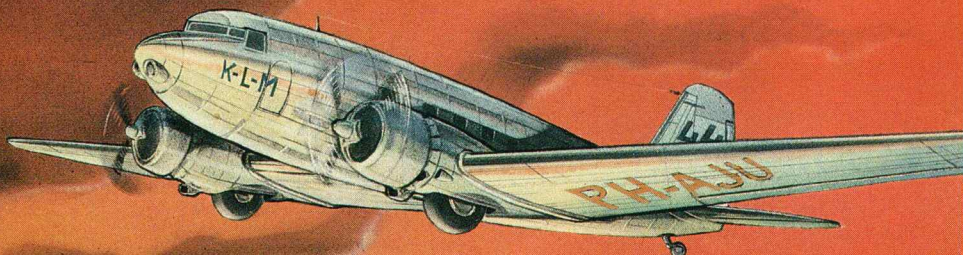
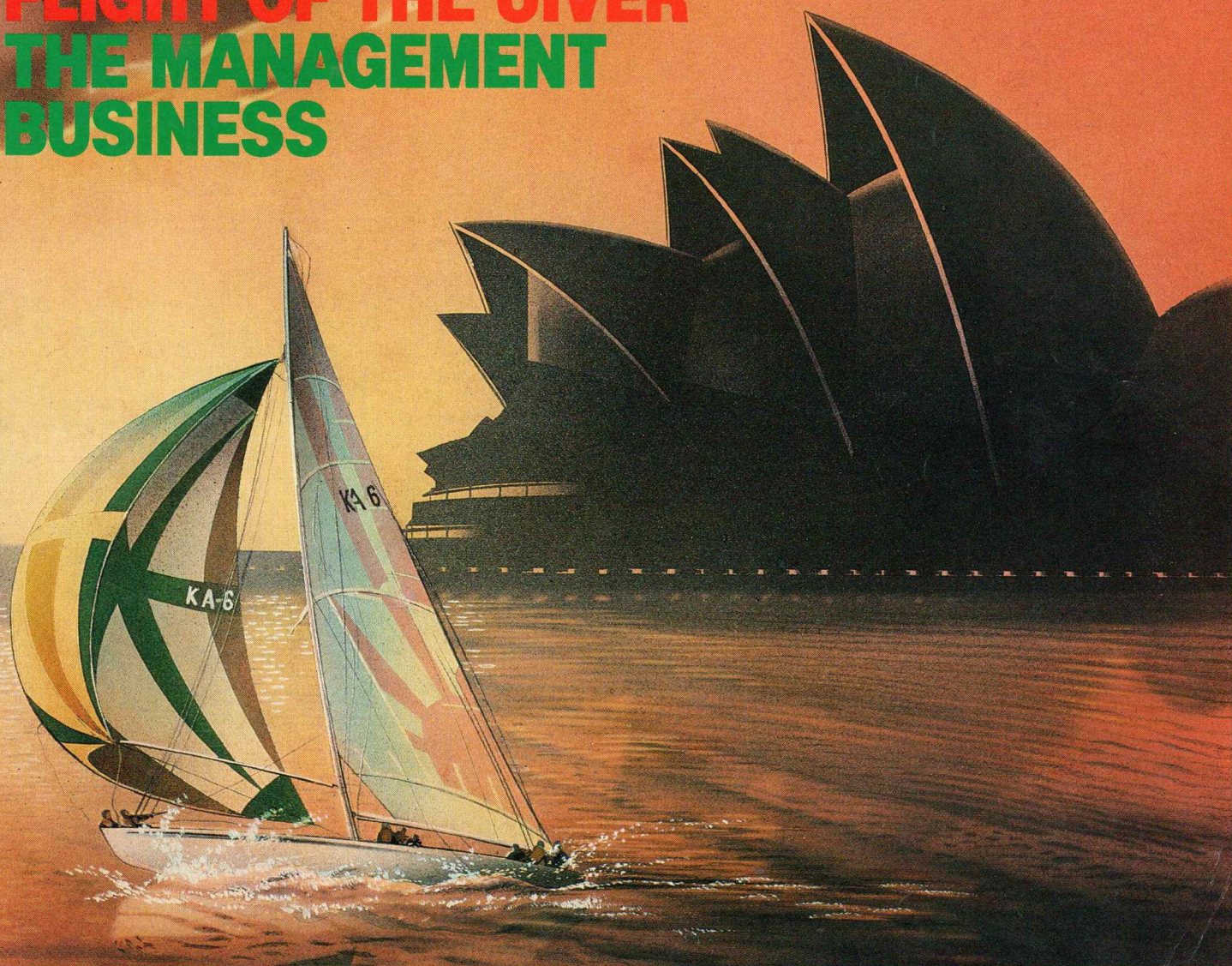
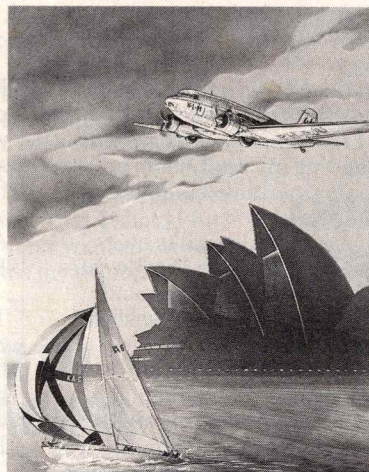


HOLLAND HERALD



**AUSTRALIA
MAKES ITS CLAIM
FLIGHT OF THE UIVER
THE MANAGEMENT
BUSINESS**





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1 Cover: To commemorate the flight of the Uiver from Holland to Australia in 1934, which is being re-enacted this month, artist John Verberk has designed our December cover to incorporate Australia II, historic winner of the America's Cup last September.

4 You write: On Paris in the Fifties, Robinski's diary and pet hates.

4 Penpals: Communications from eight nations.

5 Frontlines: Carmiggelt's last column, The most expensive book, Soccer's outspoken spokesman.

6 Aviation: This month a Douglas DC-2 takes off for an exciting flight across the world to Australia to celebrate the same journey made 50 years ago when the Uiver took part in the London to Melbourne Air Race. Hansmaarten Tromp looks back on the excitement this event inspired.

10 Acrossword: Film fun.

14 Travel: Half a century after the Uiver flew to Australia, Sue Teddern journeyed 'Down Under' and reflects on Australia II's America's Cup victory as the outward symbol of a new confidence and national maturity.

34 Eating out: Adventurous eating in Amsterdam and Amersfoort.

39 Take off: Flight of fantasy by Jim Valentine.

43 In business: Holland has more management consultants per capita than anywhere else in the world. Walter Ellis looks at this new breed of businessman.

47 In brief: Car sales drive, Jobless on the right tracks, Brewing abroad, Jumbo facelifts, Trade increase, Gas to fall back on, Philips' job scheme.

54 Highlights: What's on where in the Netherlands featuring the Irish exhibition at the Rijksmuseum, Australian theatre group KISS, a one-man show with a difference and Albert de Klerk's farewell to Christmas.

LIFE FROM ALL ANGLES
Edited by Sue Teddern

CARMIGGELT SIGNS OFF

'No flowers, no visitors.' On the occasion of his 70th birthday, Simon Carmiggelt borrowed the phrase normally used in death announcements to say farewell to the readers of his column in *Het Parool*. It's probably no exaggeration to say that Carmiggelt, who has contributed many short stories to *Holland Herald* over the years, has a greater personal following than any other Dutch writer. Those to whom his dry, melancholy wit

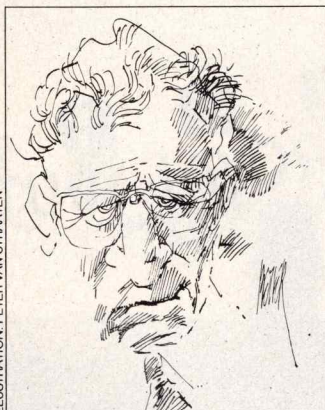


ILLUSTRATION: PETER VAN STRAATEN

and his clever blend of fiction and reality do not appeal are few and far between. Though he later came to be one of Amsterdam's best-known residents, he was born in The Hague, where his first column was published in 1936 under the title *Kleinigheden* (Trifles). Playing an active role in the Resistance during the Second World War, he stood at the cradle of *Het Parool*, which started as a clandestine publication. Kronkel was the pseudonym he used for his daily columns about everyday life and the people he met in the cafés and on the streets of Amsterdam. After 6,000 'Kronkels' Carmiggelt has finally put down his pen. His space has been taken by Peter van Straaten, another *Holland Herald* contributor, whose

cartoons accompanied the columns since they became weekly a few years ago. Carmiggelt, who will continue to read his stories on television as no one else can, explained his decision to sever his links with *Het Parool* after 37 years as follows: 'If I don't go now, I may realize in a few years' time that I should have gone. I don't want my readers to witness my decline.'

WORTH READING

The most expensive book in the world can be viewed in an Amsterdam canal-side basement. *The mandalas of the two worlds*, weighing in at 42 kilos and costing a mere f12,900 (about \$4,450), is being distributed by Idea Books of Amsterdam's Nieuwe Herengracht, dealers in international art books. The limited edition of 500 signed and numbered four-part copies is reproduced from the oldest existing painted version of *The mandalas of the two worlds*, now in a Japanese monastery, and copied in turn from the mandalas brought back from China in the ninth century. Even if you don't intend to buy the book you can still make an appointment to see it with John Simons of Idea

Books. Of course, he won't be upset if, once you've seen it, you change your mind and buy it anyway! For more information, contact Idea Books. Telephone: (020) 226154.

THE ENTER-TRAINER

At the heart of the recovery of Dutch football club Utrecht is a Welshman. But Barry Hughes, who was recently appointed FC Utrecht's manager-coach, is no newcomer to Dutch football – or to the Dutch public. In the 23 years that he has lived in Holland he has become famous not only in the football world but also as a TV personality and singer, earning himself the nickname 'enter-trainer'. Hughes is shrewd and vigorous and expects the same of his team. He believes that the secret of being a good manager-coach is simply being able to pick a good team. 'It's important to balance the individual talented player, who will do nothing for 89 minutes and then suddenly pop up and score two goals, with the hard-working team players. Both are vital.' Born in Caernarvon in 1938, Hughes has been involved in

football since early childhood. He played for Wales at schoolboy level and as a young man was signed by English football club West Bromwich Albion. His future as a footballer looked bright. But a broken leg during a match against Manchester United put him on the transfer list and a few months later the Amsterdam-based club, Blauw Wit, offered him a contract. Four years later Hughes switched to management and coaching. Before coming to Utrecht he worked with Dutch football clubs Alkmaar, Haarlem, Go Ahead Eagles (Deventer) and Sparta (Rotterdam). Haarlem were bottom of the Third Division and in a 'right mess' when Hughes took over.

