

Country of Birth: **United Kingdom & The Netherlands**  
 Date of Arrival in Australia: **16 April 1971**

## Ken & Els Gray

Herewith a copy of the "Application for Board and Lodging at Wacol" which we received on our arrival on 16 April 1971. A lot of emigrants who arrived during the time we were at the Hostel from April 1971 till February 1972, did not speak a word of English, I just wonder how they got on with this form. Also a copy of Personal Issues.

Once a week the women would bring their towels and bed sheets to one of the large sheds and get issued with fresh ones, as well as toilet paper. It always tickled me seeing these people walking around with heaps of toilet rolls. I am sure a lot of people did not know what toilet paper was for as a number of new arrivals did their washing in the communal toilets which had to be "unblocked" all the time.

If you had an open mind and could see the funny side of things you had a good time at the Hostel. Never a dull moment. Some people never stopped complaining and returned home to Australia's benefit, I'm sure. Mind you, on the day we arrived I could have cheerfully turned around and gone home on the first flight available.

After a long flight with many delays on the way, we eventually arrive in Brisbane from London via Melbourne. It's hot and we have to walk a mile from the plane to what looks like an army shed. I wear a long camel coat, baby in one arm, suitcase in the other. My husband also wears an overcoat and carries two suitcases with a five-year-old in tow. We are loaded onto an old and dilapidated bus that is held together by the layers of dirt both on the inside and the outside. It was so dirty we could not see through the windows without wiping it with something and only then we got a dim view.

We got out of the airport and passed some old wooden sheds on poles and I wondered what they were used for. In my mind I thought they were places where animals were kept. Eventually we arrive at the Hostel. Dehydrated, hungry and tired only to find that we were not expected for some reason or another. Hence there was not a hut ready for us. We waited and stood under the shade of a tree until we were given a wooden hut. There was no bed, so we waited and waited till eventually a "put you



*Els Gray in front of the Wacol Hostel church*

up" was found and we could move in. I opened a drawer and was welcomed by the biggest cockroach. I just screamed. By then, we had missed the dinner session so no food or drinks till the next morning.

We decided that there must be a restaurant near and walked outside the gate of the Hostel in search of a place to eat. The stench in the air outside was so strong that we thought that the sewerage must run onto the street. So we walked back in. (We did not know that there was a pickle factory close by and if the wind was in the right direction the pong was unbearable). We knocked on the neighbour's door and a German couple made us a cup of tea. I really did not know what we had let ourselves in for. Things got better after our first day.

When our first Christmas in Australia came around (1971) we all felt very depressed. Everybody felt homesick, missing mums and dads and brothers and sisters and friends at home terribly. We all spilled a few tears in quiet moments and wished we were back home.

The heat made it worse as we all associated Christmas with cold weather and cosy nights around the fire. The Christmas atmosphere eluded us totally. All of us who had nowhere to go on Christmas Day are forever grateful to the Manager, Mr Bale, and staff at the time for the wonderful Christmas Dinner they provided. We were all



**COMMONWEALTH HOSTELS LIMITED**  
(Incorporated in Victoria)

"D"

**HOSTEL BOARD AND LODGING**  
(COMMONWEALTH NOMINATED FAMILIES)

APPLICATION FOR BOARD AND LODGING AT Waceoc  
Note: The term "resident" or "residents" referred to hereinafter and in the Schedules annexed means "boarder and lodger" or "boarders and lodgers" as the case may be.  
To: COMMONWEALTH HOSTELS LIMITED.

I hereby apply for board and lodging at the abovenamed hostel on a weekly basis for myself and the following members of my family (hereinafter called my family):

WIFE: NAME Heliz

CHILDREN:

NAME	Born on	NAME	Born on
<u>Jessie</u>	<u>8 A 65</u>		/ /
<u>Helaine</u>	<u>2 11 70</u>		/ /
	/ /		/ /

and if you grant my request I will accept such board and lodging on and subject to the following conditions by which I agree to be bound, namely:-

