution or what contribution I can make to the destiny of these people.

After lunch we rested a little then returned to the camp. We found it all but abandoned. The fires could be seen from a distance of a few hundred yards. On approaching several aboriginal men came towards us pointing in the direction from which we had just come. We were told politely that *blackfellow business* was going on and we should go away. The ceremony was starting.

Bernhard was anxious, and so was I, to see whether these aboriginals can still flake stone. We sent a message to Peter who we knew a little better than most. He came and indicated we would have to go in the Landrover to obtain stone. This could then be made into a *tula* and either mounted on a handle or the end of a spear thrower with spinifex gum. We all climbed in and away we went – Peter directing. The journey commenced through the Mulga then along a very narrow dirt track. Every mile or so Peter pointed the way – always in the same direction as the road! We made one stop to see a small cave (with some paintings) situated on the slopes of Mt. Frazer. While there we collected a few stone flakes. Peter sat down and trimmed several of them in an expert fashion. It was interesting to note that he used another fairly small piece of stone as a hammer and refused a larger one which seemed to me to be more suitable. This is a point of interest – hammerstones as we know them may not have been the only tool employed for stone flaking. His method was very effective.

We resumed our journey under Peter's directions, passing Ayliffe Hill and continuing on into the Reserve. After some 16 miles Peter called a halt. There was no apparent sign of any quarry or suitable stone which we were seeking. To our amazement Peter alighted went to the nearest Corkwood tree and commenced eating the flowers. Apparently they contain a sweet nectar and are one of the few sources of

sugar in the desert regions. This was photographed. After some delightful conversation – Peter knew two words of English and Bernhard two words of Pitjantjatjara – we seized the opportunity to retreat homewards. Peter was quite agreeable and directed the way home with as much good humour and sincerity as he had shown us on the way out. We gave him a few shillings for his trouble in acting as our guide but we are still uncertain whether he was the *Hero of the Tribe* for leading us away from the ceremony or actually helping to satisfy our interest in stone tool making! It was too amusing an incident to feel annoyed about the loss of time.

We arrived at the camp at dusk and had some further delightful experiences with these people. They came from all directions with spears, boomerangs and other items for sale. The kids flocked around wanting sweets. I could not resist and finished up with a great long spear (of all things to carry on our journey) a boomerang and woomera. Spent quite some time throwing both spear and boomerang. I'm not much good! The aborigines on the other hand were very accurate and could hit a jam tin at quite a distance. After hitting the tin the spear would zoom along the ground at an unbelievable rate. Their arm muscles must be well developed. There is ample opportunity for much good work to be undertaken among these people. In the big cities they do not look as comfortable as they do in their own country. It surprises me to find them still in such a semi-nomadic state and still initiating young men.

A number of camels appeared on the scene. One an enormous bull. They evidently belong to the head of the tribal group.

In the course of our conversations with the aborigines four of the elders drew us aside. We sat on the ground. They started to draw in the sand. We talked earnestly together and they told us something of their totems and legendary stories. I drew tracks and circles in the sand with them. This seemed to encourage them. One man (Dibukuda) was very earnest about tribal customs and became quite excited jabbing two long spears into the ground and indicating they represented a ladder along which his totem reached the sky. On his arms and under his shirt we could see circular, white decorations. No doubt he is taking a leading part in the current ceremony. His enthusiasm would fit him for any part. All this must have lasted about an hour because it was quite dark when we rose to leave. Dibukuda wanted to take us to his country on the Reserve but disappointingly time would not allow such an escapade. It will be with the greatest reluctance that we leave these wonderful people tomorrow and go on to Ayers Rock.

On pointing to a large rising moon several old men showed signs of fear and indicated that it should go away. These people are still steeped in their ancient mythology. It would be wonderful to stay among them for a much longer period.

I was amazed to see the women carrying heavy bundles on their heads. Some of their faces are terrific. Many children wore no clothes as they huddled around their glowing fires in the dusk and early evening. It was a very memorable sight.

I am completely exhausted this evening after such an eventful day. It is already 10.30pm. It takes some time to prepare dinner and do the chores although tonight everyone bucked in and left me free to do my own particular tasks.

Ayers Rock tomorrow – I wonder what I will think of it after all the many pictures seen and descriptions read?

Distance travelled today 31 miles. Total miles from Adelaide 1189.

Sunday 16 May 1965 Ayers Rock Central Australia

There at last looming large in the bright moonlight about half a mile in the distance is the gigantic, amazing form of Ayers Rock. It is a black silhouette against a lighter sky and rises abruptly from the surrounding flat plain. Quite remarkable. Much like the pictures but now real for the first time. I had quite expected to be disappointed. Instead I am surprised and deeply impressed. A single solid rock sculptured by the elements since time immemorial.

We were a little late rising this morning (7.30am) and the packing and farewells took longer than expected. We left at 10.30am and I was again robbed of an opportunity to visit the aboriginal camp and continue with some photography. If anyone had told me at lunch time on Friday that I would be unable to return to take full advantage of such a good opportunity of recording scenes of camp life I would not have believed them. However fate seemed to take a hand. I suppose it is impossible to do and see everything one would wish in a single trip.

Mt. Connor was the first of the great sights this morning culminating in Ayers Rock this evening. The road from Mulga Park has been widened and graded since tourists have taken a more active interest in Central Australia. It follows the valley between sand ridges and was quite good travelling. About 25 miles from Mulga Park the deep blue form of the enormous tabletop, Mt. Connor, could be seen in the mid-distance. We drove in on a side track for several miles to the abandoned homestead of Mt. Connor Station. Here Ken located quite an extensive camp-site. A collection of implements was made and photographs taken of the Mount.

Continued on to Curtain Springs where we arrived at 4.30pm after a journey of 64 miles. The Rover is using more petrol in the rougher country where gear work is necessary. There was only a cupful left when we arrived at Curtain Springs and added 31 gallons.

The attendant at the station store, Peter Severin, was a nice bright sort of chap and we delayed to have our first cool drink since Adelaide. He had a pet snake which he let crawl over the counter. It was quite horrible. He showed us a ceremonial board given to him by an aboriginal while visiting the Tomkinson Ranges with Bill Harney. It was about four feet long and nicely carved and well ochred.

Travelled a further 59 miles to Ayers Rock where we camped for the night. Unfortunately we are among several hundred tourists and are spending the night in the camping ground. It is good to see some supervision of this important reserve even though the emphasis on tourism seems to cheapen the majesty of the Rock. The view as we drove in at dusk was truly magnificent with Ayers Rock in the foreground and the incredible outline of the Olgas in the distance. We circled the Rock once and were most impressed. We had a mighty tea of Mulga Park beef steak.

Once again it is almost midnight. There seems much to do. The days are very full and it takes time to unload and set things up. I do hope all is well at home – it seems months since we departed.

Distance travelled 123 miles. Total 1312.

Monday 17 May 1965 Ayers Rock Central Australia

It was a bitterly cold and uncomfortable night – Bernhard hasn't any bedding and we are forced to share what we have between us. This is very unsatisfactory! Rose early (6.15am) to photograph Ayers Rock in the early light. Took an Ektachrome-X film with the new wide angle lens. One shot every 5 to 10 minutes. The early light is not balanced for this sort of thing so the results are in doubt. Returned and had breakfast and then drove out to the Olgas. What a tremendous sight. It is quite unbelievable. After seeing these mighty monoliths in photographs it is hard to realize they are actually real. This extensive group is composed of conglomerate rock and has quite a remarkable appearance. The colours continually change and our only wish was for more time to spend at such an interesting place.

Came back in time to photograph Ayers Rock at sunset but disappointed because clouds moved over the sun at the critical moment. Never-the-less it was an inspiring sight. Nature has worked incessantly to reduce this great pile of rock but has achieved no more than decorate it with ridges, contours and cavities which make it unique.

Came in at dusk. Ken and the others prepared tea while I cleaned my cameras. The dust is terrible – seeps into every crevice and corner. It would be the ruination of camera equipment unless great care is taken. Bus after bus came and went all day long and the roads are in bad condition. Tired tonight after a poor night and an over active day. My ankle is causing discomfort as a result of tripping over a stone during the day. Hope some of the photographs turn out well. It has been constant pressure all day.

Distance travelled 63 miles. Total 1375.

Tuesday 18 May 1965 Erldunda Central Australia

A very pleasant day. I would give anything to be home! Awoke this morning with dysentery and a temperature. This is an experience I could well do without.

The sunlight on Ayers Rock this morning was very beautiful – a bright orange colour. I peeped out of my covers to see it but could not rise for a photograph of the grand monolith.

Broke camp this morning then had a closer inspection of Ayers Rock. Tried out a colour film in the Besmatic to see how it performs. I hope it turns out ok as it is a very convenient camera to handle.

Inspected many caves eroded into the base of the rock and looked at practically all of the paintings. They are in a poor state either with age, faintness through weathering or from thoughtless people re-touching them. It is a great problem to know just what the solution is as far as preservation is concerned. There appears to be little doubt that they will all eventually disappear whatever action is taken. Careful restoration by aboriginal artists using original pigments and carried out faithfully in accordance with traditional practices could well be a suitable course to pursue. However, to suggest such a thing seems sacrilegious. The position does seem to be a hopeless one. The Northern Territory Reserves Board has a dual function in this regard i.e. to preserve examples of aboriginal cave painting art and to display them to Australian and overseas visitors. Faithful restoration using original techniques and commencing on the smaller caves where the paintings are indistinct, could be the way to proceed. Such a programme would need careful supervision and include the removal of paintings superimposed by vandals. Should such a programme of work be undertaken it would be necessary to erect some form of grill to protect them. The Ranger, Bob Gregory, is enthusiastic and appears to do an excellent job. Had an interesting talk with him on this subject before leaving. It is a disgrace to encourage overseas visitors to see such poor examples of the aboriginals' skill when the Rock itself is such a phenomena.

Travelled 11 miles in and around the Park. Left at 2.30pm. Crossed the expansive parallel red sand dunes for many many miles. Occasional Desert Poplars along the road contrasting with dying Mulgas. The Desert Oaks seem to be withstanding the severe drought better than the other trees. These are indeed very beautiful.

The country traversed was monotonous and dreary. The Mulga gave way to more open plains but there is no grass and many of the trees have died. Occasional hollows with groups of small gums break the monotony.

It was a wonderful experience to see Ayers Rock and the Olgas. However the great distances are cruel to man and vehicle.

Alice Springs tomorrow if all goes well. I certainly hope my health improves over night. Sleeping out will not help matters.

Arrived Curtain Springs 4.15pm	mileage 1708 (68 incl. Ayers Rock)
Departure Curtain Spring: 4.30pm	mileage 1708
Arrived Ebenezer 5.30pm	mileage 1771 (63)
Departed Ebenezer 7.30pm	

Camped the night near Erldunda 7pm mileage 1805 (34)
Distance travelled 165. Total from Adelaide 1540 miles.

Wednesday 19 May 1965 Alice Springs Central Australia

Arose feeling a little better this morning. However, I had to face up to another particularly heavy day and any improvement soon disappeared. The pressure of the preparations and anxiety of being in new situations combined with the long travel, living out of tins and setting up camp every night is proving to be something of a strain. The need to achieve worthwhile results with so much depending on the outcome of this project is causing mental stress. All this due to the accumulative effect of over tiredness.

Broke camp at 9:00am mileage 1805
Travelled through pitiful country. It is terribly dry. With sand drifting across the country as far as the eye can see.

Arrived Palmer River 10:00am mileage 1892 (87)
Arrived Alice Springs 2:00pm mileage 1941 (49)

Large black cockatoos with bright red colouring on their tails made a beautiful sight as they crossed our path on several occasions.

Distance travelled today 136 miles Total miles from Adelaide 1676.

Made contact with Mr. Tom Hare, head of the Northern Territory Reserves Board. A very friendly person who made me feel very welcome. He explained the objectives and composition of the Board. Membership is nominated by the Northern Territory Legislature. Consideration is being given to placing a number of rock engraving and cave painting sites in the Macdonnell Ranges under its jurisdiction (in fact many sites throughout the whole of the Northern Territory). The particular problem is to know what action is desirable as far as protection and presentation are concerned. I have promised to make a full report to him at the conclusion of my six month art recording project. This should be arranged through Mr. McCarthy at the Institute in Canberra. Mr. Hare promised to take us out tomorrow at 2:00pm to examine a very significant group of rock engravings some 20 miles from Alice Springs. I am to examine the site and prepare a report for the Reserves Board.

Mr. Hare is anxious also to obtain photographs and historical material that could be used in the publication of booklets describing the places under the Board's control.

Letters from Adelaide were waiting for us at the Post Office. I took the opportunity to ring Cath. She sounded sad and quiet and is missing me. A three minute discussion seemed more like 3 seconds. There were also letters sent on from Uncle Keith in Katherine, Mr. Wren from Canberra and also the Institute. I was pleased to receive also the boys school reports although it made me feel quite homesick. Called at the works department about servicing the Landrover. Met Doug Boerner who Ken Maddock had recommended to me. He was very helpful and seemed to have a

particularly fine character. I would welcome the opportunity to get to know him. It is very heartening to find such helpful and interesting people here in Alice Springs especially when feeling exhausted after such a long trip. Uncle Keith seems to have everything in hand ready for our arrival in Katherine.

Tidied up and went down the street. Invited to visit the Arunta Galleries by Mr. T.A. Muldoon who turned out to be a personal friend of C.P Mountford. It was a very interesting gallery. Purchased four beautiful bullroarers brought into town by natives from Maryvale Station. Posted these home while I had the opportunity. They appear to be quite genuine and are not to be shown to women. It is a great shame aboriginals sell their sacred objects. It shows clearly the disintegration of their culture.

Had an enjoyable dinner in a local restaurant. It was a welcome change from food out of tins. On returning to the hotel an American in Australia on a Fulbright Scholarship introduced himself. Graeme Pretty had evidently told him to look out for me. We had a very interesting discussion.

It is 12:30 again!! In retrospect it is a great mistake to fail to plan every detail of expeditions carefully before departure. Sensible itineraries properly followed can be of great value and save a great deal of time. It is desirable also to avoid including anyone in the team except those essential to the tasks at hand. Minimum numbers are best as the more personalities involved the wider the range of temperaments and the greater the distractions. Large parties should be avoided at all costs as it is natural for each individual to think differently. This adds to the problem of keeping a happy team together and focussing on achieving the objectives of the field work.

Tomorrow will be an interesting day as I am keen to see a major rock engraving site so far distant from the north-east on South Australia where most of my research to date has been concentrated.

Thursday 20 May 1965 Alice Springs Central Australia

A very full and busy day. I thought nothing would keep me out of my bed tonight but here it is 1.15am. Improved after a comfortable night in a good clean bed and breakfast at the hotel. Took the Landrover down for a routine service. Struck complications as I have no order book. Telegraphed the Department of Supply in Adelaide and received a prompt response: vehicle completely overhauled and head to be screwed down tomorrow. Doug Boerner the head mechanic wangled an oil change and lubrication before the boss drew out the red-tape book. A mighty chap.

Wrote to Cath and Andrew. Had lunch in town and met Tom Hare the Executive Officer of the Northern Territory Reserves Board at 2.00pm. He guided us out to the remarkable Ooraminna rock engraving site which I feel certain is the same site that Mr. Mountford has written up as Ewaninga. Made a detailed examination and photographed this extraordinary site. Will return in the morning to complete the task. It is desirable to finish the report as soon as possible otherwise it will take second place to the next phase of the project.

Doug Boerner invited Ken and me out to his home for the evening. It was a fabulous night full of interest for all concerned. His wife, Una, is interested in historical matters and has been mixed up with Maj. Gen Symes and the Royal Geographical Society in Adelaide. Doug has an amazing mineral collection including the second largest untouched gold nugget in Australia. They are particularly well-informed and intelligent people and very hospitable to all in need.

The time went very quickly!

Friday 21 May 1965 Alice Springs Central Australia

Another long day. Drove out to the rock engravings again after breakfast and completed photographing and making notes. Returned and made a verbal report to Tom Hare who seemed satisfied with the description and explanation I was able to provide. The Landrover went down to the Works Department for a complete service. Collected laundry which had been left two days ago. Called at the Post Office for mail and send a telegram to Cath to send up Mr. Mountford's paper on Central Australian engravings and also to Uncle Keith informing him that we expect to be in Katherine late on Sunday evening. Called at the Welfare Branch to see Mr Max Althaus, however, he was in Darwin so I left a message. Collected the Landrover. Doug did a good job. He is very likeable and most obliging. Repacked the Landrover as it was in quite a mess after the long journey. Had a good hot meal at the Hotel. Showered and retired early. Have been writing my report on the engravings until midnight. It is essential to complete it before moving on north to Arnhem Land.

Tomorrow will see the last big push before we start in earnest. We leave for Katherine after breakfast.

Still not feeling too well. I hope the tummy trouble clears up soon as it takes enough energy to simply survive on a journey across Australia from South to North.

It has been cool today by Alice Springs standards. It is generally agreed by the locals that it is unusually cool, for this time of the year, especially during the day.

Alice Springs is quite a likeable town. I hope to see more of it when I return from the North in a few months. At the moment there is insufficient time available for sight seeing.

Distance travelled 169 miles. Total miles 1795.

Saturday 22 May 1965 Alice Springs Central Australia

Departed Alice Springs feeling sorry about the lack of time to have a better look around the town as it is very pleasantly situated in the midst of the MacDonnell Ranges. The country north of Alice is extremely dry. Even the Mulgas are dead in many places and the soil is drifting badly. Goodness knows what the fate of this country will be if the drought does not break soon.

The heaviest days travel in my life – still not feeling at all well. Will be pleased to settle down in one place and get my tummy into some sort of order.

Itinerary for the day:

Departed Alice Springs 10.00	mileage 2060
Crossed the Tropic of Capricorn 10.15am	mileage 2081 (21)
(Most impressive feeling)	
Arrived Ti Tree 12.30pm	mileage 2187 (106)
Arrived Barrow Creek 2.00pm	mileage 2246 (59)
Arrived Tennant Creek 5.30pm	mileage 2393 (147)
Departed Tennant Creek 5.45pm	mileage 2393
Arrived Renner Springs 8.15pm	mileage 2498 (105)
Stopped for night outside Katherine 4.00am	mileage 2816 (318).
Distance Travelled 756. Total 2551.	

The country is pleasantly hilly north of Alice Springs. Picturesque gums line the creeks and there are many striking rocky outcrops. A little warmer today very pleasant for travelling. The nests of the Mulga ant occur in great numbers in this region. They build a perfectly circular ring around their entrances with pieces of grit. During the day distinctive termite mounds increased in both frequency and size. They are especially picturesque at sunset with their brilliant red colouring and long shadow set against the yellow of the *Triodia* grass.

After the hills came the flat country: an open dry plain devoid of features and monotonously barren. The road runs as straight as an arrow making it hard to maintain concentration. However it is a blessing to be rid of the dust which has been dreadful until today.

As we go further north the countryside greatly improves and it is obvious there have been good rains. High grass waves in the breeze and there is a touch of green everywhere and a sprinkling of wild flowers. The gum trees have lush new growth and the whole scene is a dramatic contrast to all we had seen since leaving Port Augusta many days ago. This change broke the monotony of the drive and it was interesting to watch for the various colourful wild flowers which were to me at least all new species. Central Mt. Stuart was soon visible in the distance – a name well known but unseen by me until now. We visited the old Telegraph Station at Barrow Creek and the graves of the two men killed by the natives in 1874 two years after the town came into existence with the arrival of the Overland Telegraph.

The night is warm and there is a noticeable change in the atmosphere as we push on northwards. I cannot help but reflect on the plight of the early explorers. What valiant men they must have been to trudge across this enormous wilderness. John Mc Douall Stuart named Barrow Creek in 1860 during the return journey on his first attempt to cross Australia from South to North.

Drove into a wild cyclonic storm tonight with torrential rain. The road is under repair in some places and the detours were slippery and hazardous. The humidity is high and the night warm. We have thrown a tarpaulin on the road and will lay down to sleep under it while the rain continues to pelt down. I feel completely and utterly exhausted. The first impression of the tropics is one of oppressive humidity. The multitude of different noises is also very strange.

Tonight's drive seemed unreal – a senseless mad push to cover the endless miles. I suppose we will be pleased to have it behind us – if we recover.

Sunday 23 May 1965 Katherine North Australia

Awake with that unmistakable feeling of the morning after the night before. All was damp and the atmosphere heavy. No water lay about but there was a dank feeling in the air. We were slow to get going and all suffered from the great effort made on the previous day. Departed at 9.30am for Katherine which we reached an hour later after travelling a further 21 miles.

Total miles from Adelaide 2572.

The country along the roadside has been burnt out and therefore looked very sorrowful. Passed the Tindal RAAF base where works are in progress. It was constructed in 1942 and known as Carson's Airfield during World War II. The people in Katherine speak more about the danger of war than anyone does in the South. Evidently the air base here is being expanded into an important defence installation. The Japanese bombed Katherine only once on 22 March 1942.

Met Uncle Keith (Cordon – my mother's brother) and his companion Wattie. They were very good to us. There is no doubt it is a pleasant feeling to be with ones own family. I have always thought well of Uncle Keith and it is good to be here with him.

Went down to the town and arranged Bernhard's bus seat for Darwin tomorrow morning. Had a good hot lunch which was enjoyable. There was no time to see much of the town. It appears to be well spread out. There are 200 pupils at the school. This is indicative of a reasonable population.

The local Darwin paper rep. by the name of Ken Brennan (a school teacher) called and had a long talk with us. Quite a helpful young chap and interested in our project. I am uncertain whether I should have given him a statement. However as long as it is accurate and conservative it is probably alright and should not cause any concern. Anything to show that the Institute is actively engaged on research which many up here feel is desirable. All relevant authorities have been satisfied. Ken Brennan told me the aboriginals are deriving much amusement from Ken Maddock's activities. He is a generous giver and it is said they are all taking advantage of him. Apparently much of the information he is receiving may be quite wrong. What a business it all is. You just cannot tell where the truth lies.

Delivered Doug Boerner's parcel of opals to Roy Morgan at the Department of Works in Katherine. Spent an interesting afternoon examining his mineral, shell and coin collections. He and his wife are a remarkable couple and have quite extraordinary and valuable collections. They are something of specialists in opals. Mrs Morgan also designs rings. Roy has several bi-faced trimmed pieces of stone which he collected at Nicolson on the W.A. – N.T. border. He said they were the initial stages of bi-faced, trimmed spear points. This is important as Stan Mitchell recorded bi-faced implements from the N.T. and suggested a relationship to those in the South-East. This new evidence is therefore of some interest.

Another good meal tonight. Cold chicken and salad. Much better than eating from tins. Jack Garnett and his son-in-law, Noel Cornell called to see Uncle Keith. He is quite a live wire and a complete enthusiast as far as the Katherine Gorge is concerned. He has placed his entire facilities at our disposal. I have no doubt he will be as good as his word. It sounds a terrific place. The rain yesterday has brought the creeks down so we will be unable to go out there for a day or two.

There is quite an unbelievable *din* outside. The place must be alive with insects of one kind and another. (I have been given to understand 65,000 insect species have been recorded in the Katherine/Arnhem Land region). Feeling a little better tonight. Hope tomorrow will see me up to the mark again. There is much to be done now that we are here safe and more or less sound.

The evening is quite warm. Ken and I have beds on the front veranda which should be more pleasant than any we have had since leaving home.

Monday 24 May 1965 Katherine North Australia

Bernhard caught the bus to Darwin this morning.

Spent the day in and around Katherine. Uncle Keith introduced me to the following local officials and identities:

District Officer: Charlie Jenkins

Welfare Officer: Mick Ivory

C.S.I.R.O. Miles Fisher (Member N.T. Reserves Board)

Superintendent Beswick: Jim Faint

Newsagent: Ron Ryan, J.P. ex Patrol Officer for Katherine District.

They were all exceptionally kind and offered full co-operation and assistance as needed. It is good to feel there are people like this close at hand.

Walked over the railway bridge and glimpsed the Katherine River for the first time. It is a big river with a wilderness of undergrowth along its banks. No wonder the crocodiles live in it!

Saw a snake in the main street. No one seemed to be in any way perturbed about it – except me!

The night is heavy and oppressive again although the stars are out and shining brightly. Tomorrow should be a fine clear day after several very muggy ones.

Had to run the film refrigerator as the temperature is rising too high. This is a great asset for safeguarding films.

Busy trying to write the report on the Alice Springs engravings. It is important to send this south so that Cath can prepare it for presentation.

The old tummy is still playing up. It simply cannot seem to adjust to the changes.

Met many people again today and gained increased familiarity with the town. This will serve as a base for our operations over the next two months.

Received a letter from Dr. Campbell today. Good to hear all his news and doings.

Past 11.00pm so must try for an early night!

Tuesday 25 May 1965 Katherine North Australia

Sunset at the Gorge on the Katherine River. What a beautiful sight. The clouds came up soon after lunch but broke up and disappeared leaving a clear blue sky and very still atmosphere. The outline of the Pandanus Palms is very striking against the setting sun. All is quiet and one cannot help but feel a little contented and at peace with the world after seeing the glorious, majestic gorge of the Katherine River. Over the ages it has cut its way sharply into the quartzite and sandstone conglomerate rocks which form cliffs several hundred feet high in places and rise straight from the water to the blue sky above. It is truly a remarkable sight.

Arrived at the Gorge at 9.00am. Jack Garnett has proved to be as good as his word and taken no end of trouble to ensure we see everything. Tonight he even cooked tea while we enjoyed the cold showers provided at this beautiful spot.

The cave paintings in the Gorge are located on open cliff walls and weathered depressions near the base of the cliffs. The light was not on them while we were there today as they need the low angle of the early morning sun. Tomorrow morning we plan to leave early to do battle with them. There will be some problems as in most instances the condition of the paintings is poor. Some are high up on the cliff-face while the talus at the base drops away suddenly without providing any form of suitable platform to set up a camera and allow photography at eye level. It is all quite beyond our resources. Most of the figures are in red ochre although there are a few in yellow. The subject matter is extremely interesting: large human figures, fish, kangaroos (one with a Joey in its pouch), and many smaller figures. Full of interest but in pathetically poor condition. Our grandiose plans for overlapping coverage of the whole site etc. etc. seems quite absurd when looking at the original material to be recorded.

The paintings are near the rapids where rocks impede the flow of water. Exploration further up stream led to the discovery of more paintings. Several of the small figures are in good condition and should photograph well. The access to these paintings is reasonable. There are also a number of stencilled hands. There is no doubt about the majestic beauty of this very wondrous place.

As we departed in the boat this morning we sighted our first crocodile as it plunged into the water not far from us. It was a thrill. Later we saw another. A large goanna stood up and watched as we passed in the boat. Surprisingly after a time I wandered about in the water without any great concern. There were many fish to be seen and we spent some time watching them. Barramundi, Target fish, Brim and others. The place is alive with insects, birds and small animals. As I sit here writing my notes frogs are jumping in and out of the River with moths fluttering around the light. I would like to be a moth collector. It would be so easy!

Of course the water is fresh in the River and can be drunk without fear of contamination. This is very convenient and saves carrying a heavy supply of water. Few people realize how much is involved in undertaking long field projects. Arranging for vehicles, photographic equipment, provisions, cooking, writing up not to mention navigating across the country. It takes an enormous amount of time and effort or perhaps I am simply slow.

Tonight I went into Katherine and rang Cath and Keith. It was a thrill to hear their voices so clearly some 1800 miles away. The family are all well and my letters, films etc. are arriving safely. I hope they will be something of an education for the boys. Dear, dear Cath how I long to see her. The report on the films exposed so far is just so so. Experiments must continue because the final results need to be superb. Field conditions are certainly not as simple as expected. Washing clothes is another great and time consuming task. I don't relish sleeping out among the bugs and beasts. There is no alternative.

The frig is proving to be essential for the film stock but is taking a great deal of attention and power when the weather is so muggy and hot. I hope our concerns and care will be adequate to at least minimize this problem. I would not like to be without a means of maintaining film stock in reasonable conditions.

If there are no interruptions and we do not find any extension of the paintings we should complete photographing this site in a few days.

Wednesday 26 May 1965 Katherine Gorge North Australia

A little after 2.00am this morning we were aroused by piercing screams coming from a small group of aboriginals camped on the sand down by the River. We were very alarmed but at a loss to know how to react. As everything soon became quiet again we decided no action was the best response. In the morning we went down to the little camp and enquired about the disturbance. The men burst into laughter and said *come, come and look*. We were led to a bare area of sand where all had slept in comfort. They pointed to a large furrow in the sand with a gap in the centre.

Apparently a large python had been slithering across the sand where one of the women was sleeping. She awoke with a start to find the huge reptile slowly sliding over her tummy – hence the frightening scream. The men thought it was a huge joke and were much amused by the incident. We thought the woman concerned was still looking quite *white* and we were very cautious about how and where we set up our camp stretchers. Welcome to North Australia.

Up early and left before breakfast to be in time to catch the early light on the paintings. What an experience the trip up the River was this morning. The water was like a mill-pond and the cliffs and vegetation along the River reflected brilliantly in the calm water. It was pleasantly cool with warmth increasing every minute. The water was like glass. As we travelled into the morning sun the majestic beauty of the Gorge was seen at its best. It would be impossible to capture such an experience on film. The vegetation lining the River is very strange to me and has an intriguingly unfamiliar character. At every turn a new and glorious spectacle opened up before us. This place is a tremendous encouragement to waste film.

