



Humour and satire from the life and times of a Baby Boomer

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Cool and hot?

When it comes to clothes, unless they are worn out or haven't got smaller, hang on to them because in the fickle and totally unnecessary world of fashion, there's a good chance that they will come into fashion again. We need clothing. We want fashion.

In the 1960s, we tried to look both cool and hot at the same time. And in our minds only, we thought we nailed it. Stovepipe jeans were a must have item of clothing – they were all the rage. They were leg-hugging jeans. Stovepipe jeans were also known as drainpipes, cigarette jeans, slim Jims, skinny legs, and skinnies to name a few.

What are the younger people wearing today? Skinny jeans. I better come clean here, I have five pairs of skinny jeans and, although all my shirts these days come with a bump in the middle, I'm still on the lean side, leg-wise. (I did read that if you wore stovepipes in the late 50s or 60s, you should not be wearing skinny jeans today. Whatever.)

The stovepipe look of the 60s didn't just stop with jeans, trousers also became tight-fitting. As they are again today. And the dudes and dudettes today, look cool, and hot.

I and a friend liked corduroy stovepipes which were pretty tight-fitting when we bought them. His mum would take them in even further for both of us. They were skin-tight. Standing and walking were OK, but you didn't want to spend too much time sitting down as they would stifle the blood circulation in your legs and, oh boy, were they hard on the agates. But we thought we were cool, and hot.

There was another mode of dressing that we favoured. Black trousers with a white shirt, black, skinny tie and a black cardigan worn with black pointy shoes. And not just we two, but many of our fellow teenagers. This was our standard attire when we went to Winnie Wright's Dance Studio to learn dancing. I never mastered the dancing, but again we thought we were cool, and hot.

Another must have item at one point was a car badge buckle on the belt of your jeans. You would see many Holdens, Fords and Valiants driving around minus their badges with holes in the boot where the badges used to be. These same badges would be seen as buckles on the belts holding up our jeans.

In Australia, in the 1970s, bell-bottom jeans were very popular. And we're talking wide, bell bottoms. Nearly 30 cm in diameter. Think of John Lennon. Then that moved into bell-bottom and flared trousers. And tapered shirts or body shirts, as we called them then.

Around the same time, wide ties became necessary. I've still got a couple today. 12 cm at the widest point.

White shirts were the standard business shirt to wear to work. Then one day, somebody turned up in a yellow shirt and it was on for young and old. There was a break out in coloured business shirts.

Platform shoes also became necessary. With 2 to 5 cm soles for men and skyscrapers for women. Look around today to see what the cool kittens are wearing.



Here's what I was wearing one lunch-time walking through the city mall. Black platform shoes. Black bell-bottom trousers, skin-tight above the knee. A plum coloured, body shirt. A wide, black tie with purple polka dots. And I blended in beautifully with the rest of my peers in their early twenties. And, just as today, we thought we were cool, and hot.



Performance counselling in the 1970s?

Remember the Postmaster-Generals Department (we knew as the PMG) which made sure that we got our mail and our phone rang? In rain, hail, snow or drought. The postie on his bicycle and the whistle he blew as he (no female posties back then) posted our mail through our letter-box? And the clunky, black telephones with the large, circular dialling device with the numbers 1 to 10 going clock-wise? And today, when you are walking along the footpath, you can still come across rusty, metal plates with the PMG insignia.

My first full-time job was with the PMG in 1971. I was there when the PMG became Telecom (now Telstra) and Australia Post in 1975.

I was unsuited to a career in the public service. I knew it. My bosses came to know it. I didn't excel in my six years as a servant of the public. I was a recalcitrant public servant. At best my career could be described as mediocre. The term 'career limiting moves' hadn't been invented back then. Had it been, I would have been a **CLM Black Belt**.

Because of my sloth and inability to turn up to work on time, I was moved from job to job. I had many opportunities to experience what we now call 'performance counselling'. Back then, I'm not sure there was any term for it. It might have been 'discipline interview'. I just knew it as an unpleasant experience. But I became quite good at it.

Early one year after my four weeks recreation leave had finished, I turned up on the Monday to take up my position at my desk. There was a young, red-haired bloke sitting in my chair at my desk. His name was Don. While I was away on holiday, the Postmaster-General must have decided to restructure (although the term 'restructure' had yet to enter corporate vernacular) the organisation. Don cheerfully informed me that he was now the assistant recruitment officer and I had been moved sideways to the assistant training officer in the Training and Development Section.

