

***Patricia Hecher – An Oral History***

*Interviewed by Jerry Krejzar, Pettneu am Arlberg, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016*



**ATRICIA HECHER – AN ORAL HISTORY**  
**Conducted by Jerry Krejzar, 81 Dorf, Pettneu am Arlberg, Austria**  
**20<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

*I am sitting here in 81 Dorf in Pettneu am Arlberg in Patricia Hecher's house. Patricia has kindly accepted to do an oral history for Thredbo Historical Society. My name is Jerry Krejzar and the date is 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Now I am going to ask Patricia whether she would like to donate the history to the Thredbo Historical Society once it is transcribed.*

Yes

*And there is another part to this opening, in that we are also covering Bernti's history. Both Patricia and Bernti were well known for establishing Bernti's in Thredbo. To start the ball rolling, Patricia can we get some of your details, what about your grandparents? What do you remember about your grandparents, where were they born, and what did they do?*

I have a lot of detail there, but I would have to sort it all out. I come from a very large extended family, Irish Catholic in Melbourne. I had twenty one first cousins and my mother was one of four children. They lived in the centre of Melbourne, Brunswick where the family had come mostly in the 1850s from Ireland . They were very busy looking for gold . I know a lot about them because it was always there. My grandfather had a grocer's shop and we lived next door to the grocer's shop and it was always a good place to steal chocolate biscuits and lollies over the counter.

My father's father, Henry Hogan, his mother came from Ireland. There were nine children. They came from Waterford in Ireland. They were the Beresfords and they all came out in 1880 and of course, they all got together at the Catholic Tennis Club at St Margaret Mary's, North Brunswick, where I went to primary school.

*And what did your parents do?*

My father was an accountant. He was Civil Secretary of the Navy when he retired. My mother was a stenographer and she worked for a hotel broker, and then she became a housewife. I remember her complaining bitterly about having to iron fourteen shirts every week with my two younger brothers and I decided I really didn't want to follow in her footsteps.

*So what year were you born?*

I have forgotten, Jerry. *(Laughter)* You're not serious?

*Well we will leave it. What about your school days?*

I went to the Catholic Ladies College, East Melbourne. I think things were just starting to loosen up then, because I can remember certain nuns leaving. I can remember, I had read some D H Lawrence when I was in 5<sup>th</sup> form, and asking my English teacher, the nun, if she had read it and she said “No, we are not allowed to read that sort of thing.” I then saw her a few years afterwards in St Patrick’s Cathedral, but she wasn’t in her habit anymore.

*So what year did you leave school?*

I would have to think about that one too. *(Pause)* Let’s just say the ‘60s.

*That is a good enough decade. So from leaving school on, until you met Bernti, what was your life like?*

I worked in the Taxation Department and I studied accounting which was called Business Studies Part-Time, at Swinbourne. I eventually passed all my subjects and then left and worked in a chartered accountant’s office in Melbourne. That is what I was doing. Then in the holidays a friend of mine a group leader with National Fitness at Hammond’s Gap at Falls Creek. He invited me to join his group leaders and go to Falls Creek, which was a nice three weeks in the mountains. It appealed to me so I went. Bernti was the coach for the whole group. There were probably a couple of a hundred people at Hammond’s Gap. I think I had about ten to look after but Bernti and I got together.

*From what I have heard about this, she was doing the BBQ and she always gave him the best pieces of meat. For her it was love at first sight.*

*Do you remember the year?*

Yes. That was 1970. After the season he came down to Melbourne. I took him home for the first time. My mother gave him a nice dinner. He said that by the third time the lamb chops were burnt and he wasn’t very happy.

*Austrians aren’t too happy with lamb chops.*

That’s how he knew that my mother wasn’t too pleased by me being with him. But then after he left, and being in an accountant’s office, it seemed like a future stretching out without too much excitement there and he said I could come and join him. He always said it was one of the better things he said he ever did was to get me out of Melbourne and I would be inclined to agree with him.

*So those years up to 1978 before Bernti’s opened? What were those years like between 1970 and 1978?*

Those eight years.

*Yes, well what did you do?*

First of all we were having fun. We were having fun all the time. I left - people then were still coming by ship – the instructors were. He left.

*Those Austrian instructors.*

I think it was about the last year. I still had one final accounting exam to do, which I did, then I took a ship to Miami and then I flew to Burlington and met Bernti in Stowe.

*Where he instructed?*

Where he instructed. He was actually the coach for the North American Junior (Ski) Team, a position into which he had been put into by Herman Muckenschnabl, the brother of Heinz, because Bernti was in the Austrian Demonstration Team.

*The Muckenschnabl that was instructing in Thredbo?*

Yes, he is a friend on the Friends of Thredbo website. He was very close to Bernti.

*I do believe that dad was the godfather to his oldest son.*

*So in those years in Stowe, travelling between Stowe and Thredbo, what?*

We didn't travel between Stowe and Thredbo. Bernti was in Falls Creek at that time, but I never went to Falls Creek with him as an instructor. I think we spent one year, where we just stayed in Europe and then he went back to Stowe. By this time we had decided that we were going to be together and we had to decide where we were going to be.

*We will tackle that just a little bit later about your time with Bernti. Let's leave it there where you met Bernti. Now could you tell me about Bernti's background, with respect to his family and what you know of his family. When and where was he born? Can you remember?*

21<sup>st</sup> January, 1940. He was the eldest.

*And that was in Schwaz in Tyrol?*

In Schwaz in Tyrol, his father was away. He was an old Nazi. Then he was away in a prisoner of war camp in 1952.

*How did that affect the family?*

It was very, very difficult. Afterwards I think he couldn't get any superannuation. It wasn't easy but he came back.

*Did the Austrians from a town like Schwaz stigmatise ex Nazis at all?*

Yes.

*How?*

Well I found out later that at Bernti's funeral, this fellow came up to me and wanted to tell me some stories, which I was very keen to hear, but somebody else sort of shuffled him off and I was a little bit annoyed. But Bernti's sister was also there and she was always very busy saying "These things aren't always true." But Schwaz is a very nice town. There is lots of culture, lots of artists and musicians as well as being highly industrialised, the Swarovski Crystal people is sort of part of Schwaz. I could live there quite easily. It is a beautiful place.

