

What to do in a crazy COVID world

Bronlyn Schoer

Needing a project that is constructive and enjoyable, my husband and I have turned to our collection of slides, print photos, scrapbooks and travel diaries extending back to 1976. The aim of our project is to ditch the slides, the storage boxes and slide projector carousels and bring our images and memories into a hard copy book.

We have travelled extensively since the mid 1970s, hence the overarching name of the book is ***Around the World in 40 Years*** with four volumes now completed. Each volume has been published on the 'BLURB Books' platform and each is a 160-page coffee table sized illustrated travel memoir.

Volume 4 can be found at <https://au.blurb.com/b/10256472-around-the-world-in-40-years-vol-4>. If you go to this webpage and then click on 'PREVIEW', you will be taken on our 14-week journey from NW USA and Canada, north to south through Chile and southern Argentina and then onto the Antarctic Peninsula.

In addition, if you scroll down to the bottom of this webpage, you will come across our three previous volumes as well, which you can also preview, or click on 'See More' to access the other 'Blurb' books we have completed.

We use a Kodak Scanza (digital film scanner) that has proven to be an excellent little machine by which we scan slides and colour or black and white negatives into positive digital images, download them onto an SD card and then edit them through our computer photo program. From there, we select the best photos that illustrate 'the story' and then proceed to tap into our comprehensive travel diaries and scrap books compiled after each trip, to write each book.

We have been working on the writing and scanning since January, and I can't believe that we have constructively used our time for eight months on this project. There is still one more volume to be written, covering the period up until digital photography became established for us in 2008. In the meantime, thousands of slides and bulky scrapbooks have been discarded and hopefully many slide boxes and empty Kodak carousels are about to be disposed of through Gumtree.

The whole process has been a wonderful journey through travel memories and the various photographic technologies. It was interesting to note that 35mm slides were expensive in the 1970s, and therefore they were judiciously rationed to be used to build our resources for the teaching of geography and biology. Hence, we have many photos of the East African savannah and glaciated landforms of Northern Europe, but only four photos taken in Paris during a stay of one week! A diary entry written in northern Norway noted that we had gone berserk and taken 17 slides on one day because of the magnificent fjordland scenery, an extravagance rarely repeated.

Contributor details

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Bronlyn was the Principal of Lucas Heights Community School from 1992-2006. Since retiring from the Department she has consulted in the area of school leadership and combined a deep interest in voluntary roles supporting young women and students from a refugee background. Bronlyn is a life member of the NSWSPC and has enjoyed many travel adventures since retirement with her husband Gary, both in Australia and overseas.