The Katherine Gorge is a photographer's nightmare as far as recording cave paintings is concerned. Most designs are painted on the face of cliffs which run more or less east and west at this particular place. It faces the first rapids on the northern bank with a southerly aspect. The bedding of the quartzite is horizontal and in many places has collapsed forming overhangs and caves. Some of these have paintings in them.

It soon became apparent that the sun would not light up the cliff-face and probably never has at any time. I decided to photograph without flash as the open shade was reasonably bright. Had a dreadful breakfast cooked on the spot – raw egg and water dunked bread!

The paintings extend along some hundred yards of the cliff-face. However their condition is disappointing and there is little purpose in making a comprehensive coverage of the whole rock-face. The paintings are widely separated with blotches of red ochre interposed amongst them. It is obvious they are portions of major designs now almost totally obliterated. It is frustrating to see only two legs of what once must have been an attractive figure excellently depicted in a running pose. These figures portray action and movement to an extraordinary degree. Twenty years ago it may have been possible to record the designs but in most instances it is now too late. The aboriginals do not appear to have touched up the groups in the Katherine Gorge for many many years.

At both the east and west ends of the rock-face there are concentrations of larger figures. These are out of reach high up on the cliff in quite inaccessible positions. A small ledge under the westerly group is too narrow to provide access. Many figures are also too small to photograph at an angle. If a good coverage is to be obtained it is inevitable that we will have to resort to some hand tracing.

Many of the paintings are coated with a thin film of mineral residue which has seeped out of the rocks to form a hard crust over the art works. To some degree this

is a protection however flaking of the surface and breaking up of the rocks is, and will continue, to destroy the paintings. The necessity to make a faithful record is clearly justified and beyond question.

The aboriginal artists have used few colours. Deep dark red or maroon ochres are the main pigments. Most of the smaller figures have been painted in these colours. There are some lighter brown-red images and a few in yellow ochre. These paintings are always super-imposed on others and are the most recent additions to the Gallery.

It is most unlikely that any situation exists at this site where an archaeological excavation could be carried out.

I am doing my best but have little hope of a good outcome. It is a great pity as sufficient images have survived to give some indication of what must have been an extensive and important site of cave art.

This afternoon we undertook a survey further up the River in search of more paintings which may be associated with the main group. We carried the boat across the second rapids. It was quite exhilarating to place it in the water on the other side of this natural barrier as few people venture beyond this point. However, we were soon blocked by further rapids. This time the River was restricted by massive outcrops of hard quartzite rock. These had been pounded into fantastic shapes by flood waters which are said to rise as much as 20 feet in the wet. The lower part of the River rises much higher. There are many almost perfectly circular holes, varying in width from 1 foot to 20 feet. They have been worn down to depths of up to 20 feet. The swirl of the River must spin stones around in these holes and grind them down. It is quite amazing and unlike anything I have previously seen. There are many enormous boulders along the river-bed. These have fallen as jagged rocks from the towering cliffs, soon to be blunted and rounded by the swirl and erosive action of the turbulent waters.

An exhaustive search failed to locate any paintings on either the cliffs and associated cavities or over-hanging ledges. We set out back down stream in the boat searching thoroughly all the way. Landed at a likely looking place near a high waterfall. The water plunges some 150 feet from the top of the cliff into a deep, narrow crevice in the rocks eventually finding its way into the River. To our delight we found a number of interesting paintings nearby. The main group were small stylized figures in red ochre super-imposed by large yellow representations of emus with their necks bent sharply downwards. Once again it was the yellow figures overlying the earlier dark red ones. There is a beautiful view of the River from this vantage point. In a shelter on the east side of the waterfall we found another small group of paintings. These were quite unlike those in the main gallery. They were painted in narrow red, parallel lines on a broad white background and depicted human figures and a fish. They were most interesting.

Continued downstream and then had to carry the boat back across the rapids. Photographed some small figures in an adjacent overhanging ledge then continued

on our way. After leaving the first rapids the outboard motor overheated creating some concern and delay. The trip down the River was again a delight. We arrived at our camp late and tired and were in bed by 9.00 pm. If we succeed in having a good nights sleep it will be the first time for a week! There are wild donkeys across the creek. Their "hew-haws" could be heard loud and clear throughout the night. For us it was quite an extraordinary din.

Thursday 27 May 1965 Katherine Gorge North Australia

Went back up the Gorge again today to continue recording the rock art. Resorted to tracing but even this was a hopeless task as so many of the figures are weathered and unrecognizable. It simply isn't any good guessing! Took some 35mm shots. Hope for the best!

Not a great number of figures are completely filled in with ochre. The pigment is brushed along more or less parallel lines within a well defined outline. This technique sometimes dominates the design with the whole work being composed of parallel lines of paint.

No matter what procedures are adopted there is no way of reviving what has been lost. This is very frustrating when I am so impatient to obtain good results. The paintings so far have been in such a bad state that it is impossible to make any really worthwhile records of this ancient art.

All the paintings are in one colour. There are no multi-coloured art works. By far the most dominant colours are maroon and dark red.

As previously mentioned, the paintings cover a particular area of the cliff-face near the first rapids. There is a dominant group at each end. However, few paintings continue on from these main and very extensive groups. Those in between the two larger groups are located in rock shelters weathered out at the base of the cliff. The western group surrounds a long figure (9 feet) lying along the cliff-face. This is made up of the common series of parallel red lines. There is a large kangaroo together with some smaller figures, about 4 feet in height that can be seen clearly beneath the other paintings. There are also six stencilled hands. These have been painted on a natural reddish background which appears to have been chosen for this purpose. (The later yellowish figures where they do occur, appear much cruder and possess less finish than the others). A number of small dancing figures make up the remainder of the western group. The eastern group is located in a similar elevated position on the cliff and has been painted on an identical natural coloured surface. The main figures are two large kangaroos – one with a Joey in its pouch.

The talus at the base of the cliffs is made up of surprisingly loose stones which slide away under foot at the slightest pressure. The stones are jagged, and sharp having broken when falling from high up on the cliff-face.

There are many designs including small figures indiscriminately arranged between the two main groups of paintings. A large snake and a long reclining figure have been painted under a shallow ledge.

Tracings were made of some of the figures. The question is what do you do when half or three quarters of a figure is missing?

Returned to camp earlier tonight. Jack Garnett told us he has sold his business to his opposition and will leave for Sydney after he has taken us up River once more tomorrow. He is quite a character and has been very decent to us.

Climbed to the top of the cliff this evening and gained a magnificent panoramic view stretching out for many miles. The Gorge was a wonderful sight as it cuts its way through the plateau. The whole area is very stony and of great interest. It is alive with lizards, birds and masses of insects. The trees and shrubs are quite distinctive. I gained something of an understanding of the country from the great height of the cliff-top.

Letters from Andrew and Cath were waiting on our arrival back. My word it is good to hear from them. The time is now starting to go quicker. Tummy is feeling better – I hope it will not give trouble again.

Friday 28 May 1965 Katherine North Australia

Returned to Katherine this afternoon from our camp in the Gorge. We had left early in the morning and travelled up stream again to photograph the cave paintings found in the third gorge beyond the second rapids. These could only be photographed in the early morning light. Every trip along the River is different as the colours are continually changing with the varying light conditions. The Kingfishers are numerous and stand out in their brilliant colours. We encountered quite a number today. In many places the trees and shrubs cling tenaciously to the cliff walls. It is a mystery how they establish themselves and eke out such a precarious existence. Some send roots down many feet to reach the water. It is similar to living in an enormous Botanical Gardens. In many places the cliffs have eroded and formed giant buttresses which appear to hold the mass of the cliff from collapse.

The aboriginal paintings between the second and third rapids (discovered on Wednesday) are in a rock shelter formed at the intersection of the main cliff-face and the rocky shelves. This is on the northern side of the River near the beautiful waterfall previously mentioned. The walls of the small gorge associated with this feature have been broken down by the forces of nature and widened into rock ledges. A process that must have occupied many thousands of years. The main designs are a group of six large birds painted in yellow pigment with long bent necks. These are superimposed on smaller maroon figures similar to those in the main group. Some of these are only 4 inches high while the tallest is about 18 inches. Judging from the surviving intact figures and those partly destroyed, there could have been 45 in all. Most of them are faded almost to the point of being beyond recognition.

Another much lower and deeper cave is situated nearby. It is no more than 3 feet high. There is a large, red indistinct and quite unrecognizable figure about 9 feet long on the roof. The cave-like shelter is wedge-shaped tapering down to the ground at the rear.

Further to the East another more extensive gorge enters the main one. The eastern side of this is precipitous and on its lower side there is a long line of spacious rock shelters. The vertical jointing and horizontal bedding has resulted in massive rock falls creating the long shelters. The aboriginals have painted in these shelters although considering their size the figures are few in number.

Small human figures dominate the art in this area. There are also two life sized paintings of a man and a woman lying horizontally along the cliff-face.

A particularly interesting group of small figures has been painted in two tones with red outlines filled in with yellow pigments. This is an interesting variation and the first seen here or elsewhere. It will be useful to make comparisons when other sites are visited. I photographed these groups in detail.

It was terribly hot today and we all suffered from exhaustion after having spent several days of prolonged exploring, scrambling over rugged rocks and carrying boats over rapids etc. Conditions were made worse by the breathless atmosphere in the gorges.

Returned to camp early in the afternoon as Jack Garnett, our boatman, had to leave us as he is returning to Harbord in New South Wales. We paid him \$20 for the cost of boat hire.

I must confess to being confused at the moment. It is quite frustrating to be confronted with such scattered sites of weathered and faded paintings and others far out of reach of any equipment. The results must inevitably be indifferent. I feel it is unwise to spend any more time here. A record has been made of a representative selection by photography and tracing (exactly what I was trying my best to avoid). It is so difficult to move from point to point and the boat hire is expensive. The results could not justify further time and cost. Comparisons with other sites will prove whether this is a wise decision. If the sites in Arnhem Land are no better it will be very disappointing.

Being in North Australia I had expected the paintings to be in much better condition. It was a surprise to find them in such a poor state of preservation. There is a continued tourist – preservation interest here which could be developed in some way via South Australia.

It was most unfortunate that an elderly aboriginal who had been living in Jack Turner's camp for some months was absent – to get married. He has been making didgeridoos, fire by twirling a stick and generally living the life of a *nomad*. It would have been a good opportunity for some movie work. Jack was a scream describing

some of the antics that have gone on – catching goannas, flying foxes, carpet snakes and the aboriginals first and last ride in a speed boat.

Packed up and drove as far as Maude Creek where we examined a camp-site which had been described to us. Very few implements or stone flakes. However it was of interest to find portions of blade flakes and bi-face implements. I will send them to Dr Campbell to examine.

The bush is alive with lizards, wallabies and all sorts of birds and insects. As far as I am concerned it seems quite unfriendly. Every creature seeking out the other for food in the ruthless business of survival. There is no doubt it is a very beautiful area and our stay at Katherine Gorge has been an enjoyable experience.

Returned to Katherine. Dying of thirst. Stopped at the hotel. Had a pint or two. Shouted an aboriginal a drink only to find later he had given evidence against his father for the murder of an aboriginal woman! This appears to have brought much disfavour upon him.

We hope to go on to Sliesbeck as soon as our guide is out of jail!

We rest for the weekend. Hooray!

Saturday 29 May 1965 Katherine North Australia

A day of rest at last! Spent the morning doing the washing, cleaning up and posting films to Adelaide for processing. However, most of the afternoon was taken up writing letters. The climate is certainly not conducive to work. It is much more pleasant now than when we first arrived. The humidity after the rain was dreadful but it is settling down to what the locals consider a normal weather pattern. The days are very warm but the nights agreeably cold.

Mrs. Jack Turner who lives in Second Street, Katherine, came over this afternoon. Her husband is a great friend of Professor John Mulvaney, Professor Jack Golson and Dermot Casey. Jack Turner gave them considerable assistance when they were excavating in this area. The Turners are interested in gemmology and polish local agates and other stones. These they mount and sell. Mrs. Turner has promised to obtain some agates for me to send down to Professor Paul Hossfeld.

Bed reasonably early and a sound sleep.

Sunday 30 May 1965 Katherine North Australia (Refer letter Edwards to Campbell)

Up at about 8.30 am. It was pleasant to lie in for a while. Mrs. Turner came over again and took us to meet Ross Christie who boards with them. He accompanied us out to Katherine Rocks about 3 miles north-east of the town (along the Gorge Road) where he showed us John Mulvaney's excavation site. It was very interesting. Took photographs of two associated cave paintings.

Returned home late having spent the afternoon working out a statement of accounts for the Institute of Aboriginal Studies as the mail goes out in the morning. Young Ross took us out to a campsite called Manbulloo about 7 miles to the west. Not a true campsite as we know them but of great interest. Found a few Pirri points, other uni-face symmetrical trimmed points – long blades and pieces of implements. Returned home at 7.00 pm and spent the evening writing.

Tomorrow we launch off to El Sharana. I am full of expectations. I certainly hope it is as good as everyone has led me to believe. I must obtain some good photographs soon!!

Miles travelled in Katherine Gorge 78. Total miles 2650.

Monday 31 May 1965 El Sharana North Australia

We are camped tonight among quite steep hills not far from the South Alligator River. This is the farthest point I have ever been away from home. We have travelled a total distance of 2,807 miles since leaving Adelaide.

Left Katherine this morning for Pine Creek at 9.30 am - mileage 2915.

Travelled through interesting country. Thick bush all the way along the road. Many large outcrops of rock. The great difference in the north of the Territory is the rainfall which is so high that scrub is sustained around the rocky outcrops. In South Australia stocking, farming, drought etc have caused the trees to either die or be cleared and it is too dry for them to re-generate. I imagine many of the campsites in South Australia had trees somewhat similar in number to those associated with the sites up here.

Arrived Pine Creek 10.45 pm - mileage 2983 (68)

The country becomes quite hilly adding to the interest. Called at the hotel and met Joe Young, the Publican. Uncle Keith had given us a letter of introduction to him. He was very helpful and contributed some local knowledge of value. Made contact with Trevor Milliken a Patrol Officer with the Welfare Department. His supervisor in Katherine, Mick Ivory, had asked us to look him up and seek his assistance. He is a decent chap and we talked for an hour or so. His approach to the problems besetting the aboriginal people and general outlook is much like my own i.e. recognition of the right of aboriginals to continue their natural way of life if they so desire. Many and great are the problems. Apparently the population of full and part bloods is increasing significantly.

Departed Pine Creek 1.00 pm. mileage 2983.

The country is becoming increasingly interesting as we go deeper into Arnhem Land. Hills are more frequent in number and size. Photographed a very large goanna. Called at Moline ore treatment works but found our contact, Joe Fisher, was absent

in Melbourne on business. Uranium treatment has been discontinued for the moment as the contracts ran out last year. The tailings are now being treated and the gold removed. They obtain about 900-1000 oz's per month. Value approx. £15 oz.

Quite a range of hills as we approached El Sharana. The mine is on the side of the hill and visible from the road.

Arrived El Sharana 4.00 pm mileage 3057 (74)

Chanced to meet the mine foreman, Bob Gough, on the roadside. He directed us to the main group of cave paintings. We arrived here at 4.15 pm mileage 3060.

The paintings are located on large boulders which have fallen from the adjacent rocky hillsides. Although few in number they are an interesting group. The main figures have been painted under a gigantic boulder which rests on other large rocks. This is an occupation site as there is an obvious accumulation of bones, freshwater mussel shells and artefact material. The site would be highly suitable for archaeological excavation.

Broken implements lie about on the ground around the many boulders. The paintings themselves are very interesting and in quite a good state of preservation. I should be able to obtain some quite reasonable photographs. The larger cave will require flash as the paintings are in the shade. The outside group will provide a good opportunity to try black and white film with filters.

On entering the first cave I jumped over a large rock to gain a closer look at some paintings and collided with a large rock python. It was 12 feet long – without allowing anything for exaggeration. Ken shot it. It had a bandicoot, it was digesting, in its stomach. A dreadful business which has made me feel uncomfortable.

Tonight is the first night that Ken and I have been camping out alone. Throughout the trip we have had someone with us. It is certainly less complicated not having to worry about other people.

There have been large groups of bats flying about tonight. The insects are very active and no doubt attract them.

Distance travelled today 145 miles. Total miles 2807.

Tuesday 1 June 1965 El Sharana North Australia

Up early. Spent the day busily photographing cave paintings and the general scenery in this interesting area.

Trevor Milliken told us the aboriginals of the northern central area around Oenpelli came into these hills during their nomadic wanderings. There is no doubt some similarity exists between the art of the two areas. This is a point in need of closer investigation. It sounds quite reasonable. The number of implements both broken

and intact and the food remains in the main shelter suggest this was a well frequented living area and not a secret place restricted to male members of the tribal group. There is no sign of any aboriginals living hereabouts at the present time.

Much of the surrounding countryside has been burnt off, apparently this is an annual occurrence in Arnhem Land. Vast areas along the roadside have had similar treatment. The aboriginals take advantage of the situation by catching animals as they escape from the flames. Of course the cattle welcome the lush re-growth. It is an asset to us as in its natural state the grass is high and thick and clogs up the radiator of the Landrover.

It has been very hot and trying today. Photographed the smaller group of paintings this morning. These are on the open surfaces of a large boulder and consist of several adult kangaroos and human figures. Fine examples of X-ray art. Recorded these on 35mm, Ektachrome 2 ½ " x 3 ½ " as well as B. & W. I hope the results will be good as they are the most interesting paintings we have seen to date. They were in a convenient position which was a change and assisted our recording work.

This afternoon we transferred to the main shelter. We soon struck trouble as the paintings were too large and the shelter too low to be able to obtain good photographs. Took shots of a number of the more accessible paintings and will have to do battle with the others tomorrow. There is some very fine art work. However, a number of the paintings are quite indistinguishable due to the ravages of time. There were both small and large human figures and kangaroos. Two large figures dominate the cave and are no doubt important *spirit* men. There are several kangaroos in-filled with fresh looking pigment. They do not display the fine workmanship of some of the others and have probably been touched up quite recently.

Trouble – the 35mm fell over while on the tripod and the spot finder was broken. The one second stop on the Speed Graphic also failed. I hope nothing else goes wrong in this remote region.

There are many rock shelters in this area which are suitable as painting sites but do not appear to have been used as there are no signs of pigment on the rocks. Climbed the high hills at the back of the shelter this evening and gained a wide view of the surrounding countryside.

Found some indistinct paintings – human figures and a kangaroo – way up near the escarpment. The hills are very rugged. There are huge cliff-faces near the summit. It is from these that the great rocks at the base of the hill have fallen. The view was magnificent. The country is almost mountainous and in its virgin state as far as one can see in every direction.

The Christmas Creek runs east and west through the valley and is a little to the north of us. We found a water-hole where we enjoyed a good cool dip.

The nights are not so cool here. The insects are in plague proportions and seem to increase each night. It is not difficult to appreciate the aborigines' fear of the dark. Every noise is amplified – the thump of the wallaby, the rustle of the birds, the croaking of the frogs, the innumerable crickets. It would take little imagination to enter the spirit world of the aborigines.

Awoke this morning to the unfamiliar calls of a myriad of local birds. The air is very still.

The ants are thrilled about our visit as they have reaped a harvest from our scraps. They have worked assiduously all day and night until not a crumb remains!

The problems of photography are very great indeed. I had underestimated the task. I only hope I will be able to do an adequate job.

It is frustrating and very tiring in this hot weather and rugged environment.

Wednesday 2 June 1965 El Sharana - Stag Creek North Australia

Completed photographing the paintings at Christmas Creek. Attempted a mosaic cover with the Rollei which is proving to be a useful camera for taking ceiling shots. Used the electronic flash – I hope the results are good.

The main Christmas Creek rock shelter measures 80 feet E-W and 30 feet deep. It is 18 feet high at the opening and tapers to ground level at the rear. The accumulation of bone material, broken pieces of implements and general appearance of the paintings suggest this shelter has been used for centuries. The ceiling is heavily blackened with soot from the many fires which must have been made in the shelter in past times. This forms a background to the paintings. There is evidence to show that some art work has disappeared beneath the soot.

There are many cup-shaped hollows on the surfaces of the rocks in this shelter – evidently this is where ochre has been pounded up for use as pigments for the paintings. Most figures are outlined in red and filled in with lighter colours. Many are weathered and continued deterioration can be predicted.

Re-crossed the South Alligator Creek and returned to the El Sharana Mine.

Talked with a young German who is one of the mechanics. He works at Moline but visits here periodically for maintenance work. There is evidently a Dane by the name of F. Kalemberg who has been examining many of the cave paintings in this area, collecting stone implements and undertaking a little excavation. He is working through the Copenhagen Museum and has travelled extensively on prospecting expeditions in Arnhem Land.

Met with the foreman Bob Gough who escorted us to the mine. The pumps were clearing water out of the shafts. Mining did not look to be an inviting proposition. Some 100 or so people once worked at the mine. We were given some small

samples of pitch-blende (a native oxide of uranium) it is 65% pure. The only minerals are uranium and gold. There is a great variety of rocks that have been dug out of the mine. It was an interesting experience to see and hear about this remote mining venture.

The location of another cave painting site was indicated to us; it lies some 4 miles up Stag Creek. The first obstacles to be overcome are two great waterfalls. These must be a spectacle in the wet season. Some water was still flowing over them making a most impressive sight.

We decided to make a trip to the paintings this afternoon on foot to assess the situation ready for photography tomorrow. My, what a trip it was too! I have never traversed such wild, rugged, mountainous, beautiful country. The climbing itself was a great effort as we were loaded down with camera equipment. We are now exhausted tonight. My feet are blistered and my sprained ankle is causing great trouble. The Stag Creek rises on top of the plateau which we had to climb. Bypassing the waterfall took the greatest effort. As we went further up-stream the creek had dried out into large water-holes. Evidently, in places the water still runs along under the bed of the creek. The water pools were the clearest I have ever seen. Absolutely crystal clear. In many places there was pure, coarse white sand. The outcrops of large rocks, Pandanus Palms, gums and other exotic vegetation were mirrored in the clear water. Really a most beautiful sight. It is all quite strange to us - the rocks themselves, the soil, trees, the wild life - everything is unfamiliar and one seems to feel uncomfortable and rather alien in this remote country.

The trek over the hills and boulders to journey's end was goodness knows how far from our point of departure. The paintings were ample reward for such an effort and the best by far that we have found to date. No doubt many of them have been kept up by the aborigines as their condition is really excellent. Of course others have faded. However there is ample evidence to indicate the site has been used over a long, long span of time.

The enormous rocky outcrops under which the paintings occur are a sandstone - quartzite - conglomerate similar to the Katherine Gorge formations. When one ventures into the hills it is really becomes quite rugged.

Many of the shelters have weathered out into fantastic and quite unbelievable shapes. There are large quantities of animal bones heaped under some of the rocks. A truly extraordinary place. Little imagination is needed to visualize the aborigines at work in this particular shelter. Most designs are good examples of X-ray art showing the external form as well as some internal organs. There is a tendency to exaggerate the sexual organs. The figures are very colourful as several ochres have been used in many of the designs.

The journey back was even more hazardous than the journey out. We tried to find a short cut which turned out to be the longest way home over a sheer cliff-face which was quite breathtaking although the grand view was some compensation. Arrived back almost too tired to walk or prepare our tea. A cold shower in the camp did

wonders. We are bedded down on the veranda of the recreation hut which is better than the wild bush.

Thursday 3 June 1965 El Sharana – Stag Creek North Australia

Another particularly long day. Up at sunrise and on the move back to the painting site before breakfast. Climbed the escarpment to the right of the falls. It was a little easier but not much. A hard journey to the site. Spent the day photographing industriously as it is doubtful whether we will make the strenuous journey again on this trip. Met many difficulties in photographing the site – particularly with the very low ceilings. Obviously it was reasonably comfortable to paint a low ceilings with the artist lying on his back. The problems of manoeuvring a Speed Graphic to take a photograph – particularly if the painting is large – are very great. I could not claim to have obtained a complete coverage of this or any of the sites investigated so far. Such a proposition, no matter how desirable, eludes me. I am becoming reconciled to the fact that however hard I work or what time and thought I give to the project, a thorough, complete coverage does not seem possible. I wonder whether it is due to my own inexperience or whether I am attempting to record images that are simply too worn and weathered to be worthy of photographing. A complete coverage would require a whole team of talented people to undertake studies in depth and trace the images. This is a great pity. In many ways the project seems to have been undertaken far too late. Never-the-less it is important to record what is possible as before too many years pass most of them will be gone. Looking at Arnhem Land from Adelaide it seemed likely that the paintings would be in a good state of preservation as they were in some places part of a living culture. Time is a relentless agent of destruction as far as these fragile ochre paintings are concerned.

The journey up to the site and back was full of interest. Although to me it is still a very unfamiliar and unfriendly country. Disturbed several Bandicoots which ran quickly over the rocks also two black Euros. It was quite fascinating. There is no doubt about the value of walking over the country as it gives a first hand knowledge of the whole environment, however much energy is expended in the effort! The rock-holes are very picturesque with shady trees surrounding them. Many of the bushes are alive with bright green ants which have quite a nasty bite. They do not outnumber the spiders!

The paintings occur in rock shelters weathered into the sandstone ridge outcropping in this hilly country. The sandstone has distinct bedding and in many places the petrified water ripple marks are very extensive. These vary considerably some being close together others are further apart while still others show further variations on the action of water. It is quite remarkable that the ripple marks created by water have been so well preserved. This is the most outstanding area I have seen for this type of formation. The rocks have separated along the bedding. This has accelerated the processes of disintegration and assisted in the formation of shelters and caverns. There are several amazing formations some in the form of giant mushrooms. Quite extraordinary. Most of the main group of paintings occur along one specific ridge however there are minor groups in the smaller boulders lying nearby. Doubtless these formations are residuals of the former plateau which has since been cut up

and broken down and continually modified by the many fast flowing streams resulting from a 60 inch tropical rainfall in the wet season.

Some of the rocks on which the pigments were ground are still to be seen in the shelters along with broken stone implements. There are obvious signs of aboriginals having struck flakes from along the edges of some of the quartzite rocks in the shelters. The edges have been bashed about leaving a series of tell-tale conchoidal fractures. The rocks range in hardness from sandstone to quartzite a material suitable for stone implements.

If the Region was, as has been stated, a resort for the aboriginals of the coast during the wet season it is indeed an excellent one as there is a bounteous supply of all sorts of game and abundant water in rock-holes and springs in the creeks. Being elevated it would drain well and be comparatively dry for much of the year.

One of the shelters at the end of the group has weathered into a miniature catacomb. With a net-work of cavities and crevices containing a large accumulation of animal bones. Small dark tunnels extend further into the rock. There are a number of paintings on the walls and ceiling of this particular shelter although not as many as in the main cavern. Most of these paintings have suffered from constant weathering. However there are a few which have been re-touched in recent times.

Spent an interesting evening talking to Lauri MacIntosh and German born Frank Marcsik. They both have been here for a number of years and accumulated considerable local knowledge. Frank has taken an interest in locating and photographing cave paintings and been very helpful in directing us to new sites. Lauri is a mechanic looking after the compressor equipment. He has a mining background having been born and bred at Mt. Morgan. He shows no interest in the paintings but is a very sensible, likeable chap. El Sharana – like many other mining settlements in the South Alligator River Valley – was only established during the uranium boom in the mid 1950's. The good road to the mine was built in 1960-1961. The slump in the price of uranium on world markets and the fulfilling of all sales commitments has made this something of a ghost settlement. It will more than likely be abandoned unless some Government assistance is forthcoming. This also seems unlikely. It is a great pity when the machinery and associated settlement is so well established. United Uranium Co., seems to have been a reputable organisation. However, the evidence shows mining to be exploitation of the first order as it devastates the countryside and brings people into the region who lack respect for the integrity of the aboriginal sites. There is little doubt most of the artefacts that once existed at these sites have been removed.

Friday 4 June 1965 El Sharana North Australia

Spent another night under the veranda of the recreation hut at the mine. Still very tired after the activities of recent days. Decided to investigate other sites in the vicinity which are related to those already examined. Frank Marcsik gave me descriptions of these last night. Travelled back over the South Alligator and walked up several of the creeks to the escarpment on what must be roughly the western

side of the South Alligator River Valley. Apparently there are a few rock engravings located on a stone near one of these creeks. An extensive search failed to find them. A number of shelters under giant sandstone boulders contained some interesting paintings. Some of these sites had evidence of occupation with implements lying in and around the shelters. Water running from the drip-line of the shelters has washed away the soil to a shallow depth and it is through this action that the implements have been exposed. The large boulders are an extension of the Christmas Creek series and have been displaced from the top of the escarpment.

Drove up past Fisher's air-strip but failed to find access to a distant escarpment where we were told some paintings are located. Sleisbeck is about 30 miles further along the same road. The condition of the track to El Sharana is quite good.

Examined Coronation Hill and the old uranium mine. Gained an interesting view of the South Alligator River Valley and surrounding country. This helps to obtain an overall picture of the country to be examined.

I greatly fear a two man team is quite inadequate to completely record the paintings of Western Arnhem Land. Several competent artists, and technicians with support staff would find plenty to occupy themselves for many years. I feel I may make a worthwhile contribution but research over many years will be needed to accurately plot all the sites and photograph the paintings in detail.