*Getting back to 1940, so Bernti was one of how many?*

Three children. He was born in 1940, his brother was born in '42 and his sister was born in '43.

*What sort of family are we talking about?*



***Bernti on the left with his best mate Michael Meirer in Graz in 1996***

Well his father came from Brixlegg which is farther down the valley. It appears to be quite a relatively educated family. His mother came from - they lived right at the top of the mountain in Schwaz, on the Zintberg which is very marginal farming. His father was a day labourer in Germany at some stages in the Ruhr Valley. From the pictures or the drawings I have of him, he looked to be a pretty foxy old Austrian. Bernti lived there and they used to have to walk down to school each day and walk back up again. It was an hour and a half climbing each day for the little boys and obviously laid the foundations for great strength in his later days. Bernti was a very good chess player. They used to sit and play.

*It was 1 hour down and 1.5 hours back up*

*What level of education did he go to?*

When his father came back, when he was fourteen, he immediately took Bernti out of school and sent him to a trade school where he learnt to be a stone mason which held him in good stead in Thredbo. But Bernti wasn't very happy about this and later I met a friend of his, who was at that stage head of the Taxation Department in the whole area of Schwaz, and he told me that Bernti was by a long shot, always the best in the class. It was always a shame I think that Bernti didn't further his education.

*And what about in 'terms of education' as opposed to ski instruction and ski education? Where did this impetus come from?*

His sister was ski racing. She was a beautiful young thing with plaits. At sixteen, she won the Hahnenkamm in Kitzbuhel and became an overnight sensation.

*In what year?*

I don't know, I would have to look that up. But I know that in 1966 in Squaw Valley, she won a Bronze Medal and she skied with a broken ankle. In those days it was much more difficult. Their expenses weren't paid. Her father trained her and they didn't have all the psychological support they now have. It was a much more difficult situation. She was (racing) at the same time as Karl Schranz and there is a picture of her in a ticker tape parade with Karl Schranz and all that sort of thing.

*Traudl won Kitzbuhel in 1960 and 1961. 1960 Olympics was in Squaw Valley and 1964 was in Innsbruck.*

*So we are talking about Bernti coming from a very established ski racing family?*

Oh yes.

*Also, Lizz (Traudl's daughter) only retired recently, but still holds the record of the oldest woman to be on a world cup podium.*

*Did Bernti race or did he just take up teaching?*

No, Bernti didn't race. He didn't like air. He always said he didn't like his feet leaving the ground. But what happened, Bernti's sister was given a piece of ground on top of the mountain to build a mountain house, by the Schwaz Council. They built a mountain house up there, he and his brother. So for a couple of years he and his brother were totally involved with brick laying in the cold and carrying things and doing that. He decided he had enough so he went to Mayrhofen where he learnt to be a ski instructor and he maintained his connections to Mayrhofen where he made friends. He made friends with Peter Harbeler; he was a mountaineer and mountain climber and friend.



**'Hecherhaus' - Schwaz, Austria**



**Bernti in the Austrian Demonstration Team in the Arlberg in the 1960's**

*A few things here; firstly, I think that the land was given to her because of the Olympic medal after Squaw Valley. Secondly, the Hecherhaus was just recently purchased (since this interview) not by a family member, but by someone who respects the family and the Hecher name, and using Traudl's photo. I think I have a photo in Austria of dad breaking the first ground for the Hecherhaus. It was used for Traudl's 70th.*

And then Bernti – you can see from pictures that he didn't have the same style early on that he developed later on - but he was on the Austrian Demonstration Team and he did his Bergführer which is the highest level. He could take people all over the mountains. He was a mountain man and he loved teaching people.

*Bergführer, which as you say is the highest qualification in Austria, did he take many Austrians before he travelled to Australia? Did he ski with locals from Mayrhofen, do you know?*

I think he was a ski instructor a ski instructor in Mayrhofen; because there are pictures of him with a Dutch girlfriend.

Bernti with girl friends was a big problem. When we were married I said to him “Bernti, you have to stop this. It doesn’t work!” He said “But look, I don’t do anything, they just come. This is life.”

*That is the way with ski instructors isn’t it?*

He just stood there looking helpless I think, and everyone wanted to help him. It didn’t stop all his life.

*So now we are going back to the seventies, when we talked about Stowe. Where is the connection between you meeting Bernti and actually those years leading up to ’78 when Bernti’s was actually established?*

In 1972 we got married. I was working in Montreal in a chartered account’s office, which I was really enjoying and then coming back and working in the chartered accountant’s office in Melbourne where they had offered me a partnership but I was still too foot-loose, too enamoured with this gypsy life style, and skiing, and the excitement, and the life in the mountains.

*That is what I want to hear more about – the gypsy lifestyle.*

It was a wonderful time. I was better off working in Montreal and then going down at weekends. There were always friends of Bernti’s that always skied with him, Austrians and all sorts of people that would give me a ride.

*So is Montreal close to Stowe?*

I think it is only two hours from Stowe. I really enjoyed my time in Montreal. We did two years I think, like that. Then the third year Bernti said “We have to get married or I couldn’t come anymore!” I would rather have left it as it was.

*That is not like a ski instructor to say that.*



**The Hecher marriage ceremony at Gallzein near Schwaz in 1972**



I think he was the first in his life that he followed through with. But I became important to him.

*Well that is fantastic. So after those gypsy years, what happened?*

Well what happened was that I got pregnant. There are so many people in the mountains that are born in February like my daughters. Both of my daughters are and Andreas, Tina's partner, was born in February.

And I know why that is – after the ski season, everybody gets into 'schnaxeln'. There are so many people that are born in February, it is funny.

*You should do a survey on that.*

Anecdotally. That is when schnaxelning starts again.

*Just for the people who don't understand the German word 'schnaxeling'*

It is what you think it is. *(Laughter)*

*So we won't go any further there.*

If you hear some instructors going up the lift and you hear the word 'schnaxelning', that is what they are discussing, if they are Austrians that is.



