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"Naturist Living in the Nineties"

Issue No 50

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Front Cover: Deb at the Down to Earth Confest. Photo by Charles MacFarland.

Page 2: Christine at the Manawatu Outdoor Leisure Club. Photo by Doug Ball.

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50 issues on ...

It's hard to believe that here we are putting the final touches to Issue 50, although, on the other hand, it does seem a long time since we launched our magazine at the 14th ANF Convention during the summer of 1982/83.

On many occasions people have said to us, "What prompted you to undertake such a venture?" I guess the only real answer is, "Because it was there to be done." We had become members of the ANF Supporter Group and the fees included a subscription to the "New Zealand Naturist" magazine. We couldn't help wondering why there was no Australian nudist publication, and after a great deal of consideration decided to have a go at it ourselves. It was a rather ambitious undertaking considering neither of us had any background in this field. However, as the old saying goes, "Where there's a will there's a way", and here we are in our thirteenth year of publication.

At this point I would like to mention a few people who gave us tremendous support and encouragement during those early days. Indeed without their assistance Issue 1 may never have happened. Our special thanks to Col Kenny, Keith Murfet, Sandy McDonald, Joy Denton, Peter and Sandra Beerens, Peter Rowsell, Mary Weston, Fritz, and of course our first cover girl, Sivan and her husband Jack.

There have been many high spots during the intervening years, and of course some disappointments as well, but I would say by far the greatest reward has been the contact we have made with other like-minded people, not only here in Australia but throughout the world. As copies of our magazine spread into the naturist community we were delighted when various overseas publishers wrote to us offering encouragement, and suggesting reciprocal advertising arrangements. This broadened our scope immensely, putting us in touch with many thousands of additional readers. And as we have travelled to naturist functions and venues over the years we have met just so many delightful people which otherwise would not have been possible.

If I were asked to single out the most memorable occasion I can recall I think I would choose our first Alexandria Beach Carnival. I was one of the main instigators of this event, and had promoted it through the magazine, but of course we had no idea how many people would turn up. It would be hard to convey my feelings as we walked down onto the beach early that day and found a crowd of several hundred there already, and more arriving all the time. And probably the biggest disappointment is the fact that our governments still don't give naturism the recognition it deserves, nor do they comprehend the tourist potential it offers.

Les.

Above: Winners of the Body Painting competition.
Below: Rex Gates interviews Bruce Grieve on video.

1995 Swanbourne Olympics

By Les Cook

Photos by J. Orr

Preparation for the 1995 Olympics at Perth's internationally acclaimed Swanbourne Beach commenced early in January, six weeks prior to the scheduled date, with a small group of volunteers gathering to sort out the program of events, sponsors, purchasing of necessary props and equipment, and any other relevant details.

Long time sponsor of the Swanbourne Olympics, Gobbles Nightclub, once again expressed their interest in supporting this years games. Over the years their generous monetary contributions have ensured the days success. For 1995, Gobbles suggested and offered to cover the cost of producing and supplying a souvenir cap, with the logos of the Swanbourne Olympics on the front and Gobbles on the side.

This suited everyone as Gobbles gained the advertising exposure and the caps could be used as prizes. Also, by selling a good number of them the much needed funds to stage the Olympics could be raised. After all, things like the medallions for all the placegetters, the public address system, and so on don't come cheap.

Over the years the weather on the allotted day for the Olympics has not always been altogether kind to us, sometimes causing the games to be either moved to another date or conducted in windy conditions, as was the case last year. And these being the 13th games, it was with a little trepidation that we waited for Sunday 19th February to see whether this number would prove to be lucky or unlucky.

Officially the summer of 1995 has been the hottest in the West since the late 1970s, with a record number of days above 30 degrees Celsius. Weather forecasts leading up to our day all predicted a top temperature in the high 30s, so we waited with bated breath to see if they were right. Were they ever! By 9.00 am, an hour before the planned starting time, it was already over 30. For once the weather was on our side, which is more than we can say for our Queensland friends, who had to postpose their day due to inclement conditions. Don't worry Banana-benders, we Sandgropers know only too well how you feel.