I was getting the hang of these 'sideways' movements. Not a promotion. Not a demotion. The term 'whatever' wasn't in use back then, but had it been that would have summed up my reaction.

'Awesome' wasn't in use either, but that would not have been my reaction. I had no idea what the training and development section was all about and didn't even know where it was. Don told me it was on the eighth floor. I packed up my meagre personal items and headed off for new adventures.

When I was moved into the Training and Development Section, I had another new boss, Harry.

Harry's opinion of me when I joined his section was probably on the lowish side as my reputation had preceded me. And his opinion of me went downhill from there. I didn't mind Harry too much because he was prepared to give me opportunities and because he was also willing to try new things in the Training and Development Section. In today's terms, he would be described as 'proactive'. So Harry was probably a little ahead of his time because the term 'proactive' wasn't in common use back then. I know he was a little ahead of my time because I was still working out 'active'.

But because of my continuing serial acts of lateness, it was not too long before I had the opportunity to experience Harry's counselling style. Several times. Of all the bosses who counselled me, I rated Harry the best. Not because he caused any significant changes to my attitude or behaviour. Just because he was quite a formidable adversary who gave me opportunities to further hone my skills at being counselled.



Back in those days, smoking was allowed in the workplace. In fact, it was encouraged. I remember that when I was moved to a new desk to take up my next demotion, there was always a standard issue glass ashtray embossed with C of A – Commonwealth of Australia. Harry used to smoke a pipe. And he used his pipe as a tool in his counselling sessions. If your misdemeanour was on the serious side, the counselling session was conducted in a small private room.

Harry and I would sit facing each other about two metres apart with no desk in between us. Harry would blow thick clouds of smoke from his pipe which would swirl around his head so that his face drifted in and out of focus. One of the tricks I had learned through my previous counselling sessions was to stare at the other person and keep my face devoid of any expression. Through trial and error I got pretty good at this, so that by the time Harry and I started our first counselling sessions, I had the expressionless stare pretty well nailed.

Part of Harry's approach was to use the tool of silence. After he had explained the reason I was being counselled and what he wanted from me or what penalty was forthcoming, he would say nothing. But saying nothing was also one of my tactics. I figured the less I said the better. Less things to be held against you later. Less opportunity to incriminate yourself further. You could call it a minimalist approach to being counselled.

So the pall of silence was as heavy as the pall of smoke from Harry's pipe. We would both sit there in silence. Harry observing me through the smoke. Me staring right back at Harry. And to his credit, Harry was as willing to sit it out in silence as I was. We had some long silences where nothing was said for 5 minutes which was uncomfortable, but we must have both decided not to be the one to break the silence.

Harry had another feature that I enjoyed. He would like to tell you things in threes. It would go something like this. "Kehoe. I've got three things to tell you. One... (he would tell me the first point). Two.... (he would tell me the second point). And C.... (he would tell me the third point).

And sometimes he would throw in a variation. "Kehoe. I've got three points to make.

"A..... (he would make his first point). "B.... (he would make his next point). "And three... (he would make his next point).

His points were usually lost on me as I was listening for the switch from alphabetical to numerical or vice versa. I never worked out whether Harry didn't know that he did this or whether he deliberately did it.



Signing in and signing out in the 1970s

My working hours when I first started full-time work were 8.30 am until 4.51 pm. The working week according to our conditions of service was 36 hours and 45 minutes, seven hours and 21 minutes each day. At 4.52 pm, you could safely fire a shotgun with no danger of hitting more than one or two upright people. Any others slumped at their desks had fallen asleep.

One of the requirements at the beginning and end of each day was to sign the 'Record of Attendance' book. You filled in your name and the time you commenced or left and signed your signature. At 8.30 each morning, the Staff Clerk would rule a red line across the page so that if you turned up late, your signature would show under the red line. Until they did away with this procedure, I had a lot of trouble beating that red line. If your name appeared under the red line too often, you won a mild reprimand from your boss and an explanation on the merits of punctuality.

Further indiscretions involved counselling including suggestions on where your career was headed. Because I struggled to make the deadline of 8.30 am, I was invited to join these counselling sessions with my various bosses.

Unfortunately, it wasn't only the red line that got me into trouble. To see if anybody would actually notice, I occasionally signed in or out as D. Duck or M. Mouse. Somebody did notice and I was invited to further counselling sessions. Ah...bugger it!