*To think I have been (around) here for so long, and I don't know that. So now let's move on a little bit. After these wonderful years, when you were married, when were you pregnant? What about your kids, when were they born?*

Then I got pregnant. Tina was born in February 1974. So after the '73 season - I only lasted three seasons without getting pregnant. Then I had to stay in Melbourne. Natasha was born in February 1977 but we had been saving money like crazy,

***Bernti and Patricia at Pirschnerast on the Zintberg near Schwaz in 1971***

because instructors were extremely well paid in those days. I remember I saved \$10,000 Canadian dollars and Bernti, the last season, had also \$10,000 American dollars, which we had saved in a few seasons, so we finished up with \$20,000 or \$30,000. It was a bit of a competition as to who had saved the most. In Montreal, I really put my money away.

I have been trying to teach my kids how to do it, like if you get 9 bus tickets and you need 10 for the week and walk the last day, and things like that, but it never worked. But anyway we had this money, and it looked like to me that the best way to make money was to buy a house and renovate it, in Melbourne. We looked at Sydney but I didn't know Sydney, so we scurried back to Melbourne and we bought a house in Hawthorne which we renovated.

*In 1974?*

We would have bought the house in '74. No, we had it when Tina was born. It must have been six months before February '74 and Bernti still went off ski instructing in Stowe.

*Back to Falls Creek?*

No, back to Stowe. We never went to Falls Creek, but we were already living in Thredbo by that time, because --

*So that was your first year in Thredbo?*

It must have been. No it was just after May in 1974. We got married in 73 in Austria first, then in May in Melbourne at St Patrick's Cathedral – my mother organised it – then we went up to Thredbo because we didn't have any connections there, but Bernti had heard that the way was to just get up there and be around.

*So Bernti's first instructing position was in 1974?*

In Thredbo, yes. What he did was, he got dressed every morning in his ski instructor's uniform and went to stand in the line up with all the other instructors and Leonhard Erharder was there saying "No work, no work". This just went on and then the snow came. He never gave up because he demonstrated persistence.

*He must have known of his qualifications.*

He did but there was this lovely competition because Leonhard came from Hopfgarten, Kitzbuhel area, whereas Bernti, who was thought of more as an Arlberg man, and it was Hopfgarten /Mayrhofen and it wasn't Arlberg/Kitzbuhel, you didn't get the first jobs unless you were ... But Bernti managed to get himself in there quite nicely. From then on Leonhart had him on every day.

*Where did you live in those years?*

In Redbank.

*What did you think of those times?*

It was pretty funny. I was quite amazed at the lack of accommodation. We were given a room with a sort of bathroom door and it had a foot underneath it and a foot over the top.

Peter Brown - if things displeased him, he would turn off all the power and things like that, and God knows what else.

*Was it all up until the time you built Bernti's?*

No, no. We started looking for what else we could manage and we heard that Thredbo Alpine Club was looking for a manager. I had never cooked but it seemed like a good option, so we set about lobbying to get it.

*And what year was that?*

That would have been about - Tina was a baby so it would have been in 1974. For the '74 season we had it. We had it for 8 years.

*Eight years, so your next home was Bern tis?*

After TAC, yes.

*So could you tell me whose dream was it to build Bernti's?*

Well Bernti thought it was a really good idea. seemed to me to be a good way of making money.

*Well you both must have discussed it?*

Oh yes, we had discussions. I said 'Bernti, are you really sure you want to do this?' and

things, and he said 'Oh yes.' He quite fancied the idea of having a lodge, and giving schnapps to all his mates and all that sort of thing.

*So, many years before 1978 were the formative years, when you actually built Bernti's?*



***Bernti bricklaying with Christina supervising in Hawthorne in Melbourne in 1974***

It

We realised we had to get some capital so in the meantime we renovated this house in Melbourne. I think Bernti stayed there and worked on the house, but he changed to go to Europe. He stopped going to America. He went to Oberlech and Zurs in those years.

*Did you go with him?*

No because I had a baby.

*You had Tina, you were raising the family?*

Yes, I had Tina, but I was bringing work home from the chartered accountant's office and I was renovating this house. We bought it for \$22,500 and we had a small mortgage. Then we then sold it for \$80,000 and we finished up with \$50,000 in 1976, which was our seed capital to build Bernti's.

*For 1976, that's not bad.*

It was a lot of money in those days. It would have bought lots of houses.

*So how long did it take to build Bernti's?*

You had to build it in a summer and be ready to open, not two seasons like now. So you had to go really hard. It was really stressful because you had to line everything up. But there were plenty of helpers. There were wonderful people around like John Aho who was absolutely brilliant and Steve Szeloczky the builder who had done everything. Bela Rascko the architect, he was fabulous

*John Aho built Happy Jacks too.*

Yes, John Aho who was a Finn and the boys from the Tyrol had been around for a while. They were great fun. John taught me a few lessons. One of the best ones was that – my brother who was studying at Oxford at the time, came to be with us – I think it was stage one – he was working on the building site to earn money – so John said to him 'What you do is: you order the concrete for Friday, then you push everything and make everybody work towards it, because if you don't set a dead line, it doesn't happen.' My brother has never, ever forgotten having to work until 10 o'clock at night pulling wire-ties and things like that.

*These days it is incredible to think that you had to do it in one season.*

Yes and the other thing too is that it was very hard too - you had to do it all by hand. You had to mix and pour the concrete by hand, because it didn't come up the mountains. It was only during stage two in '82 that you could get the concrete coming up the mountains in a truck, and that seemed like an unbelievable luxury.

*So what was the difference when you opened in 1978 compared with stage two in 1982?*

What was the difference? The difference was that we only had ten rooms and it had the restaurant side if it. Then all the rooms on the other side and our apartment were built after that.

*As it stands today.*

Yes. That is right.

*Well 1978 must have been an exciting year.*

Yes, then you know you have got all this money. Mark Francis gave me some sage advice: ‘What you do is, you don’t worry about the bank. You just go ahead and you order everything that you want and then the bank has to come and just give you the money.’ He seemed to know about these things.