Not long after sunrise there was already plenty of activity on the beach as the final preparations got under way. Competition areas were roped off, the PA system set up, props and prizes sorted out, along with a lot of double checking and last minute organising.

Just after 10.00 am, the traditional Torch Bearers' run signalled the start of what was to be a superb day's entertainment, comprising of 12 tried and tested events. Attendance wise, this year was by far the biggest in the history of the Olympics. Estimated at between 2500 and 3000, it was easily the largest crowd at any of Perth's metropolitan beaches that day. The extremely hot conditions that prevailed no doubt contributed to the huge turn out. In fact the highest temperature in the state that day was officially recorded at Swanbourne - a sizzling 40.2 degrees. To compensate for the heat events were spread out with regular short interval breaks in between to enable

competitors, officials and spectators alike to cool off in the calm Indian Ocean waters.

Another problem that the heat caused was that the hot sand became unbearable to walk on. Some clever souls were even seen filling up buckets with water and making wet trails in the sand from the water's edge back to their respective places on the beach. Unfortunately, quite a few people did receive blisters from walking on the burning sand.

During the ever popular Best Bum contests water was constantly being thrown over the competitors feet as they lined up behind the partition awaiting the judges decisions in the Male, Female, Children, and Over 50s categories.

Proving to be an extremely popular item on the day were the previously mentioned souvenir caps which had completely sold out by lunchtime.

By far the most amusing and light hearted sight on the day occurred during the Eggs in Space (egg throwing) contest. Competitors had to throw their eggs to their partners who in turn were supposed to catch them without breaking them. When the kids were having their turn one very young girl stole the show. She was in position to catch the egg with arms outstretched and palms cupped. Indeed she remained in this position for some time after her partner had thrown the egg and it had cracked on her head. It was the typical childhood innocence that one sees often on TV shows such as Australia's Funniest Home Videos.

By mid afternoon some relief from the heat finally arrived, with the south westerly breeze, commonly known as the Fremantle Doctor, cooling things down a little for the remaining couple of events. Even at 5.00 pm a sizeable crowd was still stretched out along the beach as everything was being packed away in readiness for next year's Swanny Olympics.

Rex Gates, an ardent campaigner for more nudist beaches, is at present putting together a pilot documentary on nudism, with the view to getting it shown on SBS television. He took advantage of the Swanny beach day to get some video evidence of how popular nude beaches are, and also did a live interview with Bruce Grieve, one the original founders of the day. Our best wishes to Rex in this project.

Above: The torch bearers arrive. Below: The Sandgroper Slither Tag Relay.