The red line

Six months after I started, and despite my mediocre performance to date, somebody had the brilliant idea of appointing me as acting Staff Clerk - a temporary promotion as this was a Clerk Class 2/3 position. I got paid extra money referred to as Higher Duties Allowance. Now I had the power of the red line. For the first few weeks, I did my best to be there at 8.30 am to rule that red line across the page and catch those late starters. But punctuality and me have never been close friends so it wasn't long before the '8.30' red line was appearing at 8.40, 8.45, 8.50, and even as late as 9.30 am. This was a real treat for the rest of the staff. I even like to think that I helped management deal with the punctuality problem which I had single-handedly virtually eliminated. Except in one case.

Thus I still found myself a keen participant in the counselling sessions. Born with a vivid imagination, I like to think that I did my bit for these counselling sessions by impressing my bosses with the scope and ingenuity of the myriad of circumstances that conspired against my getting to work on time.



My first promotion which didn't last too long

My on-the-job training in the duties of the Staff Clerk was not ideal. The actual Staff Clerk who was supposed to be training me was a pretty young woman who was leaving to get married the coming weekend. The effectiveness of my training was compounded by two things. One, her mind was totally preoccupied with her upcoming wedding arrangements which naturally entailed many last minute phone calls. So she didn't have too much time to be training me. Two, I had a crush on her. Even though I hadn't shared with her my dreams for our future together, I was still coming to grips with the knowledge that she loved someone else.

However, for the two days that I sat at her desk along-side her, I was happy to be close to the unknowing object of my desires. While her mind was on her wedding, my mind was on her. The duties of Staff Clerk were not high in either of our priorities.

Consequently, at 4.51 pm on the Friday before the weekend of her wedding, I wouldn't say I was a full bottle on the duties of the staff clerk. In fact, most of the duties and procedures of the position were a mystery to me. Now this may not have created any problems had it not been for one key function.

It was the job of the Staff Clerk to calculate the fortnightly allowances paid to all the public servants who were acting on higher duties which meant that they were entitled to extra pay. And there were a lot of people in this position.

In my first week as acting Staff Clerk, I approached this task confident in the knowledge that I didn't have a clue what I was doing. Not knowing what I was doing has never held me back so I plugged away calculating the allowances due for those people acting on higher duties. Come the next pay-day, my popularity as Staff Clerk was split at roughly 50:50. Due to the law of averages, my ignorance of the correct methods of calculating allowances had split the camp. Of those employees entitled to extra pay, roughly 50% had been paid too much and 50% had been paid too little.

All that pay day and for days after, my phone rang incessantly with irate public servants wanting to know why their allowances had been cut. In the midst of all this aggravation, I did observe to myself that I got not one phone call from those who had received more than they were entitled.

My problems were only starting however. Not only did I have to calculate the correct extra pay for the next fortnight, but I had to calculate the adjustments that had to be made to compensate for under payment or over payment. It took me several weeks to get on top of this. It was a bleak moment in my less than promising career to date and gave me further opportunity for participation in the counselling sessions.

I was once told by a mine manager at a remote mining site with a fly in, fly out workforce, that there were two important ways to keep the workforce happy. One was to make sure they were well fed. Two was to make sure that their pay was always correct. I wasn't responsible for what my fellow public servants ate, but I was responsible for their incorrect pay. And some of them became quite angry, particularly those who it happened to more than once. A couple took to abusing me personally over the telephone.



I had received my fair share of complaints from other public servants who were being disadvantaged by my failure to perform my job. This reached a peak when I was grappling with the calculations for the higher duties allowance. At some point in these conversations would come a time when I knew that I was on a hiding to nothing. My fellow, but very angry public servant on the other end of the telephone was demanding to know why his or her allowance had been cut.

I shared their frustration, although for different reasons. I knew that I had no explanation that would calm them down. I didn't think that they would chill if I explained that during my 2-day on-the job training, I was not paying much attention as I was fairly busy fantasising about the Staff Clerk quickly realising that she was marrying the wrong man and that she would leave him a day or two after getting married and declare her love for me.

As I had nothing to offer by way of a reason that they were out of pocket, I would listen for a few minutes and let them rant. When I could take no more, I would start to say something and then hang up while I was talking. For some reason, this seemed to work. Most didn't call back. And for the few that did I asked why they hung up on me. This seemed to throw them into confusion for a moment. When they recovered and started ranting again, I just repeated the procedure.