*Because they had invested in you.*

At the end, Bruce Rossel who is still in Jindabyne approved it. I think it was one of the last loans he approved before he left the bank and became a business man himself.

*Let’s talk about the actual running of Bernti’s in 1978. Were you mostly responsible for that?*

Yes. That was very funny. You look back on it and you think “Oh my gawd, how could you have possibly done something like that.” When I went to TAC, I had to cook for a lot of people. I knew I remember Liela who was at Pindari. She was a Berliner, who cooked very well. Any way I think the first time I cooked, it was roast lamb, and Liela said “You know, Trish, you have got use salt when you cook meat.” That is just about all I knew. I enjoyed it.

*So you went along.*

Yes, by the time, which was one of the jobs was to get the lease in Thredbo. Lend Lease – Kosciusko Thredbo brought Len Evans who was writing a very successful column brought him down to Thredbo to try and lift the standards in the Thredbo Alpine Hotel and he went round and checked everything out. Bernti invited him for dinner up at TAC. Then he wrote it was the best food on the mountain, that I was cooking for Thredbo Alpine Club.

*A nice tribute from Len Evans.*

Yes. Then on the strength of that, I asked him for a reference for the bank, which he also gave me, which helped us in our loan application. I had no experience with a la carte or anything like that, but then along came Leo who used to have Leo's Lodge, and we were gathering all these friends as we went along.

*Let's just pause there because I thought when Leo lost the management of Leo's Lodge, I can't remember but Rudi?*

Rudi went in there.

*Rudi went in there.*

Yes, he had a restaurant in Sydney

*We are talking about Leo Pockl?*

But he was still around the mountains very happily and he knew everybody and because I didn't have a la carte, I was just going to cook just for my house guests, but Leo came along and said 'Oh no, you have got to open it to everybody. You really need some competition. I will show you what to do'.

*Was it his idea to open a full scale restaurant?*

Yes, with no preparation, nothing in the kitchen, I mean it was a really great idea. But Leo had a chef – an apprentice – and he had just graduated as a chef and I think his name was Buck. I can't remember where he was from but I had the feeling he was from Corryong or somewhere but he had been working in Sydney for some time but anyway Leo tipped me in head first, and then he tipped Buck in head first and we opened the restaurant and just went along. We didn't make any money with it during the first year,

*And as they say, the rest is history.*

The rest is history. It was very funny because I can remember building materials around the building and I remember Nikky Allen from the Ski Club of Australia, and they brought a group of them, and they brought two planks because we had no tables left, and they wanted to sit in the restaurant and eat. I mean it just took you with it.

*Over the years a sense of professionalism crept in.*

We worked very hard at that. It reached a certain zenith at some stage when I look back at the menu. One of the nice things I remember was when Nick Greiner, when he was Premier, he came to dinner three times in the one

week and at the end of the third time, he said to me ‘Trish this must be the best restaurant in town because they keep bringing me here.’ I really liked that because you can take it as being a compliment.

*It seems to be that you must have been an enormous force behind what happened in Bernti’s in respect of the restaurant and what was happening in the running of the place.*

Yes

*How was Bernti doing all this time? Was he just instructing?*

He was doing what he called ‘public relations.’

*He was instructing by day, and being Bernti in the cafe and restaurant by night*

*Tell me about those ‘public relations’.*

He was amazingly good at it and people loved it. When we were at TAC he started it off. There was a group of people like Tony Carroll - he had his apartment there - where he adopted us and he always helped us with our legal’s. He negotiated our lease. He was always there and he was always just fantastic. He is Natasha’s god-father and we stayed with them. That was really nice. He had a group of friends at TAC. I will never forget Bernti used to play chess with his father up in the Hecher house, and Tony said “Bernti, oh you play chess.” And Bernti said “Oh, just a little.” Anyway Dick Conti, the QC, wanted to play with Bernti, and Bernti beat him. Dick Conti couldn’t believe it, and he kept coming back for more. I think they played four times and Bernti beat him every time. Dick Conti never believed that Bernti could beat him.

*It was a bit hard for a QC to believe that a ski instructor could beat him.*

This sort of thing became, was very funny. Because in those days the lift lines were so long, there was a group of them, which I know, Paul Fagan and John Molineaux were leaders of this other group, and they would say “Oh, we’ll get a ski instructor for the day and we can jump the lift lines.” Bernti used to take them up, then he would pick the best crud he could find, the heavy snow, and he would ski through that, like it was a magic carpet. And then he would get down to the bottom and still be laughing six or so hours later at the sight of these guys. It was like - John Molineaux had a fur jacket with a hood and all these sorts of things. And Bernti said ‘Oh, I showed the boys a few things.’

*Oh, that must have been funny*

It was. Bernti took all sorts of skiing.

*He also took the family that had the cremation business. I am trying to think of their name.....*

Ian and Marie Speis that was not in the early-years that was in the later years, after Roland had come along. I think that Bernti really enjoyed working with Leonhard. He understood the man.

*You mean to say that their professional relationship developed once he got in and was accepted?*

Oh, we had a lovely relationship with Leonhard.

*Tell me about it.*

Leonhard was a very interesting man. I understand that he was put in the Luftwaffe when he was seventeen. He was quite steely in his – we met a few times in Austria. I can remember he was one time in Schwaz and he was playing cards with his mates but he was always very charming and very nice and funny.

*But to Aussie skiers unless he knew the people very well, he didn't come across as personal, did he? Did he come across differently when he was with Austrians?*

Oh, he looked like a Nazi, with his nose and his demeanour. He was stern and he was severe. But knowing what I know now, it was the way they were brought up when they were children. Life was not easy and it was very hard. Life was very hard for them and life was hard in Austria, which is why they welcomed Hitler because there were no jobs. So when Hitler came along, everyone was thinking there was going to be jobs for them and there was, because they had all these road making things. But there was a lack of sophistication, so they didn't know exactly what ...

*Certainly, those years in Austria.*

The way news travels and with social media it was a whole different world to what it was. Bernti didn't go to Innsbruck from Schwaz until he was fourteen years old for his apprenticeship. Now that is twenty minutes on the Autobahn now.

