

IT'S THE FRIENDS WE MEET along THE WAY THAT HELP US APPRECIATE THE journey



MILLIE SPAM!!!!

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Hi Everyone,

I don't think we ever thought we'd make it to December (back in March) but we have! **What a year!!!** Mind you, 2020 has gone quicker than all the other years I've been involved in and that's even with being in mandatory isolation.

So what's 2020 taught us? New words & terms firstly! **Iso**—Isolation. **Rona**—Coronavirus. **WFH**—Working From Home. **Sano**—Hand Sanitizing. **Social Distancing**. **Flattening the Curve**. **Isobaking**—Baking in Isolation. **IsOfashion**—What you wear at home. **Isoweight**—All the food you ate and kilo's gained during isolation. Who knew really how much a **4 square metre space before?** We've also learnt that we can all adapt to new things. No longer are we shocked when we see someone wearing a mask (although I do still get the giggles when I see someone driving a car by themselves with a mask on!). Churches had to adapt and either Video their sermons or use **Zoom**. I myself have used Zoom for many many meetings and it's become a really simple tool to use. **Netflix** accounts grew as we watched more TV. Instead of seeing your relatives in person, we **Facetimed** through **Facebook**. It's not like the real thing but we still saw important milestones. But the most important thing we all learnt is that **we can adapt and we can change**.

I do have to say that as a business we've been blessed. While initially we were worried about our future, we are thankful for the **Government for JobKeeper** which has been a huge blessing to small businesses. We have also been fortunate to have received some Coach work from NSW Trains which has certainly been accepted with wide open arms. In Term 4, school excursions were also back on the table so we've done a little bit of school transfers. Mind you, there have been weeks gone by in 2020 where I haven't even looked in the diary because I knew there was nothing much happening. But as I said, we've been blessed! As you all know, our Lease was up in our shop in The Link and we have now been working out of our new office in the Depot since March. It's worked out great for us although I do **miss waving** to you all as you walked past the office. I now wonder how I ever got any work done between answering the phone, waving, chatting to you all in the office, counselling some on technological issues, waving, drinking cups of coffee and did I mention chatting! We were only talking about this the other day!

But we've been out and about on the road with our **Mystery Day trips** and they have been fantastic. Good to get back into the saddle so to speak. We've missed you and I know you've missed us so that's been great. We've taken you on lots of little roads you may never have known existed. There was the picnic at the Dam on the other side of Lismore. Seeing a Wind Turbine Propeller in Glen Innes. Watching the waves at Minnie Water. Precariously walking on the ledge overlooking Coffs Harbour. Reliving days of old in Bowraville. Viewing the new bridge at Tabulam and the list goes on. How blessed are we living here on the North Coast with so much to see.

We also managed to squeeze in a little overnight trip to **Tenterfield**—putting our toes in the water so to speak.

I finally got to **Bundaberg** in early November to see our Granddaughter **Amelia** (as well as John & Alicia). Millie is now 9 months old and while I was there she said "Hi Nanna". She hasn't even said "Dad" yet!!! John wasn't impressed but Nanny Nell was over the moon!

So what's 2021 look like for Northland Coach & Travel? Well, how long is a piece of string? We don't know what will happen Coronavirus wise/Border Restriction wise but we thought it was time to just put the trips together, put them out for our clientele and we'll just roll with the punches in 2021. Some trips don't have confirmed dates as yet or prices but we'd love to hear from you in you are interested in joining us on those trips. **Remember you can email us, Facebook Message, Text on 0412 266 238, Call on 6643 1212 or send us a snail mail with your requests.**

There's lots more to tell you, so go get your cup of something nice to drink, find that comfy chair and read on **Janelle x**

Northland Travel Club Update

You may have noticed that you didn't receive a **Northland Travel Club Renewal** since March 2020. Well we thought it was a great opportunity for us to have a look at our **Travel Club** and rejig it so that all renewals fall due on one date. So we picked **January** as the renewal date.

After more than 11 years, we also decided to increase the renewal fee so it will now be **\$12.00 per person per year**.

You'll find attached your renewal notice commencing **January 2021**. Please check your details and if there are any changes, please either re enter them on the form, send us an email with the changes or give us a call.