A great effort is required to suppress the urge to collect stone implements which are surprisingly common near some of the shelters. The stone spear head is the most frequently occurring basic type. There are a number of variations of both uni-face and bi-face points. Even those implements with distal trimming appear to have originated as a blade flake which has been truncated. The weakness of uni-face points is seen in the many broken ones lying about on the floor of the camping sites. The structure of bi-face points certainly adds tremendously to the strength and support given to the point of the implement and may have developed as a consequence of so many breakages of the simpler flatter type.

We encountered a huge buffalo this morning. His horns must have been fully six feet across. I was told the young bulls drive the old males out of the herd. They graze along the rivers, often with station cattle. He looked very unfriendly with his head in the air snorting and doubtless would have taken very little to arouse. Kangaroos are far more numerous than in the South. At times mobs of 16 to 20 cross our path. They are a beautiful animal in their natural surroundings.

Returned to Katherine early this evening to post films and tidy up our equipment which has had quite a hard time.

Saturday 5 June 1965 Katherine North Australia

Packed up films and posted them to Adelaide. They will go down on Monday morning's flight. Cleaned out the Rover after the trip away.

Jack Turner came out with us this afternoon and showed us several sites near Katherine. There are many large outcrops and boulders of solidified limestone in close proximity to Katherine. The first was on C.S.I.R.O property and has been recorded and published by Wally Arndt. It is adjacent to some of the sites excavated by Jack Golson and John Mulvaney. They appear to have been used as shelters by the local aboriginals for many centuries.

A small group of 'pecked rock' engravings was located on the Southern face near the Arndt cave paintings. The designs consist of crescents, round pecked-out hollows, emu tracks and turkey tracks. The whole series are very worn and indistinct but are unquestionably ancient engravings. The pecked areas have weathered to match the surface colour of the rock. Although only a small group they do add another site to the overall Australia wide series of engraving sites.

Stone implements were found lying about on the surface. Close investigation of this site is warranted as there is the possibility of excavation.

Went on a search for the Kintore Caves. Travelled many miles but was unsuccessful in locating them. During the quest a major limestone cave was examined. A few abraded grooves were located on rocks near the entrance. It appeared to have a reasonably deep deposit.

Sunday 6 June 1965 Katherine North Australia

Spent the morning writing letters.

Ron Christie drove us out to his Uncle's farm (Wally Christie) located on the Katherine River west of the town. He is a vegetable grower. This visit brought back old memories of my own days on a market garden. I am most thankful those times are past. I wonder just how I survived them.

On the way back we examined some eroding creek banks for stone implements. Found a few, including one beautiful bi-face point. It is a type specimen identical to those found in considerable numbers in N.W. Australia. It is fashioned from stone and is indeed a beautiful specimen. Its discovery supports Dr. Campbell's often repeated view that it is foolish to call these implements Kimberley points when they do in fact have a far wider distribution and may not have originated in the Kimberley region anyway.

Spent the evening quietly.

Monday 7 June 1965 Katherine North Australia

Took Ken Archibald to the aerodrome for his return flight to Adelaide and picked up Uncle Keith who was returning from Darwin hospital. A tragedy. A young married woman of 24 had died suddenly on Saturday. Her husband and two young children were going south.

Wrote to Peter Hamilton at the Institute about films and also to Bob Wren.

Paid a visit to the Welfare Department. Had a long talk with Trevor Millikens the Patrol officer at Pine Creek. He has told several people at Jim Jim Creek, Barramundi and Nourlangie Creek that I will be coming their way later.

The first early night for many months. Feeling on edge and nervy. The planning, preparation, organizing, leaving work and so on has been a great strain. I only hope I can keep a grip on myself. I have made some enquiries today about going south on Monday next to take stock, repair cameras and so on.

Jack Turner called to tell me he has found the localities of several large groups of burial poles which used to be *in situ* along the Katherine River. I will prepare a map and mark them in tomorrow.

Tuesday 8 June 1965 Katherine North Australia (Refer letter Edwards to Campbell)

The morning was devoted to writing letters and tracing maps of the Katherine area. In the afternoon we visited Bert Nixon's farm on the River near the town. An interesting and well informed person but an untidy gardener. Still that's the way he likes it! Had an enlightened discussion on the future of the aboriginals.

Mr Nixon feels – probably quite rightly – that it is too much to expect the Australian aboriginal to be assimilated quickly – from Stone Age to Space Age. Most people have predicted grave problems in the future. Particularly if the basic wage has to be paid to all aboriginals. Their reliability and efficiency as workmen is such that most would be dispensed with if a high wage is imposed. The result would be total dependence on government support for much larger numbers. Of course this is at the expense of the taxpayer. It is a difficult problem and I am afraid it is necessary to be experienced in such matters to fully understand them. It is interesting for me to be in a position to see some of these problems at first hand.

Spend the evening planning the weekend trip. Called for the mail at the Post Office at 11 o'clock at night. This is a regular service when mail arrives from the South.

Wednesday 9 June 1965 Katherine North Australia

Spent the day out at the Gorge photographing. Now that the Bessmatic appears to be working well it was desirable to take the cliff paintings with the telephoto lens. There is no doubt about the beauty of the Gorge. I learnt today it is 90 feet deep in one part even at this time of the year when the water level is low.

The paintings are located on some 200 yards of the cliff -face near the first rapids. At each end there is a group of large figures high up on the cliff. It was these two particular occurrences that were photographed.

I was taken up River by T. Shepherd from Pittwater Road, Dee Why, NSW who is travelling around Australia by caravan with his wife, he has a temporary job on the boats which take tourist parties up the Gorge. An interesting chap and most helpful.

Sighted eight crocodiles. The most I have seen in one day. They were comparatively small – I should think about 6 feet. They are tremendously quick in the water. It would be too bad to be caught in the water by a salt water crocodile as nothing can match their speed.

Spent some time investigating eroding banks of the Katherine River. Found a few stone implements of interest.

There is an abundance of food available at the Katherine Gorge. Making it highly suitable for occupation probably over many thousands of years. The following are but a few of the plentiful edible foods: crocodiles, goannas, tortoise, barramundi, cat fish, brim, mussels, prawns and other fish. Pythons and other snakes, lizards including large water goannas and flying foxes at mouth of the gorge. Euros and kangaroos on the tableland. Rock wallabies, porcupines, bush turkeys, pigeons and other birds as well as birds' eggs. White apples (wild), fan palms, wild plum, yams and many fruit and edible berries. Native honey is also abundant. Burrundie is especially good country for yams, kangaroos, rock wallabies, goannas, snakes and porcupines.

Reasonably early night which is much needed.

Thursday 10 June 1965 Katherine North Australia

Warm to hot day with a temperature of about 90 degrees. Gave the Rover a good wash. The first it has had for some time. The wet weather encountered on arrival had left it in quite a state. I feel obliged to look after it as though it is my own.

Talked to the District Officer. He said Eric Bradyll is hereabouts doing some photographic work. I feel the more attempts made to record the art the better as there are some obvious problems which a joint effort may overcome. The painted figures are also certain to continue to weather away.

Caught up on letters and writing. Prepared a map of the Katherine Gorge as a cross reference for site locations.

Friday 11 June 1965 Katherine North Australia

Went out north of the town and explored the caves among the limestone outcrops. Unsuccessful in locating any paintings but was impressed by the intricate weathering patterns. It is certainly an ancient worn down landscape.

Spent the evening with Jack Turner discussing various sites he has located in the Northern Territory. One out from Wave Hill has paintings partly covered by deposit. Of course, this could be of great importance as far as possible dating of the paintings is concerned. He knows of another large rock engraving site on O.T. Station. I intend recording this on my way South next month.

It is said the original Katherine 'Tribe' is now extinct. The aboriginals inhabiting the area have all worked their way in from the coast.

Although I feel restless at stopping for a day or two it is important to gain as much local knowledge as possible. Without the help of those who are familiar with this country little objective work can be achieved.

Saturday 12 June 1965 Katherine North Australia

Writing reports and letters all day. Making preparations for the trip south. It is good to rest up for a day or two.

Sunday 13 June 1965 Burrundie North Australia

Jack Turner took me out to a site 4 miles west of the old Burrundie mining centre. Originally tin and gold mines. They were worked mainly by the Chinese. A number of the remnants of their cottages were investigated – found many pieces of pottery and household utensils. There are other now abandoned mines in the area. These include Mt. Wells (tin) where a new government settlement is now situated and Spring Hill (gold). Both mines were in their prime early in the 1900's.

The painting site investigated during today's survey was first located by Jack Turner when prospecting in the area in 1954. It is situated in rugged hilly country inaccessible by motor vehicle. The cave is located near the summit of a long high hill composed of conglomerates, rock shales and slate. The cave itself has weathered out of the softer materials. It has an outlook to the east and is some 60 feet wide and a similar depth. The lip-line is 15 feet at the highest point. The cave is vertical at the back where a considerable amount of debris has accumulated and a number of plants have grown.

The talus in front of the cave falls away at an average incline of 60 degrees and has pieces of slate strewn over it. Some of these have indications of being struck by human hands. The floor of the cave itself is uneven and covered in a layer of accumulated pieces of slate. Some of these also have percussion bulbs giving evidence of blade manufacture. Few finished implements were found among the debris.

The figures in this cave have almost all been painted in white pigment with two being finished with red outlines. There are a number of human figures, a fish and kangaroo together with six stencil hands in white ochre. No X-ray art was present. A number of unintelligible blotches mark the location of paintings since weathered away. Remnants of one design has a white background painted over with yellow lines.

On the way to this cave a number of flakes were found adjacent to an outcrop of high quality indurated slate – obvious evidence of an aboriginal quarry. Long spear blades were lying amongst a large accumulation of rejected artefact material. Some of this was patinated - an indication of the use of the quarry over a long period. A particularly good site for long blades. White clay was present in a seam in the ceiling. This is no doubt it was used for painting.

As we drove the Landrover through several miles of thick grass rising higher than the roof it was difficult to avoid the ant hills which are strewn across the landscape. It was then an arduous walk over very rugged country.

Visited the Horseshoe Mines where the Chinese prospected for tin and gold in the early days. Called at the old Mt. Wells Battery where the tin was treated.

Lunch at a beautiful spot near a recent tin mine where this mineral occurs in crystals. We collected several pieces. The country is rugged on Price's Spring Station. There is no permanent water in the immediate vicinity – travelled over rich but rugged country.

Returned to Katherine.

Monday 14 June 1965 Adelaide South Australia

Flew to Adelaide on the 'milk run' to review the project and evaluate the photographic techniques used in the field.

Sunday 27 June 1965 Katherine North Australia

Returned from Adelaide today together with Graeme Pretty the Curator of Archaeology at the South Australian Museum. He will be my colleague in the Department once I take up the position of Curator of Anthropology. Graeme will spend the coming weeks with me to gain experience in the field and assist with the rock art recording work.

The flight to Katherine seemed very quick compared to the hard slog by road. We passed over Pt. Augusta at 7.15 am. It was an interesting trip as we had a clear view of the country laid out below as the plane flew north across the parched deserts of Central Australia which is locked in a long and very severe drought.

Adelaide looked dark and cold as we took off from West Beach Airport. It was particularly sad to give Dr Draper Campbell a last wave and see him return the gesture. It was with mixed feelings that I sped away from family and friends and headed North to take on further challenges.

The Station people in the far North of the Territory burn off much of the tall rank grass in the dry season to stimulate new growth on which the cattle graze. The extensive fires were visible from the air with the smoke rising high up into the sky reaching the level of our aircraft. I am becoming a little more accustomed to flying although it could be that a late night and the rush to get away made me too tired to worry about anything.

Met an interesting chap on the plane named Bern Dawson. He is in charge of a team surveying the agricultural potential of the Northern Territory. They will be stationed at Jim Jim crossing and have the use of helicopters to aid them in their

work. We may meet up in the next few weeks as it is my intension to also be in the same area.

Uncle Keith Gordon met us at the Katherine Aerodrome. I must admit to feeling far less tired on arrival than when first reaching Katherine after the long journey overland.

Everything seemed just the same as when I departed. The trusty Landrover to which I have become very attached was waiting for me where I had left it together with all my equipment.

Jack Turner came over to let me know he had found several more cave painting sites and collected some stone implements while on a field trip with the Department of Works. Later in the day Graeme and I went over and had a long and interesting talk with him. My work up here is creating considerable interest and there are many people on the look out for new sites.

There have been two aboriginals camping at Uncle Keith's place in the hope of cadging a ride back Mainoru. One is a very old man named Dick and the other a young chap known as Willy 'Smiler' Martin as he is always happy and smiling. Uncle Keith is keen for them to return home as they dislike Katherine and are very unhappy.

I had met Willy some weeks ago in Katherine. He had told me about a magnificent cave painting site known to him when he was living as a young boy in his father's country along the Wilton River. He urged me to take him out to this place as I would see the best paintings in the world. Willy also promised to guide me around Mainoru Station which is his country and his present home. When I asked him how far the paintings were from the Station Homestead he said *little bit long way*. Of course this was of no help in knowing what to expect. Never-the-less I intend following up this lead as Willy impressed me deeply and the enthusiasm he had shown for his own country was quite infectious.

It is inevitable therefore that we must go out to Mainoru in the morning. I unpacked the Landrover this afternoon and sorted out the equipment ready for an early departure. I am now very tired from the long day but still writing letters to post before going to bed and it is already midnight.

Monday 28 June 1965 Mainoru Station Central Arnhem Land

This morning was quite cold and I did not really feel like getting up. Preparations for departure took some time as stores had to be purchased and a number of parcels collected to take out to the station people. Also had to fill up with water and petrol. Departed Katherine at 10.40 am. Mileage on Landrover 3,550 miles. Travelled south on the bitumen then turned off towards Beswick settlement. Our native companions were good company all the way and kept up a happy conversation. Passed through the country of the Katherine aboriginals (Djauwon) which are now extinct. The numerous aboriginals living in the district today have migrated in from

the coast of Arnhem Land. The two aboriginals with us are members of the Rembarrunga Tribe who have always inhabited the Mainoru Region.

As we travelled along the bitumen we passed many typical limestone outcrops which have been weathered into fantastic shapes. The bedding of the rocks is horizontal and in some instances large blocks appear to rest loosely one upon the other. From a distance some of these are quite reminiscent of giant Easter Island statues.

Reached Beswick Settlement at 3,602 miles. A very neat and tidy place. A good reflection on the Superintendent, Jim Faint. I had to call at the Reserve to obtain a permit to pass through the settlement as the Welfare Officer in Katherine, Mick Ivory, is away in Darwin. In any event Mr. Faint was in Katherine! I explained the position to the lady in charge and all was well.

The journey continued through typical Arnhem Land scrub. We crossed many creeks and watercourses. Graeme occupied himself by recording Rembarrunga names from our companions. These included many of the trees, shrubs, rivers, animals and distinctive landmarks. Stopped at the Waterhouse River (3,622 miles). A large stream which is drying back into waterholes. It has an extremely sandy bed. Took a number of photographs. Smiler walked up the River with me. A native companion is good in this country especially as it helps ones confidence. Continued over flat country then through hills and descended into a valley. Crossed Burkit Creek at 3,636 miles. Stopped for lunch 3 miles further along the track. Some fascinating termite mounds. These are a dominant feature of the landscape and interesting to observe due to the range of shapes and sizes. It is noticeable that as the colour of the earth changes so do the mounds. It is a quick reference to identify the type of soil when the grass is thick. The evening light makes them stand out. They stretch away in every direction as far as the eye can see. Could not resist taking some photographs. Dick attempted to make a stone implement but the material was too poor at this locality. He appears to know all about stone flaking techniques. Some good work on stone tool technology could be undertaken in this region.

Departed at 3.20 pm. A few miles down the track (that's all it is!) we came upon a large transport full of cattle caught in Wire Creek. The bank was too steep for the vehicle to climb out and we were unable to reverse. It had been marooned since midnight on the previous night and the driver was glad to see someone come along. The poor cattle had been without water for 28 hours and were naturally thirsty and discontented. We could not do much to help as the Landrover is too small but promised to divert our course to Mountain Valley Station where the cattle were to go and ask them to send help (3,664 miles).

We have been going over flat country for many miles. Encountered several mobs of wild horses (brumbies). They are beautiful animals. Most are brown with dark manes and tails. They stopped to look at us and then galloped away at great speed. Travelling through Djauwon country. Passed a large waterhole in the creek at 3691 miles. Interesting outcrops of tabular slate with horizontal bedding. Two old bush shelters nearby. At 3697 miles we arrived at Mountain Valley Station. Met the owner

Neville Hood, his wife and father. They have occupied the station for 12 years and appear to be doing well. The rainfall is 26 inches per annum.

As we were now in Rembarrunga country Dick and Willy seemed very pleased and relaxed. Entered the Mainoru Station property at 6.20 pm at 3,716 miles. It was almost dark and we were all anxious to reach our destination. Crossed a series of creeks – eight mile, four mile, and two mile! Final destination Mainoru Station at 3728 miles, a distance of 178 miles from Katherine. It certainly felt a long way from civilization. It is virtually at the end of the road and located in real isolation apart from having radio and aeroplane contact. The station is on the Darwin network and calls in every day. The plane comes once a week. As we drove in a dozen or so little black children ran after the Landrover. The station homestead is situated in an elevated position overlooking a large river of fresh water (Mainoru Springs). It is impossible to see the water from the house as the Pandanus Palms and other vegetation are very thick. There are many Paw Paw trees around the house. These give an attractive and tropical appearance. As I write this evening the donkeys (wild) are making a tremendous noise. They have come in close to the house and are “he-hawing” in great style.

I am afraid my writing is very poor as I am lying in bed holding a torch in one hand and trying to write with the other. There has been such activity since arriving back from Adelaide that I have found it impossible to keep the journal up to date. Of course this is a great pity. However, it really is quite an effort as there is so much happening and the long days are very tiring. At Mainoru the lights go out at 9.30 pm every night.

In spite of having had no definite indication of our visit we were treated to typical Territory hospitality on arrival. A good hot meal (kidney stew!! – the things I suffer!) and a clean and comfortable bed in which to rest our very weary selves. A cold shower was also welcome! The station is owned by Jack (Sandy) Macky. His sister Mrs. Dodd, lives here and teaches the aboriginal children (some 40 or so). Her daughter (Heather) completes the household. Both Jack and Mrs. Dodd are elderly and very good company.

Tuesday 29 June 1965 Escape Creek Central Arnhem Land

Up early. Who could sleep with the shortwave receiver blaring! Tuning in time 6.30 am!! Sumptuous breakfast. Several of the younger aboriginal girls help in the house and do so very capably. In compliance with an earlier request Mrs. Dodd invited us to inspect the school. This was a fascinating experience. She blends kindness with discipline (mostly the latter). It was quite evident that she accomplishes much in teaching the aboriginals. The children start school at about 3 years of age – to keep them out of mischief. Our first introduction was to hear three of the tiniest little kids you can imagine count up to 20 and answer questions. From this beginning we were given a demonstration of the remarkable progress made by children of all ages. It was quite incredible. Young boys will have to improve greatly. They know all their tables at a very young age and can say them backwards, or in any other way. The older ones were set a test – they all had every question correct. After about an hour

they sang for us. The climax came when one of the boys went over to the camp and returned with his didgeridoo and music sticks. You cannot picture the scene without actually being present. Even the 3 year olds joined in a *corroboree* for our special enjoyment. It was the most touching scene witnessed so far on our travels. The school is clean, light and airy. The children are taught to wash and given fruit juice and milk each morning. They are very happy and seem to enjoy their lessons. Several of the older girls (11 and 12) are already married and have babies themselves! Mrs. Dodd is encouraging marriage between young couples rather than letting the old men marry the young girls which has always been the custom.

At 10am we climbed aboard the Landrover accompanied by Willy our guide and began another Arnhem Land adventure. (Mileage 3,728.5) We had no idea where we were going or how we would reach our destination. Willy was delighted I had accepted his offer to show us the cave paintings out East as described to me in Katherine - so away we went – entirely in his hands which turned out to be very capable and reliable.

Passed Jabiru Hill (a bird) 3,731 miles. Willy told us the old people used to collect eggs of the Jabiru bird from this locality. Crossed a broad gilgai plain skirted by trees. Very rough: no road at all – except for a pack-horse track – if this can be called a road. Crossed a number of deep creeks. Bottom gear all the way. Low range through the creeks. Grass is all of 8 feet high through most of this country. Termite mounds and fallen trees made the journey even more hazardous. Had a close escape from an accident with the Rover. Willy asked me to stop so he could look at the country ahead to make certain there was nothing too dangerous. He walked around in front of the Landrover and disappeared from sight. He had fallen into a big hole hidden by the long grass! He rose up again almost as quickly as he had disappeared. With a big grin he exclaimed *my word that big fella hole, we nearly disappear in him*. Willy was the height of good humour and proved to be a magnificent and very loyal guide, highly intelligent and a good friend. We moved through the country very slowly as it is bisected by a number of creeks. It was difficult to find suitable crossing places as the banks were very steep. The most challenging driving ever encountered – by me at least.

Willy has been in Darwin hospital having an operation on one of his hands which has been deformed through leprosy. He was full of information about the political situation as it affects his people and is well informed. He has some very sensible ideas about the future for aboriginal people. He explained to us that there was great concern when they were given the right to vote. It arose from a language misunderstanding. Various officers went about lecturing on the new right to *vote*. The aboriginals thought they each had to buy a *boat* to be like the white man. There was great consternation. How were they to obtain enough money to each buy a boat? And what would they do with all the boats?

We skirted rocky ridges for several miles travelling along the flood plain of the Mainoru Creek. Willy told us one of the finer tall grasses on the swampy flats is called *Manalerik*. It is used to make necklaces for corroborees. Passed through a scrub of *smoke* trees so named on account of its light grey coloured leaves. Willy

also pointed out areas of native cotton. In the *old days* the *natives* used this for making cotton string.

At 2pm we arrived at Coolamon (3746 miles). This is large and very delightful permanent waterhole. It is very picturesque with many large white-bark gums, paper bark trees, a few lilies on the water and surrounded by other smaller trees and bushes. It is named Coolamon as the first white people to visit the waterhole disturbed a group of aboriginal women who were in the billabong collecting lily roots. They had raced away leaving their coolamons behind.

There is a stockyard a short distance away. It can be seen through the trees. Stopped at this lovely place for a late dinner. Took some photographs then left at about 4pm. We skirted a large creek with extensive water-holes. The grass is very tall: up to the roof of the Rover. Really a tedious business with a number of bad creek crossings. The most difficult country to date.

Pulled up for the night at 5.54pm as it was too rugged to drive any further - mileage 3748.5 miles. A distance of 20 miles covered in 8 hours. Set up camp on a hillside in a strategic position for the walk into Escape Creek where the cave paintings are located. This water course runs into the larger Wilton Creek. Willy was last in the area as a young boy and is very anxious that we see the magnificent cave paintings in his country. He remembers the site well from his youth and assured us we would not be disappointed.

Prepared dinner and then sat around the campfire. Willy is a good mechanic and a driver at Mainoru but after dark he is an absolute treat as he returns to the old ways and becomes a really superstitious aboriginal full of stories of the past and of his people. All that can be seen of Willy by the fire-light are his big white eyes and long rows of white teeth with a dark gap in the top row where the old men knocked a tooth out during his initiation ceremony. Willy tells us a fire-stick and hammer stone were used for this operation. He described it as a very painful experience. After the tooth had been knocked out he had to spit the blood between one of his big toes and the adjacent one. Several elders looked on and if by chance he failed to achieve this feat he would have been considered unfit for further advancement in the group.

Willy and the members of his traditional family have decided that the white man fails to understand the black man's ways and this has led to many problems for both. In their simple way they have decided that some *Canberra people* should be told *the old ways* so they can understand and make laws amenable to all concerned. This question arose over gaining citizenship which was given to them without their specific request – a condition being that all *the old ways* had to be abandoned and forgotten. This seemed quite unfair to Willy and many of his tribe as indeed it does to me. He hopes our work will help the *cause* of his people.

I listened in complete fascination to the stories he told with great seriousness and many gestures. Of the lubra who was collecting water lily roots in a lagoon when a great buffalo came up behind her, tossed her on its back and sped away with her at great speed. Truth and fiction – legend and fact seemed to be delightfully mixed and

a very serious Willy became very excited and animated. I have no doubt he really imagined he was taking part in the story himself. It is not hard to realize what mythology meant to these people in the time before white man came on the scene. Willy kept on emphasising how terribly strict were the old laws. There seems no doubt punishment and even death was a threat from a young age and a high degree of discipline and respect for tribal laws was thereby maintained in the group.

Willy gave me a sense of confidence about the country and all its strangeness. However he was in fact quite scared of the dark as well as the buffaloes, snakes, dingoes, etc. which concerned me too. He also had to contend with the spirit world. Upon hearing a rustle in the leaves nearby he would shoot up (scaring the life out of us) and exclaim *what's that*. Graeme and I listened in respectful silence. He said very seriously after a while *Willy make big ear like donkey tonight*. This was indeed true for I am certain he slept very little. Although we were in the midst of buffalo country we had no trouble other than hearing them rustling through the nearby bush.

Willy appears to have been appointed to a position of leadership in his group and struggles to keep the people together and on the original tribal lands. They are planning for the future but find themselves excluded from the white man's ways while at the same time being forced to abandon their rich inherited culture. They are in an unenviably complex position and feel confused about the old ways being preserved as killing seems to have been a fairly frequent punishment for breaking tribal laws. It has now been decided to modify the extremely strict and rigorous hold many of their beliefs have over the individual members of the tribe by gradually easing them. Willy told us all these things because he is very concerned, needs help and hopes we may be able to do something to bring happiness to his people.

I went to bed completely fascinated by this first experience of an aboriginal deeply involved in the affairs of his people. I found it difficult to sleep for thinking of the stories told so vividly by a remarkable but still *primitive* man who is living in the midst of change.

Wednesday. 30 June 1965 Escape Creek Central Arnhem Land

Due to the exertion of travel and discussions that went on well into the night we did not get up as early as planned. This proved unfortunate as we had a long trek ahead of us on foot. Cooked a good breakfast and struck out across the hills at 8.30am. Crossed over difficult rocky country. Up and down hills and gullies. Willy was quite concerned all the way for fear he would fail to lead us straight to the main series of paintings as it is many years since he last visited what in his mind is a large and elaborate art site. Stopped at regular intervals for a drink and spell. A very necessary precaution when on exhausting enterprises in this country.

Eventually we reached Escape Creek and followed it up for some considerable distance passing en route a number of extensive water holes containing a good supply of clear fresh water. The River runs through a rather strange u-shaped valley with high cliffs reaching skywards on both sides. There are numerous overhangs and weathered out shelters along the escarpment and it was to a large one of these

that Willy led us – right on target. We were stiff and exhausted after the 3 ½ hour walk through quite difficult country and resolved to have lunch before beginning to photograph the site. Willy could not rest and insisted on exploring along the escarpment in an endeavour to locate more paintings. We were deeply concerned that we would lose contact with him as we had very little idea of how to return to our vehicle and without him we would be left in an isolated part of a vast and little known region. Willy returned with a smile and news of paintings extending along in both directions. These included an extraordinary giant Rainbow Serpent.

Willy told us that Escape Creek is *Kabadu* as further down to the north east towards the Wilton River there is a ceremonial ground, *Padarnnanga*. Escape Creek was made by a mythical snake *Datpa*. He had been a Kind Brown Snake and was responsible for making and naming many of the features of the landscape. He also distributed the boomerang to many tribes. Apparently, according to myth, he began his journey on the coast, passed through Rembarrunga country and on through to the centre of Australia “right down passed Alice Springs way.” The serpent did not give the Rembarrunga the boomerang. This is their explanation for lacking the weapon in an otherwise rich material culture.

Willy explained that when a man dies a drawing must be made for him either in a cave or at some other place. He pointed out many bisected circles which were made to perpetuate different tribal members. They apparently represent the ceremonies experienced by the deceased person during his journey through life.

The rocks appear to be fine grained horizontally bedded sand stones with tabular jointing. It is a picturesque and very significant locality. Unfortunately our time examining the paintings was limited as the return journey had to be confronted in failing light. Greater preparation involving several weeks would be necessary to completely cover this important site. As we had only brought meagre food supplies with us our only option was to return to the Landrover this evening.

The Rainbow Serpent paintings were the most impressive I have ever seen and are located north of the first rock shelter examined. They extend for a tremendous distance and are very elaborate and colourful – full of interest. There are also many paintings along the cliffs between the two main groups. It is obviously a site of great importance. Time was pressing as the return journey involved another 3 ½ hours of strenuous walking. As a consequence photography became a hurried and difficult business. The paintings were partly in the shade and posed difficulties because of their large size. I can only hope I have some success as it would be tragic to fail to have a record of this new site.

We hastened back south along the cliffs passing as we went many more paintings of interest. There were also groups of abraded grooves of varying lengths and depth. None of them were painted. They appeared to have been freshly made indicating significance in relatively recent rituals. It was with regret that I left this place so steeped in the legends of a fascinating people. Ken Maddock should most certainly visit this particular area to record the rich mythology.

Departed the Wilton River for our base camp at 4.10pm. We hurried along as quickly as we were able to as the thought of being lost in the dense scrub at night without food or water was quite daunting. Willy again took the lead. After the first couple of miles the weight of equipment plus the reaction to the days extreme exertion made every movement something of an effort. After a time we strode along from habit rather than desire – the lateness of the hour was sufficient incentive to keep us moving.