*Now leading up to 1982, do you want to tell me a few more details about some of the personalities who were involved - when we get to the year the second stage was built? It must have been hard work.*

It was hard work, seriously hard work. I mean – and I had to learn how to do a la carte. The thing was that we were open all year round for twenty years we had the lodge, so when there was no chef – I mean we couldn't afford a chef and I had to do the cooking.

*Well what about staff?*



There is a legion of them. I can remember issuing a hundred group certificates for one year for people who come for 6 weeks and things like that. Some people, I have lovely fond memories of; with other people I can't remember at all and I would have to think about them for a while, and sometimes it comes back.



***Bernti instructing in Thredbo in the 1980's***

I didn't try. I thought "Anything you can do, I can do better" I think.

*(Laughter)*

*So what happened then? (Laughter)*

I remember one time when I thought we were still together, and Bernti was instructing and he went to Sydney to go in the "Sydney to Surf"; he ran in the "Sydney to Surf"; and it was really warm in Sydney and he had come straight from the mountains and he didn't drink any water as was his want, and he finished up collapsing with no memory.

They took him to hospital and after a while they brought in a German interpreter along because you lose your second language when.... and all he could remember was me and my phone number. So I laughed because it served

People say "Hi, I worked for you in such and such" and I say "Oh, yes that's right."

*What else happened in '82?*

In '82 in the lease, stage two had to be built at that time. Bernti worked on the building site all summer. It was very stressful. We managed to open all and then there was no way Bernti was staying around. He was off, back to Europe, and I was there cooking.

*So you stayed married, you didn't...?*

Oh, we were married all the time. We were married and living in the same house but our relationship fizzled. Well Bernti was – well he had ladies. I mean, poor man, he didn't do anything. They just came and 'got him'! - all the time.

*How did you compete with that?*

him right, and that it was his bad luck, because he missed out on seeing his girl friend and they were going to meet afterwards.

*So how did your life travel in Thredbo after that?*

I would really have to think about it and make a list.

*Do you want to mention any people?*

Well Albert van der Lee of course. As Albert had left the Company, he moved into Bernti's. We had known each other for a very long time it was quite an interesting time. I found out about a lot of Thredbo history. I know some of it, like a part then Albert was a consultant in getting it ready and Wayne Kirkpatrick had come along which was exciting. We had the World Cup Race. That was the best time, when you think about it, with everything happening and they had really built a big international resort.

*Do you think it had a lot to do with Albert?*

No, I think Wayne caused that. Albert was probably the most valuable in the building stages of the resort. But the resort had so many people that loved it and wanted it to succeed. You know, you have only got to think back on the fact that he tried to sack Leonhard three times and never quite managed, because Leonhard would just go to Dusseldorp. It wasn't just one man managing the resort.

Then of course, Albert had to.... they had an American come in and do a plan for the resort because they were trying to get the bottom areas – they had to be redesigned, because skiing to the bottom was very important and the bottom areas were in the sun. By that time the technology was just starting. It was a whole study in itself. Snow making was happening and things like that and Thredbo needed a new ski school director. Albert was very busy looking for the right ski school director.

*Was this when Arnold Konrad left?*

I think Arnold Konrad left and they were looking for a new one and the chosen man was Roland Wanner. What he had up his sleeve was that he spent a lot of time with Club Med so he could do the ski school things. Oh, he did them beautifully. A really busy man, he brought a lot of vibrancy to the resort and he and Wayne Kirkpatrick have formed a lifelong friendship out of that, I think. They deserve each other.

*Can I quote you on that? (Laughter)*

I don't think that really matters. I mean life goes on.

*Sure.*

But they were two old reprobates that is all I'll say. Well they are not that old yet.

*From this time we have just discussed, leading up to the landslide what year was that?*

1997

*1997, so there was a lot of water flowing under the bridge leading up until then. You kept working?*

All year round. I had some nice holidays where I closed in February. When I think I went to Europe a couple of times skiing. I went India with all the kids, with Heinz and Michelle, and Albert.

*Now tell us a little bit about the kids, leading up to that, their education in Thredbo.*

Oh they went on the school bus to Jindabyne until about eleven.

*Were they typical mountain kids getting all around about the mountain?*

Oh yes, there was all sorts of mischief they got up to - running up the mountain and they loved skiing. Actually, all those that went on the school bus, they had their own group. I think they would all still be in contact with each other, even now in their forties, and that is quite something.

*That group of Thredbo kids – they all know each other - it is interesting.*

*Marcus, Luke, Adam, Sascha, Shane, Zoe, Jade (Aho), Simi Parker, the Young Family from Crackenback (Sarah, Jamieson, Henri and Zoe) Simi Parker (Pru's daughter), Sas Kusar, and then there were some others.*

Yes. They were always in each other's houses and we were very friendly with Heinz and Michelle. The kids were always together and Liz Jones, Brian Jones, and Sascha and Adam. I think it was a closer thing.

*Who were all your friends during these years?*

Liz and Michelle.

*And Pru Parker.*

*We are talking about Michelle Reichinger and then Heinz?*

Yes.

*So Bernti's got more well known and more well known through the eighties, through the nineties until '97 and the landslide. What can you remember about the landslide, in terms of that actual night?*

It was hard to believe. I mean, there was a noise. It is not really at the front of my mind all the details, because it is something you like to bury. But what do I think of being in the lodge in the days afterwards. Thinking I could hear Wendy O'Donohue's voice saying "Are you there?" Then I remember people talking about Mim and Mike and Mim saying "I don't want to die, get me out!" I mean, it was just horrendous.

*Thredbo lost a lot of good friends.*

It was horrific what happened because the whole of the village water supply went into site because the pipe was the wrong pipe that was installed. But it wasn't an error that you can forgive. Lend Lease had plans drawn and I can find you the name of this hydraulic Company. Because it was the whole village water supply but they, the engineers that worked for Lend Lease before they sold the resort, thought they would save money and they just put in pipes that didn't have any proper – what was the state of the art for that time. What they put in was totally inadequate and no engineer should have ever done it. They hid all the stuff. I spent 10 years digging out as much as I could and let it see the light of day.

