



EILEEN AND PAUL DANN (ABOVE), ERIC AND PHYLLIS TYNDALE-BISCOE IN 1960 (RIGHT) AND (BELOW) THE SHIP THEN AND THE SCHOOL NOW.

# You wouldn't read about it

Or maybe you will. Another yarn from Paul Dann

IN 1960 MY WIFE EILEEN AND I were living in the bush and we must have been a bit bored with the scene. We woke up one morning and wondered, "Why don't we just ride a motor bike from India to England?". That's how it started.

So we put my 1956 AJS bike on the P&O ship 'S.S. Strathaird' in Sydney, bound for Bombay. During the course of that three-week journey we met a nice upper-class English couple and we told them of our prospective trip. I think they thought it was a risky show and that we were quite adventurous.

It transpired in our conversation that he was the principal of a school in Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir. Anyhow, they wished us all

the best on what they thought was a foolish enterprise, brash young Australians that we were. And so we parted to complete our respective trips. Jump forward forty or so years in Mongarlowe where I came across Hugh Tyndale-Biscoe and his wife Marina who live by the river near Burkes Crossing. I just happened to mention my encounter with the nice English couple on the boat.

Hugh exclaimed, "That would have to have been my parents. My father kept a meticulous set of diaries — I'll have a look."

Sure enough, the diary entry for Friday April 8 1960 read: "We went down to the baggage room and met a couple who intend travelling on a motorbike to Kashmir!"

And a bit of background from Hugh Tyndale-Biscoe:

MY GRANDFATHER WAS in charge of six mission schools for boys and one for girls in Kashmir from 1890 until about 1930 when my father took over. However, the old couple lived on in Kashmir until Indian independence when they

went to Southern Rhodesia [Zimbabwe]. My parents ran a school for English boys during the Second World War but retained their close connection with the mission schools as well.

In 1947 they went to New Zealand to run a boarding school. At the end of 1959, when they had retired to a small farm, they were asked to return to run the mission schools, now called the Tyndale-Biscoe Schools, for two years until a permanent head could be appointed. That is how they were travelling on a P&O liner in April 1960. The schools still flourish under the very able leadership of two remarkable people, Parwez and Joyce Koul, who have raised the standards to a very high level and increased the numbers to nearly 6000 boys and girls.

Marina and I have visited Kashmir five times since 1975 and have watched with amazement the work they have done. We have become very good friends with them and they spent a week with us here in 2009 and invited us to attend the centenary of the girls school last year but we couldn't face the journey.



# Who am I?

- Born in Dulwich, London in the 60s, I am the youngest of five children
- I grew up in South London, lost my two front teeth trying to snog my boyfriend while we were riding pushbikes
- Was a punk in the 80s and purchased the best boots from Shelly's at Covent Garden
- At 18, I went to Leeds University where I gained a Masters in Civil Engineering. I hung out with artists and members of the alternative cycling society. I also worked as a stage hand and acted at the local theatre
- After graduation, I worked for six months in a sewage works doing pipe flow analysis, then joined my lover, David, in Sydney in 1991
- Lived in Bondi and got work as an IT professional which I continued for ten years in the telco industry
- Learnt to ride a motorbike in Australia at age 22
- Have travelled extensively around Australia on motorbike and was president of a Sydney based motorcycle touring club for two years, and catered for the group at functions for over ten years — camp oven and spit roasts for up to 100 motor cyclists at times
- Returned to the UK in 1996, lived near Liverpool in a large farmhouse and worked as an engineer for Bectel Engineering
- Bought two Honda VFR 600s, kitted them out then took off with Dave and his 17-year-old brother Jomby on a day trip on the Dover-Calais ferry crossing and came back nine months later!
- We carried on to India via France, Germany, Austria,

- Hungry, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey (where I ate sheep bollock kebabs)
- Broke my ankle so had to ride with my foot in plaster, crossing the Pakistan border then across the Taftan Desert in 45° heat 90% humidity, into the then very Taliban-strong foothills to Quetta, where Dave ended up spending a night in hospital with severe gastro
- Rode the fascinating Gilgit to Chitral road, with spectacular views of the Himalayas, spent a week with the Prince of Chitral where we were his guests of honour (previous guests included Prince Phillip and Lady Diana Spencer!)
- Crossed into crazy India — that is a whole article in itself, popped into Nepal. After this epic journey we returned to Australia
- Two years later found us in South America, same bikes, same boy and another amazing adventure for nine months
- David and I married but divorced after three years
- Back to Australia, started a cafe in Redfern called TriPod. Sold three years later to return to Spain where my parents lived, to help mum and dad through the final months of his terminal cancer, working as a sous chef for my brother in Isla de Roses, near Figuerouse, two hours north of Barcelona
- Then ran a 600-year-old weatherboard pub in Essex for a year, followed by two years as a catering manager for wedding venues in stately homes in Southern England
- Returned to Australia to be with the new love of my life
- We moved to Braidwood from Sydney about two and a half years ago. I have recently taken up position as president of a local committee. You may see me around town with my beloved Jack Russell (when I am not in the kitchen). I love it here and am planning on staying for a good while.

(The answer will be in the crossword next issue.)

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## GRAPHICS

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