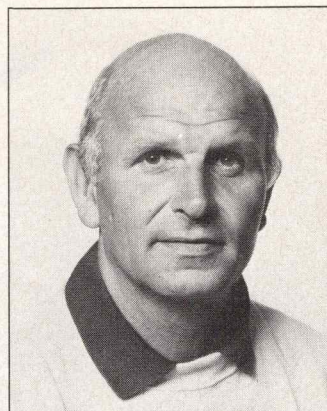


PHOTO: GERDIJKSTRA

Within three years he brought them up to fifth place in the First Division, winning the Second and Third championships along the way. He has high hopes for Utrecht and would like to take them into a major European Football competition, thus achieving his ambition of becoming one of Europe's top coaches. Hughes' career as an entertainer began by accident when a film showing him making fun of an opposing team's coach found its way onto an English sports programme and Hughes won its 'personality of the month' award twice running. Since then he has hosted his own sports quiz on Dutch television, made countless TV and radio appearances, and even had a hit record in the Dutch pop charts.

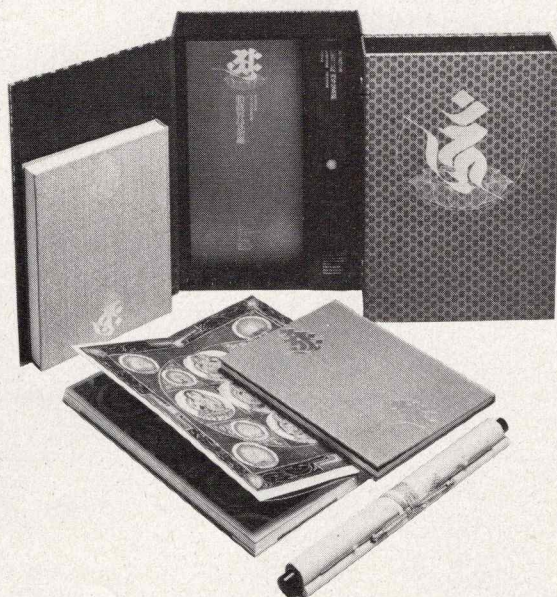


PHOTO: LOUK BOUCHER

THE UIVER FLIES AGAIN

Fifty years ago the *Uiver* took part in one of the greatest air races in history, from London to Melbourne. On page eight, Hansmaarten Tromp recalls the event, the plane, and a boy-hood fascination for aviation.

Initially it was the idea of NOS (Netherlands Broadcasting Corporation) and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines. Why not re-enact the historic flight of the *Uiver*? The idea immediately caught everyone's imagination and so, 50 years after the first Douglas DC-2 participated in the legendary London to Melbourne race and flew the distance in three days, 18 hours and 13 minutes, another DC-2 will follow as accurately as possible that same route. But it won't be racing against time, as its namesake did, nor will it be competing with 19 other

competitors.

The original route took in 21 stops before arriving in Melbourne. Perhaps the most famous was the penultimate stop in Albury, New South Wales. A heavy storm forced the plane to land on the town's race track which was spontaneously lit up by the headlamps of the cars of the excited locals. This landing still features largely in the history of Albury, and the *Uiver* crew, Captain Parmentier, First Officer Moll, Radio Operator van Brugge and Flight Engineer Prins, were treated as heroes.



In 1934 KLM's president Dr Albert Plesman, had seen participation in the race as proof that it was possible to transport passengers and mail safely and punctually by air over long distances. The *Uiver*'s success, coming second in the speed race and first in the handicap class, was proof enough. Another Plesman is involved in the *Uiver* re-enactment flight. He is Captain Jan Plesman, who with Flight Engineer Bonne Pijpstra, First Officer Fred Schouten and Engineer Ton Degenaaars, will fly the DC-2. Other passengers include the NOS film crew (plus all their camera equipment) and a journalist from *De Telegraaf*, the daily newspaper which will be publishing an exclusive report on the flight. *De Telegraaf* is also one of the sponsors of the flight and is represented on the Uiver

Memorial Foundation committee, along with the Royal Dutch Aviation Association (KNVvL), Fokker, and the Netherlands Foreign Trade Agency (EVD). And of course KLM and NOS. Whereas today's Boeing 747 flight between Schiphol and Melbourne takes in only two stops – Dubai and Colombo – the *Uiver* route is like a series of kangaroo hops. Leaving Britain's Mildenhall Airport and Air Museum on December 18, stops will include Rome, Athens, Karachi, Calcutta, Rangoon, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, where it will stay for nine days to participate in a 'Holland Week' and the Singapore Air Show. Then it flies on to Jakarta, Selaparang, Kupang, Darwin, Cloncurry, Charleville, Albury and Melbourne, arriving on February 3.

This schedule is obviously going to take a lot longer than three days, 18 hours and 13 minutes. There are several reasons for this: firstly Captain Plesman will not be able to follow the same, 'A to B' direct route Captain Parmentier took.

Secondly, the NOS film crew who are making a documentary of the flight, to be shown in October 1984, want to keep their shooting schedules as flexible as possible and finally the *Uiver* will be the centre of much international press attention together with sponsor activities on several of its stops.

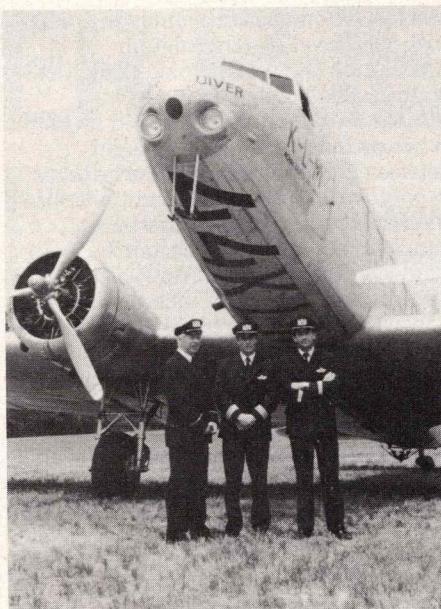
As a celebration of 50 years of civil aviation technology and innovation, the *Uiver* flight will be memorable. As an experience for those who are actually participating in it, it will be very much more than that. ►



As a lad of barely ten years I was already bringing my father to the point of despair. He would light up one cigarette after another while I maintained careful watch to check that he smoked only the brand *Croydon*, which contained aeroplane prints on the inside of the box. As he finished a packet I would snatch it from his hand, cut out the aeroplane print, and paste it in my album. And while my school chums were swimming or playing soccer on free afternoons, I would cycle off alone to Schiphol airport, eight miles away. Pedalling along, I would look more at the sky than the road, hoping to see a Lockheed Electra passing low overhead. When I finally reached my destination – the landing runway – a Vickers Viscount, the first turbo-prop aircraft and also the first aircraft which I, as a five-year-old, had ever travelled on, would sometimes roar up to greet me. Sometimes the then still ultra-modern first jet airliners such as the Havilland Comet or the Caravelle, which could reach a speed of more than 800 kilometres an hour, would be there. I would always stand at the runway and watch for hours.

Just where the fascination felt by a ten-year-old for aeroplanes comes from is difficult to explain. In my case it was a combination of factors: dreams of distant travels, the exciting but satisfying growl of the prop planes, the majestic gliding approach of one gleaming aluminium cylinder after another. And I cursed my luck for not having been born when the Wright brothers made the first flight in a self-constructed motorized aircraft; or that I could not personally shake the hand of Charles Lindbergh when he landed safely in Paris. Such things can infuriate a child.

But I was even angrier at the fact that my father, when he was 18, had experienced one of the greatest air race in history. He could talk for hours about the DC-2 *Uiver*, the KLM aeroplane that had taken part in the legendary London to Melbourne Race in 1934. Full of pride, he would relate how this race had held



Captain Jan Plesman and 83-84 crew.

not only Holland, but the entire world in a sort of aviatory spell, to which the morning papers and radio reports contributed their fair share. When my father was narrating with such enthusiasm, and undoubtedly raking up facts that he simply invented in the heat of the telling, my sole consolation was that he kept lighting one *Croydon* after the other.

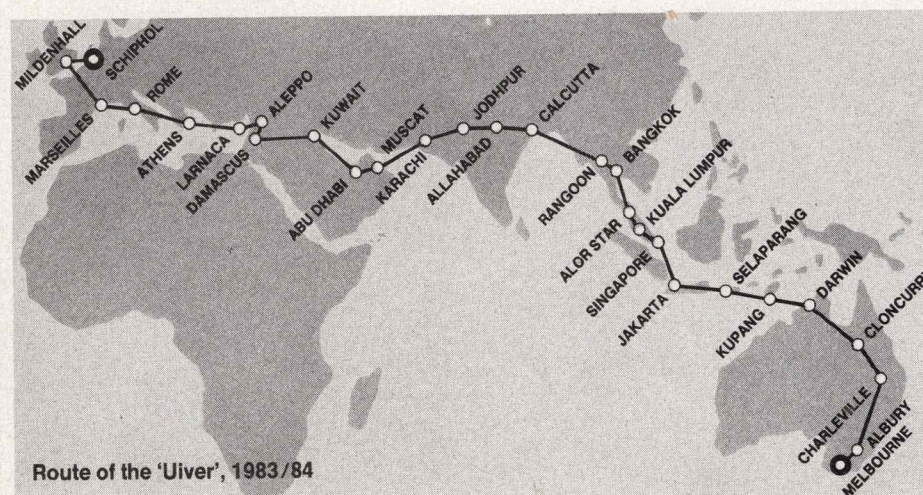
I knew the DC-2 from my visits to the hangars around Schiphol. It was difficult to get into those hangars but one way or another it was nearly always possible to get a quick look at the aircraft that were being readied for their next distant journey. A DC-2 was already an 'old-timer' and long out of service but when I saw this aircraft standing in its full glory, its slanting nose held high and its square viewports as panoramas of exotic destinations, I soon realized that this DC-2 – which became the proto-type for the DC-3 Dakota – had to be one of the most successful aircraft in the history of civil aviation, even though I had no