Before the journey came to an end we were given an excellent example of the aboriginals' phenomenal ability to find their way through the bush. On the outward journey – about a mile or so from our camp we noticed a large, perfectly formed spider web. It had been covered in early morning dew and made a beautiful sight as it shimmered in the early sunlight. We had passed around it with only a casual glance and comment. After travelling about 2 ½ hours on the return journey Willy suddenly aroused me from my deep thoughts by stopping and looking about in the dim evening light and exclaimed *where's that big fella spider web, we donna want to meet him*. At the time I remember thinking he was about to say we were lost and would not reach camp until the next morning or perhaps he was suffering hallucinations after the long day. To my complete amazement a few yards further along the way there appeared the same spider web. Willy earned my complete respect and confidence from that moment.

We reached camp at 7.15pm tired out but very pleased to be *home*. Willy lit a grand fire and we had a large and welcome meal.

After tea Willy again lapsed into myth, legend and the aboriginal world. Standing before the glowing fire dressed only in a pair of shorts he looked an impressive sight. His large white eyes gleamed and his long line of white teeth showed up against the pitch black night. There was a new moon. Willy had an urge to share his problems. He had been made a head man by his tribe. One of his responsibilities was to circumcise the young boys in an appropriate ceremony. To his complete consternation while he was away in hospital the doctor had circumcised four of the young boys. This was an infringement of tribal law. It was of great concern to him. There were all sorts of implications arising from this impertinent action and there would be *big talk* about such a serious matter. This led to a further discussion on citizenship and his tribe's reticence to abandon all the ways of their grandfathers. His laws had been very strong and punishment meted out in a severe manner. Willy could see the advantages of weakening the old system to some extent but certainly not in abandoning it altogether.

He then told us the exciting story of the mythical alligator who took a young girl – maimed her – dragged her under the water and forced her to marry him. Willy became more and more excited as he hastily and not too clearly relayed the story. It appeared almost as though he was losing hold of himself in his serious enthusiasm. Nelly the cat and the Moon story followed. White eyes flashed even more. It is a great pity such experiences cannot be captured on film or in some other way. It was a completely unbelievable experience. Such stories as those relayed to us had a distinct moral message and seemed to be designed to scare the aboriginals into

doing the right thing in all matters. The fear of *The Law* from youth is extremely strong and serious violations would bring severe punishment as Willy had already explained on the previous evening.

Willy interpreted abraded grooves found at Escape Creek as tally marks to indicate time lapses between important corroborees in the old days. Ceremonies of one kind and another seem to have occupied a large part of their time. There must have been a wide range in the type and seriousness of the various gatherings. Some were for general amusement while others were indeed very secret. They join with neighbouring tribes for some ceremonies although from Willy's remarks the Rembarrunga appear to have been at enmity with the adjoining coastal tribes.

The story of *Datpa*, the mythical Rainbow Serpent was long and involved and it was impossible to make a full record. This did not appear essential as Willy told us he had worked with Prof. Elkin on a number of occasions, *Prof. Elkin was his grandfather*.

It is essentially a legend of the Dreaming time (*kadjangan*) when a mythical snake began his journey from the coast right across Australia making creeks and hills, forming cliffs, giving the people songs, names, stories, language, weapons and sacred objects. He made the laws and is associated with the Kunipipi (ceremony). *Datpa* entered Rembarrunga country at *djambarr*. He was followed by a Brolga and two women. At a place known as *Maraindjara* the women's blood crossed. After this all the creatures in the land gathered for a big corroboree. It is this ceremony that has been re-enacted, probably over many centuries, and from Willy's description with considerable realistic vigour. *Datpa* was frightened by a big red plain kangaroo (*Damiriri*) near a crossing on Wilton Creek. This place is well known and the event is perpetuated. *Datpa* ultimately finished up his amazing journey way to the south of Alice Springs at a locality known as *Plinara* or *Wangarala*.

I went to bed completely exhausted but with my mind reeling with the events of the evening. We all slept reasonably soundly despite the noises as the bush came alive in the night.

Thursday. 1 July 1965 Mainoru Station Central Arnhem Land

Peeped out of my sleeping bag to see a mist blanketing the countryside and a heavy dew coating everything. I was content to rest for another hour! Up in the chill of the morning and cooked a good breakfast. Packed up ready for our return over the difficult 20 miles separating our camp from the Mainoru homestead. Departed at 10.20am mileage - 3748.5 miles. Stopped at Coolamon, two miles distant. *En route* Willy recalled the morning he woke up to find a snake slithering up his pyjama leg. *Me make big fella jump – smash mosquito net and hit head on roof*. You would have to see it to appreciate the performance. Another night he and his wife and two other aboriginals were camped at a water-hole. Willy awoke to find an enormous wild buffalo breathing on his face. Poor Willy vividly portrayed the fright he received. The buffalo was eventually speared after a wild chase for an hour or so.

We stopped at the lagoon at Coolamon as Willy had offered to prepare a bark painting for me. I wanted to make a photographic record of each stage of the process on Extachrome X. It proved to be quite a drawn out affair but of great interest. Such experiences are going to be of importance in my museum future. I do hope the photographs come out as the subject matter had very high contrasts. Willy also wore bright white shorts and had three fingers in plaster! This made it difficult and several exposures were made of each part of the sequence. (These were later published as a colour book).

A suitable tree was selected and a large piece of bark removed. The outline of the painting was first cut through the bark and then the sheet gradually prized off the tree. We returned to the lagoon where a fire was lit and the fresh bark placed on the flames to flatten it. Willy then dived in for a swim followed by a hearty lunch. As the painting was far from complete when it was time to leave we took it along to Mainoru with us.

The journey back was as slow and difficult as the outward trip. On the way Willy spotted a wild bush turkey – excellent eating and much prized by the aboriginals. There was great excitement as the gun was taken out and the bird stalked. It has a peculiar stride neither stopping nor hurrying. It continued on its course quite unperturbed by the hail of bullets from Willy's gun. One struck the bird but it kept on at its regular pace and disappeared behind a large stone. Willy raced after it only to find it had dropped dead. He was delighted and quite a hero when we arrived at the homestead at 5 o'clock - mileage 3767 with a large fat bush turkey.

Mainoru homestead is large and spacious with cool flagstone floors. Built in the tropical style, with ample ventilation; it is very liveable. We will indeed be quite sorry when the time comes to leave.

Had an enormous tea. Talked with Jack McKay. The Boys will be interested in one of the experiences he relayed to us. When he first came to this country years ago he only had a push-bike to ride. While travelling along the bush track one day he came upon a large flock of emus drinking at a water-hole. They rushed at him and being frightened he hastily climbed a tree. The emus started taking bites at his bike and so wrecked it that he had to abandon it and walk the rest of the way home.

About 9.15 pm two stock boys came to the homestead. They were about 15 years of age and named Ricky and Geoff. Ricky had a large swelling on the inside of his right knee and was in great pain. The station people care for all the sick aboriginals through the flying doctor. There is a large stock of medicines on hand at all times and unless it is a matter of great seriousness the doctor prescribes treatment and medicines over the radio. Emergency calls can be made on every hour of the day. It is a comforting feeling to know that such a service exists.

Prior to Jack McKay, taking up the property in 1928 Mainoru it was owned by Billy Farrar.

Retired to bed tired out.

Friday. 2 July 1965 Mainoru Station Central Arnhem Land

After a conference it was decided to drive out to Bulman (*Bjigeri*) some 40 miles distance to see an enormous water-hole and corroboree ground. All the aboriginals had been enthusiastic about the place to which they appear to attach particular importance. Left at 10.00 am – mileage 3768. Became bogged in the main creek near the homestead. Black and very sticky mud. The Landrover went down to the back axle with the exhaust gurgling under the water like a motor boat. Chuck – an oldish aboriginal who had accompanied us as our guide was an extremely pleasant natured person and respected by all his people. Assistance came from the station and with some pushing and digging we eventually freed ourselves and proceeded on our way.

The road was a complete horror, rough and rocky. Washed out most of the way with tall grass growing over it. Crossed the Leichhardt Creek at 3775.8 miles. As we drove slowly forward Chuck (*Djaiilama*) dropped lighted matches out of the window in a most casual way. We left a trail of smoke and fire behind us as the dry grass caught alight and burnt rapidly. It is customary to do this as the high rank grass is not suitable for cattle. After burning young growth comes up quickly providing good tender feed for the stock.

We reached Lindsay Creek at 12.10pm mileage 3790.8. The ground became very boggy and before we had proceeded very far we had driven right into a horrible, large swamp. It was fortunate we stopped when we did otherwise we would still be there. I manoeuvred around and attempted to find a passage through the mire but was unsuccessful. It became obvious that we would not reach Bulman as further progress was impeded by vast swamps spreading out as far as the eye could see. We turned back reluctantly very disappointed at our defeat. Bulman is held in such reverence and is associated with so much of the old law we had hoped to see and learn much from our visit.

Encountered several buffaloes wallowing in the swampy ground. One was only young while the others were large and bad-tempered. Recent rains have evidently set a myriad of rivers running in this region. The flat plains are very sticky when wet – typical gilgai country.

Returned to Mainoru over the same rough track. The fires had done a good job as burning off the grass made it easier for us to find our way without coming to grief in the deep wash-aways. Unfortunately we bent the back door of the Landrover rather badly when negotiating one of the steep creek-bed. The spare tyre evidently struck the sharp edge of the bank.

We walked down to the aboriginal camp to see how Ricky was recovering. He is still in great pain with his infected leg. Met several of the old men. They have dozens of dogs. Most look like a dingo cross. Willy and Smiler were pleased to see us. Introduced to Ronny's father (Bulman Paddy) who is one of the oldest in the group and is scarred from his many fights in the *old days*. Willy brought out a fine

didgeridoo. It was unusually large and had been hollowed out through the centre by termites. It had a “reduced” mouth piece which makes it more effective. The children love to dance. Some beating special music sticks soon appeared and in a few minutes there was an enthusiastic *mulara* or party. After a while I was encouraged to take over on a pair of sticks and beat time as enthusiastically as the aborigines. We played and danced well into the night. Willy put on a fantastic performance. He is a dancing man and sang and danced a number of very lively solos. His comrades received his various efforts with great enthusiasm. It was all very exciting – quite a fantastic experience for us newcomers. I was made a *temporary dua* man. This is a moiety (*nuja*) Graeme was made an *iritja* man. He seemed to consider this a lesser degree – much to his annoyance.

Retreated to bed but could not sleep for thinking of these *primitive* people and the dances we had witnessed. The obvious enjoyment they obtained from the night’s proceedings was a delight for us to see. From the homestead we could hear the didgeridoo, sticks and singing well into the night. As the hour became later the singing increased in enthusiasm and volume. Wild shouts came echoing through the night. It will be a great tragedy if such customs are abandoned. Having participated myself I can begin to appreciate what obvious delight and inspiration these people gain from their traditional ways.

The aborigines on Mainoru are a happy but still *semi-traditional* people. They have a wonderful sense of humour and gain obvious enjoyment from most things they do. The country abounds in game and edible fruits and berries which they still relish. They live in one or two room prefabricated huts – sleeping on rugs or bags on the floor. To us their conditions seem very poor but they evince no sign of discomfort. One big factor contributing to the happiness of these particular people is the fact that they still live on their tribal lands. On week-ends they can continue to visit their old familiar places and corroboree grounds.

Mrs. Dodd told me their morals are none too high. One lubra will often have children by several men and some men still have several wives. Occasionally a nomadic family will come in from the bush. They are often in very poor health. Apparently the women still kill their babies on occasions as was the tradition and there is a definite confusion between the old ways and the new. It is said that only a few years ago the babies were eaten under certain circumstances.

The young people are encouraged in the old ways. There is no doubt the boys mimic the older men from an early age. Even when only two and three years old they participate in the dancing and story telling with serious enthusiasm. They learn quickly and remember all the proper steps. What a sight they are when gathered in the fire-light.

Saturday 3 July 1965 Mainoru Station Central Arnhem Land

Had the usual enormous breakfast – paw-paws, steak, eggs, sweetcorn, potatoes, toast and tea!!

Went down to the River a short distance from the homestead. It is quite park-like with green grass and gums and a picturesque background of Pandanus Palms. Took a number of portraits of the aboriginal children. Several of the older men came down and made string figures which Graeme and I both photographed. It is difficult to have a contrasting background and I fear the results may be indifferent. Played with the kids – they are a great bunch – full of fun. Mrs. Dodd invited Cath and the boys up for a holiday at any time. What a delight that would be for all concerned.

After lunch Smiler and Ronny directed us out along the River to a small rock engraving site. There were 12 kangaroo type tracks, 1 pair of human feet and 27 cup-shaped pounded hollows. They occur on a gently sloping surface of slaty rock. The aboriginals explained that these markings were made when the rocks were soft and the animals crossed them leaving their tracks indented in the surface which then became consolidated and so preserved for all time. The site is ¼ mile N.W. of a large water-hole. The creek is very beautiful in this vicinity as it is fed by large springs located higher upstream. It extends for some miles and is permanent.

Mileage on departure 3813 – on return 3832.7.

On the journey home we searched for hollow trees from which to obtain wood suitable for making didgeridoos. Surprisingly we were unsuccessful. Ideal raw material seems hard to come by at least in this particular locality. No doubt suitable trees have been harvested over many years.

On return Willy engrossed himself in painting my bark painting. He is doing a very good job. Took several photographs of Willy at work. He really is quite an amazing personality. We were watching him at work when his wife started cleaning up in the kitchen a short distance away. Suddenly there was a great rush of dirty, soapy water which surrounded the great artist at work. There was much confusion and excitement. His poor wife was hotly reprimanded. The episode was quite amusing to watch. We nicknamed Willie, *Rembrandt*.

It has been an interesting day full of the most valuable first hand experiences – providing invaluable background information for my future role at the S.A. Museum.

When I went to the toilet tonight I pressed the knob and a huge green frog jumped out. It was all of 9" in length. It gave me a terrible fright as for the moment I failed to realize what was happening.

Sunday 4 July 1965 Katherine North Australia

Took a final shot or two of Willy working on the special bark painting. Said farewell to our friends at Mainoru and set out once again for Katherine at 9.50 am – mileage 3,833.4.

My experience in travelling through the bush has taught me to pay more attention to the sun and familiarize myself with the fact that it rises in the east and sets in the west! The various guides we had at Mainoru proved to me how intimately these

people know their country. Miles mean nothing to them in fact they have little appreciation of distance as we know it. A three mile walk may turn out to be 6 miles or a two mile walk only one. However they know every feature of the land, i.e. creeks, hills, depressions, rock outcrops, particular trees and so on. They travel from place to place rather than over any specific distance. This vagueness worried me at first until I learnt to understand it. Quite often they make good use of kangaroo and other animal tracks because these creatures always choose the best and least tiring route around hilly country.

Willy quite amazed us with his ability to mimic people. Jack McKay who is a well-known Territory identity, has a hair lip. Willy's impersonation of him was perfect. There are many stories about old Sandy. He has a reputation for being rough on motor vehicles and in the habit of making for Katherine when the road is very wet. It evidently takes weeks to do the trip under such conditions. On occasions it has taken a week to get out of one mud hole. On one trip he was taking a new truck home and crashed into a tree shearing off a mudguard. When asked about it he simply said it didn't matter because it would eventually fall off anyway.

The trip back was slow over the very rough road. Took some pictures of the beautiful clean skinned Salmon Gums. Called at Beswick Settlement to see whether Ken Maddock had arrived to join our party. Unfortunately he still has failed to appear. Talked for a short time to Jim Faint, the Superintendent. Arrived in Katherine at 6.00 pm - mileage - 3,995.8. Tired but feel excited about the cave paintings on the Wilton River and the good experiences shared with Willy and his people. I only hope the photographs are satisfactory.

Smiler and Chuck (*Podaiawalja*) accompanied us to Katherine to collect the Mainoru truck which is being repaired. They have lit a fire and are sound asleep in Uncle Keith's back yard. We too will soon be dead to the world.

Monday 5 July 1965 Katherine North Australia

Caught up in a busy day of routine chores in Katherine. Packed up exposed films for postage to Adelaide, wrote letters and my journal. Gave the Landrover a good clean inside and a thorough wash all over. It is better to keep it clean even if going into dusty country again. Checked the petrol, oil and so on ready for departure. Visited Roy Morgan and Jack Turner for a brief period in the evening. A very pleasant time relaying our experiences to anyone with the patience to listen.

Tuesday 6 July 1965 Moline Western Arnhem Land

Well here I am now at Moline out from Pine Creek. This is an ore treatment plant where uranium from the El Sharana and other mines is converted into oxide before being exported. Joe Fisher is the Manager and also a member of the N.T. Legislative Council. He lives here with his wife, he is being very congenial and helpful and has provided us with several maps showing the location of cave painting sites in this area. Mr. & Mrs. Fisher had four boys – just like me - but very tragically the eldest boy was killed recently in a road accident not far from the settlement. The

other boys John, Robert and Gregory are extremely nice and have let Graeme and me sleep in their two little rumpus rooms at the back of the house. They each have a bed, table and chair and boy's nick-nacks i.e. shells, crocodile and snake skins, minerals, bark paintings and several *Man* magazines. We were invited to dinner. A delicious and large helping of locally caught Barramundi. Mr Fisher has been living here since the early 1950's and has an intimate knowledge of the whole area. He has taken a great interest in cave paintings and has a large collection of very good slides. We looked at many of them this evening.

Packed up and purchased stores this morning. It took much longer than it should have and we failed to leave Katherine until 11.00 o'clock - mileage 3,999. The journey to Pine Creek has become routine now that we have travelled it several times. Never-the-less there are always interesting rock formations – limestone then granite – to look at as well as the old diggings near Pine Creek where all the earth has been turned over in the quest for gold.

Arrived at Pine Creek at 12.20pm – mileage 4,066. Called on Trevor Milliken the Officer-in-charge of Welfare. He asked us over to the hotel for a drink. A long discussion ensued concerning the problems of the local aboriginals. This was very interesting. It was a hot day and a cold drink was a good reviver. Several men were letting off big fire crackers in the hotel bar which was quite nerve racking.

Trevor was concerned as the Health Officer from Darwin is expected to inspect his aboriginal camp. He has sent the old aboriginal women away in the bush for the day with their numerous dogs as they are really not allowed to keep so many. He is a kind and caring person. He has a young Irish wife who must have lost patience with him because it was nearing 3.00 pm. when we eventually left for Moline and he returned home for his lunch.

We asked Trevor whether he had a knowledgeable aboriginal in the settlement who is familiar with the El Sharana, Sleisbeck area and could act as our guide. We were introduced to Jackson Bark an elderly, grey-haired, whiskery, but kindly aboriginal. He is accompanying us. So far he has hardly spoken a word - not that he has really had a chance yet as he is asleep outside of my door rolled up in his blanket. It is a comfort to have a person with us who knows something of the bush. The Fishers were recalling experiences of people lost hereabouts. Several have perished in spite of being quite close to civilization. I certainly do not wish to take any chances as far as this is concerned. Certainly the country is both unfamiliar and very rugged. This therefore requires us to exercise the greatest caution.

Jackson is a member of the Djauwon Tribe. There are a number of his people living at Pine Creek.

We arrived here at Moline at 4.00 pm – mileage 4,100.

From the slides seen tonight it is quite obvious there are many interesting and important cave paintings to be photographed in this region. If all goes well there will be much to do in the next few days.

Wednesday 7 July 1965 Sleisbeck Western Arnhem Land

Feeling very tired tonight after a long journey over a dreadful track out to the lovely, isolated spot where we have set up camp.

Departed Moline at 9.15 am this morning - mileage 4,100.5. The Fisher's extended us every kindness. Joe prepared sketch plans of both the El Sharana and the Sleisbeck cave painting sites. He warned us that the road to Sleisbeck could be difficult as no one has been out there for over a year. The wet season washes out the roads making travel difficult. His fears were realized!

We were given a letter of introduction to the caretaker at El Sharana (Mr. R. Hollerhead). Arrived there at 10.30 am – mileage 4,135.6. He is a happy-go-lucky type and offered us every assistance. We arranged for him to come in search of us on next Wednesday morning if we have not returned. Perish the thought!

Departed at 11 o'clock for Sleisbeck. Passed Coronation Hill at 4,145.1 miles and commenced the journey on the unused track. Crossed the South Alligator River. A difficult crossing. The water was deep and the banks badly washed out during the wet. A challenging journey through hills to the top of the tableland. The road then became very sandy for many miles. Trees had fallen across the track blocking our way. The difficult travel continued. It is very tiring when moving away from known country into the unknown. How the first European explorers managed on horses and camels – I will never know. We were beginning to wonder whether we were really on the right track when suddenly a crossroads turned up. This was a known road out to the Sleisbeck air strip. Crossed another large creek and then continued on until we arrived at the old mining camp at 1.30 pm - mileage 4,172.2.

Sleisbeck was a uranium *bubble*. A bad company. There is a large steel-framed corrugated iron shed still standing. This we are using as a camp. It really is very good being about 50' x 50' giving ample room for our Landrover, fire, beds and so on. It is good to have such shelter. There is a vast amount of rubbish lying all about the place. The power generator and diesel motors are still in position but wrecked.

The Katherine River is only about 100 yards to the East of us. It is wide and deep as it is blocked by rapids. A magnificent stretch of fresh water. This relieves the problem of a water supply which is so critical in Central Australia.

Pandanus palms line the River as well as a thick belt of paper barks and other trees. To date no crocodiles have been seen but they are reported to be numerous in this area.

An extensive ridge of conglomerate sandstone extends roughly east and west from the River. Weathering over a long period has transformed the rocks into a variety of shapes and sizes. Graeme and I began a detailed examination at the eastern end and worked towards the west. Not far from the River (about ¼ mile) a circular arrangement of Kangaroo tibia bones was found under a shelter on the northern side

of a large boulder. The bones had been painted with red ochre and partly buried in the floor. A number of crocodile skulls had been placed in the centre of the arrangement. It was quite a remarkable cultural relic of the aboriginals of this region. There was something quite moving about it.

Further along, after a search of nearly two hours an interesting and extensive series of weathered-out caves was located in the middle of the ridge. The site excavated by Jack Golson and his colleagues from the ANU was found and examined. It is quite an extraordinary place. Enormous masses of rocks have been weathered into a network of tunnels supported by stone columns. Some of these extend right through the rock. Most are heavily blackened by fires and show obvious signs of having been occupied over a long, long period. We photographed the area. A few cave paintings occur near the shelter. There are others in a very poor state of preservation.

We were feeling exhausted after the hazardous trip and general responsibilities. Old Jackson has lit a big fire outside. He simply could not bear a roof over his head. He sleeps rolled up in his blanket. He told us he is 90 years old. We do not believe him although he is certainly a great age.

Tomorrow we search for an extensive *Dreaming Cave* where there are said to be some outstanding paintings. The main group in this region. We settled down for the night in our new and quite comfortable surroundings feeling well satisfied we had located the important cluster of significant sites which was one of the main objectives of our visit to North Australia.

Thursday 8 July 1965 Sleisbeck Western Arnhem Land

Up reasonably early and had a good breakfast. Despite this we did not leave camp until 9.30am - mileage 4,173.9.

Stopped and spent time photographing the arrangement of bones located in a small shelter about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile along the ridge which runs roughly east and west. Continued on a further $\frac{1}{2}$ mile and located and photographed the series of caves where Jack Golson undertook his excavation.

At about 1.30 pm a Landrover came along the track. This surprised us as Sleisbeck is at the end of the only road out in this direction. Returned to base for lunch at 2.45 pm - mileage 4,176.2.

The Landrover turned out to be Trevor Milliken, the Welfare Officer from Pine Creek accompanied by *Spider* his aboriginal helper. Needless to say we were delighted to see him as it is a very lonely and remote area. Trevor has a two-way transceiver and a good knowledge of the country. This is most reassuring. He agreed the road was in a terrible state.

Resolved to take advantage of the company and make an effort to find the pathway of arranged stones and associated *dreaming cave*. Set out at 3.45 pm. Followed

the road from the camp and continued on past the turnoff to the airstrip. A low rugged knoll of rock appeared on our right. The rock is dark reddish in colour and very hard. Quite different to the vast regions of sandstone, quartzites and conglomerates at Katherine Gorge. It is of an earlier age and similar to the El Sharana and Coronation Hill formations. Passed a number of trenches bulldozed out in the search for uranium. Had difficulty in finding the road shown on Joe Fisher's map. Eventually turned off into the scrub in the general direction indicated on the map. Stopped near some vertical cliffs where a small gorge leads up the hillside. After a search we located the creek from whence the ceremonial path lined with stones commences. After walking some distance further along the bank of the creek the Pathway was found. Followed this as it wound its way up the hillside. Had a bad fall and twisted my ankle again. Very painful. Lost the path as it went over a rocky ridge. Had considerable trouble in locating the main cave but eventually found it and also relocated the Pathway. It is quite uncanny to walk along this path lined neatly with stones. It runs for some 700 or 800 yards and is precisely formed. It is the first time I have seen such an extensive stone arrangement. I hope Ken Maddock will be able to obtain the full story of its construction and significance from his informants. The cave paintings in the main shelter are quite remarkable. Mainly human figures of various kinds. All painted in red ochre filled in with white pigment. Many bones are littered on the floor of the cave. The whole place certainly has atmosphere and is well worth all the difficulty in travelling to Sleisbeck to locate it.

I wonder whether we would have found it without Trevor and his companion? I doubt it very much. Left the cave as evening approached. Located the Landrover without difficulty and returned to base at 7.15pm - mileage 4,185.5.

Cooked a good tea. Talked over the day's events with Graeme and Trevor. We all turned in early in anticipation of a full day tomorrow.

Friday 9 July 1965 Sleisbeck Western Arnhem Land

Slept better with company. Up early, cooked breakfast and ready to leave by 8.10am mileage - 4,185.5. Travelled to the cave by a similar route to the one taken yesterday. Drove further up the main valley so lessening our walk to the site. Arrived at the main cave at 9.15am. Trevor helped me with the photography. Graeme made a sketch plan of the shelter. Jackson and Spider helped him. Trevor and Spider left at 12.15 pm for their return journey to Pine Creek. We watched their departure with regret. Had a good lunch at 1.15 pm.

Busy all day making a photographic record of the shelter and its masses of beautiful paintings. Many problems – as usual – I do hope I have some successful results as it would be difficult to return here again in the foreseeable future. The paintings are certainly well worthy of a good record. Took more shots at different exposures hoping for improved results. Used electronic flash much more than previously. I am uncomfortable about it but as the earlier tests were satisfactory it is sensible to make full use of it. It is difficult when I am not fully familiar with all my equipment. To continue taking film after film without knowing the results being obtained is quite frustrating.

We had no difficulty in finding our way back as the track is now quite well defined as it has been travelled over several times. Arrived back at our base at 5.45 pm - mileage 4,194.

Jackson was telling us about the varying burning qualities of different types of wood. He is able to pre-determine illumination and heat levels through an intimate knowledge of the different timbers – their size, type and dryness. Some are much better for particular purposes than others. The Coolabah is reputed to make an excellent fire. The aboriginals use much less wood for their fires than we do. They are very experienced and, like all their traditional ways, are experts in such matters.

Jackson was feeling tired tonight. Evidently he injured his back in a fall some time ago. It seems to be troubling him. We have been busy writing up film identification slips, journals etc.

Once again feeling tired, rather frustrated and lonely. We will be pleased to leave Sleisbeck.

Saturday 10 July 1965 Sleisbeck Western Arnhem Land

Very cold this morning. Slept in until 8 o'clock. Departed for the main shelter at 9.30 am - mileage 4,194. Made a complete photographic mosaic of the paintings. Used the wide angle lens in the Speed Graphic and the Futura and electronic flash where the ceilings were low and awkward. Worked hard all day. Late leaving the shelter (6 o'clock). Arrived back at base as darkness began to fall - mileage 4,202.6. Walked down to the River for some water this evening. It was very beautiful. The water was like a sheet of glass with striking reflections of the trees. It is terribly lonely here as there is not a soul to be seen or heard in any direction. Complete isolation. There is a colony of large black cockatoos living just across the River. They make an awful fuss morning and night.

Feeling tired and hope to be in bed early tonight as we have to find our way back out of here tomorrow.

The cave paintings have been well worthy of the visit to Sleisbeck. They are quite outstanding. Trevor's aboriginal assistant told us it is a very sacred place and only the fully initiated are allowed to visit it. The many bones placed in the cave serve as a reminder that a spirit has been there. Ken Maddock is apparently working on the mythology of the people who own the cave. It will be interesting to gain a fuller understanding of this fascinating place.

Willy indicated last week that there are certain cave paintings that women are allowed to see but would never be told their meanings. Many of the paintings here appear to have been quite recently touched up. They are practically all red outlines in-filled with white ochre.

There seems to be no end to the smaller groups at all these localities. It drives one quite insane trying to decide where to begin and where to end.

Sunday 11 July 1965 El Sharana Western Arnhem Land

Pleased to be back in civilization again – if you can call an all but deserted mining settlement civilization. Walked along the Katherine River at Sleisbeck this morning and took some photographs. Packed up all our belongings and departed base camp at 11.10 am - mileage 4,202.6. Stopped near the crossroads and took photographs of several more cave paintings in a small shelter located on a ridge formed of conglomerate rocks.