Well the State Government was involved of course, the National Parks was involved. Everyone knew that the road was unstable. I think money was allocated to do something about it but they decided to use it on a bridge down in the Upper Murray so that the buses could get through in summer. You know, it was just a litany of mistakes. It always surprises me that David Osborn never had to give evidence at the Coronial Inquiry.

*Before we go to the Coronial Inquiry, how did it affect you firstly, personally, and secondly, as far as your business was concerned?*

Because the hillside came down on that side, people didn't feel happy sleeping there because you didn't know and of course that was borne out a few years later when it was all closed down, they redid the creek and everything then. I mean, I could say some bad words.

*Well what happened to Bernti?*

The next day, even though this had happened, David Osborn in his wisdom decided to keep the resort open so people had to work. Now Bernti wanted to help too, but he couldn't, he was working too. He couldn't look at the site. He was trying to ski in other areas.

*But the ski areas weren't directly affected.*

No, the skiing wasn't affected. It was on the other side of the hill but you could see it: what was going on all the time.

*You mean psychologically.*

Yes. Psychologically, yes. Bernti stopped eating and drinking. Of course you dehydrate when you do that.

*Now knowing that he had his stroke three weeks after, so you think that was a contributing factor?*

Well of course, he was totally dehydrated because he had stopped drinking water altogether. He was probably inclined for cardiovascular disease because children that had a hard time in the womb, which he did – he and his mother during the war – have been shown to make them more susceptible to cardiovascular disease. Just one morning he was going out and he had to come home. He was giddy and vomiting on the floor and the doctor said it was just the ‘flu. I said to him “He has to go to the hospital.” “No, he doesn’t, it is just the ‘flu.” I don’t think about these things now because like the landslide, it is litany of the mistakes that cause a disaster of some sort. It is never one thing that causes something. It is the culture and people don’t want to know about it.

*You want to leave it at that, no doubt?*

Yes, I think it is better to leave it. I think it is better to read it on paper.

*Do you want to supply something on paper as a result of this interview?*

Yes. It is actually still in Sydney. It is called ‘The Adverse Incidences’ which was prepared by the Coronial Inquiry

*Well for the sake of Thredbo history, I think it would be fitting that we attach it to your interview if you like?*

Yes, I would like to do that, because it is the very worst things that can be thought about all the companies and people involved. It is not edifying reading, Jerry.

*But it is not that people think that they have done the wrong thing, with mistakes at the time. It is just in retrospect that these things surface, wouldn’t you say?*

Yes, if this was done at the time of the Coronial. We know that lots of papers disappeared. There is one paper – I have a set of discs that I haven’t seen for a long time, from all the papers they gathered up and there is one paper they gave out that was sent to Kim Clifford, which was a report from somebody about the road, and somebody had written in pencil: “It is sub-lessees buildings that will be affected by this, not the Company’s.” So I think that just underlines the attitude. But I have lived this for ten years Jerry. Part of the reason that I am here is that I can wipe it all away.

*Well we will get to the reasons that you are here after we have dealt with this and I think it is fair to say to deal with it, is that we just attach it to the interview. Let's go back to just the personal effect on you and with respect to Bernti's stroke how you had to deal with it. What can you tell me about the successive years - from when Bernti had his stroke?*

Well the kids were really upset of course. We were all upset. It was really, really difficult. I wanted to look after him. They said he would only last six months after he had been in the nursing home. Well he had a second stroke – he had one and then three weeks later he had another one in hospital.

*You told me that being in St Vincent's Hospital had a lot to do with extending his life.*

Yes, that was afterwards. I thought "I'm not a nursing person, I am an organising person." And I thought I would bring him home because it could make the girls more stable because after the landslide, people lived life like there is no tomorrow and I think that happened in a number of cases. I wanted to bring Bernti home because he was there in Bowral in the Bowral Nursing Home and he is looking around at the pink curtains, and he did that movement with his hands that he does. Well maybe he didn't move his hands but his eyes did and I felt that I could wait with him a little while if it was only going to be for six months. But I was seriously scared. I woke up having nightmares thinking that I wouldn't be able to do it, to look after him. But I managed.

We got things organised with a lot of help from his friends with money because we had no access to funds at that stage and they raised over a hundred thousand dollars over the next ten years. It went for eight years, that we were using this for physiotherapy and his personal trainer. I also took all opportunities that there were to get extra help in the house. We had great people that came and gave him a shower, the food and how we did it, and the endless doctors' appointments. Everybody rallied round. We were in Bowral, I went to Bowral, and then Paul and Susie Fagan, I think it was at Susie's instigation, they came along to see exactly what....

*We are talking about Dr Paul Fagan, the ear nose and throat specialist?*

Yes, He was always a friend from TAC days from a long time ago. They came along. Bernti was home – I had brought him home from the nursing home - and they came around and we had coffee and a chat. Susie thought he could benefit from the ... there is a geriatric rehabilitation hospital in Waverley in Sydney – the name of it has escaped me.

*The War Memorial?*

War Memorial. Susie had connections there and they thought that Bernti could benefit from that and make it easier for him to be at home. So within a few days we were up in Sydney and they had taken him in. He got looked after and I lived in the next - because I had to look after him with the feeding tubes and the rest. There is an ongoing learning thing which takes some time. Besides the Coronial, I didn't have much to think about at that time and I was very happy to involve myself.

*Describe all the movements and what he could or couldn't do.*

It was the highest level of disability. He had no balance because he had a lesion to the cerebellum. His stroke was brain stem strokes which.... function and that means that you don't breathe regularly. You breathe when your brain tells you that you are lacking oxygen and he had very ragged breathing and he was very susceptible to chest infections.

*This is reason that they thought he would probably only last six months when in fact he lasted for eleven years?*

Yes.

*And that is due in part to the fact that he had such great friends to look after him.*

Oh yes. It was fabulous. Paul Fagan started it off, like we were sent to a geriatric rehabilitation specialist. He set me along the right road track, like we had the physio in and then the physio would show the trainer what to do and then we would religiously do that. We were sent to the War Memorial – Kate Madell, I had to follow what she did. She said she has never had a patient like Bernti who was so strong, because you know he was an Olympic standard athlete.