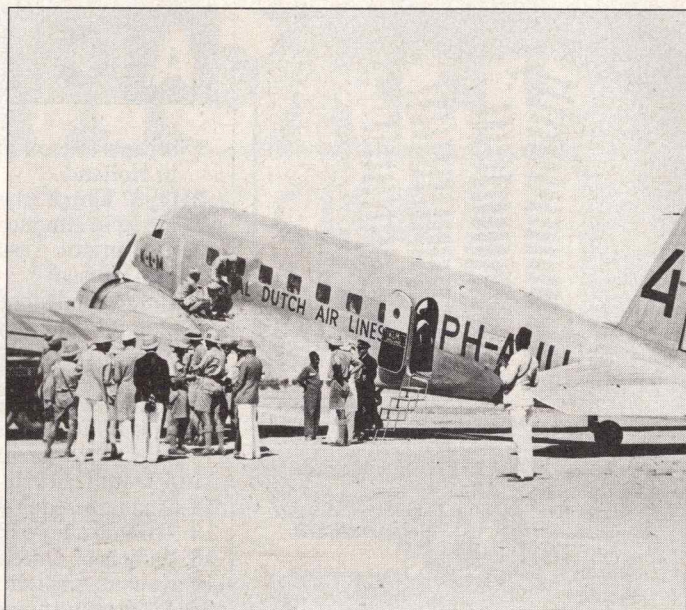
notion that the success of the DC-2 was of course due in the first place to its technical qualities. That notion came later, when I immersed myself in the history of aviation and acquired the same appreciation for the ingenuity of the aeroplane builders that I already had for the appearance of their machines.

At the beginning of the 1930s, air traffic in the United States began to truly take off. The American airlines foresaw a clear growth in passenger traffic and it was expected that passengers would be attaching more and more importance to faster and more comfortable aircraft. As a result the aircraft manufacturers Boeing and Douglas were given a commission in 1931 to develop a new generation of aircraft made entirely of aluminium.

The first Douglas prototype was the DC-1, which made its maiden flight on July 1, 1933. This first flight did not go well – the two motors began to malfunction directly after take-off. The carburettors of the DC-1 were designed in such a way that the fuel lines became blocked as soon as the plane's nose was raised. A second DC-1 was never built but in the same year the company launched a thoroughly improved version with a greater wingspan and a couple of extra passenger seats. The DC-2 was also the first aircraft with automatic steering, the forerunner of the automatic pilot. At the same time it was one of the few aircraft with retractable landing gear. KLM was the first European airline to place an order for the DC-2. Fokker Aircraft Builders at Schiphol airport assembled them and the first plane was delivered in the autumn of 1934. This first of a total of 18 ordered by KLM, was the PH-AJU *Uiver*, later world-famous for its role in the London to Melbourne Race and winner of the handicap section. My father's passion for this race expressed that same excitement that I always feel as a result of my own youthful fascination with aviation. After all, he too jumped on his bicycle to pedal to Schiphol, where the *Uiver* stood ready for its far flight to Australia. On that day thousands of people streamed to the airport to wave the crew of the *Uiver* goodbye.

My father recalled the famed Captain Parmentier, who stood with his crew exposed to the drumfire and salvos of the press photographers before going on board. I saw that whole scene before me, as if it was a film. I saw the *Uiver* gain speed on the concrete runway and slowly ease off the ground. Then the DC-2 climbed so steeply that the fuselage hung from the wings like a wind-sock on a windless day. In my thoughts I followed the aeroplane with my eyes, until it had become a dot in a cloudless sky. It was my father who would wake me from my dream to give me his empty cigarette packet.

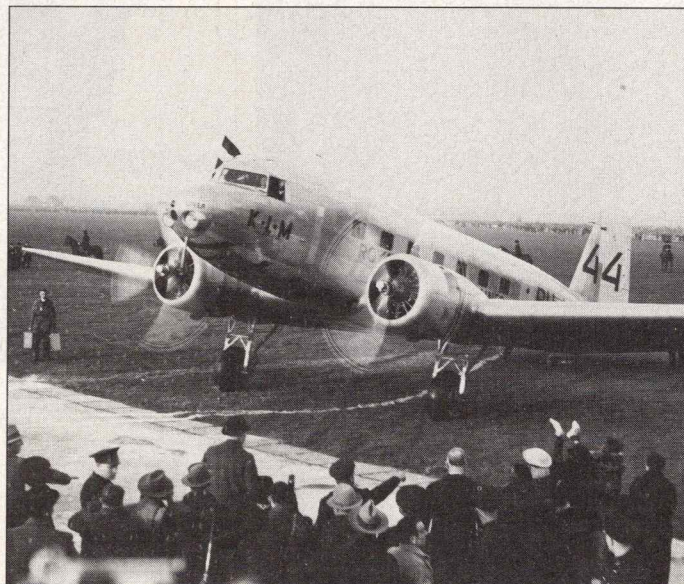
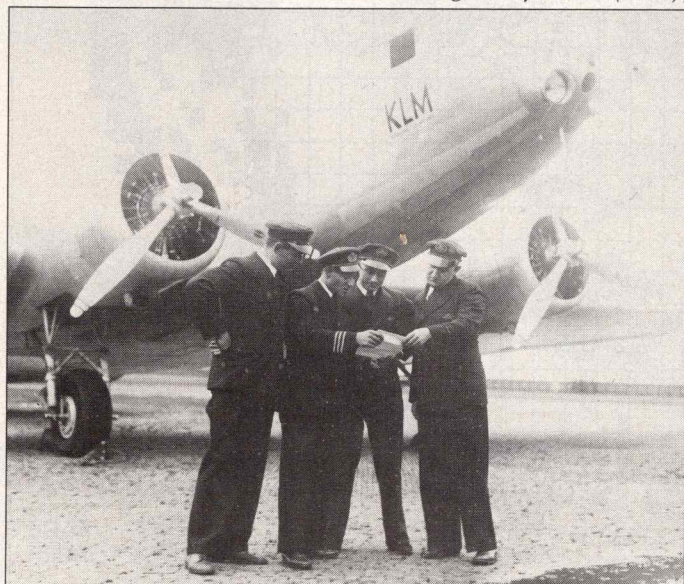




Ready for take-off and (right) Karachi stop-over



Passenger comforts and (below) posing pilots and a victorious return



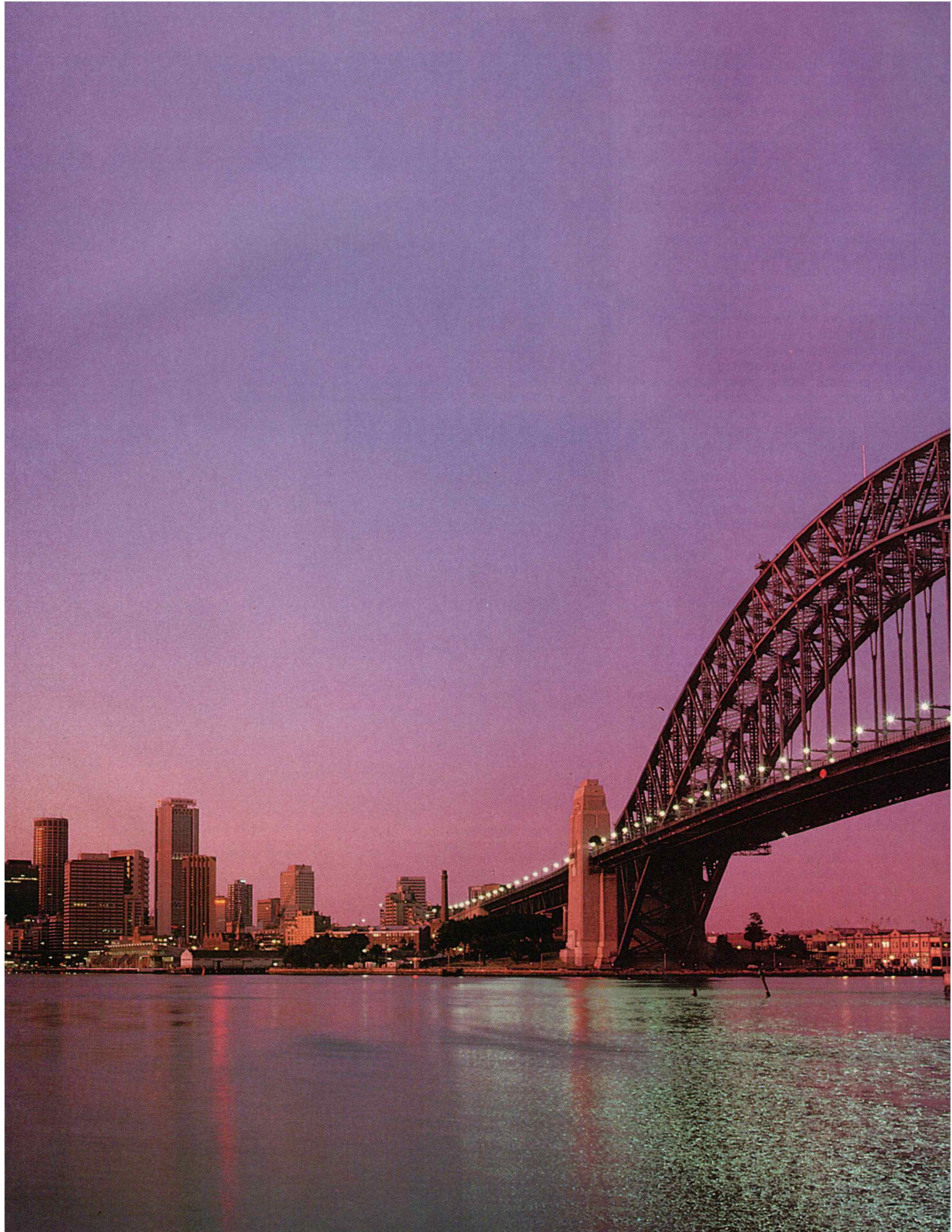
AUSTRALIA

OF WINES, MINES AND MOVIES

'We're simply catching up because we've been quiet for so long,' said one proud Australian after the America's Cup Victory. Sue Teddern went 'Down Under' and learnt that Australia is on its way up.

Photographs: Roderick Hulsbergen





If it were superimposed on to a map of Europe, Australia would stretch from Dublin to Istanbul and from Madrid to Moscow. And yet, despite its size, to the average European it's still the land of beefy, beer-swilling 'Bruces' wearing hats with corks; koalas, kangaroos and kookaburras; surfers, sheep and Christmas day on the beach.