Early ergonomics – the scientist with the stress meter

In 1976, I was employed by Australia Post as a training officer. These days my title might be learning and development coordinator or people capital developer or HR business partner or capability development adviser.

One of the experts that we sometimes used in our training programs was a scientist from another government department who specialised in the just beginning field of ergonomics. He and I had struck up a bit of a friendship. One day as I was sitting watching the clock move excruciatingly slowly toward a time when I could knock off without upsetting my boss, this fellow rang me. He was quite excited. He had just swallowed a transmitter to demonstrate some things about ergonomics and stress. He wanted to know if I could come across town to his office right now. Tomorrow would be too late.

I had nothing urgent on my plate at the time. Nothing I considered urgent. As usual, there were a pile of files in my IN tray. Since my experiment of moving files deposited into my IN tray straight into my OUT tray without actioning them, I had adjusted my interpretation of the word 'urgent' in the context of the Public Sector.

My immediate boss, my arch enemy, wasn't there at the time, so I asked his boss, with whom I got on well, if he would like to pop across town to see a demonstration about ergonomics and stress. Now he was a very hard working manager, but he too must have just been going through the motions that day because he jumped at the opportunity.

We were on our way within one minute of me hanging up on the scientist. When we got to his office, he showed us a smallish transmitter similar to the one he just had swallowed. While it was smallish, I thought it was still big enough to focus his mind as it left his body.

Wires were connected to various parts of his body and these were connected to a machine which featured a meter and speaker. He was looking very pleased with himself and obviously appreciating that he now had an audience. Firstly, he sat at his desk in a normal sitting position. There was no movement on the meter and no sound emitted from the machine. Then he said to watch what happens when he reached for the telephone. As he reached for the telephone, he turned his upper torso and leaned across his desk while stretching out his arm. As soon as he did this the needle on the meter moved and a beeping sound came from the machine. He then returned to his normal sitting posture and the needle on the meter returned to its resting place and the beeping stopped.

He said that the needle and the sound were measuring pressure brought to bear on sensors on the transmitter. He then twisted his upper torso right around and reached behind him. The needle registered higher on the meter and the beeping was louder. Maximum stress. He returned to a normal seating posture and the needle returned to zero and the beeping sound stopped.

We were impressed and let him know. He beamed with satisfaction at his demonstration. I beamed with satisfaction because another hour of the day had disappeared and knock off time was approaching. My boss's boss was also beaming, although I didn't know why. There was a lot of beaming going on.



Flexitime

In the mid-1970s, a change was made to the working hours for public servants. This new concept was called Flexitime and I took to it like a duck to water. Working hours had been from 8.30 am until 4.51 pm with a one-hour lunch break. That's not a mistake, the official finishing time was 4.51 pm.

Now you could start work anytime between 8.00 am and 9.30 am. Take your lunch break between 12 noon and 2.00 pm and finish anytime between 3.30 pm and 6.00 pm. You could choose to start early, take a shortened lunch break of 30 minutes and finish late thus accumulating a time credit of up to one full day which you could redeem by taking a paid day off from work.

Many of my erstwhile colleagues started arriving at 8.00 am and finishing work at around 5.30 pm or 6.00 pm, so that they could 'flex off'. The term used to describe what you were doing when you had accumulated enough time to take a flexi day off work.

I had a slightly different take on the whole flexitime scheme. Moving the official start time back to as late as 9.30 am meant that I could now start at 9.30 without the need to attend counselling sessions, which I must admit were wearing me down a bit. The new finishing time of 3.30 pm was an added bonus as I could escape early if I was particularly bored or it was a hot day and the surf was up. And having an official two-hour lunch break brightened my day. So after due consideration of this new Flexitime system, I gave it the thumbs up.

It reduced much of the stress which came with turning up late for work and less of my time was required for counselling.

I happily applied my interpretation of Flexitime which involved starting as late as I could, lunching for as long as I could and finishing as early as I could.

After several weeks, the Personnel Manager called me into his office. He explained the purpose of the Flexitime system. It was to give public servants the flexibility to choose their start and finish times and build a time credit to allow them an extra day off work every month. So after a month, say, the public servant would be owed one full day of paid leave.