Now I know a lot of you have **email addresses** too that you are a bit reluctant to tell anyone but please let us know. We promise not to spam you & we certainly won't "on sell" your email address to anyone else. In 2021 we really want to be more active in sending out regular emails focusing on new tours (as well as sending out our normal Newsletters by post).

And in these modern times, we will also be advising passengers of tour updates via **mobile text messaging** so if you have a mobile phone, please also fill those details in too. (if you can't receive text messages or don't understand them, please tick the box, "**Please don't send me text messages to me**").

We've also included a **blank Travel Club Application form** for you as you may know a friend who could be interested in hearing about our Upcoming Tours & receiving the Travel Club Members discount on some of our tours..

You might like to fill in their details and pay it forward and "**gift**" their membership—**now that's a nice idea!** Or alternatively just hand the blank form to them to complete. If you need more copies, we are happy to send out to you or your friends.

And finally how will you pay for the Membership?

- Well you can either **post** a cheque in the post to **PO Box 384, South Grafton NSW 2460**.
 - You can do a **direct deposit** but please make sure you use your name as the reference. We also ask that you phone or message us so we can keep a lookout for your payment.
 - If you are heading out our way, you can pop it in an envelope with your name and details and put it in our **letterbox** (485 Armidale Road, Elland).
 - You can **hang** onto it and hand it to us on **your next tour**.
 - Or you can **call** us and we can do a **Credit Card payment** over the phone.
- Easy Pease! Lots of different ways to pay!**

Bryan thought he'd be funny and take snaps on my phone with our driver Chris Webb. I always thought this photo would come in handy one day!!!!



Can you come and visit us at The Depot?

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

We've been asked if people can come and visit us at The Depot. You can **BUT**.....we need to make an **appointment** with you.

Our depot is a fully functioning workshop and depot with vehicles moving in and out all the time. We need to keep you safe. And we are not always working in the office. We may be on the road and running our office from our Mobiles.

We need you to call us on **6643 1212** to make a **mutually convenient** time for you to pop over and see us. That way we ensure we are here and can alert all the staff that we will be having visitors coming over.

Parking is either on the grassed area to the left of the driveway or to the far right in front of our office roller doors. However, **please please please** watch out for reversing vehicles as your safety and the safety of our staff is paramount to us.



Upcoming Tours



Our 21st Birthday Party—13 January 2021



It's our **21st Birthday** on **13 January 2021**. Can you believe it?

21 years of taking passengers, who have become friends and family, all over Australia & beyond.
21 years of being a local family owned and operated business.
21 years of watching our children grow.
21 years of supporting our local communities on the North Coast of NSW.



It's time to celebrate this milestone and Alan & Janelle want to invite you all to our party.

It's a Mystery Trip because we know that you love the surprise. Day will include morning tea and lunch. Pickups will start from Coffs Harbour through to Woombah.

Cost \$75.00 per person.

Come and celebrate with Alan & Janelle and the team on this very special day.

FUTURE DAY TRIP DATES



We have just loved our special little Mystery Day trips these past few months, so for 2021 we've planned some more for you to enjoy. Each trip will be different!



We will keep them nice and simple. On these trips, we'll provide the morning tea and you bring along your own picnic lunch or purchase your own. These day trips will, although a Mystery to you, will be to some of the lovely areas around the North Coast. North, South, East and West!

Cost will be \$50.00 per person.

Bookings are essential .

Please call our office on 6643 1212 to make your booking.

Future dates will be:-

**THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 2021
FEBRUARY—SOMETHING DIFFERENT!
TUESDAY 16 MARCH 2021
THURSDAY 8 APRIL 2021**

SUNDAY 9 MAY 2021—CELEBRATING MOTHERS DAY



By now you should all know the drill. Book your seat with Northland. On the business day prior to the tour, give our office a call to confirm the pick up time and whether you need to take a picnic lunch only or there'll be places to purchase. Each tour is unique and pickup times vary.

PLEASE NOTE OUR OFFICE HOURS HAVE NOW CHANGED TO 9.00 AM TO 3.00 PM MONDAY TO FRIDAY and sometimes even these times will vary. We are making the most of not being busy!

If you get the answering machine, please leave a message and we will call you back as soon as we can.