Departed Sleisbeck at 12.30 pm - mileage 4,203.5. All pleased to be leaving such an isolated and lonely place. The only regret was that much more time could be spent in examining the surrounding countryside for further paintings. Both food and films are in short supply and if we are to do some work at El Sharana there was no alternative but to head back. The main shelter has been well covered and it would be impossible to do more without seeing the results of the photographs already taken.

The road back was sandy at first then rough as we came down into the South Alligator River Valley. The country is mountainous and appeared very picturesque as we descended. Became stuck making the crossing of the South Alligator River and had to dig ourselves out. The road is really quite difficult and unless it receives some attention it could well be impassable after another wet season. There seems to be little likelihood of further mining activity in the Sleisbeck area. The road is therefore unlikely to receive any attention.

Arrived at El Sharana at 3.00 pm - mileage 4,239. Talked with Bob Gough who has been foreman of the mine for about four years. He is moving over to Moline. Met the Caretaker, Mr Hollerhead (he is much as his name suggests) who showed us to a hut with two bunks and a frig. Not clean but comfortable. It was a great pleasure to shower, shave, and put on clean clothes again. The feeling has to be experienced to be appreciated. Jackson has had itchy feet these past two days. I feel he is anxious to get home to Pine Creek. He has been making a series of excuses *its pension day on Monday, he has a bad back, a bad cold, a cough, a headache, sore eyes, forgot his teeth, his wife might be worried* and so on and so on. Late this afternoon he decided, perhaps, I would take him to a neighbouring cattle station, *Gimbat* (Manager Jim Lennie), where his brother works. This I did. He seemed pleased and is staying the night there with his people. He is a tiny little chap with quite long curly hair and whiskers. We followed him across the paddock at *Gimbat* and lost him in the tall grass. A number of aboriginal women suddenly startled us after we had proceeded only a short distance. They said they had not seen him and looked rather disbelievingly at us. After a while there was a rustle in the grass and out came Jackson as large as life. His big army hat pulled down over his face.

Opened the first Army emergency rations and had a cold tea. Gathered a few specimens for Paul Hossfeld.

Tomorrow we will make an attempt to reach the paintings at Stag Creek by way of one of the mine roads through the hills. I hope we are successful as it is important to complete the work at this site.

Experience has shown that on extensive field work a paid assistant would be a valuable asset. I feel it is unrealistic to obtain a really complete coverage of the extensive painting sites on one visit. There is so much variation in the sites and paintings that examination of the actual photographs is essential before the final shots can be taken. I do hope the results of the Sleisbeck expedition will be worthwhile as the paintings are excellent and we have made special efforts to record them.

It will be good to be in a bed again. It is quite an unnatural business travelling around from place to place. I will be pleased to be settled down at home again. I am feeling much better than on the previous visit to El Sharana. Looking back on the past couple of months it really has been quite an undertaking and an amazing experience.

Monday 12 July 1965 El Sharana Western Arnhem Land

Up at 7.00 am. Had a good breakfast and called for Jackson at 8.30 am - mileage 4246.8. Jackson, Hollerhead, Graeme and myself set out for the Stag Creek cave painting site along a mountain track indicated on the map Joe Fisher had supplied to us. It was very narrow and climbed steeply through the hills. In many places there was a precipitous drop to the valley floor way below. The scenery was magnificent. Some of the finest in the Territory. Rugged and mountainous terrain with spectacular views in every direction. The South Alligator River Valley stretched out below us – the escarpment shrouded in a blue haze. A large boulder on the track blocked our progress until it was moved by excavating beneath it and slowly rolling it out of our path. Put a scratch on the side of the Rover. A short distance further at mileage 4,257.5 we encountered an extremely steep downward descent. Walked down to investigate. The surface was loose gravel. It is the steepest piece of road I have ever seen. Although confident that we could get down I was doubtful whether there would be sufficient traction to come up again. It was not worth the risk as if we became stuck or had an accident the whole project would be unnecessarily hampered. We reluctantly turned back and drove through the camp up to the top dam. We loaded ourselves up with equipment, water and food for the steep climb up the side of two great waterfalls and on to the main Stag Creek cave painting site.

Departed at 10.45 am, and followed the main creek up for a short distance then crossed over to the left bank. The track wound up the side of the hill. It is really a poorly defined path and we had to push our way through the undergrowth. After a perilous climb we reached the base of the top waterfall and rested by a huge rock hole full of deep fresh water. Climbed up the steep hill on the right of the fall – up and on around the top. The view from this vantage point was very beautiful –

looking right down over the falls to the El Sharana camp far below us. In the distance was the escarpment. Followed the left-hand tributary of the main creek until we reached the rock shelters weathered into the sandstone. It is here we found a very colourful group of cave paintings.

Jackson stayed behind today. The climb was far too steep for him as he soon tires when walking any distance. Tonight his aches and pains are even worse than usual – I imagine the urge to return to his family in Pine Creek is even stronger.

Hollerhead is living up to his name. He is quite a character but enormously helpful. Spent the day photographing the paintings. There is no doubt about the need for a good record as many of the ochre images are fading and weathering away. I feel certain it will not be many years before much of this art is lost.

Graeme and Hollerhead took some measurements and started preparing a general plan of the shelters.

Departed the site at 5.10 pm and hastened back to be certain we would be down before dark. Made extremely good time arriving back at the Landrover at 6.05pm and returned to camp at 6.15 pm.

Very tired after the exhausting climb in strange country and a long day concentrating on photographing the paintings. Have taken over 400 shots since leaving Katherine. A few must surely prove to be satisfactory!

There was quite a commotion when we hit camp tonight. Hollerhead has a mother with a reputation for being quite a tartar. Although over 40 years old Hollerhead is still very much the boy about the place. Evidently she had expected him home early in the afternoon. A note was left to say she had set out for Moline, over 30 miles distant, to sound the alarm and bring out a search party. Imagine our consternation at the thought of causing the Fishers unnecessary concern. Our worries were insignificant compared to those confronting poor Hollerhead as he had to chase after Mother and explain himself, as well as face up to Mr. Fisher as he really was not supposed to accompany us to the sites. Mother had liniment and bandages set out ready (goodness knows why) and a hot dinner for any survivors that may be found. We are still awaiting the final outcome and are anxious to see if we are implicated in any way.

Further trouble occurred at tea time. Hollerhead, in all his blissful ignorance, had extended us the courtesy of using the kitchen in a nearby house so that we could use the stove, sink and other facilities. Tonight we turned on the hot plates to prepare tea as quickly as possible and were in the midst of preparations, when the other men living in the camp rushed in quite annoyed because we had overloaded the power plant which threatened to burn out. The matter was soon rectified however the day's labours plus these events have left us quite shaken and exhausted.

Although almost too tired to be bothered, we had a cold shower and into bed for a good night's sleep.

Tuesday 13 July 1965 El Sharana Western Arnhem Land

All's well that ends well – Hollerhead called in this morning to relate to us the closing chapter of yesterday's drama. All was forgiven as Mum had been so pleased to see her Ron when he arrived at Moline. Joe Fisher thought it was a huge joke. The search was called off!

Tired this morning after yesterday's hike. Decided to cross the waterfalls again today and try and complete the photography at the Stag Creek site. Took our time going up and paused to take one or two photographs of the lovely view from the top of the waterfall.

Worked hard making a more or less complete black and white photographic cover of the paintings. Left at 5 o'clock for the descent before dark. Returned home without incident. Enjoyed a shave and a cold shower: tea and into bed.

Jackson is happy tonight as tomorrow we return to Pine Creek. From all his remarks the medicine will get a fair punishing when he arrives home. He said today he thought we were only going for one night. Among the things the poor old chap forgot were his teeth. This in no way seemed to affect his appetite! He was knocked up tonight as he has been trying to catch lizards for us all day. They were faster than he imagined as the day's catch was only two.

He was telling us about his experiences during the war when he went back and lived off the land. Certainly no-one would ever find him in the vastness of Arnhem Land. Jackson discussed some of the foods he obtained from the plentiful resources in this region. These included the following:

Turtles (large or small)	Mullett
Long Neck Turtles	Brim
Crocodiles	Catfish
Pythons	Mussels
Snakes	Water Rats
Goannas	Yams (long)
Blanket Lizards	Yams (round)
Blue Tongue Lizards	White Plums
Kangaroos	Native Apples
Wallabies	Pigeons
Porcupines	Native Tomatoes
Large <i>black rock</i> Kangaroo	Sugar Bug (honey)
Big 'River Country' Bandicoots	'Sticky' Yams
Bandicoots (small)	Green Ants
Opossums	Flying Foxes
Sharks	Bush Turkeys
Barramundi	Native Cats

I will be very pleased to return to Katherine tomorrow as I am anxious to hear the results of the Mainoru photography and receive news from home. I hope it is all good.

Completely out of film, food and energy.

Wednesday 14 July 1965 Katherine North Australia

Tired this morning after yesterday's arduous climb. Looking forward to returning to Katherine. Packed up – bade our friend Ron Hollerhead cheerio and set off at 8.45 am - mileage 4,266. Drove back towards Moline through mountainous country. The South Alligator Valley is very beautiful. Called at Moline to thank Joe Fisher for his help and kindness. Had a cup of tea with him. He was very amused about the episode with Mrs. H. Talked of other sites in this region – including bone arrangements and piles of stones. There appear to be many such relics hereabouts. Called on by Mrs. Fisher to sign the visitor's book. It is so sad to think of them losing their eldest son – he planned to be married a couple of months after the time he was killed doing a message for his father.

Departed Moline for Pine Creek at 10.45 am - mileage 4,302.8. Uneventful trip. Jackson started to show enthusiasm as he came nearer his home country. He is silent regarding all things aboriginal but carefully points out the stock yards and the like. This morning, following, some pointed remarks by Graeme last night, Jackson wandered over to the kitchen to make the tea. Poor old chap couldn't take a trick as Graeme had made it half an hour before. There was far more leaves in the tea than water!

Arrived at Pine Creek at 11.30 am - mileage 4,334. Dropped Jackson at his camp and went up to see Trevor Milliken who, rather surprisingly was at home. Had a chat to him and arranged to go on his patrol trip through to Muirella Park, leaving next Tuesday. This will be a great help as he knows the people and many of the cave painting sites along the route. It will be a great help to travel with him as he has much experience and is equipped with a transceiver.

Arrived back at Katherine at 1.54 pm - mileage 4,402.5. The homely atmosphere was the same as when we departed.

Packed up films in time to go down to Adelaide on tomorrow's plane. Anxious to receive some results before departing for Muirella Park.

A very good trip out to Sleisbeck - busy and tiring. I only hope the results turn out to be worthy.

Thursday 15 July 1965 Katherine North Australia

Spent a busy day in Katherine preparing for departure to Darwin tomorrow. Boiled up clothes in the copper – a long task that reminded me of my childhood. Took the

Landrover down to the garage and had it serviced and the oil changed. Drained the water and refilled the tank, bought petrol, stores etc. Met Miles Fisher in the street – he is the local member of The Northern Territory Reserves Board. We discussed various questions relating to the preservation of sites of archaeological interest. He was complimentary about my report on the Ooraminna rock engraving site out from Alice Springs. This pleased me as I had wanted to do a good job as to me it seemed to be important. Arranged to meet him for dinner on Saturday evening in Darwin. Packed up rock specimens ready for despatch per Richard Mitchell. These were collected at the El Sharana uranium mine earlier in the week. Went through all my gear and re-packed ready for the final departure south. Graeme and I went over to the Morgan's place for the evening. They really are quite characters. It was very relaxing after the strain of the last couple of weeks. Looked at Roy's collection of artefacts and minerals. Discussed their long experience with the aborigines. This was of very great interest.

Friday 16 July 1965 Darwin North Australia

Up early and completed packing the Landrover. Wrote letters and made entries in my journal before departing for Darwin at 11.30 am - mileage 4407. A pleasant warm day. Few vehicles on the road. Reached Pine Creek at 1.00 pm - mileage 4470, Hayes Creek 2.00 pm - mileage 4510. The country is very hilly. There were many large fires burning throughout the scrub with Hawks hovering overhead waiting to catch lizards and smaller animals as they flee from the flames. Reached the Adelaide River at 3.10pm - mileage 4556. Country still hilly and covered with uniform bushland of Eucalypts, Pandanus Palms and other tropical vegetation. A few lagoons with water lilies. Disappointed on the approaches to Darwin as the country flattens out on to the coastal plains. Rather uninteresting compared with the rest of the trip. Passed many of the wartime air strips and remains of gun emplacements. This was of interest as I well remember the Japanese air attacks on Darwin. The outskirts of the city are unimpressive and rather untidy – old houses and sheds with a few industries.

Arrived in Darwin at 5.45 pm - mileage 4,610.

Drove along the seafront and through the town trying to locate the camping area. This turned out to be near the beach not far distant from the beautiful tropical Botanical Gardens. There are a number of fine modern buildings in Darwin – mainly government offices including the Court House, Post Office, Administration Blocks and so on.

Walked the streets looking for a suitable café for dinner. The town has quite a mixture of races. Australian, Aboriginal, Chinese and many new Australians. Had a good dinner of Barramundi and then drove out to the showgrounds to see the Darwin Show. This seemed to be dominated by side shows. The Welfare Department Exhibition was interesting and also those presented by different Districts and Government Departments. Viewed a film on Albert Namatjira which was very interesting but not up to the standard of Dr. Campbell.

There were quite a number of paintings exhibited. Left the show at 10.00 pm and returned to the caravan park. Erected our stretchers and went straight to bed tired after the days travel and first look at Darwin.

Saturday 17 July 1965 Darwin North Australia

A cool blustery morning. Up at 7.30 am. Visited the main street and had a good breakfast. Drove around the city to see its scope and layout. Located the Museum in the Botanical Gardens. This was interesting but consisted mainly of a large selection of early bark paintings (later purchased by US collector Ed Ruhe). Sent postcards to friends in Adelaide. Had a counter lunch at the Hotel Darwin then drove down to the docks. Walked along the wharf. A large new warehouse is under construction and almost completed. This is very modern and convenient. Sight seeing drive along the coast.

Visited the show again and watched aboriginals painting on bark. Searched for the racecourse as we had promised Roy Morgan we would phone through the winner of the Cup. He had to transmit this to the owner of two of the horses. Apparently she is in hospital in Adelaide. Found the racecourse out in the Fanny Bay region. Put 10 shillings each way on one of the horses recommended to us. The Cup was very exciting as the horse that came second had similar colours to the one we had backed. Our horse came last – of course.

Called at the Post Office and telephoned Roy Morgan also Miles Fisher to arrange dinner this evening. Cleaned up a little at the Botanical Gardens and met Miles in the hot and cold room at the Darwin Hotel. Had a few drinks and discussed the future potential of the Territory. Miles is an agronomist with C.S.I.R.O. and is undertaking a series of experiments on the introduction of Townsville Lucerne – apparently a far more nutritious food for cattle than the native grasses. Enjoyed a lengthy Chinese Dinner at the Dragon Tan House. Joined by Vern O'Brien (Lands and Surveys Branch, Darwin, N.T.). Had lengthy discussions on the history of the Territory in which he is much interested and undertaking serious research. Vern has been to the fore in the historical scene in Darwin and is a friend of Doug Boerner who serviced our Landrover in Alice Springs. They have been in contact with my friend Keith Borrow in Adelaide on several occasions and are well acquainted with the research work being undertaken by Major General Symes at the Royal Geographical Society. A very interesting person.

Had lengthy discussions about the responsibilities of the Northern Territory Reserves Board of which he and Miles are enthusiastic members. There are some forty reserves either declared or under consideration in the Northern Territory. An extensive area adjacent to the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Reserve will be set aside as a park. This includes many cave painting sites in Murrella Park and the adjoining region. They were both pleased with my Ooraminna report and keen for me to do more work for the Board when in Alice Springs in August and September. There appears to be some overlap of responsibilities and a certain amount of feeling between the Board and Welfare Department. Both are interested in preservation. Of course, The Board inevitably attracts tourists to many of its reserves while

Welfare has charge of the aboriginal people and their lands. From my own experience, the problem of employing suitable officers in remote regions will be very great for both organizations. It was a good lengthy personal discussion about important issues for the future as well as sharing common interests and experiences.

Returned quite late to the camping ground and once again put up our bunks and were soon comfortable. The sea is but a few yards away from us. The lapping of the waters was very restful and soon lulled us to sleep. The tide seems to run out quickly here and the rise and fall is quite considerable.

Sunday 18 July 1965 Darwin North Australia

Awoke early – it turned out to be a shocking night with strong winds blowing without any let up. Our sleeping bags were full of sand. Arose feeling filthy and tired. Went down to the town for breakfast. Called on my cousin Neta Woisnitza (nee Cordon daughter of [Uncle Keith](#)) She is, as the name implies, married to a young German. He turned out to be a most likable fellow. They live in a very comfortable flat practically in the heart of Darwin. Neta's husband (Siegfried) is an enthusiastic sailor and has his own catamaran. When we arrived he was already down at the beach. During the dry season they spend every day at the sailing club. We had a cup of tea and followed on down to Vesties Beach where we met Siegfried. Had an excellent lunch of chicken (three)! They have a young 8 year old daughter. A most delightful kiddy. Healthy, happy and full of life. A good swimmer and keen on ballet. One of Siegfried's friends took Graeme and me out for a sail on his large catamaran. It was a real thrill zipping over the water powered only by the wind. It was my first real experience of sailing and I thoroughly enjoyed it. No noisy engine or smelly fumes. Later in the afternoon Siegfried took me for a sail in his own little craft. This was even more exciting than the larger one.

After a run across the Bay and back we entered a race for novices. Siegfried let me skipper the boat. The basic idea was to keep the wind in the sails at all times while steering in the right direction. Every now and again a sudden gust of wind would catch the sails and quickly accelerate the craft. This is the time for quick thinking and manipulation of the sails by fine-tuning the steering to keep the boat on course. There are moments when the wind becomes so strong it lifts one of the hulls out of the water. It is then essential to lean out as far as you can to stop the craft from capsizing. During the race we had one occasion when a gust hit us suddenly – the hull on which we were sitting jumped right up out of the water and despite both of us leaning out as far as we could it kept going over further and further. I looked down at the sail in front of me. There seemed to be very little but to stall in the water. At the time we were a long way out from the shore and I was certain our inevitable fate was to capsize. A moment later there was a slight wind change and the catamaran righted itself and we were again zipping along over the water at what seemed to be a terrific speed. Siegfried said it was as close as he had ever come to capsizing. He too felt sure we would go over. It was all terribly exciting and good fun for a beginner like me. I must say it was an exhilarating experience which I thoroughly enjoyed. I am certain the boys would go mad about it if they had the opportunity to sail in one of these craft. The sunset was absolutely glorious. The most beautiful I have seen

anywhere. Went back to Neta's place, had a shower and then returned to the beach for a barbeque tea. It was very pleasant but I longed to have my family with me and could not really enjoy it without them.

After a long and eventful day we returned to Neta's place for a good sound sleep with thoughts of a life in the tropics. It was a luxury after two windy, dusty nights in the camping ground.

Monday 19 July 1965. Pine Creek North Australia

A comfortable night at Neta's place. It was good to have a clean soft bed. Camp stretchers are fine in the bush but uncomfortable contraptions at the best of times.

The main purpose of our visit to Darwin was to meet with Harry Giese the Head of the Welfare Department and a constant player in the affairs of the Institute of Aboriginal Studies. Mr McCarthy had suggested I see him as an act of courtesy and also discuss research generally with members of his department. There have been inevitable problems with some of the Institute supported researchers working in the field. Unfortunately, Mr Giese is away although Trevor Milliken had believed he would be in Darwin. Met instead with Mr E. P. Milliken the Assistant Director of Research. He was interested in the photographic recording project and very informative. Discussions went on for most of the morning. It was invaluable to discuss so many matters with Mr Milliken in particular the preservation of aboriginal sites and other relics.

Spent some time enquiring at A.N.A, T.A.A. and the Post Office for a parcel expected from Adelaide. Rang Mrs Cook who indicated it had been left with A.N.A. on Thursday evening with an *Express* sticker placed on it. No trace of it could be found. All I could do was to leave instructions to have it sent back to Katherine for collection on our return.

Bought provisions ready for our trip out to Muirella Park. We then had a counter lunch at the Fanny Bay Hotel and a last drive around Darwin. Headed south for Pine Creek at 3.00 pm – mileage 4,744. We are booked in at a Motel for the night ready to make an early departure on the following morning with Trevor Milliken.

Called *en-route* at the very extensive Adelaide River War Cemetery (mileage 4,817).

The Cemetery with its formal rows of graves and a distinctive cross of sacrifice was established in 1942 to serve as the resting place for service men and women who lost their lives in Northern Australia in World War II. In an adjoining cemetery we found the graves of 63 civilians who were killed in the war including nine Post Office workers who died in the first Japanese bombing raid on Darwin. The grounds are well kept and a poignant reminder of just how close the war came to Australian shores in the 1940's.

Met Joe Fisher, his wife and a friend Kevin Malcolm at Hayes Creek. It was good to see them again. Continued on to Pine Creek where we arrived at 7.15 pm – mileage

4,906.7. Rang Cath to see how the family was and obtain a report on the photographs taken at Sleisbeck and El Sharana.

We were both very tired after the days travel and went to bed reasonably early in the comfort of a motel.

Tuesday 20 July 1965 Katherine North Australia

An extremely cold morning – the locals say it is the coldest they have experienced for many years. The days are quite delightful – mildly warm and very pleasant. Tried to contact Trevor Milliken but found he was absent in Katherine on business. Rang Cath again to obtain information about the batch of films taken at Sleisbeck. Decided to follow Trevor to Katherine and collect the mail and re-fuel etc. We departed Pine Creek at 9.15am – mileage 4,907 and arrived at Katherine at 10.45 am – mileage 4,972.

Called at the Airways Offices and Post Office. Received a letter from Dr Campbell. It was good to have the local news and details of his plans for filming at Yuendumu in August. Visited Uncle Keith. Wattie was pleased to see us. Filled the water tank on the Landrover expecting to return to Pine Creek with Trevor Milliken and depart for Muirella Park in the afternoon.

Met Trevor in the street and discussed our ETD. His responsibilities in Katherine and Pine Creek will delay him until tomorrow morning. Decided to spend the night in Katherine and drive up to Pine Creek in the morning.

Spent the afternoon writing letters to Fred McCarthy, John Mulvaney, Jack Golson, and Dermot Casey who have been encouraging and supporting me. I am certain they will be interested to receive news of my progress.

Completed further letters late in the evening and collected the mail at 11.00 pm. There was no further news. Disappointed about the failure to receive a full assessment of the Sleisbeck photographs as it may be necessary to adjust techniques to obtain the best results. It is frustrating to take a large batch of some hundreds of shots and not know exactly which procedures are proving to be the most successful. There seems to be some confusion in Adelaide. I hope all is well.

Went to bed full of anxiety as I will be in the field again tomorrow.

Wednesday 21 July 1965 Muirella Park Western Arnhem Land

Awoke to another freezing morning. Up early anxious to start out. Shaved and was soon ready to depart for Pine Creek. Called at the Post Office yet again and sent letters down to Cath by registered post.

Departed for Pine Creek at 9.00 am – mileage 4,976.6. Arrived at Pine Creek at 10.20 am – mileage 5,039 – a vast journey since setting out from Adelaide many weeks ago. Met with Trevor Milliken. After discussing our schedule we set out for

Muirella Park on a further Arnhem Land adventure leaving Trevor behind to finish his work and catch up with us later.

Passed the Moline turn off at 5,071 miles. Left the El Sharana road at 5,090.3. Stopped at Station Creek at 12.15 pm where we all had lunch – mileage 5,101.7. Set out again at 1.00 pm. Crossed the main South Alligator River at 1.30 pm – mileage 5,119.1. It is a large running stream and very picturesque. A sharp contrast to the dusty conditions on the road. The worst we have encountered in the North. It was terrible all the way making it essential to concentrate on the road.

We reached Barramundi Creek at 1.55 pm – mileage 5,131. The first of a number of the most beautiful lagoons with hosts of colourful water lilies. Passed a deserted station and followed along the face of an escarpment. The number of Palms (*liverstrania*) has greatly increased. They predominate in this region and are an impressive site to anyone new to this environment.

There were a number of sandy stretches in the road and the Landrover often struggled as it was loaded down with full tanks of petrol and water as well as equipment and supplies for ten days.

Reached the Jim Jim crossing at 5,154.1 miles where Judy and John Opey have a store and holiday camp. They hold a licence to shoot 50 buffaloes per annum but are focused on making their place a sanctuary. The barramundi fishing is said to be excellent. Enjoyed a drink and talk about their experiences in this region. Tom indicated Eric Brandl has been recording art in this area but returned to Katherine a few days ago to process films. It would have been good to meet up with him as we share an interest in recording the art in Western Arnhem Land.

Continued on to Muirella Park. Turned off the main road and followed a bush track through scrub and tall grass. Encountered a number of buffaloes grazing on the flats. There are said to be thousands of them in this part of the North. They originated in the early British Settlements established on Coburg Peninsula in the 1840's where they had been imported for food and let loose when the out-posts were abandoned. We expect to see many more in the next few days. They are very destructive to the environment. Passed close to a very picturesque Paperbark Swamp. The first substantial one we have encountered. Dense group of white paperbarks (*Melaleuca L Eucadendron*) standing in the water. It made a very splendid, natural scene.

Arrived at Muirella Park at 4.00 pm – mileage 5,173. Met our congenial host Frank Muir who is something of an outback character. He is certainly doing everything possible to make us welcome and feel at home. Frank has been in this location for two and a half years. He has built a number of holiday huts from the trunks of the Pandanus Palms. They are situated a short distance from a large and very beautiful billabong. Tourists from all over the world come to see the wild-life in this more or less pristine environment.

Frank Muir is in his 70's but certainly looks much younger. He cuts a handsome figure resplendent in riding breeches and leggings. I felt we were buddies from our first meeting.

The safari huts are constructed by erecting the palm trunks upright in the ground side by side by side and then simply wiring them together on to a timber frame of natural stringy bark poles. The rooves are covered with sheets of paperbark in the same way as aboriginals have used this material for their shelters over many centuries. They are quite charming in appearance and very liveable in the tropical climate as the air can circulate between the pine trunks.

We had noticed a number of small bark covered 'wurlies' as we travelled along today. The frame-work of these shelters is constructed of natural wooden poles with large sheets of bark cut from stringy bark trees used as roofing material. The stripping of the bark kills the trees: there were many examples along the roadside.

The floors of the huts are made of crushed termite mounds mixed with water and laid down like cement. This makes, a good, hard surface. The beds have inner spring mattresses which are very comfortable and much preferable to camp stretchers set up on the ground. A main and much larger hut is used as a kitchen come dining room. It is quite out of this world and provides a marvellous atmosphere for dining and after dinner relaxation.

While I sit in my little pine hut writing a small marsupial of some kind, about the size of a rat but with a dark coloured bushy tail, has climbed out along one of the rafters. He is a very handsome little creature.

The calls of many different species of animals and birds are coming from the surrounding bushland and the billabong. It sounds more like a zoo than a remote region of North Australia. The small brightly coloured Azure Kingfisher is quite common. They are very beautiful creatures. Kookaburras also are plentiful in the scrub but their 'laugh' is different to that found in the South. You can hear their call frequently. Sometimes they almost manage a laugh but simply do not seem to be able to make it.

There is an airstrip immediately in front of the huts where small planes can land at any time of the year – even in the wet season. It is not unusual to see several buffaloes walking along this cleared area. They must be something of a hazard for aircraft.

Frank Muir told us he has a wild dingo paying regular nightly visits to the camp as well as a number of rather nasty native cats. He sometimes shoots them.

Some months ago Frank had an exciting experience with a large wild buffalo. It was a bull that had been cast out from the mob. He was attacked suddenly and the beast knelt down on him breaking six ribs and severely injuring him. Apparently they can be quite unpredictable and even dangerous. Of course, this did not come as a surprise to us. Frank had a companion with him at the time of the attack. After the

buffalo had made the first charge Frank called for the other man to shoot the beast but in his excitement he forgot to let off the safety catch on the .303 rifle he was carrying. A moment later the buffalo left Frank, who had given the beast a smart hit on the nose with the rifle. It then went after his companion. This proved to be too much for the buffalo and it raced away leaving Frank in a very bad way. It was quite an adventure and the tale lost nothing in the telling. It is fortunate it did not end in a tragedy. (Frank gave me two pen ink sketches of the incident).

The dinner was a delight. Cooked in a large wood stove situated at one end of the large dining hut. It was very pleasant to have such good company over a tasty meal and a glass of wine.

Frank Muir tells us there are a number of alligators living in the nearby lagoons. Evidently these have worked their way up from the sea in the wet seasons. They live around about the same place all the time and are a regular sight. One of them has marked out its territory in the local area. Frank estimates it is over 12 feet long which is big even for a salt water crocodile.

Trevor Milliken was telling us at breakfast about some of his escapades as an amateur crocodile hunter. The method used was to go out at night in a boat – pick up the eyes of the crocodile in the beam of a light and then thrust a harpoon into the reptile with a long cord attached. It sinks to the bottom of the river to avoid capture. When it comes up for air the cord is pulled in following the victims movements. As soon as it breaks the surface it is struck on the head and killed. On one occasion a crocodile wound round and round entangling itself in the cord as it went down. On its ascent instead of the head coming up the tail appeared and on letting out a mighty swish it capsized their small boat. Trevor said it was the first time he had been swimming without getting wet as he went so fast he failed to even touch the water!