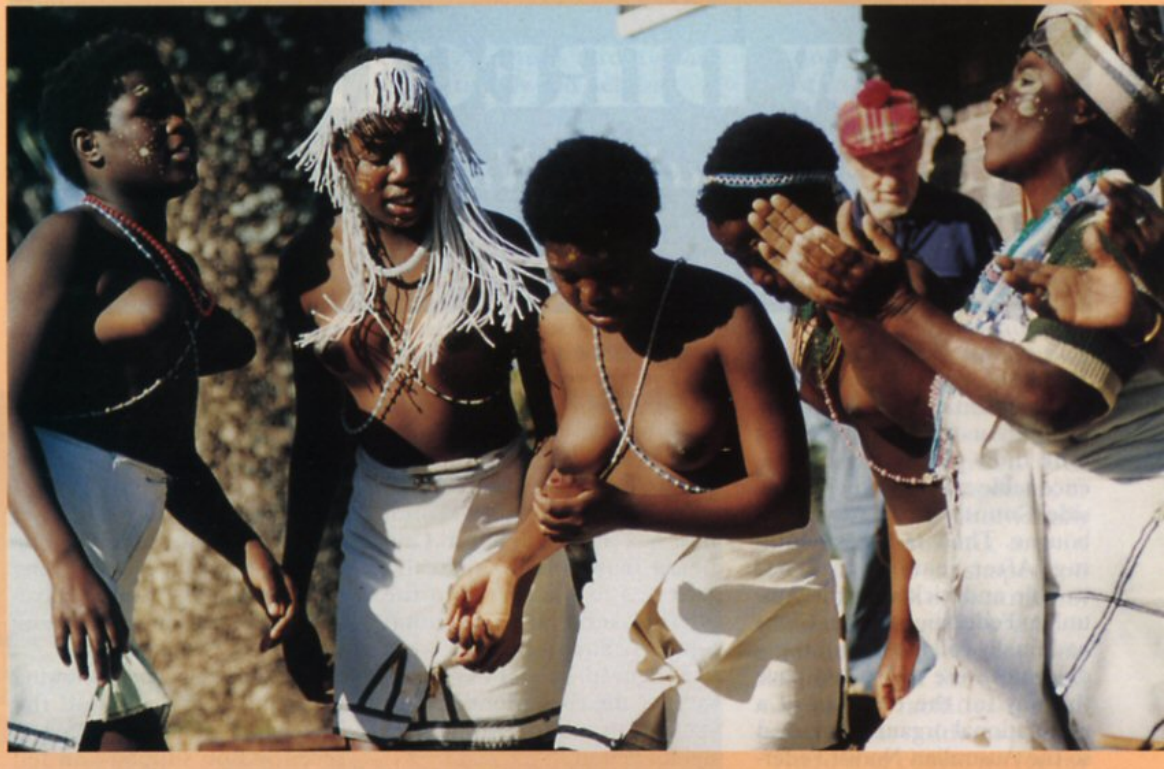
Below: Winners of the Swim/Run Biathlon.

accepted part of life in many parts of the world!

Millions of women go topless or totally naked on the world's beaches every year. Naturism is a well-entrenched part of their ethnic culture, part of their way of life. There is no exhibitionism, sexual promotion or promiscuity involved. And they are not going topless or naked to titillate tourists! But not in South Africa! Here we have one single nudist beach, Sandy Bay, where people may go naked. Women may be seen topless on some other beaches also, especially Durban and those around Cape Town, but this is simply because the authorities are turning a proverbial blind eye to it. The city fathers of Durban have stated that women who go topless on their beaches will not be harassed by their policing staff. But it is still illegal! All other naturist facilities (and there are not many) are privately run facilities on privately owned grounds.

With the changes taking place in South Africa, the scrapping of discrimination on sexual and racial grounds, and the increasing recession in certain parts of the country, more and more white people are doing work previously reserved for black or coloured people. So, what is stopping young, unmarried white women joining in the ethnic song and dance routines? And if international musicians such as Johnny Clegg can perform African dances as part of his shows, and Paul Simon can use ethnic sounds and songs on his albums, surely there is nothing stopping young white women learning the ethnic songs and dances of their area and performing them alongside their black counterparts.

Should such a scenario become reality, and if the restaurant in question continues to offer topless black and white dancers showing themselves off for their future men, you can rest assured that that restaurant will be packed to capacity at every showing. But that is not what I am advocating. What I am suggesting is that it is about time South Africa stopped being so nipple-phobic and officially opened all its beaches to topless bathing. Denying women the right to decide for themselves if they wish to go topless on our beaches is nothing more than gross discrimination.



A French Experience

By Rob Cornhill

I think it would be fair to say that most nudists have at least heard about the huge Cap d'Agde resort in France, and wondered what life would be like in a city where clothes are not required. So, when we were planning our trip to Europe during their 1994 summer we decided to see it for ourselves. But rather than spend all our time at this beach resort we booked into the inland Belezy resort near Avignon for the second week.