Upcoming Tours

* Want to see the full brochure? Call us on 6643 1212 and we can send it out to you *

4

Days

Galloping through Gloucester

Monday 1 to Thursday 4 February 2021

Something for everyone on this trip. The motor enthusiasts, the gardeners, the apiculturists, the photographers, the gourmet travellers, the sea cruisers and everyone in between! A little bit of everything. A great way to step back into touring around for 2021 with a little 4 day getaway. So much to see in this part of NSW.

Visiting Nabiac, Gloucester, Barrington Tops, Stroud, Forster/Tuncurry and all those little places in between.



Sunshine Coast Getaway

3

Days



Monday 8 to Wednesday 10 February 2021

Let's cross that border enjoy some time in the Sunshine State!

This will be a nice relaxed little getaway staying at the RACV Noosa Resort. We will include a canal luncheon cruise, time to explore Hastings Street Noosa, Eumundi Markets where you can buy all & sundry and then topping our time off at The Ginger Factory.



9

Days

Norfolk Island

Friday 5 to Saturday 13 March 2021

We'll have to move quickly on this one if you are interested as flights are at a premium for Norfolk Island. The secret is out and everyone wants to visit. Fully escorted with Janelle. An absolutely fantastic little island full of wonder. Includes Convict Settlement Tour, Glass Bottom Boat Tour, Island Orientation, Cheese Tour, Progressive Dinner, Island Fish Fry, Forresters High Tea (absolutely divine!), Murder Mystery Dinner and much much more. Norfolk Island will NEVER disappoint. It's a fabulous piece of paradise!

If you are interested in Norfolk we need to know asap in order to secure flights.



Upcoming Tours

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6

Days

FABULOUS FRASER ISLAND

DATES TBC MARCH 2021

1 Night Toowoomba exploring the beautiful Lockyer Valley region. Then travelling via ferry to Fraser Island we spend 3 nights at the Kingfisher Bay Resort. We will visit the unique Lake Mackenzie, Central Station (the heart of the island), the Shipwreck, A Bush Tucker experience, drive the highway (75 Mile Beach) and enjoy Sunset Cruise. Plus there will be a whole lot more that we will see and do on Fraser Island. Then we overnight in Hervey Bay spending time exploring that beautiful coastal regional.



Narrabri Tour

Dates TBC April 2021

5

Days

Narrabri is set against the backdrop of the Nandewar Ranges and on the banks of the Namoi River, the town is the regional centre for cotton growing and fantastic gourmet local produce. From giant rock formations to cotton farms and telescopes, discover Narrabri, a bustling town full of hidden treasures.

And the best part is, this is a stay put tour which means you only unpack once!

6

Days

Lightning Ridge

Thursday 20 to Tuesday 25 May 2021

Lightning Ridge is located on the world's richest deposit of black opal. It's a place that abounds with colourful characters, barrels of dreams, opportunities and experiences! The "Ridge" as it is known to the locals, welcomes visitors with classic country hospitality. But they very unique characters who pride themselves on their wonderful sense of eccentricity. Join us as we visit this area and enjoy their many many unique and famous attractions and you never know, you might just find a gem in a pile of rubble!



Upcoming Tours

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2

Days

APIA Good Times

Saturday 22/Sunday 23 May 2021



Something a little different. Join us as we head to Twin Towns Resort for the Apia Good Time Tour. With performances by all your favourites Brian Cadd, Deborah Conway, Joe Camilleri, John Paul Young, Kate Ceberano, Leo Sayer, Vika & Linda Bull and Wendy Matthews. What a fantastic line up!

We'll enjoy a nice relaxing little 2 day getaway on this trip.



Mungo National Park & the Silo Art Trail

Dates TBC June 2021

8

Days

The Silo Art Trail is just a superb initiative which is has taken old forlorn looking silo's and transformed them into wonderful works of art depicting life in Australia. The art is only limited by the artists' imagination. Join us as we follow the trail to view these wonders. Mungo National Park will also be a highlight of this tour. We will view the "Walls of China" - layers of sand dunes which reveal the history of the pre historic period. Nature at its best and a photographers delight. So much more on this tour too. You won't be disappointed.