It's the continent without borders that the teachers told us looked like the combined profiles of a terrier and a rabbit, and its distance from Europe tends to ensure that the majority of its visitors only make the long journey 'Down Under' to see friends and relatives.

But that potted description is about as fair as calling Holland the land of windmills, tulips and cheese.

Australia is a young country by European standards, and it shares many of America's characteristics for this reason. But it's also inextricably tied to the Commonwealth since the days when it was the dumping ground for Britain's convicts.

However a new brand of maturity, self-confidence and pride is emerging in Australia. The kids who once wore American Levis and baseball shirts are now sporting 'All Australian Girl' and Kangarucci sweatshirts. The Aussies who left a culturally-starved immature country back in the Sixties are discovering that it has finally come of age. And now they're flooding back to be a part of it. Ten years ago Australian movies began to demonstrate that they could compete quite happily with their international rivals. More recently, Australian literature has made its mark: just ask writers Peter Carey, Patrick White and Thomas Keneally (winner of last year's prestigious Booker McConnell prize with *Schindler's ark*).

And the whole package has even been supplied with an ideal anthem: Men at Work's *Down Under*, perhaps the first pop song to feature that vital Australian sandwich spread, Vegemite.

A crystalization of this new-found confidence presented itself to me on the morning of Wednesday, September 28, 1983: the day the Aussies 'sank the Yanks' and won the America's Cup. Millions sat through the early hours of endless mornings to watch Australia II come from behind and win. Newspapers philosophied and thumped their proud Aussie chests ('Yes, we can do anything if we try', bellowed *The Australian's* front page headline that fateful day), and the streets echoed to the strains of *Waltzing Matilda* and the hiss of opening beer cans. 'We've come a long way,' said actor Jack Thompson. 'The America's Cup is like a graduation ceremony.'

Two weeks earlier I had arrived in Sydney, eager for the image I had grown up with of Australia to be replaced, but not at all sure with what. Downtown



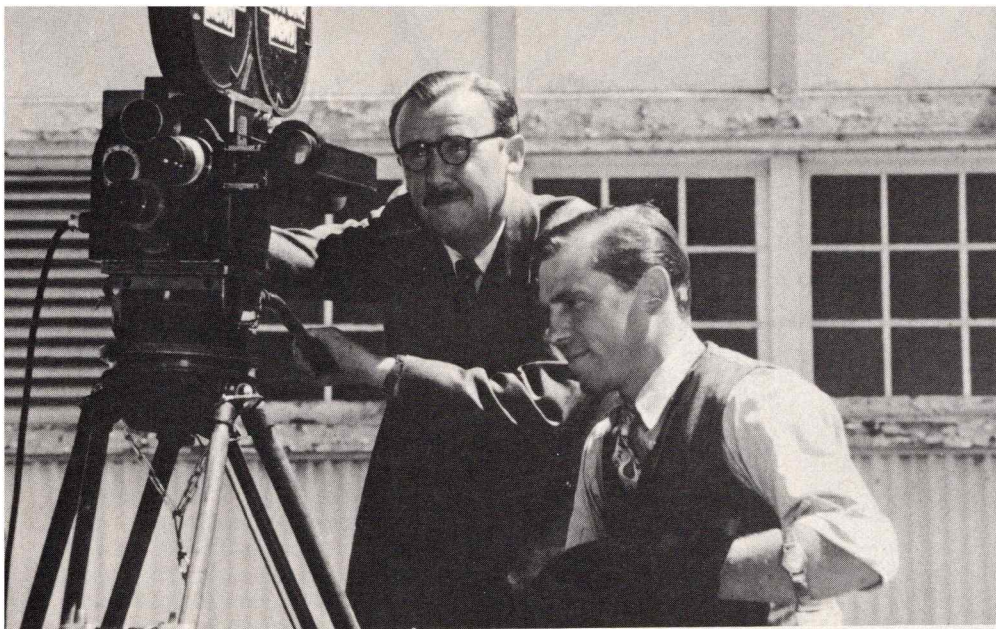
This page: The 'surfies' of Bondi Beach – a year-round obsession



Opposite page: Shopping in style – Sydney's lavishly restored Strand Arcade



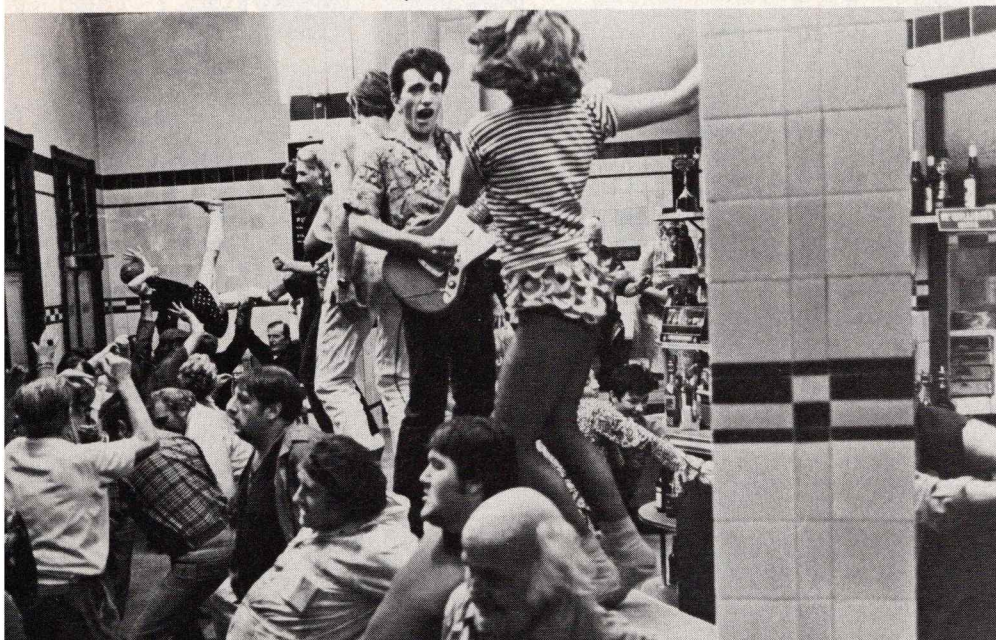




Phillip Noyce's *'Newsfront'* – 'the past is easier to be definitive about'



'We of the never never' and (below) *'Starstruck'* – two recent successes



Sydney, however, doesn't immediately charge you with brand new images. It's simply the hub of a busy city, with its traffic and newspaper sellers and shops crammed with merchandise, albeit spring fashions instead of autumn ones.

But between the tall buildings that fringe the long central streets (and whose names hark back to a time when Britain was more 'Great' – Pitt Street, Castlereagh Street, George Street and Elizabeth Street), one catches glimpses of the Sydney Harbour Bridge making cameo appearances in the same way that New York's Empire State Building nudges its way into most Manhattan views. And like the Empire State Building, the bridge and its equally famous neighbour, the Sydney Opera House, have the power to make even the most disciplined of photographers discover he's just used up two 36-exposure films on them.

Ten years after the Opera House's opening, Australians are finally forgetting the initial controversy of Danish architect Jorn Utzon's sail-inspired design. It was important to them that their city (and their nation) should have a dazzling new symbol, and when the money ran out, they were more than happy to help find the rest through a series of lotteries.

And now the Opera House has become that symbol, demonstrating that Australia is mature enough to innovate rather than to imitate, and also proving that culture has a home Down Under.

And one of the first signs of that culture, in recent years, has been the phenomenal success worldwide of Australian films. Suddenly filmmakers realized that instead of relying on well-worn Hollywood formulas, they could find their own. The process was encouraged by the Australian Film Commission, which outlined its aims as encouraging 'the making, promotion, distribution and broadcasting of Australian programmes that illustrate and interpret aspects of Australian life'. In the Seventies, films like *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *Don's party*, *The chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*, *My brilliant career* and *Newsfront* steadily established 'Australian life' in cinemas at home and abroad and found an immediate audience.

And one distinctive characteristic shone through. This 'new wave' of filmmakers had an incredible gift for evoking the past on celluloid. *Picnic at Hanging Rock* was an early example; *Careful he might hear you*, this year's hit at the Australian Film Industry awards, is another. Phillip Noyce, director of *Newsfront* (set in the Fifties) and *Heatwave* can appreciate why this has happened. 'Going to the movies is a ticket to dreams,' he believes. 'And the past is much easier to be definitive about. Maybe we're just not mature enough as a



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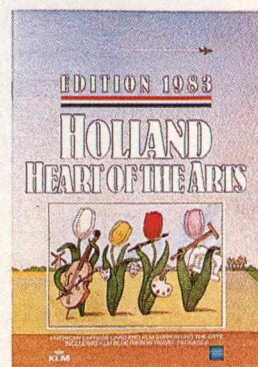
Holland has more museums per square mile than any other country in the world – 700 altogether. It has 40,000 buildings registered as monuments. And Amsterdam alone offers more than 12,000 theatre, music and other kinds of performances per year.

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Indeed, there is a lot more to Dutch culture than just Rembrandt's paintings.



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nation to turn the microscope on to our contemporary selves. The past tends to even out cultures whereas the present heightens differences. Films about the past were very important for those who had been denied it before.'

A tall, gangling giant of a man in a huge Fifties jacket, he folds himself into a chair in his office at the Art Deco Kennedy-Miller studios in the down-at-heel Kings Cross district of Sydney. But, he continues, international success can also have less obvious side-effects.

'Currently there's a huge talent drain from the country to Hollywood: Bruce Beresford, Peter Weir, Gillian Armstrong, Fred Schepisi — most of the successful new wave directors. And you can't blame them for going. I'm currently working on a TV series because for two years I couldn't raise the finance for feature films. I'd have been happy if they'd asked me to make a film in Timbuctoo.'