- That at the close of each week I will pay to your Hostel Manager the full amount due by me for board and lodging for myself and my family calculated in accordance with the tariff charges as provided in the Schedule lettered "A" annexed hereto or in accordance with any substituted charges as may be exhibited on the notice board in or at the hostel office from time to time.
- That within seven days after the rendering of an account to me for electricity in excess of the allowance for lighting and heating of lodgings specified in Clause 2(c) of the Schedule lettered "A" annexed hereto I will pay to your Hostel Manager the amount shown on such account.
- That I and my family will observe your Hostel Rules as provided in the Schedule lettered "B" annexed hereto and any variations thereof as may be subsequently notified on the notice board in or at the hostel office.
- That I acknowledge that the Company shall in no way be liable in the event of death of or injury to persons or damage to property from fire caused by the use by any person of any form of space heating equipment not authorised by the Hostel Rules and I further agree to keep the Company indemnified against all claims or demands in respect of death or injury to persons whether residents or not or damage to property arising from fire caused by the use by myself or any member of my family of such space heating equipment aforesaid.
- That you may at any time give me notice in accordance with the provisions of Clause 8 hereunder—  
(a) terminating the provision of board and lodging for me and my family;  
(b) varying tariff charges, charges for sundry services and electricity, or hostel rules upon which you are prepared to continue the provision of board and lodgings for me and my family;  
(c) of the closing down, after a period of seven days from the time of giving such notice, of the hostel.
- That in the event of the hostel being closed, and alternative board and lodging at another hostel being offered to me and my family, or if I accept transfer to another hostel, I will accept such alternative board and lodging upon the terms and conditions of the contract under which I and my family are accepted as residents of this hostel.
- That upon being required at any time to do so by the Hostel Manager I and my family will move from any rooms allocated to us to other rooms at the hostel or any unit thereof.
- That I agree that—  
(a) any notice to be given to me by you respecting any variations of tariff charges, charges for sundry services and electricity, or hostel rules, may be exhibited on the notice board in or at the hostel office and shall be deemed to have been properly given by you and accepted by me as from the date the notice specifying any such variation is exhibited over the signature of the General Manager and/or Hostel Manager on the said notice board; and  
(b) any other notice given to me by you shall be deemed to have been properly given to and received by me as from the time it is delivered to me personally or is enclosed in a sealed envelope addressed to me and placed in a room allocated to me. The certificate of the Hostel Manager as to the method and time of giving notice shall be accepted by me as conclusive proof thereof.
- That I acknowledge and agree  
(a) that the Company will not be liable in respect of any loss of or damage to any property in or about the hostel being property in the possession, custody, or control of myself or any members of my family;  
(b) that the Hostel Manager may take possession of any property left within the hostel precincts by me or my family after our moving out of the hostel. In addition if the property is not claimed by me or my family within three months after moving out of the hostel I agree that the Company may dispose of the property by public auction or otherwise and that I will indemnify the Company against all actions, suits, claims, or demands arising from the disposal of such property.
- That I understand and agree that hostel accommodation will be provided only temporarily for myself and my family; that I am expected, immediately after admission to a hostel, to make positive efforts to secure private accommodation; and that in any event the period of residence in a hostel will not be extended beyond 12 months.
- That I acknowledge that I have read and I understand this application, the conditions, schedules annexed hereto, the tariff charges, charges for sundry services and for electricity and the hostel rules.
- For all intents and purposes this contract shall be deemed to have been made at the Registered Office of the Company in the State in which the hostel or residence is located.

Dated this 16th day of April 1971  
Signature of Applicant [Signature]  
Signature of Witness [Signature]  
(Member of Hostel Managerial Staff)

To: [Signature]  
The Company accepts your application for board and lodging as set out above, and will provide you and your family with board and lodging at this hostel from week to week upon the conditions of your said application.  
This duplicate copy of your application for board with annexed Schedules lettered "A" and "B" is handed to you as your copy of the contract with Commonwealth Hostels Limited.

For and on behalf of Commonwealth Hostels Limited,  
[Signature]  
Hostel Manager

10M-7/70



COMMONWEALTH HOSTELS LTD.

E 97639

**PERSONAL ISSUES RECEIPTS**

NAME MR. GRAY  
(PLEASE PRINT)

Hostel WACOL.

Room No. OKLEY 5.