7

Days

Christmas in July - Winter Wonderland in Orange

Sunday 25 to Saturday 31 July 2021

Dust off those Christmas T-shirts, flashing necklaces, Santa hats & Christmas baubles and get ready for a fantastic 7 day Christmas in July Winter Wonderland in Orange. We'd love you to join us as we travel firstly to Tamworth with a visit enroute to Inverness Park Cashmere Farm. Then unpack in Orange for the next 4 days. We'll rug up and enjoy the hospitality of the local CWA ladies and enjoy a special performance. Our time includes a visit to a unique fruit farm, beautiful Abercrombie House, a Gallery, a Lolly shop, A Museum, Pottery and a bunch of other local attractions. Travelling home we overnight at Narrabri before returning with fabulous Christmas memories.



Upcoming Tours

** Want to see the full brochure? Call us on 6643 1212 and we can send it out to you **

But wait—there's more!!

We've been really busy planning out the full year for 2021.

August 2021—Murray River, Kangaroo Island & Eyre Peninsula— 23 days.

September 2021—Spring Garden Tour—10 days.

September 2021—Human Nature in Concert—Brisbane

October 2021—Lord Howe Island—7 days

October 2021—Batlow Apple Blossom Festival—7 days

October 2021—Tasmania—14 days

November 2021—Hunter Valley Christmas Lights— 3 days

December 2021—Christmas in Albury—8 days.



PRICES FOR 2021 TOURS

You'll notice that we haven't put prices in this brochure for the tours. It was way more important to get all our tours out to you first and then after we produce this Newsletter, then we'll sit down, finalise the individual brochures and cost the tours.

We want you to make a list of the tours that you are interested in and then write to us, call us, email us, message us or text us with your Expressions of Interest. Once the brochures are completed, we will send to you the tours that you are interested in.

Once you have the brochure, please complete the booking forms and send your deposits to us as soon as possible so we can make sure you don't miss out.

1

Day

Australian Outback Spectacular Sunday 28 February 2021

Join us for a Sunday Matinee for the uniquely Australian show at the Australian Outback Spectacular.

Sit back and take in the music, the lights, scenery and enjoy a sumptuous 3 course meal.

And then at the end of the shows finale, you'll feel so immensely proud to be an Aussie.

Get all your friends together and enjoy a wonderful day out.



AUSTRALIAN
OUTBACK
SPECTACULAR

Office closed for Christmas break

Even though we haven't been as busy this year, we are all exhausted and need a break. Our office will be closed for the **Christmas Season** from

Friday 18 December 2021 until Wednesday 6 January 2021.

During this time, you can still email us, send us Facebook messages, text and we'll get back to you when we can. If you call us, please remember to leave us a message so that we can call you back. Snail mail (Australia Post) will still be working too and let's face it, we all love getting a nice letter in the post these days.

So on that note, we hope that you all have a really lovely Christmas with your family & friends and here's to a much happier, healthier and less weird 2021!



impact

You never really know the true impact you have on those around you. You never know how much someone needed that smile you gave them. You never know how much your kindness turned someone's entire life around. You never know how much someone needed that long hug or deep talk. So don't wait to be kind. Don't wait for someone else to be kind first. Don't wait for better circumstances or for someone to change. Just be kind, because you never know how much someone needs it.

Tested positive for
missing travel.



charitycar events

You may have seen this car travelling around Grafton over the past couple of years. The refurbishment of the car was a labour of love by Alan & Mitchell Hale. The car, a 1978 UC Torana was basically a shell of a car and after many many hours ended up looking like this. (see picture below)

Charity Car Events runs a rally each year called Beyond the Bitumen. The event is open for not only car enthusiast but normal joe blows and over 4 days runs through small country towns, following stock routes, travelling through paddocks, creeks and many many dusty roads.

It's not just a car rally. It's a vital link raising funds and awareness for [BeyondBlue](#). The organisers of the event, Peter & Trish Fehon sadly lost their daughter Beth to suicide back in 2005. They had no idea how their daughter was feeling. It shattered the whole family. Their faith held them together in those dark days.

A few years down the track, they thought it was time to try and help other families so the Beyond the Bitumen dream was born.

The rally itself does raise funds for [BeyondBlue](#) for it's vital service it provides to the general community. However the rally is so important for the members to sit down in a relaxed fashion after a days' travelling and talk and talk and talk.