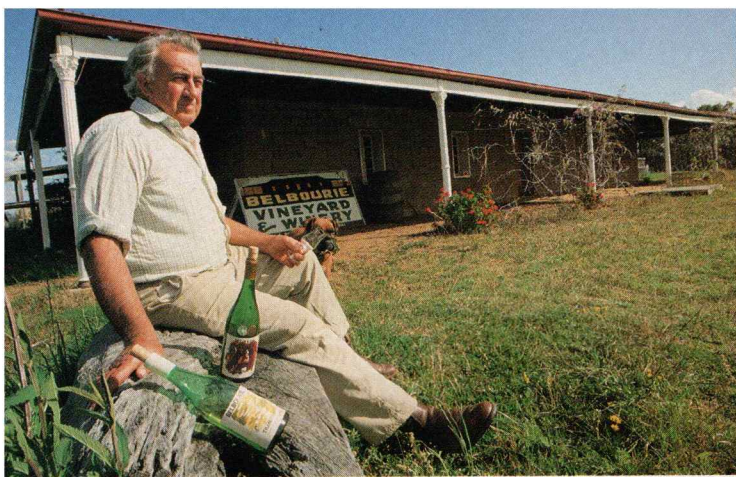
Film stars are also deserting Australian shores. Mel *Mad Max* Gibson has made such an impression on the international movie moguls that rumours even included speculation about him inheriting the James Bond mantle from Roger Moore, and Judy Davis, who starred in *My brilliant career* and Noyce's *Heatwave* is currently abroad working on *A passage to India*. Noyce hopes that as an exportable commodity the big names might bring kudos back to their home industry when they return. 'But,' he adds, 'your loyalty soon evaporates when you go broke.'

The industry is currently going through difficult times. At the beginning of the Eighties, Australian cinemas became engulfed by a surge of mediocre movies that were made in order to benefit from some very generous tax incentives. Since the Labour Government took power, the exemption on film revenue has been reduced and consequently fewer feature films have been made than during the boom year of 1980/81.

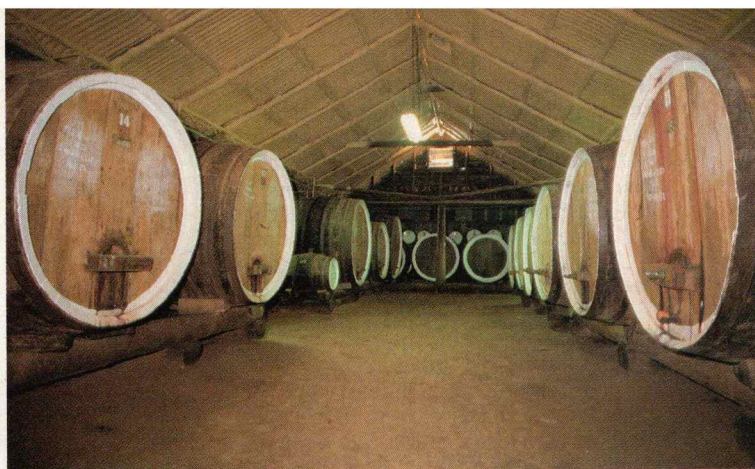
Recent international hits like *The man from Snowy River* (which has become the most financially successful film ever released in Australia — including *Star wars*), *The year of living dangerously*, *Mad Max II* and *Starstruck* continue to demonstrate the versatility and high standard of Australian filmmaking, but this is still a testing time.

'We're under pressure to define ourselves in a period of escalating budgets,' says Noyce. 'We have a distinctive culture but because we speak English, we're also receiving US culture in the form of American films.'

And in America Australian films tend to be packaged with the label 'art movie' and thus get less thorough distribution. But on this point, Noyce is optimistic: 'They might still think we make 'art movies' but we'll soon break down that tag. It's just a matter of time.'



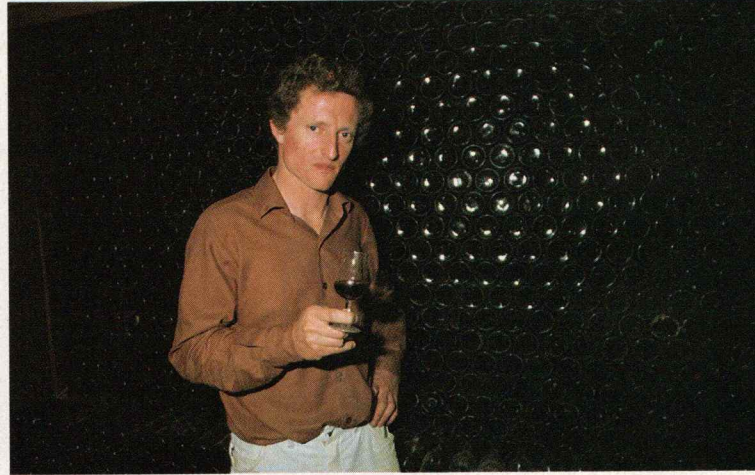
Jim Roberts of Belbournie – a unique approach to winemaking



The oak casks and dirt floor of Tyrell's winery



Above and below: The Robson Vineyard – style and simplicity



Trevor Drayton – fifth generation winemaker



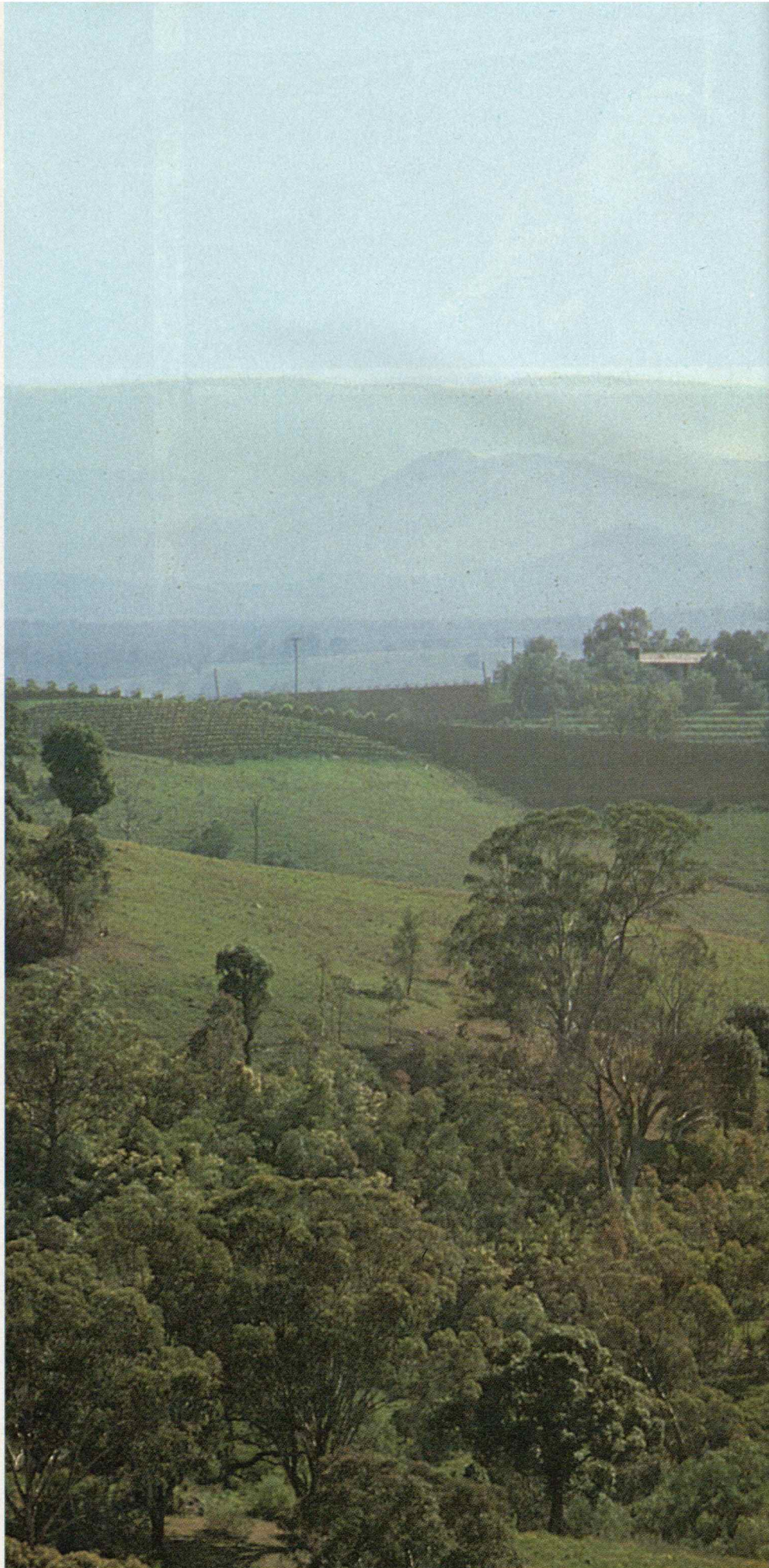
The last word on the subject goes to John Meillon, veteran of countless Australian movies – his latest is *The wild duck* with Jeremy Irons and Liv Ullmann: 'You never hear people say "that was a good British film or American film or French film". The day will come when they don't say "Australian film". We're not the poor relations any more.'