*How did you communicate firstly and then how was Bernti's psychological state? Psychologically, how was he?*

Bernti was stoic. We can say that from the beginning. We had him assessed by the University of NSW very early in the piece because we could see the government was going to say that he wasn't of sound mind, so we needed to set that right. I pre-empted that and we had these tests done and he came out with flying colours. It was that he was sort of "locked in". I could see that by his eyes because over the years, we could look at each other without talking, without saying something across the room like: "Where are you going?" You know and things like that. It was also recommended at the War Memorial that he get this piece of equipment, which ... no, maybe it was before that - somebody organised it – and paid for with the money that was raised by friends, which was an electronic device which you could put the words in.

*And he communicated that way?*

He could write a sentence very slowly with it. As time went on gradually, he really did it less and less but when he would write succinct things when he had something to say and he could still be funny. But what he found - the hardest thing for him was that when he got his punch line in, the conversation had moved on so much. It used to make him really sad, like when the guys came round and he had his punch line but he couldn't get it out quick enough. And that wasn't very ...

*Did a lot of his old friends visit him?*

Yes, yes - not so many towards the end, in the beginning. Louis Hupfau gave him his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday party which was very nice. Everybody came along to that. But you know that as time goes on...

*Heinz Reichinger and Butch Young were both frequent visitors also.*

*With communication being so difficult, it is understandable.*

Yes, but we were there. Like Michael Delaney the eye doctor, he was absolutely marvellous. Bernti was always friendly with him. He had skied with him in the Arlberg on Bernti's days off when Michael was on holidays. So when Bernti needed help with his eyes – he had cataracts – Michael put new lenses in and got him all fixed up and he was always there for him and always ready to help.

*This was after the stroke?*

The second stroke. Because we were living in Darlinghurst, it was very difficult to get disabled taxis at that time. It was much easier to push the wheel chair down the road which was one of the prime reasons for living so close to St Vincent's because I discovered they were the perfect source of help. So many people had skied with Bernti over the years that they were able to help him, like they used to

*We are talking about medicos?*

Yes, of course. Like he needed things like feeding tubes and they had to be changed every so often. His swallowing was always a problem. I mean, we needed all sorts of doctors. Paul Fagan sort of co-ordinated and to find people to do things and gently put pressure on them, I think. This went on for the whole time he was living, the whole eleven years he was living at home.

And then we had the hospice from St Vincent's come round when he had the final stroke about three months before he died and because I couldn't help him anymore. They were just fantastic the way they helped. Normally they only help people who are in pain, but you see Bernti wasn't in any pain. There are all sorts of little things you need when someone is dying, and how you manage it because I was very scared, because I didn't want to hurt him, like not getting him something if he needed it. In the end they persuaded him that Valium would be a good idea and he would say "Just a little bit."

*A muscle-relaxant; for the thoracic spasm, wasn't it?*

Yes. I remember one of the saddest things was that he wanted to stay in hospital because he wanted them to make him better and Tony Carroll was with me, because Tony always helped me. When he heard that Bernti had his last stroke, Tony came straight to the hospital and that was three months before he died - he died from that.



He could understand that and when they said - 'tell him' "He's had another stroke" and I couldn't do it, but Tony did it, because they said that "in a few hours he is not going to be able to be able to communicate anymore." When he came home in November, December, it was just waiting until he died.

*He died on 29<sup>th</sup> December, 2008?*

Yes

*And what about these friends when he died? Of course, you made the funeral arrangements?*

Oh yes, that was really quite lovely. We did a simple Mass at the church in Darlinghurst. I can't remember its name but it is just at the back of the Cross there.

*St Canice's? I went to primary school there.*

Yes. We did that and the priest said a mass. My cousins were the altar servers and it was very nice to see that the church was totally full with people from Thredbo and all walks of life.

*People that Bernti knew.*

And the church was full. He had been cremated. Tina and I took his ashes and we thought we would bring them back to Schwaz. So on our way we stopped in St Anton, perched Bernti on the window sill in the little urn and went out skiing while I organised a memorial mass in Schwaz.

*Was that well attended?*

It was a huge church. I thought 'It does not matter if there are not many people in it.' But it was totally full with all his old mates from long ago. It was fabulous and a credit to him that the friends he had made and maintained around the world. I wanted to put his ashes up on the mountain in the place where he and his brother used to jump off.

*Above Schwaz somewhere?*

Near the mountain house right up on the peak but his sister wasn't too fond of that and neither was Christina, his daughter, so we put the urn in with his grandmother, his parents and his brother in the cemetery at Schwaz and as is done in Austria, it is looked after very nicely. In November, people go. We always go, and light candles.

There is a candle here now Jerry, because it was Bernti's birthday on the 21<sup>st</sup> January and they burn for seven days. I am not religious but I do like this thought that his spirit is there. And when I go to Schwaz, I always feel like his spirit is there. As I came here, I've asked him - whenever I ask him a question, he always answers me. I know him so well, I always know his answers.

*I feel the same way about mum who is buried in Pettneu as you know. The Austrians are funny about separating ashes, but in mum's case we found a way around it.*

*It is great that you developed this intimacy over all these years and that you could feel that.*

Yes, I suppose it is. I will tell you a funny story. He was in Canberra hospital when he had had this second stroke, and his girl friend from Melbourne had come and his girl friend from Bowral had come and they were having a bit of a fight outside, and they said 'Only two people can go in' and I went in and said something, and he heard my voice, he immediately sat upright and he had been unconscious all that time. Immediately they grabbed me. Suddenly I became the most important person rather than somebody on the periphery, and they said to me, 'Tell him what has happened to him so that he knows.' So I thought if he responded to my voice, he must have.... He was very funny. Towards the end he said 'If I had known what was going to happen, things would have been different!'

*What a quote*

Towards the end before he died, I thought 'I'm getting sick of this hanging around - I'm getting sick of this, the court case is over. I want to go to Europe.' And I actually went to the doctor and found out about taking him on Qantas and what he could do, because the Gemainde in Schwaz, that is the council, had said that three people had come to see him and said if... that he wanted to be flown back to Schwaz to be looked after. That had happened a number of years before so I knew that the door was open for him to go back to Europe and I thought 'He has lived ten years, and if he is going to live another ten years, so I might as well go.'