Men in particular don't talk about their feelings. They bottle it up but on these rallies [BeyondBlue](#) is on the forefront of their conversations.

Along the way, new friendships are also formed.

Due to Covid 19 the original rally date for March was postponed and now due to regulations, 2 rallies will be run in October/November 2020.

Alan and his friend David are participating on the second rally in November. The journey will start in Goulburn and travel via Braidwood, Nimmitabel, Dalgety to Jindabyne for their first overnight stop.

Day 2—From Jindabyne through to Canberra, Tumut and ending up in Wagga Wagga.

Day 3—They farewell Wagga Wagga and travel through the Canola fields to Coolamon then through to Narrandera, Lockhart, Burrumbuttock and finally arrive in Albury.

Day 4—The final days' travelling takes them from Albury through to Jingelic before arriving in Tumberumba.

It's not a race. It's not a time trial. It's a chance to get out on the road with new friends in vehicles of all shapes, sizes, ages and see our beautiful country and along the way raise funds for [BeyondBlue](#).

Normally at this point of the "chat" I would be asking for donations but by the time you read this, the rally will be all but finished. Instead I just wanted to raise awareness of [BeyondBlue](#) with you all and to let you know that their help is available to everyone of all ages. It's been a crazy year. It's been a horrible year. But if it all gets on top of you there is help available. [BeyondBlue 1300 22 4636](#)



Pictured:- Alan (with Max Salter) on the day of his departure from Grafton to head to Goulburn.

Max works for us at Northland and is our "plug every hole" type person. We'd be lost without him.

Safe travels Alan.

Yesterday I wore something from 5 years ago and it actually fit! So proud of myself. It was a scarf. But still. Let's be positive here!



I DON'T ALWAYS CARRY ALL THE GROCERIES ON ONE ARM, BUT WHEN I DO, MY KEYS ARE IN THE WRONG POCKET.



Some of us are so old, we can remember going a whole day without taking a picture of anything.



IF WE WAIT UNTIL WE'RE READY, WE'LL BE WAITING FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES.



Now that I'm older here's what I've discovered:

1. I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
2. My wild oats are mostly enjoyed with prunes and all-bran.
3. I finally got my head together, and now my body is falling apart.
4. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
5. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
6. If all is not lost, then where the heck is it?
7. It was a whole lot easier to get older, than to get wiser.
8. Some days, you're the top dog; some days you're the lamp post.
9. I wish the buck really did stop here; I sure could use a few of them.
10. Kids in the back seat cause accidents.
11. Accidents in the back seat cause kids.
12. It's hard to make a comeback when you haven't been anywhere.
13. The world only beats a path to your door when you're in the bathroom.
14. If God wanted me to touch my toes, he'd have put them on my knees.
15. When I'm finally holding all the right cards, everyone wants to play chess.
16. It's not hard to meet expenses . . . they're everywhere.
17. The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.
18. These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter . . . I go somewhere to get something, and then wonder what I'm "here after".
19. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
20. HAVE I SENT THIS MESSAGE TO YOU BEFORE.....??????





*Memories of some of our
Mystery Day Trips.
#we missed you.
#you should have joined us*

21 Years on the Road



I should have written it all down. All the **highs** and the **lows**. The **miracles** along the way. The **vehicles** we've bought and sold. The **staff** that have come and gone.

Back in **January 2000** postage stamps were 45 cents. **Jodi was 1, Mitchell was 8** and **John 10** years of age. Some of you have watched our kids grow up over these past 21 years. As they grew older they have all worked in the business in one way or another. John in the office and looking after our marketing. Mitchell as a mechanic at the depot with Alan and Jodi on tour with me or working in the office. Sadly we (A & J) missed a lot of their growing up because we were too busy but they adapted and we're proud of how they turned out.

Depots/Offices—we've had a few. From starting out in Dyrabba Street Casino—firstly working out of Blunt's Bus depot and their own building down the road. Then coming to Grafton and renting a shed on Queen Street that when Grafton flooded, the snakes were everywhere. To New Street where we never felt secure with the clientele there to our current depot at Elland.

In New Street it was a colourful time to say the least. From Mitchell at 14 having his "do up" car stolen with his new tools inside. Having the kids asleep in the back of our station wagon at midnight while we cleaned coaches ready for the next day. Mitchell being "touched up" against our brick wall when a local wanted to "just give the kid a scare". A burglar walking around the depot stealing our two way radios while all the kids and staff were inside the building.