A ITEMS	Value Per Article	QTY.	B ITEMS	Value Per Article	QTY.	C & D ITEMS	Value Per Article	QTY.
1. Bassinette Frame	\$8.53		1. Bassinette, Mattress	\$3.30		1. Cup	\$0.32	
2. Bed, 2' 6"	12.80	1	2. Bassinette, Pillow	1.00		2. Dispenser, Sugar	0.28	
3. Bed, 3' 0"	13.40		3. Bed, Bedspread	6.00	2	3. Fork, Utility	0.40	4
4. Bed, D/D	20.90		4. Bed, Blanket	4.67	3	4. Knife, Utility	0.40	4
5. Cot	30.75	1	5. Bed, Mattress, 2' 6"	10.00		5. Mug	0.23	4
6. Divan U/carriage and Mattress	66.00		6. Bed, Mattress, 1/S, 2' 6"	10.52	1	6. Shaker, Salt/Pepper	0.10	
7. Chair, Wood	3.96	2	7. Bed, Mattress, 3' 0"	14.63		7. Spoon, Dessert	0.21	4
8. Chair, Cantilover	6.50		8. Bed, Mattress, 1/S, 3'	11.93		8. Spoon, Soup	0.21	
9. Chair, Bedroom	8.80		9. Bed, Mattress Cover	1.94	1	9. Spoon, Tea	0.12	1
10. Chair, Easy Lounge	22.00	1	10. Bed, Pillow	1.67	4	10. Tray, Cafe, Blue	1.30	1
11. Chair, Dining Room S./T.	7.26		11. Bed, Pillow Cover	0.55		11. Ashtray	0.21	1
12. Chair, Fireside	22.00		12. Bed, Pillowslip	0.60	4	12. Bath, Babies'	1.81	1
13. Heater, Room Elect.	20.00	1	13. Bed, Sheet	1.87	2	13. Broom, Hair	1.08	1
14. Lounge, Convertible Frame	36.58	1	14. Cot, Blanket	3.71	3	14. Broom, Tuffy	1.23	
15. Radiator	5.00		15. Cot, Mattress	4.25	1	15. Brush, Banister	0.32	1
16. Sideboard	24.00	1	16. Cot, Pillow	1.67		16. Brush, Scrub	0.30	
17. Table, Dressing	22.00		17. Cot, Pillowslip	0.55		17. Bucket, G/I	1.06	
18. Table, Recreation	10.45	1	18. Cot, Sheet	1.25	2	17A. Bucket, Plastic	0.29	1
19. Table, Writing	10.00	1	19. Divan, Mattress Protector	3.24	1	18. Curtain, R & F	0.90	
20. Wardrobe	FITCO 0.00		20. Divan, Blanket	5.77	3	19. Curtain, Tie Back	0.32	
			21. Divan, Sheet	2.51	2	20. Globe, Elect.	0.10	
			22. Curtain	1.50	2	21. Handles, Various	0.20	
			23. Curtain, 5'	3.25		22. Key, Room	0.50	2
			24. Drinkheater	10.23	1	23. Mat, Coir	0.88	
			25. Mat, Bedside	4.00	2	24. Mop	0.60	1
			26. Towel, Bath	0.92	4	25. Pan, Dust	0.33	1
			27. Seat, Cushion	15.40		26. Plastic, Folder	0.15	
			28. Back, Cushion	14.11		27. Pot, Chamber	1.21	1
			29. Vynex, Seat Cover	14.50		28. Plug, Sink	0.08	
			30. Vynex, Back Cover	14.50		29. Sheets, W/proof	0.91	1
						30. Shades, Elect.	0.35	

I acknowledge receipt of the above items of equipment and agree to maintain them in good order and condition. I also agree to return same on demand or on leaving the hostel. In the event of my failing to return any item or items, I agree to pay to the Company the value of same as specified above. I agree to pay to the Company the value of any damage caused to any item or items.

ELECTRICITY METER READING

Witness to Signature

*[Signature]*  
Date 28/6/71 Signature *[Signature]*

Form CH 2.

Personal issues receipt



made to feel special. The dining room was beautifully decorated, and all the tables were laid with white tablecloths and we all received a menu card. It was a proper Christmas dinner, turkey, pork, Christmas pudding, the lot. What made it extra special was the fact that it was served by the staff who all donated their time so willingly to make our transition into the Aussie life a little easier.

You got to know a lot of people at the Hostel. You are all in the same boat and all your troubles are similar. Homesickness was something everyone had to deal with one way or another and it was not easy. We arrived in April 1971 and by September we had made a lot of friends and we all felt that we needed a good party to let some steam and let our hair down. We decided that a Baptism at the little Church at the Hostel was as good an excuse as any, to have a party, and so it was that our baby daughter, Melanie Gray, was christened on 26 September 1971, probably not for the right reason. The Chaplain, Father Nouwens must have wondered why his flock was so extended on that day. The party got under way straight after the service and we just danced and laughed and were merry all day long. It must have been the biggest party ever at the Hostel and probably the most therapeutic in that it released a lot of tension and contributed in a small way to cementing some long lasting friendships.



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## Christmas Greetings

From  
**Commonwealth Hostels Ltd.**

Christmas, 1971

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*Christmas invitation*