The Personnel Manager referred me to the attendance book. We still had to sign in and sign out when starting and finishing work. He pointed out that after several weeks of the new scheme operating, I now owed my employer one full day. This meant that instead of being able to take a day off, I now had to work longer to make up for hours not worked. It was pretty disappointing and in all my time in the Public Sector, I never managed a flexi day off.



Saturday morning exams

People who were looking for jobs in the Post-master General's Department in the early 1970s were required to pass examinations for some of the job streams (although we didn't know that term back then). These were conducted on a Saturday morning. Work as exam administrators was keenly sought by many of my fellow public servants as the pay was excellent even if the job itself was boring. I wasn't as keen as my colleagues as getting up early on a Saturday morning wasn't high on my list of priorities.

But as the money came in handy, I too put my hand up to work as an exam administrator. You had to hand out the exam papers, explain the instructions, set the stop-watch, advise when time was up, collect the papers and during the exam check that no one was borrowing answers from the people sitting alongside.

They sat in the old classroom format, rows of desks all facing forward. I sat at a desk at the front of the room facing them. There were often up to 30 people sitting there showing various signs of anxiety as they knew that failure in these exams would seriously jeopardize their chances of being the next Post-master General. As they looked at me looking for some sign of reassurance or encouragement, they would have been disappointed as, for different reasons but primarily a strong tendency to introversion, I was as anxious as them.

One of the exam papers must have involved mathematics as the instructions required me to refer to the word parallelogram. Now I have a mild speech impediment which means I can't get my tongue around certain words. For instance, I can't, for love or money, say the word, 'rural'.

If I'm in a conversation and my mind is a sentence or two ahead of the words actually leaving my mouth and in my mind's eye I see 'rural' coming up as the best word, I have to search for alternatives while I'm speaking. Usually my mind comes up with a suitable alternative. Often, I speak very fast which means I'm churning out the words only a few words behind my mind's speed at setting up the next few words. So sometimes I have no choice but to have a go at 'rural'. It's no longer embarrassing, because I have got used to it, but on these occasions 'rural' will come out as wwrroowral. Well, that's what it sounds like to me. And others, I'm told.

On this particular day, parallelogram was that day's 'rural'. I had several shots at it. Paaarrellew ...parrallewello....parrallewell...parraallellewullhgra ...parrurrillello... I gave up and drew the shape on the blackboard and said, "One of these...". I never had a problem with it before and haven't since, but I couldn't get it out that day.

As I said this was pretty boring especially in the company of Friday night's hang over. Once I had read out the instructions, I had nothing to do for the next 2 or so hours. I had to check myself a couple of times as I daydreamed not realizing that my gaze had fixed on some attractive woman sitting the exam. I would find I had been staring at the same woman for 5 minutes. This could have been pretty unsettling for her as when the examinees looked up for inspiration as they searched for the correct answers, they usually focused on me as I was the only human face they could see directly in front of them. Depending on how I was feeling that morning, I would stare them down or avoid direct eye-contact. But for her she would have observed my blank, expressionless gaze focused directly on her. Next time she looked up she would have seen that I was still staring at her. Well, I would have been unsettled.



Pashing in the Cinema (Caution: Sexual references. Stop reading now)

The Urban Dictionary describes pashing as – ‘an Australian term for heavy duty kissing between teenagers.’ Do teenagers today still call heavy duty kissing, pashing?

We did a bit of heavy duty kissing when I was a teenager in the 1960s. Pashing was never too far from the forefront of our minds. In fact, it occupied the mind of me and most of my mates fairly constantly. One, because it was a pleasant sensation. Two, because it sometimes led to other forbidden fruits.

For a couple of years, when we were aged 15 and 16, there were about five or six of us who would regularly head off to cinemas on a Saturday afternoon to do a bit of pashing, if we got lucky. It was a strange ritual.

We would go to a cinema, say the Piccadilly in town (we didn’t use the term city, it was always town). It didn’t particularly matter what film was showing or which cinema. That was not our motive. We were there for pashing.

We usually did this in pairs. We would buy our tickets and take our seats before the lights went out. While there was still some light, we would see if we could spot a couple of girls sitting by themselves.

When the lights dimmed and the movie started, we would look over at where the girls were sitting to see if we were also on their radar. Sometimes, we would get encouragement because the girls would also look over at us.

This is happening inside a darkened theatre where there was a mixture of adults and kids who were there just for the movie.