When I walked into my hut last night and sat down to write up my journal I was mystified by a strange sound surrounding me. This persisted and kept getting louder. I thought perhaps the timber was green and creaking in the breeze. I finally worked out that the sound was coming from hundreds of borers which live in the palm trunks and bore away eating the soft wood. They leave numerous small holes behind. The noise is continuous although fortunately it was softer after dark although very distracting when trying to sleep. I hope the huts don't get eaten up and fall down before we leave!

Thursday 22 July 1965 Muirella Park Western Arnhem Land

It was very cold this morning. The dingo's howled for quite a time in the early hours adding to the general loud chorus of strange noises. We were up at 7.00 am and met Frank Muir in the kitchen at 8.00 am. for an entertaining breakfast.

We said our farewells to the comforts of Muirella Park Safari Camp and departed for the cave painting sites with Frank leading the way. Trevor and his black boy Oscar came next followed by Graeme and myself in our Landrover - Mileage 5,173.

Travelled roughly east –south along a well defined track. Tall grass was growing in the low lying areas. Crossed a dry neck of land between two lovely lagoons. Travelled on through Pandanus Groves, across a wide plain, forded a creek with a soft sandy bed and on to a large and exceedingly beautiful billabong – mileage 5,075.9. This is part of the Noarlangie Creek. Frank says the fishing at this location is excellent. The Pandanus Palms and Paperbarks surround the billabong and were reflected in the still shimmering water. The view of Mt. Brockman - Noarlangie Rock Massif was majestic – rugged sandstone outcrops against the clear blue morning sky.

We followed the creek along for a distance and then crossed it again. It was quite steep and had a very sandy bottom. Found our way across another plain towards an even larger but shallower lagoon. Skirted along its eastern side and then stopped to take a photograph of a large buffalo which was feeding on the lush grass. Approached closer to the Rock which is an awesome sight. Travelled on to the north-west across a treacherous flat into open grasslands. Flanked the eastern face of the first major outcrop. There are not so much as wheel tracks in this country. Pulled up at 5,177.9 miles near some caves weathered in to a rock-face.

These caves extend deep into the sandstone/conglomerate rocks and could be described as 'catacombs.' There were many interesting cave paintings. The face is exposed and the ochre figures are very weathered. Frank Muir guided us around among the large boulders and showed us what he termed 'the bridal suite'. This is a small cave with some particularly interesting paintings and a bed constructed of timber and paper bark. Barramundi Charlie, a local Aboriginal, is said to have recently lived in this cave. The pigments used in the paintings include blue colouring which is unique to this site – evidently the aboriginals who did them had access to Ricketts Washing Blue.

Continued our search among the rocky outcrops. Several caves were located with obvious signs of habitation. Frank took us to a small burial cave where there were three skulls sitting on ledges and numerous other bones. This was a poignant reminder of the people who had lived in this region for century upon century. It most certainly made me feel as though we were intruding on an important ritual area.

Our little convoy departed at 11.00 am and recrossed the flat and again skirted the large billabong. Continued on back through the tall grass then the scrub. We had to make our own way through the undergrowth as there were no tracks.

Arrived at Noarlangie Rock which is the main art site in this area. Mileage 5,180. There is an extensive shelter at the eastern tip of the Rock. The main group of paintings is the most impressive I have seen in our travels. There are a number of figures of women together with X-ray style fish and mythological creatures. We also found a didgeridoo. There were large sheets of bark in the rock shelter and the remains of a bark hut nearby. Examined another larger shelter where there were many paintings. These are a little weathered. In places water is still seeping out of the rock walls even in the middle of the dry season. During the wet many of the

paintings must suffer considerable damage through water seepage and even at times water running over some surfaces.

The shelter itself is enormous. The rock is a form of conglomerate. There are well preserved paintings of two muskets – interesting evidence of early cultural contact of the worst kind. Found several bark bundles on the rock ledges. One contained two pipes and articles of clothing which were old and decaying. The others were burials. The western shelter is roughly 240 feet long and 40 feet deep with many large boulders scattered about on the floor.

There are numerous cup-shaped depressions in most of these shelters. It appears as though the pigments have been ground on the surface of some hard Quartzite rocks for many centuries. Sometimes the 'cups' are in groups depending on the hardness of the stone.

Trevor Milliken and Frank Muir left us to begin the task of making a thorough photographic record of the sites. Trevor went on to Mudginberri some miles distant towards Oenpelli. However when we arrived back in camp at 5.55 pm tonight – mileage 5,187.2 Frank had still not returned having lost time experiencing difficulty in getting back as well as hunting for buffalo to replenish the meat supply for the Camp.

A party of three comprising a pilot and two officers from the Water Resources Board had landed at Muirella Park this afternoon to spend the night. The pilot is a young American Dan Holloway of Helicopter Utilities. They are very likeable young chaps and we all spent an interesting evening together discussing a wide range of topics before returning to our respective huts.

Friday 23 July 1965 Muirella Park Western Arnhem Land

Up at 7.00 am this morning and enjoyed a good breakfast. There had been talk last night of a ride in the helicopter over Noarlangie Rock to gain an aerial perspective. Spoke to John Laurie (Water Resources) and also the pilot. It was agreed that Graeme and I would make the flight so we very cautiously climbed on board the seemingly frail little craft. I was a little dubious about this new adventure and was uncertain whether I was going to like it. The young American Pilot's complete confidence was very reassuring. The motors were started up. There was some trouble with the clutch that engages the rotor blades. This was quickly corrected as the motors warmed up. The pilot said ready and away we went straight up into the air. And what a view. The course of the Noarlangie Creek could be seen winding its way across the countryside.

The large billabong and water holes shone out like great mirrors in the morning light. The helicopter choofed its way across towards Noarlangie Rock. The Arnhem Land escarpment could be seen in the distance rising sharply from the plain. Then we were hovering over the Rock. Round we went in a tight circle then flying down low over the top. Weathering over the vastness of time has cut into the softer parts of the sandstone creating a maze of blocks honeycombed with caves. Many are ideal habitation sites, caves for burials and rock art galleries of the kind we visited

yesterday. Noarlangie Rock is really a false escarpment. The view was amazing and brought the whole area into sharp focus. The experience was thoroughly enjoyable. We made a further sweep around the Rock and then returned to Muirella Park. What an awe-inspiring view of the area. It was very helpful in gaining an exact picture of the layout of the different sites.

Departed for Noarlangie Rock at 9.45 am – mileage 5,187.2 and travelled over the same country as yesterday. Arrived at the art sites at 10.15 am – mileage 5,194. Spent a very busy day concentrating on our photographic record of these remarkable caves with their impressive array of ochre paintings and evidence of habitation.

Oscar our Aboriginal guide found other caves in the area containing more paintings. These shelters were enormous. However, it was disappointing to find that in most instances the art works were badly weathered. Left the new site about 2 o'clock and returned to the first site visited briefly yesterday. Drove out of the bush on to the edge of the lagoon. Stopped to photograph some magpie geese. Oscar wanted us to shoot one as he was anxious to have it for his dinner.

A Landrover drove up from nowhere and who should it be but Carmel White and Edgar Waters who with Peter White are excavating some interesting sites in the Oenpelli Region. We were pleased to see them and sat down on the short green grass and talked for a couple of hours. They want us to go over to see their sites but I am afraid we are very much up against it for time and cannot spare a day's deviation no matter how attractive the prospect of seeing such important sites.

Went on to the first site where we spent the remainder of the day on photography. The burial cave was covered completely and then we started on a detailed record of the cave art. Explored the main sandstone residual which is honeycombed with tunnels and crevices.

Oscar went in search of geese at the nearby lagoon. As we were about to depart for Muirella Park the poor fellow arrived back empty handed at 5.30 pm. He is a good natured chap. I like him very much. Trevor Milliken has it in mind to offer him a position with the Welfare Department. This could work out well for all concerned.

We retraced our steps through the lovely Arnhem Land environment and arrived 'home' at 6.15 pm – mileage 5,201.8.

Had a welcome shave and shower (bucket type) and enjoyed a tasty Irish stew for dinner. The shower was something of a novelty. The bucket is suspended on a rope running over a pulley. To fill it the rope is released and the bucket drops to the floor. When full it is elevated by pulling on the rope and hitching it to a nail. Water is released by turning the rose. It is a splendid idea but I am afraid the whole system was too low for me and of course one bucket of water is fairly limited.

Frank Muir told us of some of his experiences in Darwin during the war. Evidently he was in the city at the time of the Japanese bombing and actually saw the Japanese

planes flying high over-head, circle and commence their bombing run. He described the complete panic that followed. The general attitude was *it cannot happen to us*. However people ran in circles and most evacuated quickly in sheer fright. Shops were deserted and every means of transport was used to go South to safety from the raid. He told us the story of one man who raced off on a push bike in such a hurry he failed to realize it lacked a chain until he reached Adelaide River! Frank observed the bombs hit the ships in the harbour. It is estimated 1100 lives were lost in the first two raids. The first at 10.00 am and the second at 2.00 pm. There was considerable damage and wholesale panic. Frank finished up by saying it was not long before everyone settled down and made ready for any eventuality.

We are all very tired tonight and packed up early as a buffalo hunt has been planned for the morning. The quality of the meat is dependant on choosing the right animal. The days are passing very quickly now. Alas it will not be long before we turn southwards again.

The paintings examined today in the western shelter were very impressive although they are badly affected by seepage which has caused serious deterioration and the all but total obliteration of some of the figures. The two paintings of muskets are an interesting record of early contact with Europeans. There are many X-ray style paintings in particular of fish. Distinctive hand stencils are also quite common. About 6 feet to the right of the group with muskets is what Frank Muir calls the *devil* figure. The aboriginals have told him it is to be feared. It is a somewhat clover leaf shape with long protrusions extending out from the base.

Graeme found a bundle wrapped in a blanket in a niche way up in the rock-face. There were two wooden pipes among some decaying cloths. Other evidence of recent occupation was found including several string bags.

Trevor Milliken returned back after dark. He has been to Mudginberri to take a census of the aboriginals at present on the Station. They numbered 187 and are believed to be gathering for a corroboree.

This evening Frank Muir relayed many stories of his youth. He lived at Cooma. There was an elderly Chinaman who went from property to property selling goods and buying skins. On his regular rounds he was known to always stop at a particular place for a cup of tea. One day while he was inside enjoying a rest Frank and a couple of boys unharnessed his horse and led it around the other side of a nearby wire fence then harnessed it up again. The horse being one side and the cart the other. Having completed their mischief they retired down a nearby creek to watch what would happen. Eventually the Chinaman came out looked at his cart, scratched his head, looked again, led the horse up a little but the wheels struck in the fence. He led his horse back a bit but its tails came against the fence. In the end he became annoyed and told the horse he could get himself out of the predicament as he had got himself into the mess. The boys after enjoying the joke went around the other way and came down the road and offered to help the old man. They did not tell him how the horse became entangled in such a difficult situation.

Exhausted and to bed at 10.00 pm.

Saturday 24 July 1965 Muirella Park Western Arnhem Land

Up early this morning and off on a buffalo hunt before breakfast. Everyone was very excited. Frank, Trevor and Graeme climbed into the front of the old International utility used for hunting. Oscar joined me in the back sitting in two large tubular steel easy chairs. It was very cold as we set off: a real nip in the air.

As we approached the large billabong north of the Camp the mist was rising from the water. A profusion of birds were feeding along the water's edge including magpie geese, brolgas, pelicans, shags, plovers, cranes, spoonbills, ibis, ducks and a host of other wild life I could not immediately identify. It was a superb sight as we drove close by four beautiful brolgas. They waited until we were almost upon them and then took flight. The sun caught the white bark of the profusion of paperbark trees which grow in and around the lagoons. It was a very memorable experience.

Frank was telling us last night about the time he went out shooting with several aboriginals. After stalking a large bull for some time it was at last shot and lay on the ground apparently dead. When Frank and one of the aboriginals (Yorkie Billy) approached to start cutting up the carcas for meat the buffalo suddenly rose to its feet. Frank grabbed the animal quickly by the horns and Yorkie by its tail. Together they threw it to the ground. When they looked to see why their companions had failed to come to their aid they found them sitting high up in some nearby trees. Their ascent had been so fast smoke was still coming from the bark!

We travelled many miles in search of a suitable buffalo. They usually frequent the nearby waters but this morning there were none to be found. This is not altogether unusual as they are constantly on the move, never staying in one place but grazing as they roam about through the country. The grass around the billabongs is short and vividly green. It has the appearance of a thick lawn. In places on the swampy flats the grass grows very high. I measured one cluster and it was 11 feet high.

At this time of the year it is very dry and often burnt off as we have seen elsewhere in the region. We searched the area adjacent to several billabongs without success and travelled for a good many miles. As we were about to give up the hunt and were already on our way home a herd of some 20 buffaloes appeared immediately ahead of us. The utility pulled up quickly and Frank went after the herd. They were very timid and rushed off through the scrub to avoid capture. A short distance along the road another two animals were spotted. This time there was good grass cover allowing Frank to approach closer without being detected. A shot rang out and the buffaloes set off across the country. However one had been wounded and Frank went in hot pursuit firing several more shots into the animal before it finally fell to the ground. Oscar had been commissioned to follow with the knives and boxes for the meat. I must say he was very timid about the whole affair. We urged him on but noticed that he was hiding in the tall grass and being very careful not to approach until the moment of danger had passed. All the aboriginals we have met live in fear of the buffalo. No doubt with good reason. The meat required for the safari camp

was cut quickly and efficiently from the carcase. It was then loaded up and we returned to Camp quite tired and hungry after our long hunt on an empty stomach.

We had an early lunch and departed for Noarlangie Rock at 12 o'clock – mileage 5,201.8 with a promise from Frank of a special roast dinner tonight. Graeme and I found our own way as Oscar has returned to his family in Pine Creek with Trevor Milliken.

The trail has been blazed and travelled over several times in the past few days. Never-the-less there were places where it becomes very indistinct making it easy to go astray. In due course we arrived at the second cave painting site where we spent the afternoon busily photographing the art. We also explored the area in an unsuccessful search for other paintings and burial caves believed to be located in the maze of weathered cavities in the sandstone rocks. It was exhausting work as the country is very rugged.

Departed for home at 5.45 pm – mileage 5,212.1. Had difficulty in finding our way but eventually arrived back after a number of detours but without any serious mishaps.

As we drove into the Camp there were the unmistakable odour of a roast dinner wafting through the atmosphere. After a long and tiring day our spirits were lifted at the thought of roast buffalo cooked on a wood stove. We shaved and showered for the occasion and entered the dining hall to see the table laid out for a formal dinner. Frank welcomed us warmly with a glass of wine. We were joined by three young chaps who had come out from Darwin for a weekend of fishing.

After discussing the day's events Frank went to the oven and brought out a beautifully browned roast leg from the buffalo shot this morning. It was surrounded with roast potatoes, carrots and pumpkin. Frank set it down on the table in front of himself with the words *who likes the crispy outside skin?* Being very hungry and transfixed at the sight of such a sumptuous meal complete with good red wine I was quick to make a positive response about how much I enjoyed the crispy outside of roast joints. Frank proceeded to cut four enormous pieces – from the leg, added a generous helping of vegetables including peas, beans and gravy and passed it to me. Once everyone had been served we began the meal. The meat was so tough I could barely cut it with a sharp knife let alone chew it. In an attempt to disguise my predicament I cut off small pieces chewed them, made out to sneeze and carefully placed the masticated meat in my handkerchief and thence into my pocket. At the end of the meal I had two pockets full of chewed buffalo skin! Frank's only comment was to express surprise that an animal eaten such a short time after being killed had been so tender. How little did he know!

Late tonight Dorothy Bennett and her son arrived quite unexpectedly. They had spent several hours seriously bogged in sand. They have recently returned from a trip to Japan where they had staged an exhibition of Aboriginal bark paintings. No doubt we will learn the details tomorrow.

Frank has promised to guide us out to another group of paintings in the morning. They are about 10 miles distant. It was past midnight by the time we finally fell into bed.

Sunday 25 July 1965 Muirella Park Western Arnhem Land

Up early as everyone was moving about the camp. The three young chaps from Darwin went off for a day of fishing and duck shooting. Mrs Bennett and her son Lance were helping Graeme and Frank to prepare breakfast. We had a very interesting discussion and gained a considerable amount of knowledge about the Bennett's travels and experiences with the aborigines in Arnhem Land. Mrs Bennett has been deeply interested in their art for many years and has travelled extensively in the top end. On some occasions she has lived with the women and gathered food with them. I have suggested she write to the A.I.A.S. for some means of support as I feel she deserves encouragement and could do much useful work. Her main interest is in bark paintings. She has a large collection which has been exhibited very successfully in Japan (see *news week* June 28, 1965) I suggested it may be possible for the collection to be shown at the South Australian Museum in association with the Adelaide Festival of Arts. I hope I am not being too presumptuous. As they were heading east and as Mrs Bennett has visited the other group of paintings located a few miles in that direction it was suggested we accompany them as far as the site. It was agreed that we would then travel a few miles on along the road with them in case they had further difficulty driving through the sandy patches.

We departed Muirella Park at 9.30 am – mileage 5,212.1 and travelled along the air strip then followed the track through the paper bark forest, past the billabongs where the bird life is so abundant and then on to the main Oenpelli road. Turned off to the right at 5,217 miles. The Bennetts left their car a short distance up the track then accompanied us to what must be part of the false escarpment of which Noarlangie rock is the main feature.

Arrived at 10.15 am – mileage 5,223.6. We were quick to locate the paintings in a large shelter some 175 feet in length and approximately 20 feet in width trending in a north east – south west direction. The roof is very high. There are numerous boulders on the floor and the back wall of the shelter is formed by an uneven series of rock ledges. Among the painting was a superb record of a sailing ship. Dorothy Bennett was told by an Aboriginal informant that it depicts an English ship wrecked at Port Essington. Immediately behind the main figure is a man rowing a dinghy.

Many of the paintings are seriously deteriorating. This is a tragedy as the group was obviously once part of a very significant site dating back over a long period. There are many small stick figures painted in a single red-maroon colour. These appear to underly the later, larger and more elaborate paintings. The earlier art is skilfully executed as it depicts figures in action with the use of fine single lines of pigment.

Departed the site at 12.30 pm – mileage 5,226.1 - as the Bennetts had to continue on their way. Spotted a large and healthy looking dingo. He stopped quite close to

us for a moment or two then loped off into the undergrowth. It is exciting to see these creatures in the wild.

Turned right on to the Oenpelli Road (a mere track) at 5,230.1 miles. Travelled almost as far as Mudginberri with the Bennetts as their car was small and the road very sandy and treacherous. Had a farewell can of beer all round, wished them well and turned back to the cave painting site. Continued making a photographic record of the art until 5.30 pm then returned to Muirella Park – mileage 5,285. Prepared dinner followed by a further chat to our interesting host and then into bed.

It occurred to me that one of the factors contributing to the deterioration of many paintings are the attempts by the present generation of aboriginals to perpetuate the cave art by re-touching it while lacking the traditional skills. In most shelters there are some paintings of quite recent origin. These have been painted roughly over the earlier more traditional figures. Whether we accept the recent work as genuine is a matter of opinion. However it is certain the effect has been to obscure and even damage the earlier work of which there is no record.

In common with Katherine Gorge and other sites the older figures have been painted in single lines of red-maroon ochre and are certainly not as elaborate as the more recently superimposed paintings. It would be interesting to know at what stage X-ray art began and over what period it has developed. There is much work to be undertaken on sorting out the superimposition of the different styles and place them in a time sequence.

There are so many caves in this region with occupation deposits that it would not be altogether surprising if situations exist where paintings and even engravings have been covered as the floor levels have built up with occupation debris over the centuries. In such circumstances it may be possible to accurately date charcoal and food remains to obtain evidence of relative age.

Slow settling down to sleep tonight as we depart this tropical paradise tomorrow.

Monday 26 July 1965 El Sharana Western Arnhem Land

Said our farewells to Frank Muir and thanked him for his assistance and generous hospitality. Departed Muirella Park with some regrets as our stay was an enjoyable and memorable one. It is a very beautiful area and Frank was a most kind, congenial and considerate host.

His charges were fairly high as follows:

▪ Accommodation	£5	per day per person
▪ Guide Services	£5	per day – four persons
▪ Vehicle Hire	2/6	per mile – four persons

He was very generous to us and did not charge. Admittedly we helped when we could and put in food and assisted in every way possible. I still consider his action to be one of a very kind person. Headed back towards El Sharana – mileage 5,285.

The road was absolutely dreadful in particular the fine grey coloured dust which seeped through everything. Encountered a number of buffaloes and wild horses along the roadside. Mainly, the odd ancient large old bull as they are forced out of the herd due to their old age. Once isolated they become bad tempered and are prone to attack even vehicles.

Travelled back along the road through the typical Arnhem Land country we have become so accustomed to during our Safari. Stopped now and again to photograph the palms, the large termite mounds, abandoned aboriginal bark shelters and many features of interest. Called at Jim Jim and had a cool drink to wash down the dust. Filled the Landrover with petrol and pushed on. Met the main Moline – El Sharana Road at 5,371.3 miles. Continued on to the mine reaching it at 3.50 pm – 5,387.5. Advised Ron Hollerhead, the caretaker, we were about again and arranged accommodation for the night. Drove over to the Christmas Creek site – mileage 5,392.9. Took measurements and prepared a sketch plan of the cave noting the position of each of the paintings. Completed the photographic record using a roll of 35 mm Ektachrome-x film. Returned to camp at 7.00 pm – mileage 5,398.3. Had a welcome shave and shower. This does make one feel good after travelling many dusty, tiring miles in this country.

As I write my journal tonight a large owl is fluttering at the fly wire by the side of my bed. The whole region really is teeming with life of every kind. In the morning we intend making a search for the upper Christmas Creek cave paintings described by Joe Fisher but which we lacked time to examine on our previous visit. As we are within a few miles of El Sharana it was decided to make a last ditched effort to locate and photograph the site.

Tuesday 27 July 1965 Katherine Northern Territory

Departed at 9.25am on a quest to find the upper Christmas Creek site mileage – 5,398.3. Ron Hollerhead decided to accompany us. Proceeded down the main road, over the South Alligator River and turned in at the 'no shooting' sign. We had difficulty in crossing the creeks in our path as they had been washed out during the wet season. It was also a problem to locate the road described by Mr Fisher. After some effort it was finally discovered and we proceeded along it for some distance dodging fallen rocks along the way. Followed the track over a ridge where we encountered a badly washed out section making it necessary to fill the deepest holes with stones before we could drive any further. More by good luck than good judgement we eventually found the site.

The paintings are located in a small weathered-out shelter in the side of a large boulder which had fallen from the escarpment centuries ago. The paintings were impressive and despite being a little faded were in a good state of preservation. Made a photographic record of them and hastened back as we were due in Katherine later today to prepare for our departure south tomorrow.

Departed Christmas Creek at 12.35pm – mileage 5,406.9. Took Mr Hollerhead home and then headed for Pine Creek. The road is in good condition at the moment

as there is a grader at work on it. Left the South Alligator River country behind us with feelings of regret as I may never return to this spectacular region.

Arrived in Pine Creek at 2.20 pm and called on Trevor and Annette Milliken to farewell them and express thanks to Trevor for his willing help and assistance during our visit to his area. They invited us to stay for lunch. We accepted this further act of kindness and enjoyed a sumptuous feast – the first civilized meal for many a day. Despite our need to make haste we could not resist a lengthy discussion on our various escapades in Arnhem Land. It is highly advantageous to discuss the many issues in aboriginal Australia with someone who is involved on an ongoing basis. While we were talking Trevor received an emergency call to take a sick 13 year old aboriginal girl to Katherine hospital. I offered our services and left Pine Creek with Queenie and completed the return journey as quickly as possible. We left her with the doctor and a sister and trust she will make a quick recovery.

Called to see Roy and Mrs Morgan to collect some mineral samples to take down to Dr Hossfeld. They have both been very kind and hospitable to us and made our visits to Katherine very productive. Bade them farewell and made our final return to Uncle Keith's place. He had a friend with him Dr Keith Dunstan. Unfortunately, they were the worse for having consumed 2 bottles of gin and one bottle of Port wine! He had been a fine doctor but drink seems to have got the better of him. Dr Dunstan owns Marrakai Station where buffaloes are slaughtered for meat.

Visited the Turners to say farewell to Jack and Ev. Discussed the different sites located. Copied maps of several areas of interest. Collected further rock specimens for Paul Hossfeld. Returned quite late but pleased to have been able to see the Morgan's and Turner's as both could have been away on work trips and I would have missed them.

Wednesday 28 July 1965 Daly Waters Northern Territory

Up early unpacked the Landrover, washed it thoroughly and re-packed again ready for departure on the long trip to Alice Springs. Went up the street and tidied up my affairs. Met Charles Jenkins the District Officer and Mick Ivory who is the local Welfare Officer. Had a long discussion with them about the rock art survey and other matters of importance including relations with field-workers. They are both good chaps. Mick was pleased to have us back and hear about our recording work over recent weeks. A very good relationship has developed with officials up here. This will stand the Institute and other researchers in good stead in the future.

Arranged for mail and air freight to be re-addressed back to Adelaide. Said our farewells to Uncle Keith and departed Katherine at 3.30 pm – mileage 5,548.1. Heading south with a sense of satisfaction about the experience gained on my first visit to Arnhem Land.

Reached Maranboy at 4.15 pm – mileage – 5,579.7 and then went on to Elsey Cemetery where we stopped at 5.15 pm – mileage 5,630. The Landrover is running well as the load is lighter with less water and stone implements. Reached Larrimah

at 6.00 pm – mileage 5,666.9 and on to Daly Waters by 7.25 pm – mileage 5,925.7. Stopped at 7.30 pm at a Motel a short distance off the main road - mileage 5,728.2.

Tired after coming south for 180.1 miles but pleased to be retracing my steps towards Alice Springs. The project has been full of interest and in many respects it would be wonderful to continue for another few months. However it is so intensive especially being my first venture into such extensive field studies. It requires an objective review of the work undertaken to date in the region before entering the next phase. The photographs taken over the past month will be indicative of whether I have mastered the techniques of taking high class photographs of difficult subjects under difficult circumstances.

Thursday 29 July 1965 Renner Springs Northern Territory

Spent a comfortable night at the Motel. The proprietors were very friendly. They welcomed us warmly and made us feel at home. Enjoyed an excellent breakfast with two field geologists from Australian Aquitaine Petroleum of Brisbane. They are undertaking a preliminary geo-physical survey of the region.

Departed Daly Waters for O.T. Station at 8.30 am – mileage 5,728.3 as Jack Turner has given us the location of a rock engraving site he found in a creek bed on the property. We turned off the Stuart Highway at 5,733.3 miles on to the Borolooloo Road. It is a very straight stretch and the country generally flat although undulating in places. Again made a turn off the road and drove 14 miles to the Station. The owner was away mustering cattle and an aboriginal directed us to Percy Hume. However Jack's map was very accurate and few further directions were required.

Found the engravings at 12.00 pm – mileage 5,859.8. They are located mainly on large boulders in a stream bed strewn with rocks of various sizes. The motifs include a large proportion of kangaroo/wallaby type tracks, emu tracks, human foot prints, crescents (camping symbols), hooked crescents, linear markings and a single human figure. There is a large hole containing fresh water close to the site. This is a common feature of most of the engraving sites I have visited. The designs were found also on smaller rocks and loose stones. The technique used to create the designs, the consistent dark patination over the rock surfaces including the motifs themselves, predominance of animal tracks and general condition, are identical to the engravings found at the classic sites in the north-east of South Australia. There is no apparent difference what-so-ever. This group is important as it extends the distribution of such art and supports the idea of these very ancient symbols being the work of the first people to occupy Australia many thousands of years ago.

Photographed the site using ADOX-RIA and 35 mm Ektachrome – X film.

Departed the O.T. Station site at 2.10 pm – mileage 5,862.6. We are now running behind schedule as the deadline in Alice Springs is close and has to be met as in the next few weeks I have to fit in with Dr Campbell's filming arrangements.

Retraced our steps over the rather rough and dusty track and along the O.T. Station Road. Bush turkeys are very prevalent in this area. We encountered many both on the ground and flying in the air. Entered the main Bororlooloo road at 3.00 pm – mileage 5,877.5. Reached the welcome comfort of the bitumen of the Stuart Highway at 5.00 pm – mileage 5,988.8. Feeling very pleased about the discovery of another typical ancient rock engraving site at a great distance from those in South Australia. The sites visited over the past three months supported the hypothesis for a wide distribution of engravings from Tasmania across the mainland to Arnhem Land and also I suspect from the west coast to the east.

Called at Newcastle Waters at 6.30 pm for a brief respite. Mileage 6,069 and then journeyed on to Elliott where we re-fuelled the Landrover and had a drink. Arrived at 7.00 pm – Mileage 6,087.2.

Pushed on in our relentless drive south. The explorers must have been overwhelmed by the vast distances to be covered especially as they were either on horses, camels or walking. I now have even greater respect for Sturt, Stuart, Giles, Warburton and the others who trekked across this harsh land in the 19th century.

