

27 May 2010, Thursday

The all ordinaries are up today. That means a better result this week at GESB, however minor.

We are travelling back to Avonbridge today. Many things to do on Friday before the weekend when most of the services are simply not available.

We have collected lots of reading material which are too heavy for our baggage allowance. We will have to post it sea mail.

We are planning on catching up with Arthur and Barbara tonight.

Saturday night is with Ronnie and Kathleen Martin at their home for tea.

Sunday night we are taking Linda Martin out for Mexican food.

Arrived in Avonbridge just before 4 pm. We were on the motorway and an accident occurred which would have closed all 3 lanes. The sat nav directed us elsewhere and we found ourselves in the country nowhere near the motorway, hence, the journey was longer.

Sandra was busting for a pee and I naturally suggested we stop at the side of the road. She was indignant. I pointed out that blokes don't have any problem with this type of instant relief (I wanted to go as well). I suggested that she could find a secluded spot and expose her little (well, not so little) bot to the weather, to which, I was warned not to say anymore. As you all know, I always do as I am told.

28 May 2010, Friday

The all ordinaries are up today. The European crisis appears not to have affected the ASX.

Lazy day today!

Some packing and re-packing. Also washing.

Went into Falkirk to get the car detailed and buy food, wine, etc.

Essendon won so Dylan will be happy. Well done, especially that the win was against the bullies.

29 May 2010, Saturday

Linda Martin will go into her work today and tomorrow. We are going to see Sandra's pal (Barbara Glennon) and her husband (Arthur).

Arthur was playing golf and we spent a pleasant 1-2 hours talking with Barbara. On leaving, I observed Sandra and Barbara having a close hug, a very private moment

between two people who have been friends from their first day at school. I suspect that Barbara will not travel to Australia.

Had a look at our hotel in Dubai (on the internet) – very flash.

We are invited to tea tonight at Kathleen and Ronnie Martin's. We are taking the wine (French red and white). Terrific couple – we had a very enjoyable meal and talk. It was terrific to see how much Sandra is liked by her friends. There is a genuine show of affection and caring that the years have not diminished.

30 May 2010, Sunday

My mobile went off at 1.30 am (local time) and it was a call from my alarm system at home. Our system tells us when the keypad is not entered correctly and allows us to switch off the alarm (if we want to). Turned out that it was Gary who caused all the fuss and woke me up! Oh, he is trouble.

Lazy day today – read the paper in bed (Linda Martin went out and got one for us). I am going to watch the formula one – Webber is on pole with Vettel in third position. Disappointing race for Webber and I suspect that Red Bull is not really happy with Vettel at this time, despite the outward show of support. The saving grace is that Webber leads the world championship on points and has a chance to go further in Canada. The team of Hamilton and Button (McLaren/Mercedes) are certainly faster cars. Ferrari is having problems it seems.

Kelly and John picked up our 4WD today – John's BMW is in the workshop (fixing the hail damage).

We are going to take Linda Martin out to a Mexican restaurant tonight. Also fuel up the car.

31 May 2010, Monday

Travelling to Dubai today – flight leaves 2.15 pm from Glasgow airport – 7 hour flight I am told.

Dianne (Linda's daughter) is driving us.

It is sad for Linda Martin because she enjoyed seeing us again (Brian and Linda came to Singleton in 2009) and may not have wanted us to go.

Brian Martin called before we left and wished us well – also provided some advice to leave Avonbridge at 10 am and get to Glasgow in plenty of time. Checking in can be lengthy.

As it turned out, traffic was not very busy and we had a good run. Checked in without any fuss (despite the prezzies, we were still under weight).

Actual flight time was 7 hours and was not too difficult on the back. Had plenty to eat and drink at Glasgow airport (we were trying to get rid of the cash money we were carrying) and that was a good thing because I was looking for some more food/drink on the flight? My appetite must be coming back.

We were met by the Emirates group when we landed and directed to the Arabian Adventures office. They arranged for a driver to take us and the luggage to the hotel. Bit of a wait as they were dealing with different groups of people and different drivers/hotels. Lots of anglo-indians working here.

Bit of a wait at customs. Same situation as we experienced at Glasgow. You need more people at the customs desks to process the long lines of people.

Arrived at Dubai airport just after midnight and did not get to the hotel room until 2 am. Tired and feeling seedy.



Nice hotel and room. Website -

<http://10.125.128.1/internet/index.php?webconurl=http://www.google.com.au/>

1 June 2010, Tuesday

Had trouble sleeping and finally drifted off. Woke up around 9 am to the sound of the shower running. The air-conditioning system here is very noisy and we were disturbed by it all night. Sandra did not sleep. I did not find it too intrusive as I can switch off external noise (how do you think I manage not to hear what Sandra is saying).

Breakfast is supplied as part of the tariff (we booked in Perth and got a very good deal for a 5 star hotel here).

We asked for another room away from the air conditioning units and they moved us just before lunchtime.

Went to one of the shopping centres and walked around. It is simply stunning. However, no buyer activity. The prices are way too high and no one is making the cash registers ring.

The taxi service here is good. We paid 40 dirham to the shopping centre and it cost us 20 to get back. I suspect we were ripped off on the first journey.

We are back in the afternoon. A swim is on the cards.

Went for drinks at 6 pm in the hotel and passed an hour just talking and taking in all the sights in the bar.

Dinner at the Blue Elephant restaurant in then hotel – Thai food – exquisite.

We are planning to go on the metro tomorrow, a visit to the souk market and then a ride and dinner on a dhow at night.

My world is too small. I am reflecting on people I have met and observed, the places I have been to and the things I have seen. I am glad to have had the opportunity of going on holiday with Sandra and sharing her experiences and becoming aware of how little I really know. The travel has sharpened my appetite for more travel but we will wait and see what the rest of the year brings.

Sandra's 70th birthday is this year.

2 June 2010, Wednesday

Slept in this morning and started my day at 8 am. Sandra woke up around 9 am. She was really tired and needed the rest.

I have to confirm my flight booking after 10am today – they have a business centre here in the hotel with internet and printing facilities. Sandra needs to contact Arabian Adventures and organise the dhow (ride and dinner) for tonight.

After that, we will go off for the day.

I am quite looking forward to going home.

The journey from Dubai to Perth is expected to be 10 hours 50 minutes. If I time it right, that will mean at least 5 visits to the toilet on the plane (only kidding).

Reflection – we are both very grateful to Linda and Brian Martin for their hospitality and kindness to us. Both really fantastic people who cannot do enough for you. They provided a car for us to use and that made a real difference to us getting around. I like

their home and where they live. I have pictures of their backyard (wait for the website) which I will publish once I am back in Australia.