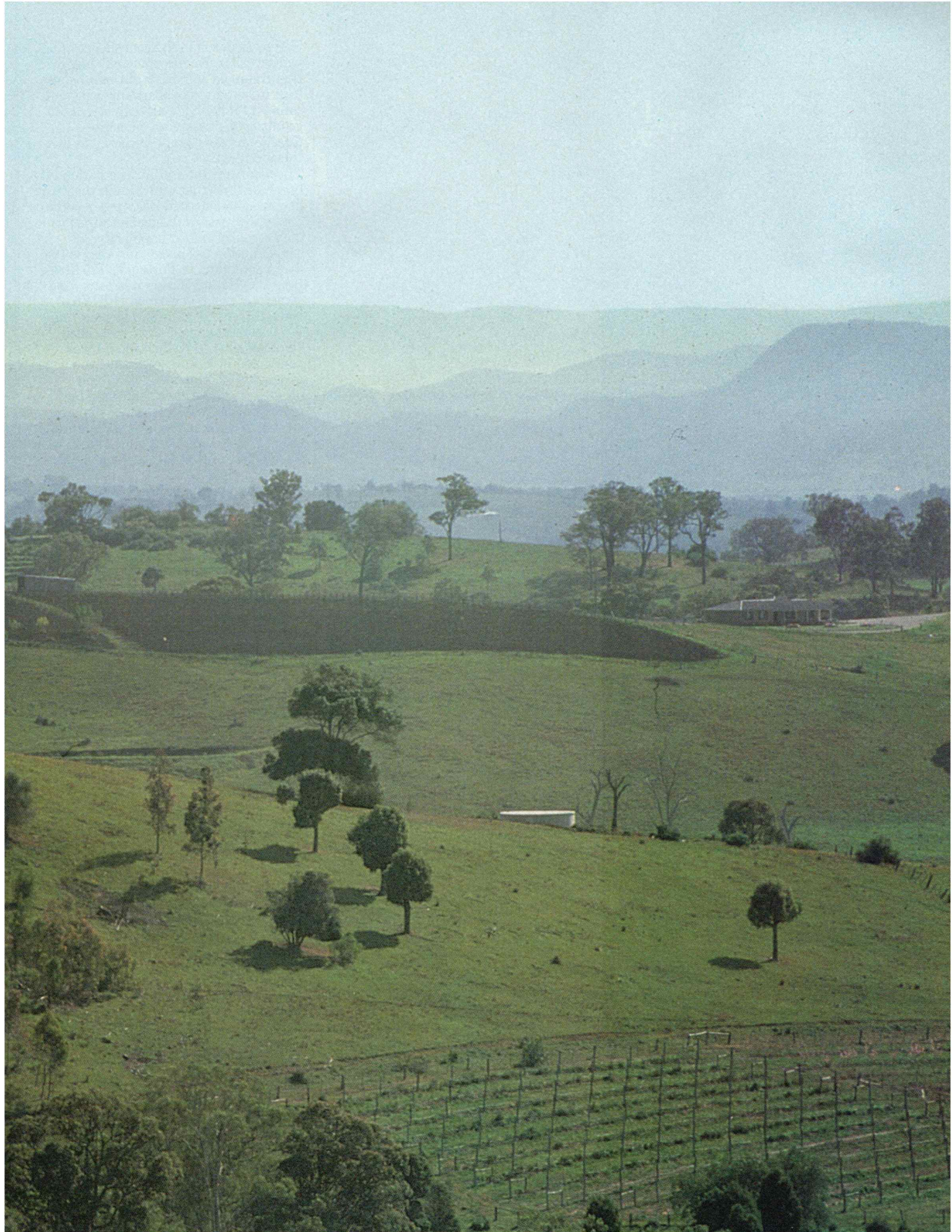
The winemakers of Australia would also not regard themselves as the poor relations. The industry may be a mere toddler in comparison to Europe's grand old men of the grape, but when did age ever preclude quality? Perhaps one of the reasons Australian wine has never received the international trumpet fanfares it deserves is because, as one winemaker puts it: 'Australians don't even know how to spell the word "marketing".'

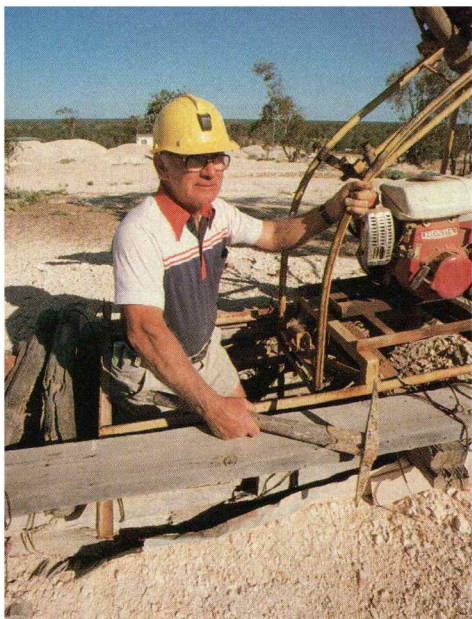
There are around 23 wine-producing areas in Australia with the vast majority of them clustered in the 'Golden Boomerang' of South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. Most of the country's premium wines come from the Hunter Valley, a three-hour drive (and one dirt road) away from Sydney. 'We make five per cent of the wine and 50 per cent of the noise,' I was told.

The first vines came to the Hunter Valley from the best estates in Europe in 1832, courtesy of a young Scott called James Busby, and it wasn't long before two of Australia's most famous family wineries began to grow grapes and commercially produce wine there: Tyrell's and Drayton's. Both are still in the family. The industry suffered a decline in the early half of this century but attracted new interest in the Sixties. Many outsiders who had been snared by the 'grip of the grape' came to the Hunter Valley to set up wineries of their own. The peaceful scene of rolling hills and budding vines only becomes 'Australian', and not European, when a vividly-coloured parrot lands with a swoop on a sign reading 'Cabernet Sauvignon, July '72'. And how many French vineyards can boast that their activity is observed and apparently found amusing by a noisily guffawing kookaburra?

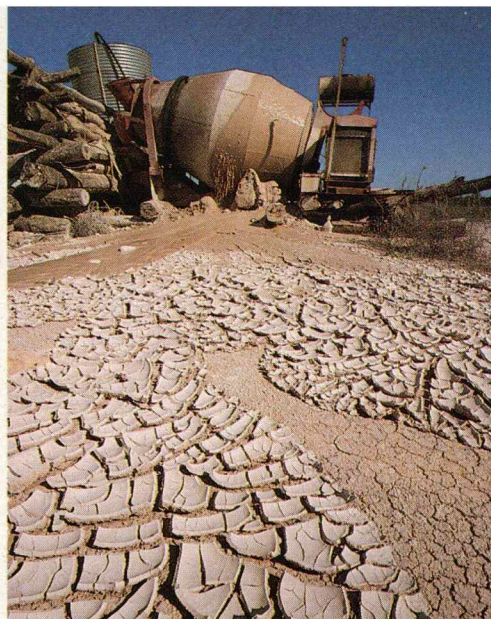
Unlike his European counterpart, each Australian winemaker grows a large variety of grapes and produces an impressive selection of wines from them. Most popular are Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz, Pinot Noir, Semillon, Chardonnay, Rhine Riesling and Traminer. From these grapes come superb reds, whites, rosés, sparkling wines, bottle-fermented champagnes, ports, muscats and sherries. The Australian winemaker is nothing if not versatile but is often criticized by his European colleagues for using long-established French or German names. 'You can call champagne "champagne" in France,' says fifth generation winemaker



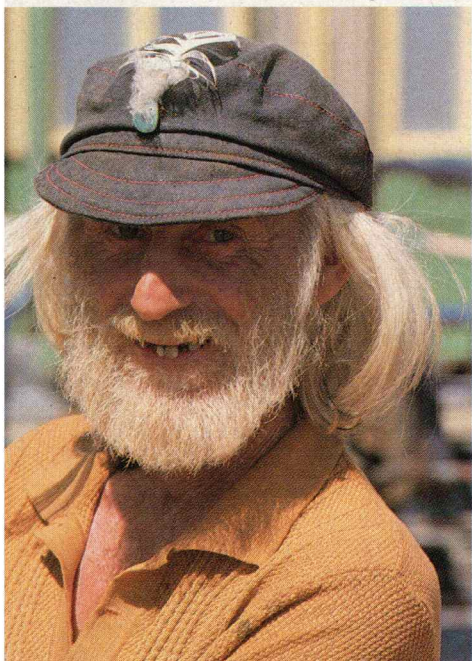




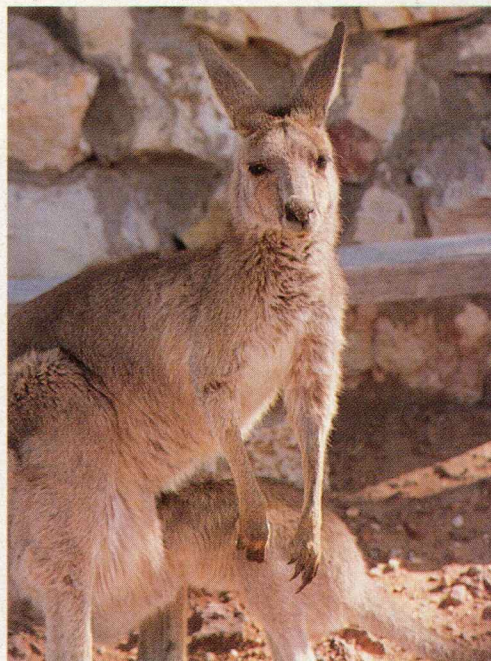
Athol Jenkins: 'It's a slower pace of life'



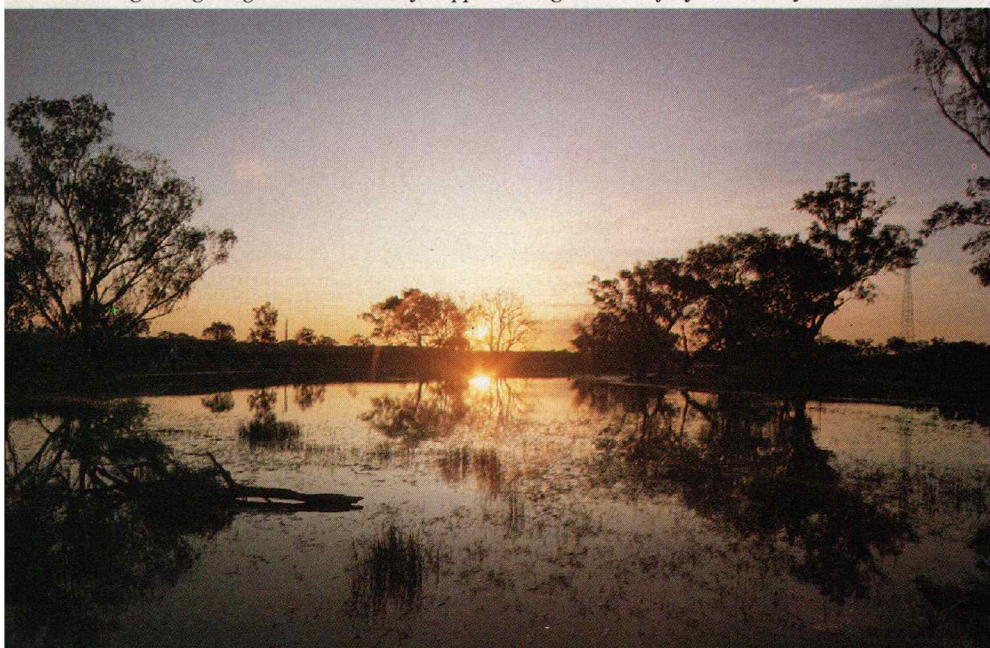
Separating the clay from the opal



Lightning Ridge 'character' Billy Capp



Kangaroo and 'joey' rescued by Gwen Jenkins



Trevor Drayton in the cool silence of his winery cellar. He has obviously heard this argument hundreds of times before. 'But if I produced a sparkling wine and called it "Pokolbin", after this area, I'd go out of business. And, of course, Chardonnay is a grape variety just like this is a bottle.'

