

No. **531**

A Quarter of a Century Ago

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG SIPLE STORY BY MADELINE MCKIDDY

→ KERRIN CRIDDLE was 23 years old and just finishing two years of teaching English in Japan when she joined the 1988 Bikecentennial TransAm tour. It was the Australian's first bicycle tour and her first time in the U.S. When asked how her trip was going, she said "It's a terrific first impression of the USA! I'm writing home regularly to a friend who told me about Bikecentennial two years ago; ever since I've been planning my big trip to America. My friend and I will soon be partners of a traveler's hostel and café in Fremantle, Western Australia — which is a new, promising avenue for us both."

Kerrin journaled prolifically throughout her three-month journey and the entries give a great picture of the emotional swings that are commonplace during such a long trip. There were good days: "I'm sleeping outside under the stars tonight. The moon is waxing. Had a glorious shower at the pool. And hard days: "I got up at 5:30 AM today to make flippin' pancakes! And now it's 10:00 PM. Where does the day go? Today was a tough day — I need more sleep." There were also days wherein nothing notable happened. The entry for June 17 read simply, "Made it to Berea."

"As we reached Portland, Oregon," Kerrin wrote, "I had a huge rush of emotion. Relief, tears I must have been holding onto the entire trip." Between Japan and the TransAm she had been traveling for three years — and now it was time to go home.

When we caught up with her 25 years later, she told us that, sadly, the hostel project never got off the ground. She does still have her TransAm bike, which she used as her main form of transportation for many years. These days, she enjoys sailing trips with her husband on their boat *Sirocco*.

And the friend who told her about Adventure Cycling? 25 years later, he is still planning his own TransAm tour.

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