If we hadn’t spotted any girls before the lights dimmed, we would look around once the show started as it lit up the faces of those looking at the screen to see if there were any likely girls.

After furtive discussions about who might be up for a bit of pashing, we would then have to decide who was going to sit next to whom. It was pot luck. Having agreed our girls, we would then leave our seats and walk up the aisle or down the aisle or across the aisle and sit in the vacant seats next to the two girls. One on either side.

No words were spoken. We would sit there for a few minutes and then put our arm around the girl sitting next to us. If we had selected well, we got no rebuke. We seldom got rebukes at this stage because we usually selected girls who had noticed us and, by their glances, had indicated that they were in the game.

After a few more minutes, we would start kissing, I mean pashing. This was in full view of people sitting behind and beside us, but, with a couple of embarrassing exceptions, none of the other patrons asked us to desist.

Pashing was first base. If that seemed to be going reasonably well, after a while, we would try for second base. This was touching the breast. On the outside. If there was no resistance there, we would try touching the breast on the inside. This could take some time depending on what the girl was wearing.



Third base (if you haven't already, you might need to stop reading at this point), involved a bit of action further south. If things were going well at bases first and second, we then tried for third base. The majority of girls were happy with first base. Some were OK with moving to second base. And some of these were OK about moving to third base.

Sometimes we struck out because the girl was wearing a girdle which pretty much worked as a chastity belt for those girls who were happy to engage in a bit of pashing, but didn't want things to go any further. When the movies finished and the lights came on, we would leave the cinema. No words were exchanged and we never saw the girls again.



One street lamp at bemo corner, Kuta, Bali

In 1975, my friend Peter and I sailed by ship, the Kota Singapura, from Fremantle to Singapore. The Kota Singapura was used as a charter vessel for a 'ship-jet' connection between Australia and Great Britain, aimed at the popular backpacker age group. This was the cheapest way to get to the UK.

There were about 270 passengers mainly in the 18-25 age bracket and the ship also carried about 2,000 head of sheep in the hold below. The ship was in poor condition, the air-conditioning was unreliable, one engine failed out at sea so we only had one propeller-shaft turning, the food was barely adequate, the captain often appeared drunk, the toilets couldn't cope when we hit the tail-end of a cyclone off the north-west of Australia, 90% of the passengers and most of the crew were sea-sick, and when the wind was from the right quarter you would often get a sharp whiff of sheep shit.

It took us 7 days sailing to get to Singapore and from the first night it was one long party. We loved every minute of it.

We were in a four-berth cabin, two double bunks, below decks, no bathroom or toilet and one basin. One of our fellow passengers was an elderly man travelling alone who was very entertaining as he had lived an adventurous life. He was drunk most of the time.

Unfortunately, at night he became disoriented and forgot where he was. Peter was lying on the lower bunk late one night when he saw him approaching his bunk. He was urinating and headed in Peter's direction. Peter scrambled out of his bunk and steered him to the basin. The cabin smelt all next day of stale urine.

I had struck up a bit of a friendship with one of the ship's junior officers. Late one night after consuming too much of the old judgement destroyer, I found myself on the bridge of the ship. My friend was the officer on watch and he invited me into the wheelhouse. The bridge was very different to the computerised bridges on modern ships today. The ship was steered by a helmsman using a large steering wheel.

My friend asked if I would like to take the helm. I did and tried to follow the compass reading guiding our course. It would take some time before the ship responded to the rudder movements as I turned the giant helm. After a couple of minutes, the officer asked me how I thought I did at steering the ship. I replied that apart from the long, time gap between me turning the helm and the ship responding, I thought I had done OK.

He showed me out to the external part of the bridge where you could look back and see the wake of the ship in the moonlight. Under an expert helmsman the wake is a straight line. Now, the wake behind the ship was a series of huge S curves.

Peter was meeting his girlfriend in Singapore who was flying out from the UK. She was delayed, so Peter decided to wait for her in Singapore and I flew to Bali on my own.

Bali in 1975 was very different to the Bali of today. I seemed to remember that there was only one main intersection (called bemo corner) with one bright street light in Kuta. My accommodation on my first night in Bali was in a losman near Poppie's Lane. It cost 80 cents a night, had a dirt floor and was outside the latrines. The next day I upgraded to more salubrious accommodation with a tiled floor and a western style toilet and shower. It cost \$1.50 a night.