Passengers have given us our fair share of adventure too. One lady on our UK tour fell into the stairwell of the coach while transferring lollies to fellow passengers. (we were stationary at the time). A gentlemen had a heart attack at a Daniel O'Donnell concert at Twin Twins. Another lady joined us in Lismore and wasn't feeling the best. By the time we got to the Gold Coast she was in hospital and never came out. From aches, pains, bandaids, wind, diarrhoea—we've had it all. I even had one of my drivers get transferred by ambulance from Berry with all our passengers looking on. Stress levels were extremely high that day.

We've had periods of time (not it hasn't been all beer & skittles) when we had no idea where the money was going to come from to pay the staff wages. One particular day Alan & I were sitting out the front of New Street ready to tell the staff it was over, when our secretary ran out and said that Countrylink required 4 trains urgently for a job. At other times, the mail would arrive and a cheque from somewhere would appear out of the blue. They say there's **no God!** We've seen many **miracles**.

The **highlight** would be when I see the face of a customer who has just ticked off a destination from their **Bucket List**. The joy and marvel of taking passengers to international destinations when I know, had I not organised the tour, they would have never left Australia. Seeing the life long **friendships** that have been formed from passengers meeting up on a Northland tour. That's fantastic.

Staff—we've had many over the years. Some have stayed with us for a very long time. Bryan 13 years. Tony nearly 10 years and then there's our Dad's Army like Max Salter, Chris Webb & Chris Sparks who think they have retired but they still work for us! In the early days we really had a Dad's Army as nearly all the main staff were retired and drove to just "keep their hand" in the business! There's been time where we've had 3 girls plus myself working in the office. Now with technology, it's just me and Bryan when he's not out on the road.

And speaking of **technology** when I think back to 2000 we started out with a Dot Matrix printer which took about 10 minutes to print one brochure. These days, we could print 50 plus brochures in less than 10 minutes! **Mobile phones** weighed a tonne and looked like a house brick. I lost count of the times Alan got cranky with me when I didn't carry it with at all times! We had a **satellite phone** for our "out bush" tours and I can remember sticking the aerial out the drivers window at **Undarra Lava Tubes** and calling Alan. I also remember thinking way back then that I'd never get Alan a mobile 'cause he'd just ring me to buy a loaf of bread. These days we call each other from the bedroom to the lounge room to turn down the TV! Ha ha.

I've been fortunate to travel to many places within **Australia** and **overseas**. I been blessed to see and do so much international prior to border closures. I've nearly missed a flight in Borneo after asking a guard with an AK47 if I could have a photo with me. I've travelled to Canada—a highlight for me. I'm still friends with my tour guides from our Canadian tour as well as our UK tour.

I've seen **Hugh Jackman** up close and personal when he performed in Boy from Oz and was so nervous that by the time I had the camera ready I took a picture of his bottom! We saw **John Farnham** in concert a gazillion times in his heyday. I've fallen asleep in the middle of a performance at the Lyric Theatre & snored! From the Musical Shout which I loved, Mamma Mia, Boy from Oz, Sound of Music—I've seen a lot of great performances. I've also seen a few dodgy ones too! With a lot of concert shows we would travel up to Brisbane at lunch time, see the evening performance, travel back home to Grafton arriving at 6.00 am and then I'd stay at work until about 5pm that afternoon. Put a few of those days together and I knew I was alive.

We've had tyre blow outs in all sorts of places but fortunately our breakdown rates haven't been very high thanks to Alan being so pedantic about his coaches. We completed a 54 day tour around Australia **without a single mechanical incident**.

It's been a **wild ride** and one day will make a great book but it wouldn't have been possible without all our passengers along the way. A huge thank you to each and every one of you who have helped to shape our business as it is today.

Here's to another year on the road. Thank you - Janelle (& Alan) about which way you look.

#all part of the adventure

#on the road again

#21 years in business

#we are still here

#quite a few more grey hairs nowadays

#all part of the journey

#it's the journey not the destination

#are we there yet?

#get out of your comfort zone



Some cool photos of all the places I visited in 2020