Stopped to help a truck driver who had broken down with a cracked fuel line. He was fortunate he did not catch fire. Found a leak in one of the Landrover's tyres. We pushed on to Renner Springs and decided to stop for the night rather than drive on to Tennant Creek as intended. It was 9.00 pm – mileage 6,150.6.

We enjoyed a shave and hot shower and a comfortable bed rather than sleeping on camp stretchers which are fine in the bush but unloading the Landrover late at night after a long day is to be avoided whenever possible.

It is far easier going south with home at the end of the journey.

Friday 30 July 1965 Alice Springs Central Australia

A restful night but very cold winds this morning. The room at the Motel was clean and neat but the bathroom and toilets left much to be desired.

Changed the wheel on the Landrover. We could hear the air coming out last night when we stopped to help the transport driver. Made Renner Springs without difficulty as the leak was a very slow one. The tyre was still half inflated this morning.

A large and tasty breakfast. Departed Renner Springs at 8.30 am – mileage 6,150.6. Running late as we had expected to go as far as Tennant Creek last night. Arrived in this well known town at 10.30 am – mileage 6,256.2. Called at the Airways office but there is still no sign of the missing parcel. Sent a telegram to Cath in Adelaide.

Departed at 11.00 am and reached the Devil's Marbles at 12.30 am – mileage 6,324.9 a distance of 705 miles south of Darwin. Took a number of photographs of these massive granite outcrops which are very picturesque and must certainly have had significance to the aboriginals.

Continued on our way reaching Barrow Creek at 2.10 pm - mileage 6,402.5. Called at the hotel and had an interesting talk to the proprietors who have a small collection of local aboriginal artefacts. They have promised to call at the Museum as they have a house in Adelaide. Again visited the graves of two telegraph workers who were speared by aboriginals in 1874. A poignant reminder of the frontier days in the Territory. Also made a pilgrimage to the Old Historic Telegraph Station.

Reached Aileron at 4.25 pm – mileage 6,499.6 and continued on to Alice Springs by 6.00 pm – mileage 6,580. Relieved to arrive as our fuel was getting very low.

In all we travelled 1,032 miles since leaving Katherine on Wednesday. A long direct trip on a largely straight and rather monotonous highway. The Landrover has preformed like clock-work and made nearly 20 miles to the gallon.

Went directly to Doug Doerner's home. Unfortunately he had a bad case of the flu. We relayed a little of our recent adventures in the North and then drove into town for dinner to save Mrs Boerner the trouble of preparing a meal.

Returned to Boerner's after dinner as they had generously offered us the use of their caravan for the night. This is parked in the yard and connected to the electricity. Spent the evening talking to the Boerners. This is always very rewarding as they are a mine of information about Central Australia. We share many interests. They have a large and fascinating collection including meteorites, rocks, minerals and artefacts. Doug told us NASA has taken a deep interest in the Henbury Meteorite Crater, Australites found in this region and the desert environment as it relates to plans to explore Mars. The Boerner library is excellent and focuses mainly on Central Australian exploration and aboriginal history. Spencer, Gillen, Strehlow, Stuart, Giles, Horn, indeed all the explorers are well represented. Doug has traced the journeys of many of those who ventured into the Central Deserts.

As Foreman Mechanic at the Works Department Doug has many good contacts as he services the vehicles of most of the officials and important travellers to the Centre.

Had a shave and hot bath and relaxed at last as the first segment of my six months field work has come to an end. Tomorrow is the great day when I go south to Adelaide and home to family and friends. I feel well satisfied that I have succeeded in a completely new role calling for me to be very resourceful and determined. Looking back it is unbelievable that since first leaving Adelaide on 11 May I have driven 6,580 miles through all sorts of fascinating environments. I

am leaving the Landrover with Doug for a complete service ready for the Central Deserts.

Saturday 31 July 1965 Adelaide

Graeme and I flew to Adelaide today and were welcomed home by Cath and the boys, Dr. Campbell, Keith Cook with photographs, Graeme and Sandra and a number of other friends.

It is good to be home for a few days after our busy schedule in the North.

Sunday 1 August to Friday 6 August 1965 Adelaide

Drove down to Harold Sheard's home at Pt Elliott on the South Coast accompanied by Cath and Mr. and Mrs. Mountford. Lunched at the Hotel Victor and then had relaxed discussions with Mr. Sheard about my trip and related matters. Everyone is delighted about my appointment to succeed Norman Tindale as Curator of Anthropology at the South Australian Museum.

Met with Dr. Peter Crowcroft Director of the Museum and was introduced to members of staff. Underwent a medical examination for the Public Service Board.

Attended the premier of Dr. T. D. Campbell's films on Tuesday. An advance copy of C.P. Mountford's latest book arrived with great excitement on Wednesday.

Spent a great deal of time with Keith Cook discussing the photographic techniques used during my trip. We went through many of the films to assess the results in different situations. He is planning a visit to Central Australia to experience the field conditions while we are working in the area.

The week went very quickly and I was soon packing up ready to begin my adventures in Central Australia.

Saturday 7 August 1965 Alice Springs Central Australia

Up early and busily packing. Boys rushing about as usual. Cath is wonderful to stand up to all the strain. I do not know how I could ever manage without her. Prof. Lawton called to collect the photographic enlargements for Canberra. He was very pleased with them. For the first time in my life I am actually pleased with my efforts. The enlargements are really excellent – I have not seen better anywhere. This is quite a statement considering my usual conservative nature! I do hope Mr. McCarthy, John (Mulvaney) and Jack (Golson) are pleased with them. Poor Barry is having trouble with the colour prints. I feel certain he will come up with something equal to Keith's work on the black and white photographs. They are both perfectionists and good friends.

The taxi called at 10.45 am. Too much on time for me! Called for Dr. and Mrs. Campbell and thence to the Airport where John Bloomfield was waiting with much of the luggage. Murray Barrett (Department of Dentistry University of Adelaide) arrived later with Dr. Sven Helm a Dental Researcher from Copenhagen. We boarded a Viscount aircraft for the trip to Alice Springs. A nice aircraft. Almost full. Mrs. Campbell and I sat up front together facing the main body of passengers. It was rather strange flying backwards. A splendid and very happy trip. T.A.A. served us a drink and invited us to visit the cockpit from which we had a splendid view. The Captain was a very relaxed fellow and much interested in our project.

Departed 11.45 am and landed at Alice Springs at 3.00 pm. Max Althaus and his wife and Mrs. Barrett were at the aerodrome to meet us with the Holden Station Wagon rented from Jackson's. Drove to the Motel where we are staying tonight in very comfortable accommodation.

Called to see Doug Boerner at the Department of Works and collected the Landrover. He had fully serviced and checked the vehicle. The tyres had been repaired and the back door mended and reinforced. Doug and Una are a congenial couple. Delayed over the non-arrival of the other stores and the X-ray plant intended for the dental research at Yuendumu. Went to Max Althaus's home which is our base for this trip. Unpacked the Rover in preparation for loading the plant when it arrives.

An excellent dinner in Alice Springs then supper at the Althaus's with interesting discussions on the Centre and its aboriginal people.

The change from the north to the south and the south back to the north is so rapid it is difficult to become used to it. I quickly returned to "routine" when in Adelaide as there was so much to do. It is hard to realise I have been away. On return to Alice Springs today and once again in the Landrover busily preparing for departure to Yuendumu it is difficult to appreciate it was only a few hours ago that I was with family and friends.

Sunday 8 August 1965 Yuendumu Settlement Central Australia

Up at 7.30 am. Good 'country' breakfast at the Motel. Went straight around to Althaus's and loaded up for an early departure for Yuendumu. Called at Ansett Road Transport and loaded the X-ray plant.

Finally departed Alice Springs at 10.15 pm – mileage 6,605. Fully loaded with two cases on the front seat. John Bloomfield accompanied me in the Landrover. We travelled through flat sandy country covered mainly with Mulga. It is exceedingly dry – even the drought resistant trees are suffering severely from the prolong dry. Stopped for lunch at 1.45 pm – mileage 6,730. Improvised a billy from a fruit can. Everyone happy and good company. Continued on in convoy

through the dry desert country. Spotted four emus and a Kangaroo. Passed through the Stuart Range. The road is very corrugated in places but generally in good condition. Arrived at Yuendumu at 3.30 pm – mileage 6,799.7.

It was a thrill to see the Settlement laid out before me on the flat dusty Mulga covered plain. I welcomed this first glimpses of Yuendumu as in recent years I have seen so many photographs and heard so much about it from Dr. Campbell. Now it has all become a very pleasant reality.

Pulled up at the Baptist Minister's house (Rev. Tom Fleming). Made a very welcome cup of tea. Tom and his wife Pat are an exceedingly hospitable couple. Unloaded the Landrover. Some of the aboriginals gathered around full of interest. One (Sandy), had a bandage on his hand and dried blood all over his cloths. Apparently there has been quite a commotion in the camp as the young men are objecting to the old men taking the young girls as wives. Sandy had been struck on the hand with a boomerang. The weapon had actually broken into pieces as a result of the blow. It seems a concert is being arranged for us in about two weeks time. This should be fun.

Sven and I went over to the single men's quarters where two school teachers (Peter and Philip) are boarding. This is to be our 'home' for the stay here at Yuendumu. It is quite new and convenient in every way having a bathroom, toilet, kitchen and living room as well as bedrooms. We carried the equipment into our room and settled in. Peter and Philip are taking a keen interest in the aboriginals and had two men making crayon drawings – an old man of 60 odd and another of about 45. They are attempting to record the stories associated with ground drawings and gaining considerable knowledge particularly of the Walbiri tribe from their acquaintance with the children in school and the older people in the camp. There are about 850 aboriginals living on the Yuendumu settlement.

At about 6.30 pm we walked the short distance over to the native camp. It was much like Mulga Park of a few months ago. An absolutely fascinating experience. Talked with a number of impressive elderly men and their families. Inspected their spears, boomerangs, waddies, stone knives and various artefacts. They are very happy in their natural surroundings which have been the lot of these people for thousands of years. To see them living around campfires behind their bough windbrakes – with dogs in great numbers all about – is a surreal experience. If all goes well it is one which I may be fortunate enough to study in some detail during the next few weeks. I hope it will be possible to obtain a good photographic record as from all accounts the Welfare Department is building houses for these people (although they do not appear to want them) and the camp days may soon disappear forever. It is a much happier environment here than in Alice Springs where the aboriginals haunt the Hotels and become a burden to themselves and others.

Tom Fleming held a moving church service in the aboriginal camp. Fires were lit and a large body of aboriginals and white staff met to sing and pray together. It was a fascinating experience to witness such an event in the midst of an ancient race of people living in their natural surroundings. In the background dogs fought with great ferocity. The camp fires glowed. The worshippers were most attentive. Rev. Fleming screened a strip film showing the story of Abraham. The simple service closed with a prayer. I am uncertain what meaning it had for the aboriginal people of all ages.

Walked through the camp with Sven, Peter and Philip. There is no doubt it is a remarkable and somewhat strange experience to see these people sitting quietly around their camp fires. The stars shine brightly above and the hot coals glow red giving warmth to the bodies huddled around them. The women and some young children were sleeping together in the shelter of large windbrakes. The young men have a separate camp at some considerable distance. We walked from group to group. I took a few photographs but felt very intrusive.

Met the principle “actors” who are to join us over the next few weeks in making a film on daily life. The men have all grown a healthy set of whiskers for the occasion. This quite suites them.

Pleased to retire to bed after a long and fascinating day. It was difficult to sleep as the evening in the camp was foremost on my mind.

Monday 9 August 1965 Yuendumu Settlement Central Australia

A siren is blown at 8 o'clock every morning for all hands to start work. However, there was a dramatic absence of any response as the settlement was very quiet this morning due to cool weather although it was not as cold as it was in Alice Springs. Never-the-less the day has been warm with a magnificent clear blue sky.

The adults are fed three meals a day from a community kitchen. There every want is catered for leaving them virtually nothing to occupy themselves. Each morning the school children are showered, have their teeth cleaned and given milk and fruit. It is a great pity these people have everything done for them which leads to almost total dependence from which they may find it difficult to escape.

The morning was occupied in getting the X-ray unit set up for Dr. Helm who is undertaking the comprehensive dental survey as part of a research project he is undertaking in Copenhagen. Photographed him at work this afternoon. The aboriginals were very intrigued to understand exactly what was going on.

I enjoyed a visit to the school to see the youngsters at work. They are a very happy bunch of children. I do wonder about their future opportunities in this remote area.

Late in the afternoon I drove Dr. Campbell, Murray Barrett and some of our associates out to see the filming site where it is intended to settle three aboriginal families who will be the principle “stars” in the intended one hour documentary. It is essential to be some miles away from the settlement to create a natural setting and avoid disrupting the daily routine.

It was interesting to have my first close experience in this part of Australia. Despite the drought it is very attractive with its red sands, yellow Spinifex, ghost gums and other desert trees.

Tuesday 10 August 1965 Yuendumu Central Australia

Warmer again today with a clear blue sky. We have been exceedingly busy making the arrangements to transfer the three aboriginal families out to the filming location. What a business it turned out to be for all concerned.

The site is some 8 miles along a narrow wheel-track through the desert near a beautiful creek lined with many ghost gums. It was quite an hilarious exercise to locate, negotiate and transport all the people. This meant a number of trips in the Landrover.

They were pleased with the location and soon began clearing ground and building their shelters and wind breaks to form a comfortable little village where they will live for the next few weeks.

Made another brief visit to the school as arrangements had to be made for the children who were to feature in the film with their families. The Welfare Department has insisted that on non-filming days the children be taken to school in the morning and returned to their families in the late afternoons. This became part of my role. Took photographs of the school classes. The kids were delighted and very bubbly.

Enjoyed a healthy meal after a very active day in the new environment.

The evening was spent in lengthy discussions about the filming and a briefing for tomorrow.

Tom Fleming is an interesting and very dedicated minister of the Baptist Church. He was born in Footscray in Victoria on 24 October 1909. In 1934 he entered the Baptist Theological College in Melbourne and was ordained to the Ministry in 1937. In July 1941, Rev Fleming went to Malaya with the 8th Division AIF in the capacity of YMCA representative with the rank of Captain.

After the fall of Singapore in February 1942 he spent until August in Changi Barracks as a prisoner of war of the Japanese. He was then taken with 1,200 prisoners to Sandakan on the island of Borneo and in October 1944 to Kuching.

In May 1946 he became Minister of the Moonee Ponds Baptist Church. He arrived in Yuendumu as a missionary with his wife and first son Adrian in April 1950. Tom Fleming appears to me to be greatly respected by the aboriginals and most certainly has a deep knowledge and understanding of their way of life. (Rev. Tom Fleming retired from Yuendumu in 1975 and died at the age of 80 on 2 July 1990).

Wednesday 11 August 1965 Yuendumu Central Australia

Another full day of filming at the temporary camp by the River. Shot some excellent sequences of traditional life including preparation and cooking of a Goana, mounting a stone 'Tula' in Spinifex gum on a wooden handle, digging water-holes in the bed of the River. Everyone enjoyed the day. I was especially pleased as there was time to make still records of these different practices. They will be very useful for museums as there are few such detailed records.

Sven is making good progress with his dental research.

Thursday 12 August 1965 Yuendumu Central Australia

Further day filming sequences of traditional camp life. We drove the men out into the bush and obtained shots of hunting kangaroos and cooking them.

Friday 13 August 1965 Yuendumu Central Australia

Today was a typical day of T.D.C.. filming.

Up at 7.30 am. Drove the 8 miles out to the filming site. Collected the young children and two older women and took them into the settlement. The kids went to school. Every child has a shower, cleans his or her teeth and has their clothes washed. Left one of the women at the main camp: the other went to the school where she works.

Breakfast at the Flemings at 8.30 am. Packed the Landrover with the photographic and other gear. A 'top level' conference decided the children would be required for today's filming. Went over to the head-master and obtained permission for the children to be taken out of school again (after a 16 mile drive to bring them in to the settlement!). Visited the school and collected the kids then went to the aboriginal camp to collect a woman and child. She refused to come as she was in the midst of making damper and was under the strict supervision of an older wife.

Returned to the Flemings and reported progress. Called at N.T.A. to fill up with petrol. The bowser had only 2 gallons left in it. Both vehicles then went to the camp again to persuade our reticent 'film star'. We received a blunt refusal. While

in the camp I negotiated the purchase of a ball of human hair string for use in the film. Also purchased three boomerangs for £1.

Finally had everything sorted out and left for the filming site at 11 am. Arrived at the temporary camp and waited while Dr Campbell and Murray Barrett negotiated the days filming sequence. Departed on a quest to find the most suitable filming location. Turned off the road a mile or two from camp and inspected what proved to be a highly suitable location amidst granite outcrops in an open plain strewn with Mulga Trees.

The second vehicle had failed to notice that we had turned off. This meant a chase of about 10 miles before we came together. We returned to the new location where considerable effort was made to prepare the cast for filming with a great deal of patience and good humour.

Returned to the temporary camp late in the afternoon and took some shots near the creek then proceeded on to Yuendumu. Collected the two old women and young boy and took them back to the camp. Arrived home in time to join the Flemings for tea. The meal was very convivial and finished at 9.30 pm. I helped with the dishes and then went back to our quarters and had a good hot bath and wrote up my diary before going to bed.

There was a fair amount of time lost today. It is hard to co-ordinate a large group and ofcourse the aboriginals have little idea of time, indeed their days follow along without any reference what-so-ever to clocks.

The female sequences of food gathering seemed to go quite well although there was only limited opportunity to obtain close still shots as the whole exercise moved so quickly and the film must take priority. The scenes of the women walking across the deserts were particularly striking. I noticed every care had to be taken not to offend their modesty.

The setting was ideal. Located between two outcrops of granite it provided a good elevated position for the camera as well as a striking background. The red soil and Mulga trees made a very natural setting in which to record aspects of the old traditional ways of life before they disappear for all time. The sky was a brilliant blue with a few clouds developing: ideal for an impressive colour film.

Once things were underway the aboriginals seemed to settle down and soon reverted back to the 'old days' they know so well. They appear to derive much pleasure from doing the simple, natural, routine tasks that meant their survival in a harsh desert environment. The young children thoroughly enjoyed themselves and ran around the countryside playing games and hunting for witchetty grubs which they eat with great relish. Even the elders seem to instinctively mimic the ways of their older brothers and sisters.

Saturday 14 August 1965 Yuendumu Central Australia

The clouds which have been gathering for the past two days brought rain during the night. Light showers have continued to fall for most of the day. It was quite a thrill to see rain in the deserts of Central Australia. Everything now looks fresh as that the dust has been washed away. The bats have come out in great numbers: their peculiar call can be heard very distinctly.

Drove out to the temporary camp to collect Jim, Darby and Mick as a trip was planned and they were required to ride with us in case there was any opportunities to do some filming.

They had moved their camp during the night from close to the creek to higher ground. A wise precaution in view of the showers and possibility of flooding. The new shelters are constructed of brush and appear to be very effective against

cold winds and showers They are very adaptable and can be modified quickly in response to varying weather conditions.

It is a genuinely wonderful experience to be among these remarkable people as day by day I am gaining a greater understanding and sympathy for their way of life in traditional times and the appalling situation in which they live today.

Certain men cannot look at particular women: due to family relationships. Many old customs are rigidly adhered to despite a lack of interest by the younger generation who are pleased to see the tribal discipline relaxing. The life they follow is certainly not as moral and modest as it would be if tribal law was still enforced.

The final decision was taken to visit Ngama the snake cave which turned out to be some 20 miles out from Yuendumu. There was much waiting about and we left much later than intended. The natives here when asked for a time to meet always respond by saying *about half past*. The hour is never mentioned as it is irrelevant to them. I am learning much about aboriginal time.

The Ngama cave is located in a large, sandstone conglomerate outcrop set in a plain of Spinifex, Corkwood and Mulga. The paintings are outstanding and made more so for me by the fact that our three aboriginal companions removed their European cloths, painted themselves with red and white ochres and sang and danced the songs of the great dog ancestor. It was an extraordinary and quite thrilling experience for me. Obviously the site is of special significance today as it has been over many millennia.

Unfortunately the weather was poor and it rained for most of the afternoon. The sky was heavy with black thunder clouds and there was some vivid lightning. Interesting for Central Australia. Despite the conditions I did manage to take a number of photographs but was unable to complete a record of the site as time

would not allow it. Hopefully there will be further opportunities as I know Dr. Campbell has in mind making a documentary of the whole ritual that still takes place at this remote site.

Returned to Yuendumu through the picturesque endless desert with feelings of disbelief at what I had witnessed.

The site is known as the Jukiuta cave at Ngama and has been described to me by Charles Mountford. According to him it is associated with the myth of Jarapiri. Mountford was ethnologist on the 1951 Board for Anthropological research of the University of Adelaide expedition to Yuendumu. He returned to the site again in 1959. His recording of the site was published in a book entitled *Winbaraku and the Myth of Jarapiri*.

Enjoyed a relaxed dinner with the Flemings and an after dinner chat on past experiences in Central Australia by Dr. Campbell.

Acquired an interesting carved pearl shell this morning. Apparently they originate in the Kimberleys and are traded west across the desert where they are used in sacred rituals.

Sunday 15 August 1965 Yuendumu Central Australia

Inspite of the best of intentions and a copious amount of advanced planning it was 12 o'clock before we departed on another desert journey. Offcourse this was much better timing than yesterday!

The trip was mostly across a flat but interesting Spinifex plain covered in beautiful Mulgas, Black Oaks and Corkwoods it took us to Central Mt. Wedge a distance of 50 miles from Yuendumu. The object of the expedition (unknown to us until we arrived) was to visit an important site of the Lizard Dreaming tucked

away in a very picturesque little gorge amongst some hills. The main feature was a huge residual rock standing high in the air. This site is in some way associated with Jim. His young son (Bobbie Spencer) was with us and stood next to the object for a photograph.

We made our return over the same very rough wheel track. The Landrover jumped about a great deal in spite of the heavy load of three large aboriginals and 3 others. It was very tiring. However the aboriginals enjoyed the ride and chatted and laughed away without taking a breath. They are always pleased to visit places which have become inaccessible due to their life in fixed settlements.

They shot a kangaroo on the return journey and we stopped long enough for it to be 'cooked' and brought back to the camp. It certainly wasn't over cooked – rather singed as blood was still dripping from it and the smell was rather strong.

Arrived home quite late in the afternoon after another fascinating day.

Relayed our adventures to the Fleming's and our associates over dinner.

Monday 16 August 1965 Yuendumu Central Australia

Up early had breakfast and drove out to the temporary camp and brought the women and kids back to the settlement.

A highly successful day for me as I was able to take numerous photographs including the women digging for witchetty grubs and cooking them in the hot sand, digging a well in the bed of the creek for water and filling their traditional water carriers, the men searched for native bees in hollows in the gums along the creek. As well as other interesting aspects of daily life. I doubt that such long sequences have been covered in the past.

It was good to see the day flow smoothly with the minimum of distractions.

Drove the women and young children back to the settlement where they camp with the remainder.

Enjoyable dinner together with the Flemings. The discussions continued throughout the evening and it was after 11.00 pm by the time I went to bed feeling exhausted after a day in the hot sun.

Sunday 22 August 1965 Yuendumu Central Australia

This time next week I will be waiting in Alice Springs for a plane home - I will be pleased to have a break from the intense activity of filming and recording aspects of the daily life of the Walbiri.

Yesterday I had to mend two tyres on the Landrover as they were punctured on Friday when driving through the Mulga scrub. One of the aboriginal mechanics, named Sandy, did most of the work – he is very good. We then went a few miles out with Murray Barrett and photographed some lizards and a rare marsupial mouse. Returned for lunch at about 2 o'clock bought one or two weapons from old Jim and Mick and then took them down to the camp. Several men were busy making spears and boomerangs.

Late in the afternoon we went down to the Pintubi camp – past the aerodrome – it is a fascinating place. Some of the old men are indeed very, very old. Many still spend their time working away making boomerangs, spears and other artefacts. Soon after sunset a group of old men who had been painting their bodies with white ochre lines – inter-locking key patterns – began preparations for a croroboree. They called for the women and younger girls to come by beating on a boomerang and shouting out. The women sat down on the ground

in a semi-circle and when the men began to sing they beat their hands on their legs making a perfectly wonderful sound keeping in time with the men's singing and beating of sticks. The men would sing a chorus then stop and chatter for a few moments before going on again. This went for several hours and was offcourse, quite fascinating for me. Several of the men danced during singing. It was not hard to imagine these people in their former nomadic state. I wonder if we have the right to destroy their culture as we are most certainly doing? Returned to our quarters where we had an enjoyable dinner and discussions with Peter and Philip – the two school teachers whose accommodation we share. They are both nice chaps. Young both of them. Philip is an Australian Jew – interested in art, writing and so on. He and some friends plan to buy a boat and travel around the world.

This morning 'Uncle' Jim arrived at the door with his long hair tied in a bun at the back – it was quite a sight. He was a little put out as he feels he has been inadequately paid for his work on the filming project. He stayed here talking for some time during which he demonstrated hee-how hair string is fixed to a pearl shell ornament with *palya* (Spinifex gum). The boys would just love this dear man.

Went to church at 10.30. Enjoyed the simple service with a congregation almost entirely of aboriginals. I must say I felt much better for the experience. The sermon was simple, dignified and in language the aboriginals fully understood.

This afternoon I visited the Pintubu camp and wandered among these interesting people. There were a number of gambling 'rings' and it was amusing to see them playing cards and betting their shoes, shirts, blankets, in fact all their worldly possessions. What was funny was the fact that if they won a pair of boots they would immediately stop the game and put them on. When they lost they would take them off again. This procedure seemed to be repeated over and over again

as the luck of the game came and went. They were most certainly enjoying themselves.

Went down to Jim's camp just before sunset and found him with his green pixie cap on in the centre of his own little gambling ring. He was very cheerful and appeared to be winning although it was difficult to tell as the actual game is something of a mystery.

Enjoyed the pleasant experience of a simple service and film strip in the aboriginal camp at sunset. There were clouds about and the sunset simply glorious.

Old Jim and Darby came. They only appeared to know one hymn which they sang with great sincerity. It was something of a sight to see these two bearded old men (Jim with his green pixie cap) taking in the whole procedure which is so different to their own religion. After the service they led us away in the pitch black night with great secrecy. Jim retrieved an old sugar mill ~~bad~~bag from a hidden place and we all went back to the Landrover. After driving well away from the camp he presented me with the ~~back~~bag which contained three beautiful wooden churingas belonging to our family "skin". These were repayment for kindnesses to him since our arrival. There is no doubt they recognise and react to correct and courteous treatment. It was most touching – I felt very moved.

Discovered today the cause of the Central Australian drought. About 10 years ago a special rainmaking ceremony was held. Billy the rainmaker was in charge but being very old the proceedings tired him out. The results of the ceremony were rapid and dramatic. Some 10 inches of rain fell over about 4 days. Poor Billy who was confined to his shelter was drowned in the deluge of his own creating.

It is interesting to know that australites from outer space are still used by the “witchdoctors” here for the cure of ills. Harry, a bright young aboriginal lad of good reputation who acts as our interpreter, recalled an incident that occurred last year. He had been sick for several days. All of a sudden one of the old men appeared at his shelter. He rubbed his chest with smelly (Goanna) fat and lined up a series of australites on it to allay the evil spirits and bring about a cure. He sang throughout the whole treatment.

The old men are very secretive and will discuss nothing unless women and children are shunted off to a considerable distance. This is quite understood and there is no resistance on the latter’s part. The old men have hoards of churingas and sacred objects hidden in the bush – a real store of material relating to their different “dreamings”. The whole “business” is involved and the stories are inter-related with other stories which extend into adjoining tribal areas. The corroborees are re-enactments of the journeys and activities of the Creation Ancestors. The churingas are a visible record of the story. The bull-roarers are the sound or spirit of the Ancestor. It is good to see the seriousness with which the beliefs are held.

The myth of the Rainbow Serpent here is said to travel a long way – up to Darwin. It is interesting that the Rainbow Serpent myth noted at Mainoru was said by that tribe to extend south – “way down south *Alice Springs* way.” There appears to be some relationship between the two.

Monday 23 August 1965 Yuendumu Central Australia

Had a very touching experience this morning. Jim took Sven and me off out into the scrub to meet a small group (six) of the “elders” of the Walbiri tribe. We were introduced and then sat down in a small circle. After some discussion between themselves one old man dug in the ground and brought out a most beautifully carved churinga. It was given to Jim who stroked it fondly with his hand on both surfaces before handing it to me. I did the same and then handed it to Sven. A second churinga was brought out and the same procedure followed. This time Jim pointed

out the meanings of the design which represented the “Kangaroos Dreaming”. The old men sang softly during the whole proceedings. The next object unearthed was wrapped in a piece of cloth. It was a flat stone representing the tongue of the Kangaroo. As before this was passed around and stroked reverently. Another stone, said by Jim to represent the testicles of the Kangaroo was handed with like reverence and ceremony. Three small bull roarers were next examined. These they intimated by gestures were swung around the head during ceremonies. All the ceremonial objects appeared to belong to an old man named Mussolini (many of the old men were given names during the Second World War). The pieces were laid before us on a blanket spread on the ground.

One of the other old men then rose and went to the base of a small bush and scratched away in the ground for a moment then drew out two larger wooden churingas. These too were carefully handled in the same reverent way while the old men chanted the corresponding “corroboree” song.

The whole ‘ritual’ was most dramatic and came as a complete surprise to us.