The country's reputation as a nation of beer drinkers (they are third in the world behind Germany and Belgium) is perhaps one of the reasons Australian wine has only recently gained popularity.

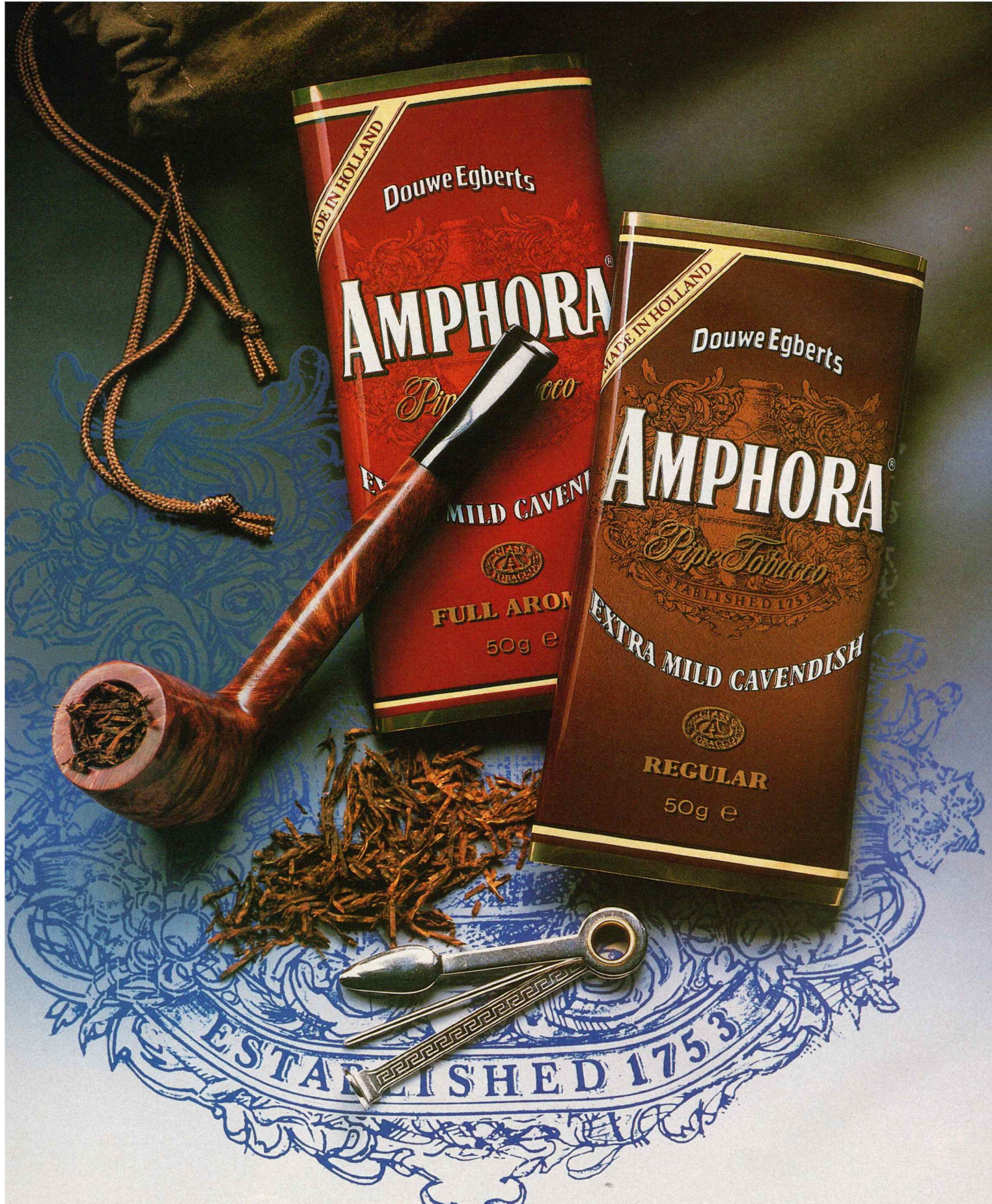
Consumption per person per year is 19.4 litres, compared to Portugal's 125 litres. Remarks Randy Harker, resident wine 'expert' at the Hungerford Hill Wine Village over a glass or two of their fine Pinot Noir champagne: 'it was called "plonko" or "old Nellie" when I was young and it was assumed that you were queer, stupid or an alcoholic if you ordered it. These days people are far more knowledgeable, whether they're buying to drink in the next six minutes or the next six years. With a bit of luck we'll soon get rid of that fat Australian beer drinker image.'

It may be a young industry which cannot hope to compete with Europe's centuries-old reputation, but that can work both ways. Young industries are not afraid to try something new. A growing proportion of Australian wines are bottled with metal caps instead of the traditional cork. The French would turn in their *Graves*. Contrary to belief, this makes absolutely no difference to the wine (except that it becomes easier to store) and it can save the average-sized winery around Aus\$50,000 a year.

Some of the Hunter Valley wineries have adopted the metal cap, while others stick to the tried and trusted cork, but this just emphasizes the different approaches of every winery. Compare, for instance, the up-market Robson Vineyard with the truly individual Belbourie. Both produce wines that reflect the atmosphere of their winery and the character of their winemakers, both are small in comparison to some of the more commercial ventures in the valley and both aim at the serious, knowledgeable and ultimately loyal customer. In fact, a sign outside the Robson Vineyard which reads: 'No sweet wines, no drink-now wines, no cheap wines, no single bottle sales' stresses the point.

Murray Robson's previous business, quality menswear, implies experienced marketing know-how and he has put it to good use by creating an ambience of style and simplicity in everything from his wine labels (he signs them, around 500 an hour) to the tasteful timber holiday cottage he rents to regular customers. Jim Roberts of Belbourie also leaves his mark on his wine labels but for a different reason.

Roberts, an acerbically humorous former oil geologist, is the maverick of the



Amphora. If first class is your first choice.

Hunter Valley with a unique approach to winemaking. As his wines reflect his personality, so he has attempted, through the abstract paintings on his labels, to reflect the character of each wine. *Traminer* colours are citrusy and clear; *Aucero*, a soft blend of blues, pinks and pale greens and the *Super Belah* (an Aboriginal tree name) a rich red and purple combination.

Although most people scoff at his ideas, they seem to work. He pioneered carbonic maceration (the grapes ferment internally within their skins) and, experimenting one day with pyramid power, he discovered that grapes left under a pyramid became raisined while the control grapes rotted. He also reckons that, for instance, bringing the picked grapes into the winery through the same door each time is one of the complex factors which affects the final product. The Belbournie winery is an old-style building filled with an antiquarian's dream of Victorian wash-stands, Art Nouveau glass doors, solid well-worn chairs, rows of large bottles of Roberts' private stock of wine which he is saving for his wake ('I thought I might have a dummy run next year. It would be a pity to miss it') and a wealth of irrelevant clutter which gives the place an instant charm.

Roberts is modest about the ambience he has created: 'It just happened,' he says. Whether or not everyone likes his wines is unimportant. He knows he is creating something special and he's learning just how much wine he has to produce in order to live. 'Being creative is the main thing,' he concludes. 'Otherwise you'd take to the grog.'

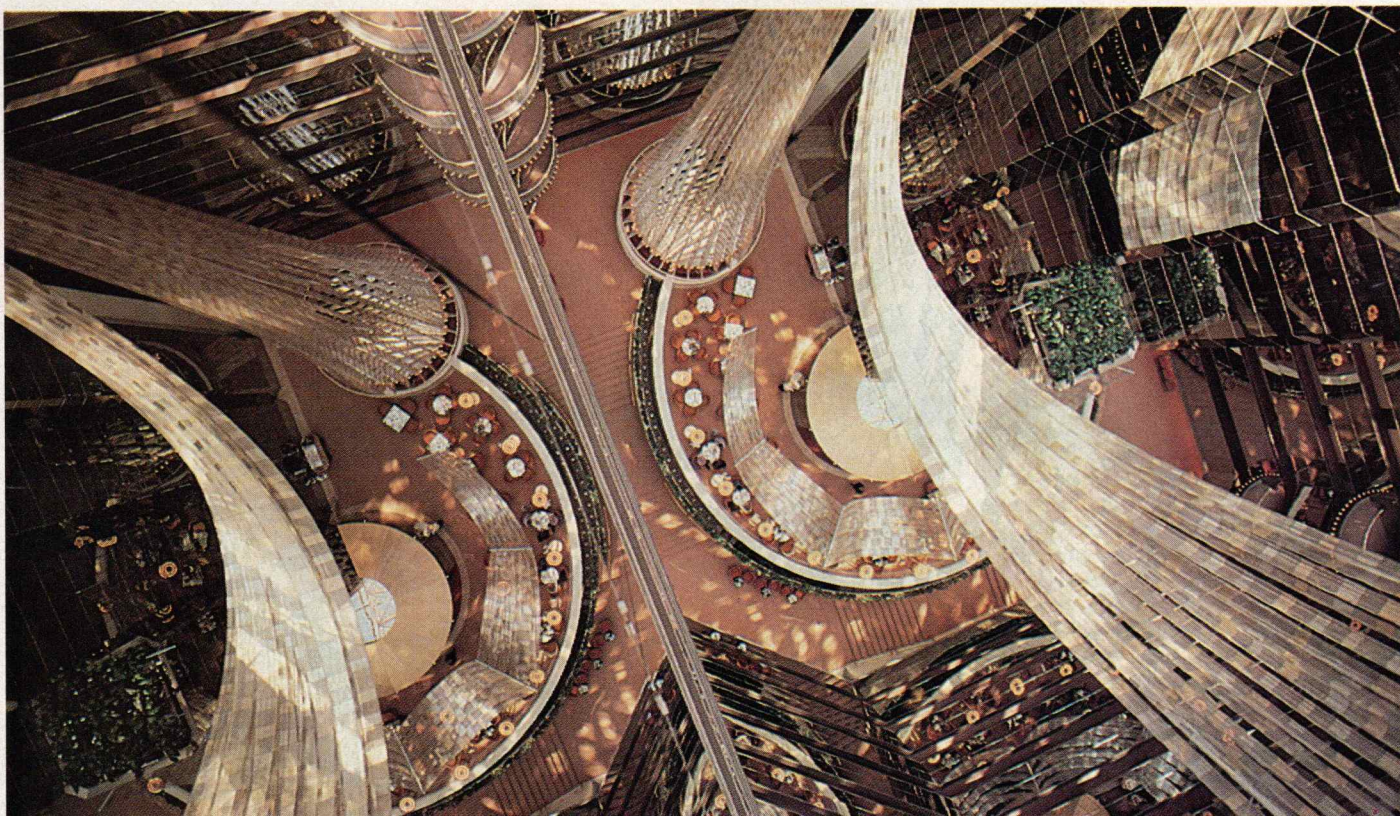
If I was to show my face again in Amsterdam, it seemed imperative that I at least see a kangaroo, if not actually photograph one (and not in a zoo). In the Hunter Valley, the occasional wallaby would dash across the road in front of the car, and a family of suspicious 'roos eyed us from a safe distance as we left the Belbournie winery. But I saw my fair share of them once we reached the Orana region of New South Wales. Driving from Walgett to the opal-mining town of Lightning Ridge, the road was intermittently littered with the carcasses of kangaroos who had not made it to the other side.