One of the first things we noticed is that we appear to be naturists not nudists in most other countries in the world except USA and Australia. Not only is the name different but attitudes differ also. The French and Germans are far more open and broad minded towards nudity than Australians, but I think Australians are in turn more open than the British.

We flew direct to Paris and within two hours were on an overnight train headed for Agde on the Mediterranean coast. On arrival Larry and Pru Beck whisked us away in their big Oldsmobile for the five kilometre trip to the resort. After a lifetime of running various businesses in the USA, including a nudist resort in Hawaii, Pru and Larry have now retired to live most of the year in Cap d'Agde. Here they act as agents for the owners of various apartments at the resort, and help non-French speaking clients with their stay. I had booked our apartment through them and found them friendly and helpful.

Cap d'Agde was begun about 30 years ago, I believe, by a French farmer who saw the potential of his land which adjoined a beautiful stretch of beach. Nowadays the resort boasts about 50,000 visitors at peak times, many hundreds of holiday apartments, and the second biggest camping area in Europe containing some 5000 sites.

Not long after the nudist resort became popular a textile facility commenced nearby. It is now two or three times larger than the nudist resort. The whole area is similar to Queensland's Gold Coast in size and popularity. The warm, dry Mediterranean summer has a lot to do with this of course. It was a delightful 36 degrees Celsius while we were there.

The resort is really a small city, boasting several shopping centres, a post office, real estate agents, restaurants, cinema, boutiques, swimming pools, tennis courts, a marina etc, all clothing optional. But the beach and the swimming pools are nude only, with signs and beach inspectors to enforce this. The individually owned apartments are in blocks of different shapes and sizes, and the communal areas are managed by a body corporate. Day visitors are also allowed in for a fee and may use all facilities for the same rates as residents pay.

There is of course no fee for the use of the beach. This is about 100 metres wide and three kilometres long, with fine, white sand which is cleaned every few days. Our first day there was the last public holiday before the French children return to school. There were huge numbers on the beach but

The naturist beach at Cap d'Agde.

sports is also catered for, even a football field. I must admit we didn't participate in any of the organised activities. I never get bored lying beside a pool and Nole unfortunately took sick.

Like Cap d'Agde, Belezy is a self-contained resort and everything is provided - restaurants, take away food, a bar and ice cream shop, supermarket, souvenir shop, and there was even an Osteopath/Acupuncturist who practices on site. Nole did experience his acupuncture technique.

We soon made new friends among the visitors at Belezy, and often sat with them in the evenings, solving the world's problems while indulging in local wine. In a couple of cases we managed to convince them to visit Australia. Other nights we attended the free concerts or movies put on by the resort.

If you want to explore the local town, a typical sleepy Provence village, it is a ten minute walk away, and comes alive on Monday mornings. Monday is market day when flamboyant French hawkers put on a colourful display of wares, ranging from hundreds of different cheeses and dried meats to tee shirts, jewellery and furniture. There was even an old woman grinding an organ and singing while her monkey collected money. Of course we also ventured into town several times in the evenings to sample the local bars and restaurants.

All too soon it came time to leave Belezy and start the remainder of our holiday to Scandinavia, but that is another story. We were so impressed at this method of beating the cold Canberra winters that we are already planning our next trip to Europe. Everywhere we went the people were friendly and helpful, and even when I tried my high school French on them they didn't laugh, managing to understand me most of the time. Most people spoke a little English so we had no language problems.

If you would like to visit either resort you may write to Pru and Larry Beck, 34 Helio Village, 34308 Cap d'Agde, France (Ph/Fax: 33 6726 0341), or to Collette Bronk, who speaks perfect English, at Domaine de Belezy, 84410 Bedoin, France (Ph: 33 9065 6018, Fax: 33 9065 9445).

Fishing off the rocks at Cap d'Agde.

Above & Below: Around the big pool at Belezy.