Wednesday 15 September 1965 N'Dahla Gorge Central Australia

Up early excited at the prospects of a further examination of the rock engravings at this interesting site east of Alice Springs. Commenced photographing but found the subjects very difficult due to poor lighting. The engravings generally are very much weathered as they are located in a fairly narrow gorge through which a torrent of water must pass in times of heavy rainfall. The best preserved engravings are on rocks located away from the main bed of the stream i.e. on the walls of the gorge and on “islands” in the stream.

Located two distinctive engravings of small figures with enormous head-dresses. Unfortunately they were in heavy shade so photographs will have to wait until tomorrow. Also found the excellent engraving of a “cob-web” like design a photograph of which had been given to me a couple of years ago by one of Mr.

Hergstrom's photographic group. It is this photograph that inspired the visit to Love's Creek. These were very exciting and unique finds.

I was somewhat surprised and not a little pleased, to see many designs similar to those found in the north-east of South Australia. Present in large numbers were such motifs as animal tracks (kangaroo, emu, euros, turkeys, birds) spirals, circles, concentric circles, crescents, multiple barred circles together with intersecting and wavy linear designs. Dingo tracks or anything resembling them were absent at this site suggesting it pre-dates the coming of the dingo to Australia. The engravings are broadly scattered along the Gorge - for a distance of about 1½ miles. I walked right through the gorge – red sandstone cliffs rising to a great height on each side – a very beautiful place.

Encountered a waterfall a short distance on from the main group of engravings. This must be quite wonderful in wet seasons. There are numerous rock-holes located in the creek bed capable of holding hundreds of gallons of water. Walked back some two miles to camp photographing as I went. A late lunch at low cross about 4 o'clock. Set off up the gorge again to photograph in the evening light. Decided to explore another gorge which runs off to the right of the one first examined. This also proved to be very interesting. Narrower and steeper it cuts a severe path through the sandstone hills. Located a small group of paintings. It was an exciting experience to find so many engravings in this gorge. Most of the linear type were very old and weathered. The surfaces of the motifs are heavily painted. A critical stage was reached long ago with these engravings and there is little doubt that surviving examples are only a remnant of those originally made at this important site.

It is a frustrating aspect of photography that the sun is often hidden by cloud at the precise moment it is needed to light particular subjects. Rock engravings require strong cross lighting to stand out: in total harsh sun light they can be almost impossible to see. The technique often used is to chalk in the designs. This is an undesirable short cut as it fails to pick up the finer points of the engravings. A similar situation occurs at cave painting sites. There is always an optimum time when the

lighting is most effective. It takes a great deal of time to study subjects before taking the exposures. N'Dahla Gorge is a fine example of lighting difficulties.

We had a good hot dinner, talked over a roaring fire and then lay down in our sleeping bags feeling pleased but exhausted after a long and active day.

Thursday 16 September 1965 N'Dahla Gorge Central Australia

One of the coldest nights I have ever experienced. It was freezing and despite going to bed fully clothed and later donning a wind proof (kangaroo skin) jacket it was simply too cold to sleep. We all suffered and were pleased when dawn came. A hearty breakfast! Worked our way up the first gorge photographing the engravings in the low morning cross light. It is a very picturesque gorge – in places almost a ravine. It must be spectacular when the creek is flowing after rain.

Photographed the small group of paintings in red and white ochre. These are not far distant from the entrance to the gorge. Continued on up, the ravine climbing over large boulders which have tumbled from the cliffs towering each side of the gorge. Climbed up the side to obtain a vantage point to take some general locations shots. The engravings are mainly linear designs. Most interesting. Many circles and tracks in various arrangements. One interesting design of a bandicoot or euro high up on a rock-face pecked out in single holes in the rock. An excellent engraved lizard – full entaglio. Reached a distance of about 1½ miles. Ron Bailey went right through the gorge and into the adjoining one but failed to locate any further engravings although he did report a stone cairn at the top of the hill adjoining the gorge.

Made a hurried dash about 2.30 pm to photograph the two “head-dress” figures which I feel certain are very important recordings of ancient rituals. Unfortunately we left our run too late and they were already partly covered by shadow – a great

pity – We will have to make a further attempt. Returned down stream to our camp photographing wherever possible on the way. Enjoyed another hot meal. Ron and Andrew are very willing companions and appear to be enjoying their first visit to Central Australia. We watched the stars for some time. They appeared so bright in the clear cold sky. It make one seem insignificant when pondering over outer space. Counted 18 falling stars as we watched. I had no idea that so many would fall n such a comparatively short space of time.

Friday 17 September 1965 Alice Springs Central Australia

Up at 7.45 am. Had another sleepless night. Not quite as cold but just could not seem to get to sleep. I doubt that I will become used to camping out without my family. Early start this morning on photography as this may be the last opportunity. The main efforts were directed to obtaining good photographs of the two small figures with huge head-dresses located at the – extreme end f the second gorge. The sun was in a good position for some of the engravings near the gorge entrance so these were photographed on the way up. As mentioned yesterday it is very difficult to obtain the correct lighting for every engraving as their position varies greatly. In some instances the sun only shines on an engraving for a few minutes a day. This has to be assessed quickly and accurately when time is limited.

Reached the head-dress figures at 1.00 pm much earlier than on previous occasions only to find some shadow was already creeping over them. Took a number of shots – hope some will give the desired results. Walked back to camp having a further good look at all the engravings on the way. We were all feeling pretty weary after an active stay at this very beautiful and interesting spot.

Packed up the Landrover and departed N'Dahla at 4.45 pm. Mileage 9,072. stopped for lunch at 4.30 pm today!! The trip back was full of interest. The late light on the hills was absolutely beautiful. One of the most picturesque drives I

can remember. The folds of the hills, the gums, everything was quite splendid. Called at Ross Rover (5.05 pm - mileage -9079). The Green Bros. have a tourist camp located there – small cabins and a trip to see the engravings. Explained to Mrs Green what we had been doing and asked if there were any other sites in the area: unfortunately she didn't know of any. Passed the Arltunga sign mileage 9084: Trepfina mileage 9087. Travelled through further very picturesque country. I hope some of the colour shots of the are good. The road is very corrugated and dusty. Drove into the sun all the way home. Encountered two donkeys – quite pretty in their wild state.

Passed Corroboree Rock (mileage 9103) at 6.00 pm. In spite of the poor road we made good time. It makes a difference if you don't stop to take photos. Took a wrong road at Undoolya (fortunately it was against my directions). Had some anxious moments as it was growing dark. Came back to the southern side of the Range instead of the northern. A little longer but no less trouble. Arrived in at 7.00 pm (mileage 9135) after a very satisfying trip. Doug Boerner insisted on rushing down the street and buying fish and chips for us. We all enjoyed them in spite of our late lunch. Glad to get to bed after a welcome shave and hot shower. Much more comfortable than a sleeping bag!

Saturday 18 September 1965 Alice Springs Central Australia

Busy morning sorting out clothes and gear after our arrival home from N'Dahla. Collected mail from the P.O. and clothes from airways and dry cleaners. Pack up films and posted them to Adelaide. Received cheques to sign on my father's behalf – also returned these to Cath. Lunched and went out to the aerodrome to meet Keith Cook who is joining us for the next week. Visited Leo Corbett's place to see if he had returned from the Peterman Ranges – he hasn't as yet. Showed Keith his collection of Rickett's sculptures arranged in his garden. Visited the old telegraph station a little to the north of the town. This has been acquired by the Northern Territory Reserves Board and is being developed as a tourist attraction.

The buildings are being restored. The actual Alice Springs are near the Station buildings. An interesting link with the past. Called to see Ron Bailey about accommodation for Mike Hindmarsh who arrives by plane in the morning. Have arranged for him to stay at The Pines with the Baileys while Keith will be with me in the caravan. Returned home to 32 Chewing Street and changed for dinner. Keith took Ron and me to the Alice Springs Hotel for dinner although the meal was not very exciting. Returned home at 9.00 pm and wrote a number of letters.

At the moment we are planning to leave on Monday afternoon on an expedition to Glen Helen Gorge where rock engravings are known to be located. Hopefully we will be able to find and record them. Keith brought a letter from the Secretary of A.I.A.S. requesting use of one of my photographs on its Xmas card. This is indeed good news. Rang Cath this evening. Good to hear her voice – I long to be home again. A letter arrived from Mr. McCarthy today advising that all is well with my work. The council were delighted with the photographs and sent on their congratulations. What a relief after all the effort and trouble. It has been a great strain from my little family. It appears it could have all been worth the effort.

Sunday 19 September 1965 Alice Springs Northern Territory

Met Mike Hindmarsh at the aerodrome this morning. He came up on the Darwin plane. Chris Armenores was the Captain and made Mike's flight a pleasant one. The full 'team' is here now. Ron and Andrew Bailey, Keith Cook and Mike Hindmarsh. It is rather complicating things to have so many. However they are all making valuable contributions and are quite prepared to do their bit which is a good sign. Fortunately their personalities are complementary. Poor Doug and Una are somewhat overwhelmed with all the "comings and goings". They are really very good to us. Decided to leave tomorrow afternoon instead of Tuesday as it will be easier to cope with so many people in the field. The route planned is Simpson Gap, Stanley Chasm, Ellery Creek Gorge, Serpentine Gorge, Ormiston Glen Helen, Mt. Sonder and possibly Haasts Bluff. I have planned this run to give

Keith the best opportunity to see some of the highlights of Central Australia while also investigating for special sites.

Drove Mike up to the lookout to see the town and its environs. Called at The Pines and introduced him to the Baileys. Mike will stay at the Motel tonight and next Friday and Saturday night then join me in the caravan after Keith Cook's departure.

Called on Max and Betty Althaus to show them photographs of Musgrave Park and discuss my plans with them. Max is very helpful and rang Mr. Penhall, Assistant Director of Welfare, Southern Division regarding permits to go to Areyonga next week. He also contacted Pastor Albreck requesting entry to Hermannsburg later this week.

Lunch with the Boerners at No. 32 Bailey's came around about "har past" and we all re-packed the Landrovers and fuelled up ready for departure tomorrow. Took Keith to Max and Betty's as they had asked for photographs of their son Christopher. This used up the remainder of the afternoon.

A busy evening writing letters and journal The fact that Mr. Geisse commented favourably on my photographs in Canberra recently does much to encourage complete co-operation with the Welfare.

Wednesday 22 September 1965 Roma Gorge Central Australia

A busy day photographing the rock engravings and surrounding gorge. We split into three parties to make best use of the time available. I closely examined the engravings at Roma Gorge and photographed them. Ron and Andrew Bailey explored the immediate precincts to determine the extent of the site and examine associated camp-sites to identify quantity and types of stone tools. Keith Cook and Adrian Fleming returned to the Ormiston Gorge turn-off to photograph an

extensive quarry site and further examine associated camp-sites. An examination was made of Glen Helen Gorge as well as the southern side of Mt Sonder. My companions are all bright and good company. They are thoroughly enjoying themselves and seem to have good personal relationships.

It is a very interesting group. Mainly circles – many with pecked out centres. Engravings on the edge of the stream are badly weathered to the extent of being almost worn away. Groups of large straight-line markings. Several examples of the “herringbone” design. It was exciting to find some new designs. There were no dingo tracks which is consistent with practically every site. Some animal tracks but they are less numerous than usual. Collected several samples of loose rock to examine in detail the degree of patination. The engravings were difficult to photograph: some appear to never be adequately lit. There were large rock-holes and a small waterfall in the creek-bed. Only one had a little moisture. It must be a magnificent place in good seasons. There was much evidence of aboriginals occupation. Many flakes, grinders and other stone tools both at the entrance to the gorge and on the flats beyond. Quartzite has been used similar to that for implements of the Adelaide Tribe. Found some crude stone choppers. It is difficult to tell whether they are ancient. One or two are similar to the common types found by H.M. Cooper in South Australia. It is interesting to see them for comparative purposes. The gorge is vivid red in colouring and very picturesque.

Sent a telegram to Cath today via the transceiver - nice to keep in contact. Received a reply this afternoon at 5.00 pm. “Congratulations appointment gazetted. All well love Cath”. Thrilled with the news. After all this time my one desire fulfilled. It seems hard to realise that I am actually Curator of Anthropology at the S.A.M. Today is a turning point in my life. I hope all turns out well and that I make a complete success of it. It would be so nice to have Cath with me tonight. I know she will be thinking of me. She has worked and sacrificed so much for me to achieve this new appointment.

Thursday 23 September (?Friday 24 September?) September 1965 Roma Gorge Central Australia

The weather has become increasingly hot with frequent dust storms. They are quite extraordinary and blot out the entire landscape. Visibility is sometimes nil and we have had to throw tarpaulins over the vehicles and sit it out. This has taken up valuable time. Navigation is also difficult as the tracks through the country have been completely covered in sand.

The prospects of locating further sites is excellent and there is no doubt it will be possible to link the engravings of North-Western Australia with those in North/ North-Eastern South Australia and Western New South Wales.

The engravings are uniformly patented as at most other sites. The designs – circles, geometric shapes and a range of animal tracks is a constant factor throughout the country. We have only found one or two instances of the earlier ancient art being ‘adopted’ and used.

There are some exceptional designs such as the small figures found recently at N'Dahla Gorge to the East of Alice Springs.

We are camped at Roma Gorge about 20 miles West of Glen Helen. It is very picturesque.

Friday 24 September Alice Springs Central Australia

The morning was spent on further investigation of the north side of the Bluff without finding any significant signs of recent habitation. This was surprising as although there was an abundance of bird life we were unable to locate any source of water.

Took photographs of Gosse's Bluff and collected some lizards for the museum. Departed Gosse's Bluff at 11.15 am. Mileage 9472. Travelled across red sand hill country with a scattering of beautiful desert oaks.

Arrived at Hermansburg at 12.45 Mileage 9511. Called briefly at this historic settlement established in 1877 by Lutheran missionaries.

Journeyed on to Palm Valley in the Western MacDonnell Ranges arriving at 2.30 pm - Mileage 9525.

The valley is a complete surprise as it is very extensive and has an extraordinary number of distinctive red cabbage palms. These are a residual stand which is a relic of far distant times when central Australia enjoyed a tropical climate. This unique valley and its ancient flora is an extraordinary example of adaptation to desert conditions which had developed over many thousands of years. We split up and made an extensive examination of the area in search of rock engravings that had been reported to us. The exhaustive hunt failed to locate any sign of them and it will be necessary to obtain more specific directions in order to locate them.

Engravings may not have survived unless they were sheltered as the sandstone occurring at this site is very soft. Certainly we examined many highly suitable surfaces but drew a blank.

The rocks have weathered into a whole array of amazing formations. Took a number of photographs as it is such an impressive area which must surely have had great significance to the aboriginals.

Departed on the return journey via Hermansberg at 6.30 pm - Mileage 9542. Passed the airstrip at 9545.

Travelled back through the day desert suffering from the prolonged drought. Even the tough Spinifex is dieing back. We encountered very few cattle. Although the conditions were depressing the views of the ranges were spectacular.

The journey was interrupted for an hour in an attempt to assist a group of aboriginals who had a flat tyre. The tube had been patched 9 times (one on top of the other) and was completely useless. We gave the group some water, tea, milk and sugar and proceeded on our way.

We finally arrived at Alice Springs at 9.10 pm - Mileage 9627.

It was another long tiring but rewarding day in Central Australia.

Saturday 25 September 1965 Alice Springs

Drove to the town centre and collected parcels from Adelaide. Posted letters and purchased stores. Called for my laundry and sleeping bag which have been cleaned ready for departure on the next phase of the trip.

Called on Tom Haire at the Northern Territory Reserves Board office in Todd Street. Discussed important sites in Central Australia in particular the response to my report on the Ooraminaa rock engraving site. Provided him with an account of the engravings found last week in the N'Dahla Gorge to the east of the town. Stressed the importance of the finds especially the depictions of small figures with ritual head-dresses. He was very enthusiastic.

Tom allowed me to stay on in his office to write further letters as the caravan becomes absolutely unbearable in the heat of the day and exceedingly chilly on frosty mornings.

Max Althaus has arranged a permit for us to go on to the Areyonga Reserve and other areas to the west.

Had dinner with Max and Betty Althaus and an interesting evening of discussions on native affairs and the problems it faces in the centre. They were interested in our recent finds and pleased to learn my appointment as curator of anthropology at the South Australian Museum has been formally Gazetted. They have become good friends.

Returned to my caravan for another night of sound sleep.

Sunday 26 September 1965 Alice Springs

Packed up films for Keith Cook to take down to Adelaide today, I am still concerned about them becoming too hot on the trip home. It is essential to be very careful and avoid large variations in temperature. The heat from the body of the Landrover comes up from the floor creating an oven like atmosphere especially in the intense heat of Central Australia. I hope this present batch will be OK. Up until this misadventure they had been looked after by our own special mini-refrigerator.

Helped Keith pack up and drove him to the Aerodrome. It was interesting to see planes coming and going. I could not resist taking some photographs. Returned 'home' for lunch after ringing Cath. Spent the remainder of the day catching up on letters.

The Bailey's came to dinner. It was a jolly night mainly looking at Doug's splendid mineral and book collection. He recounted some of his experiences living in Central Australia. Retired to my caravan quarters and went to be feeling very tired but contented.

Monday 27 September 1965 Alice Springs

Much of the day was spent writing further letters and updating my day journal. Completed provisioning for departure to the west tomorrow morning. The Landrover is in good shape as Doug Boerner has given it a thorough service.

Went down to Todd Street and met Peter Mackey who is the superintendent of the Areyonga aboriginal settlement. Discussed plans for our search of this region for rock engraving sites. He agreed to provide guides and any assistance needed while we are working in the area. I found him to be congenial, interested in our research and very forthcoming.

Delivered copy of Ernert Giles' published journal to Max and Betty Althaus. They were delighted with this important account of explorations in Central Australia.

Called on the Baileys and discussed our forthcoming trip. They have been packing their Landrover ready for an early start.

Put 30 gallons of petrol in my vehicle and delivered parcels to Richard Mitchel Carriers for transit to Adelaide.

Checked our maps to make certain we don't repeat last weeks difficulties. Packed up a four volume set of the Horne expedition to deliver to TAA tomorrow. I acquired this from Doug as it is a duplicate. (Now in the National Museum of Australia).

Doug arrived home from work tonight with several sketch maps giving the locations of cave paintings in the Kings Canyon region. Giles was the first to explore the area and names most of the features. We spend the evening looking through Giles journals and discussing the places on our route that Doug has visited.

Poor Doug is rather unwell tonight. He is under pressure as Foreman of mechanical workshop and more than likely over doing it.

Retired to bed full of anticipation for the journey ahead.

Tuesday 28 September 1965

General organisation work in Alice Springs. Visited the Welfare Department collected the mail and purchased some fresh provisions.

Despite an early start we finally departed Alice Springs at 10.30 am, Mileage 9678.

Arrived at Areyonga 3.00 pm - Mileage 9832. (154 miles)

The country en route is very dry and showing the effects of the prolonged severe drought. It was very noticeable that the land on the reserves is not as denuded of vegetation as elsewhere. This is apparently due to running less stock.

General organisation and enquiries at Areyonga. Arranged with Superintendent for guides, use of the settlement for accommodation and supplies. We were received very well, looked after and given an escorted tour of this remote centre.

Mileage for day - 154 miles.

Wednesday 29 September

Departed Areyonga 9.00 am - mileage 9832.

Travelled to Tempe Downs Stock Yard where cave paintings have been reported with 3 guides aboard. En route our guides pointed out features of landscape

representing various Dreamings. Two prominent rocks and a cleavage in cliff-face representing the Kangaroo dreaming. A small depression surrounded by oddly marked stones (natural). This is an important ceremonial site, (apparently a 'cooking' site). Located a cave with marking not unlike grub holes in section. Being a corroboree site for the promulgation of the Witchetty Grub. This ceremony is carried out by the tribal elders. The site is taboo to Women and the uninitiated. From the actions of our guides there are probably sacred churingas deposited nearby: no attempt was made to uncover them. In placed the rock-face was work quite smooth. As a result of rubbing during rituals.

Departed for the Stock Yard.

Arrived at 12.00 am noon, Mileage 9859. Examined 6 caves located on a hill surrounding the Stock Yard. They contained a number of hand paintings. One cave contained three designs superimposed, which were made during coorborrees according to our informants. The surrounds were examined to determine the extent of the paintings. Also the local extensive camp sites were examined. A large quantity of permanent water is adjacent to this site – fish irrigation of approx. 5 acres lucerne by Tempe Downs. During explorations an aboriginal grave was discovered with a skull protruding. This was somewhat upsetting to the guides.

Another Kangaroo Dreaming rock was pointed out. Excavation to a depth off 2'6" was carried out in one of the caves, producing charcoal and bones.

Returned to Areyonga. Arrived 7.35 pm - Mileage 9885
Mileage travelled during day – 53.

Friday 1 October 1965 Tob Waterhole Central Australia

General organisation and enquires at Areyonga, took a number of photographs of this remote settlement as well as the school. Took on a full tank of petrol and departed Areyonga 3.30 pm. Mileage 9931.

Travel on oil search track to Tent Hill stock yards. Arrived at the stockyards at 5 pm - Mileage 9980.

Inspected the rock paintings and very extensive camp sites in area. There were many well worn grindstones indicating a good area for suitable grass seeds.

Proceeded to engraving site. Quickly surveyed the sit and camp.

Arrived Tob (or Pinkine) Waterhole 6.30 pm - Mileage 9987.

Mileage for day - 56.

Saturday 2 October 1965

Examined the engravings at Tob Waterhole to determine their extent and range of designs. Start count and photography.

It was determined that the engravings extended approx. $\frac{1}{2}$ mile upstream and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile downstream from the three cylindrical rockholes. Engravings also were found up on to the area out of the Gorge where suitable rock-faces are located. Predominant designs were the usual tracks and circles. Some very large emu tracks were found, up to 10", which may support a theory that these were made in the time of the giant emu. Two engravings of a man tracking a kangaroo were found, also many designs showing a complete set of forepaws, hindpaws and tail of kangaroo or wallaby. Four sets of previously unseen designs were found.

Although time was not available to ascertain their presence, our companions assured us that more sites were located near at hand.

An interesting feature of this site is the one large rock with small emu tracks on its surface. It was a celebrated Emu Dreaming. The story told to us by our guides was that the young emu emerged from the stone egg and made the tracks when leaving. This is an unusual combination of an ancient culture with the present.

Sunday 3 October 1965 Reedy Creek Central Australia

Completed photographing and recording the engraving at the Tob Waterhole. An analysis shows the following percentages of designs:

Approx. 3,000 of an estimate 8,000 designs were counted and classified.

These counting's were taken from random sections of the site.

Departed Tob Waterhole. 2.45 pm, Mileage 9986. Travelled to Kings canyon via the oil roads. Arrived Kings Canyon 4.45 pm, Mileage 10039. Examined Kings Canyon for engravings and for paintings. None were discovered in the short time available, so moved on to Reedy Creek.

Arrived Reedy Creek 6.00 pm - Mileage 10046.

A quick examination showed 3 sites of paintings, the major one of which was somewhat spoiled by cattle workers and/or tourists.

Reedy Creek is an extremely beautiful site with abundant permanent water. No doubt it would have been a favourite camping spot for the natives. At present it is the site of stock yards and traps. At this time about 200 carcasses of cattle and horses were scattered about which did not help the atmosphere. These animals were probably shot to ease the drought problem. Quite a few pitcherry (native tobacco) plants were found, to the delight of the guides, who quickly snapped them up. Native figs were found here, along with winberry.

Mileage travelled during day - 60

Monday 4 October 1965

Returned to Reedy Creek and photographed the cave paintings as well as the associated rock-hole.

Departed Reedy Creek	2.30 pm	Mileage	10047
Arrived Bagots Creek	3.00 pm		10063

Examined numerous campsites in area. Examine cave paintings in cave under rock in creek bed. Informed by guides that this and adjacent rock are used in the celebration of the Snake Dreaming. Celebrations are held by old men who came from the south bringing their own churingas. In honour of a medium sized edible snake. Designs mainly of handprints with one geometric design in red and grey ochre. Time would not permit photography or the examination of a reported site in Stokes Creek nearby.

Travelled back towards Areyonga via Tempe Downs arriving at a site north of Stone yard for the night.

Arrived 7.00 pm - Mileage 10122

Mileage for the day - 75.

Tuesday 5 October 1965

Departed camp	8.30 am	Mileage	10122
Arrived Areyonga	12.00 noon		10146

Travelled to Areyonga again searching en route for engraving sites but in vain. Noted the large number of waterholes along this valley and was surprising that they persist even in this time of extreme drought.

General organisation at Areyonga in pm pay off guides – Kiwi, Snowy and Coomanjara – etc.

Wednesday 6 October 1965

AM inspect settlement, photograph interesting residents, including Harry Brumby and Lively who went with Lassiter on his expedition. Interesting to note reluctance of native with one foot to be photographed until assured that photograph would be face only.

Impressed by efficient running of settlement and happiness of resident.

Departed Areyonga	11 am	Mileage	10150
Arrived Hermansburg	12.00 noon		10217

Inspected Hermansburg Mission and received directions to engraving site on Ellery Creek.

Proceeded to the site via the tripod (10239) and stockyards (10245) to arrive at 5.30 pm - Mileage 10256.

Only a few designs were in evidence. These were photographed. It would appear there could be many others below the sand in the wide creek bed.

Also nature of rock would allow fairly quick erosion.

Departed Ellery Creek	6.00pm	Mileage	10256
Arrived Alice Springs	8.00 pm		10328 (approx.)

The lack of signs on roads is quite disconcerting to the uninitiated particularly the Ellery Creek Gorge/ Glen Helen turn off from the main Alice Springs Hermansburg road. Mileage for day - 178.

Thursday 7 October 1965 Alice Springs

General organisation etc in Alice Springs in preparation for the trip back to Adelaide. Mileage for day - 6.

Friday 8 October 1965

Trip to Orraminna

Departed Alice Springs	10.00am	Mileage	10334
Arrived Henbury	1.00 pm		10428
Departed Henbury	3.00 pm	(7 miles to main road)	
Arrived at Ayers Rock	8.30 pm		10654

Stopped at Curtin Springs en route. Met Peter Severin and was interested to obtain the views of a station owner on the attitude to natives. Discussed the question of equal pay as well as the problems associated with liquor.

Mileage for day – 320.

Saturday 9 October 1965

Departed Ayers Rock	8.30 am	Mileage	10654
Arrived the Olgas			10692
Arrived Ayers Rock	2.00 pm		10740

Travelled to Mt. Olga and return – photograph – pm photograph cave paintings – particularly adjacent to Maggies Springs to show need for restoration. Diagram of plots attached. Mileage for day - 86.

Sunday 10 October 1965

Continued to photograph Ayers Rock Paintings in the afternoon.

Departed Ayers Rock	12.15 pm	Mileage	10752
Angas Downs	4.30 pm		10856
Mt. Ebenezer	5.15 pm		10888
Erlunda	6.00 pm		10930
Kulgera	7.00 pm		10977
NT/SA Border	9.20 pm		10992

Camp	10.30 pm		11046
------	----------	--	-------

The extreme co-operation of Ayers Rock Rangers was appreciated. They were very much in favour of restoration of paintings and stressed the urgency of action. As some of designs are almost obliterated now and will be completely gone before long. Elders having legitimate rights to undertake such restoration works are difficult to locate and are fast disappearing.

Made a vain attempt to locate a reported engraving site near Fighting Camp Bore.

Mileage for day – 294.

Monday 11 October 1965

Departed Camp	8.15 am	Mileage	11046
Wantabella Soak	9.00am		11078
Stopped to examine extensive campsite (1 hour)			
Wilburn Hill	11.15 am		11137
Jasper Quarried	12.00 noon		11168
Wintuna	12.30 pm		11171
Lunch	12.40 pm		11175
Mt. Willoughby	1.45 pm		11189
Mabel Creek	3.15 pm		11265
Coober Pedy	3.55 pm		11265
Mend 2 punctures, hub cap missing			
Dep. Coober Pedy	6.35 pm		
Tea	7.30 pm		11359
Camp	10.30 pm		11469

Mileage for day – 423.

Tuesday 12 October 1965

Departed camp	8.20 am	Mileage	11469
Arrived Kingoonya	8.50 am		11486
Departed Kingoonya	9.30am		
Lake Hart	11.00am		11563
Pimba	12.00 noon		11594
Lunch and campsite	Dep. 3.00pm		11628
Port Augusta	5.00 pm		11712
Old Whydown	8.00 pm		11826

Mileage for day – 257.

It would appear that a large portion (perhaps all) of some sites are now covered with sand e.g. Ellery Creek and Roma Gorge. This may indicate that the rainfall was heavier when the engravings were made – hence more scouring of creeks or that, because of erosion the actual level of the plain is rising (hills washed and eroded to flats. If the first assumption applies, then it would be reasonable to assume that water would have been much more plentiful.

Presuming that water was available in Ormiston Gorge, Glen Helen, Ellery Creek Gorge etc. why were engravings made in remote gorges where there is no likelihood of there being any more than small rock-holes. Is it possible that these were purposely put in remote places of religious significance where the casual traveller would not find them? the precipitous walls etc. these gorges could have been used as slaughtering places where animals were driven and slaughtered – hence the food and time to make engravings. That the size, shape or type of rock-hole itself would have had some significance religiously.