This was the 'outback'. Mile upon mile of flat scrubby land, interrupted by clusters of thin scrubby trees, including coolibahs, the kind the jolly swagman camped under the shade of. He had probably worn one of those hats decorated with dangling corks, and as soon as I got out of the car, I found out why. No end of head-tossing, air-swatting and arm-flicking would keep off the flies. Perhaps one eventually gets used to them. I didn't. The flies were just one aspect of a lifestyle I would have had great difficulty



Melbourne's Windsor Hotel Grand Dining Room and (below) South Melbourne 'trendified' residence





The largest single construction ever undertaken in Australia – Melbourne's Regent Hotel

coming to grips with. Scratching an unreliable existence from under the dry earth was another. The majority of the people living in the Ridge are there to seek their fortune by finding that perfect opal. A few do. The rest keep looking. The town consists of a handful of streets, centred around the Digger's Rest pub, with names like Onyx Street, Gem Street, Brilliant Street and Nettleton Drive, after Charlie Nettleton who is supposed to have sunk the first shaft in Lightning Ridge in 1902.

Since then, Lightning Ridge has remained the world's only producer of commercial quality gem black opal. However, getting it out of the ground has proved too costly for the big international mining interests so the fields have stayed open to the small-time prospectors who have always worked them.

A few of the old 'humpies' (shacks) and original buildings remain, but the town has changed in the last 15 years. Tourists and holiday 'fossickers' (prospectors) now keep the motels, souvenir shops and tour guides in business and are tolerated by the miners as a necessary evil.

Billy Capp, a wiry little vaudevillian from Liverpool with a Santa Claus beard is guide at the Lightning Ridge and Grawin Bush Museum, an extraordinary open-air collection of old settlers' artefacts, Aboriginal carvings, rusted farming tools, an original Dodge 'ute' (utility truck) from 1929 and the teeth Pale Face Gardiner lost in a fight to

Darkie Karpam on March 28, 1970. Amongst other things. Capp also has a well-rehearsed line in jokes and anecdotes, but I was reluctant to laugh because Lightning Ridge flies seemed to enjoy the challenge of an open mouth. He, and a few others like him, continue the tradition that towns like this need characters.

Driving around the desolate-looking, vividly-named fields (Potch Point, Bald Hill, Bill the Boer's, Poverty Point, Old Chum), the landscape is littered with abandoned mining equipment, rusted cars and, of course, the dusty ant hills of dirt that are the signs of mine shafts and activity below.

Athol and Gwen Jenkins came to the Ridge 15 years ago when they decided they wanted a slower pace of life. They live just outside town at Kangaroo Hill, named after the orphaned 'joeys' (baby kangaroos) Gwen has become famous for taking in.

'This is Sunny and this is Summer,' she explains as an affectionate huddle of soft grey kangaroos cluster around our legs. 'And that's Mulga and Wilga and Brolga and Bindi and Brumbi. Bindi is a friendly little soul, aren't you, cuddlepots.' She picks him up and gives him a hug. Jenkins, a former radio and TV repairman, has seen a lot of changes in the last 15 years, especially among the miners themselves. 'In the old days you could leave your tools on the surface, go off for lunch and know they'd still be there when you got back. Not any more.

One fella I know was working down underground when suddenly all the lights went off. Someone had stolen his generator.'

What Jenkins likes most about life in Lightning Ridge is the lack of pressure. He works 60 foot down in the claim in front of his house whenever he needs to but there is never anything so urgent that it can't be put off till tomorrow. He and Gwen would never dream of returning to city life. But not everyone has the same relaxed approach to life. To many others Lightning Ridge is a running battle: either you conquer it or it conquers you.

By the puddling tanks, where miners wash the opal clay through modified concrete mixers to separate the silt from the stones, Bruce Condon and David Wentworth are picking through some top gravel to see if they can find any opal missed by previous miners.

They've been here five years after what was planned as a short working holiday. The price of opal has remained steady in that time but expenses have rocketed and they reckon that even if they made a Aus\$10,000-find tomorrow, it would barely cover costs.

'We'll be leaving soon,' says Condon, cloaking himself in a fresh cloud of fly repellent. 'It's too hard. You could be driving one way and the opal's waiting for you somewhere else. You might strike lucky tomorrow, next week, never.' Despite the insecurity of opal-mining, they've enjoyed the lifestyle on the

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Ridge. No traffic, no smog, no insurance agents or unions. 'But you can't live like that all your life,' Condon continues as he sifts through the mountains of gravel for the occasional chip of worthless 'potch'. 'The nice stones make it all worthwhile. But it ends up beating you. It's a free life but it doesn't pay the bills. The only way to survive is to think that your lucky claim's just around the corner, the light at the end of the tunnel.

'I suppose opal has got to be hard to find or it wouldn't be worth so much. It's just a bit unfair that one or two people find it all.'

One hundred and fifty years ago another form of prospecting put a somewhat different settlement on the map. It was the gold rush of the 1850s that established Melbourne as an important commercial centre, and the city's solid – some might say staid – appearance dates from those heady days. There has always been a rivalry with Sydney and the first point of criticism is Melbourne's weather. If you don't like it, locals say, just wait a minute as you're likely to experience all four seasons in the course of one day.

Sydney is the brighter, more dynamic of the two cities and that's probably because its climate inspires more of an outdoors approach. Sydney is like California, Melbourne like Europe. Which is why I immediately felt more at home in Melbourne. For one thing an unreliable climate gives greater emphasis to the more European pursuits of eating and the arts.

Sydney may have the world-famous Opera House, but Melbourne has its Cultural Centre too. The disappointing exterior of the Concert Hall hides a superbly conceived interior with a colour scheme based on the hues and patterns of Australia's gemstone deposits. And Melbourne also has its bridge, the Westgate. But perhaps it gives more ammunition to the critics who think Melbourne is architecturally the poor relation.

It seems Melbourne is visually most successful when it is not trying to compete with other cities. And its wealth of Victorian architecture puts it head and shoulders above Sydney in this respect. The first manifestation of a bygone era presents itself when you drive in the city. The yellow and green endearingly old-fashioned trams that accept and disgorge passengers around the city have certain idiosyncracies that other drivers must respect. Built during the Great Depression, these noisy monsters have become popular symbols of the city. One has been transformed into a mobile restaurant and a large number have been handed over to eager artists for a visual, often vivid, facelift. Recent

Continued on page 49

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restoration on them by the public transport authorities has been extensive and expensive – not surprising when you consider that some have done as much mileage as six trips to the moon. Call it restoration or 'trendification', many of Melbourne's suburbs are now realizing the worth of their old buildings. The residents of South Melbourne, for instance, are all for changing the name of their area back to its original 'Emerald Hill' and they take pride in the fact that those great Australian culinary institutions, Vegemite, Violet Crumble Bars and Kraft cheese, were all developed in this vital little corner. Despite the wealth of the city when these old, curlicued houses were built, there was a tax on windows and for this reason many of them look attractive from the outside and dark from the inside. But not as dark as the cells at Old Melbourne Gaol, another relic of the past, which is now open to the public, some 140 years after it was built. Australia's infamous bushranger Ned Kelly probably wasn't thinking about the tax on windows during his stay there – certainly not in 1880 when he was executed. As the man on the souvenir counter quipped when I left: 'It's a nice place to visit but I wouldn't want to stay here.'

He would not have said the same about the Windsor Hotel, perhaps one of the finest examples of Victorian architecture in the city. Construction began 100 years ago from the designs of Charles Webb, and once completed, the hotel became one of Melbourne's most luxurious properties. Over the years the Windsor played host to numerous famous patrons – Sir Robert Menzies kept a suite there for a time – but by the early Seventies, like most elderly ladies, the Windsor was looking a little tired and time-ravaged. Instead of replacing her with a glamorous young showpiece, the Government bought the property and leased it to the Oberoi Hotel Group.

General Manager Pieter van der Hoeven was present for the lengthy facelift. 'Every day we were finding treasures,' he recalls. '24-carat gold leaf on the pillars, tiles under the grand staircase carpet, a stencil design on the walls of the hall.' The diaries of the architect were exhaustively consulted and what could not be restored was replaced as precisely as possible. Throughout the transformation it was business as usual, and one of the hotel's oldest and most loyal patrons, an elderly socialite, happily walked under the scaffolding and edged round the workmen so that she could stay in her favourite hotel. 'She typifies the Windsor to me,' says van der Hoeven. 'And not just her. Every

Saturday night you'll see confetti in our lifts from the honeymooning couples who want to stay in the rooms their parents stayed in on their honeymoons.'

But the atmosphere of the Windsor was far from stately and refined during my stay. Even 100 years of refinement must make way for fervour and revelry when Australia triumphs. Thirty-two years before construction on the hotel began, America took as its own the America's Cup and finally, in 1983, another nation had won it.

Room service telephone lines were jammed with orders for champagne and no other subject of conversation was permissible.

Out in the streets Melbourne went wild, and Lygon Street, the city's pizza quarter, looked more like carnival time in Rio. Who could blame them? After centuries of silence, Australia was stamping itself on the map with a vengeance.

'There was so much pent-up tension in Australia after years of being dominated by British and American culture,' said one commentator. 'When people found out they could do it on their own, there was a rush of confidence. We're simply catching up because we've been quiet for so long.'

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