*Because of the family.*

Yes, his sister was here and I was getting a bit...

*Well you had done a lot of looking after by that time!*

Yes, I thought that may be that might work better and I put on a lot of weight and quite a bit of tummy and everything whilst I was looking after him and Bernti, being Bernti, wrote on his little machine "You have to lose 6 kilos before you can wheel my little wheelchair down the main street of Schwaz." So that put me back in my place.

*After Bernti passed and the years following his death, how did you come to terms with it? Did it take you a while?*

I came to St Anton because this was where we were going to be if we weren't going to be in Thredbo. You see, we were choosing between staying in Vermont, St Anton or Thredbo, though we spent the '76 season in Oberlech. It was a wonderful season, but when I first came back here, to St Anton after he died, I kept seeing him, like though

he was coming around every corner near Cafe Schneider. I kept thinking he was going to come around in a red parka around the corner.

*I can understand that.*

I feel very close to him when I go skiing.

*When you left Australia, before you established yourself here in Pettneu, did you live in Schwaz?*

No. We came on holidays here. The first holiday was when we did the memorial service. Then we went back and Tina and I came the next year for another holiday – six weeks or something. In the meantime we were looking around Byron Bay to find somewhere where we wanted to live because Thredbo wasn't an option. Jindabyne didn't appeal.

*Why was Thredbo no longer an option?*

Because I think I was too involved in the legal aspects of it, and I wanted to get the bastards, and I still do.

*That is an interesting aspect of the slide - because I think that the public perception was that it was one of these things that (just) happened, and you are sure there were mitigating factors - and why things happened - but they weren't connected with the individual decisions.*

Individual decisions, that's right.

*Now that we have covered this unfortunate aspect of your past, I think it is great to have it documented, your point of view, and it will be great to have the record put alongside this interview. Now to something positive, you have set yourself up in a beautiful, what would you call it in Austrian terms? In a dorf-haus*

A village house, a dorf-haus

*A dorf-haus, that you are slowly renovating, which will end up as a beautiful guest house.*

A small guest house for the over-50s mainly. I don't want too many ...

*That includes a lot of us.*

I always need a project, and with this house, there are endless projects.

*You bought it, in which year?*

Four years ago.

*Four years ago. It is now 2016, we are talking about 2012 and each year now...?*

It was a guest house in 1937. Before that it was a bakery. It took a long time to strip it back and to see what had to be done, and sort of work it out. It is funny there are lots of Australian ski bums in St Anton there are a whole lot of...

*Older ones as well!*



**'Hildesheim' Dorf 81 - Pettneu am Arlberg**

Oh yes! Well, we are talking about some of the young ones. If you are talking about the young ones, some of the young ones are probably aged about 52, 50 or so, anyway they treat me as one of their own. My carpenter is Ken from the Canberra area, and then there is Ken, the electrician – I think he came from somewhere up the North Coast. Then they have got their mates. We have smoko and it is like a building site in the old days in Thredbo.

*Having said that, it is obvious to people who read this interview, that Patricia has landed back on her feet and doing very much the very same type of projects that she did when she was a lot younger in Thredbo. And I take it that Bernti's - now in Thredbo – there are a lot of individuals that still remember him and were associated with Bernti's - even with different owners and different management, there is still that sense of history.*

Yes. Bernti wanted it to remain as Bernti's and he was very proud of it and it is good. I am sure he would be very happy about this. For my daughters and myself, I wanted to create the same type of life-style that we had in Thredbo without the financial problems that we had there. There are always people coming and going, and people coming to stay. It is a relaxed way of life. For Christina in particular, it has helped her settle down and be happy with the babies. They both love it, and they live their life as if they were in Thredbo. There is a great resemblance between St Anton and Thredbo, both of them being ski-bum-towns, and both of them having this wonderful change of the season.

*We have got to end this interview on that note, because the juxtaposition of those comments are extraordinary – because if we go back - because to that history of Tony Sponar – one of the founders who built Thredbo; he had a dream of building an international resort which happens to be Thredbo and here we are, my dear friend Patricia talking about the very opposite (in Pettneu), of building a dream in Thredbo which you and he did, Bernti's -----*

But Tony Sponar also started building up a ski resort in St Christoph with Frank Prihoda.

*Well I don't know about a ski resort, we are talking about a ski-lift, but you know where I am coming from - the irony of it- the juxtaposition.*

Well it is a small world and the six degrees of separation works very well here in the mountains. Every time you meet somebody, like Jerry the other night at the Mary Schwarzacher meeting who did we meet that knew Tony Sponar?

*Mario?*

That Mario.

*Editor's Footnote: (The above personal recollections, between the interviewer and interviewee, should be read in the context of sharing many mutual friends in St Anton over many years).*

*Oh yes Mario, and Tony Sponar, because that is remarkable, he looks a little bit older than us, but he must have been a teenager. On this note, I would like to thank you very much Patricia.*

I can tell you lots more.

*Thank you. On behalf of the Thredbo Historical Society, thank you.*

## **POSTSCRIPT- 1**

***Tricia had second thoughts as to her supposedly uncharitable comments - made about a few of the individuals in the latter part of the manuscript – and Tricia talked about editing the text throughout the year in 2017. This never occurred. I was fortunate to have met with her on January 8<sup>th</sup> 2018 and planned to edit the original manuscript. Sadly Tricia passed away just a few days later on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2018.***

## **POSTSCRIPT – 2**

***The only minor changes to the revised version relate to the individuals referred to in Postscript 1. The individuals who were connected to the ‘Thredbo Landslide Disaster’, who Tricia had already considered excluding from the original manuscript just before she died.***

***Natasha Hecher as the sole executor of the Hecher estate has also agreed to these exclusions. Furthermore Natasha has added (in purple), some personal commentary and relevant history related to the Georgl side of the family. (Bernti’s sister’s married name).***

*A few days before Tricia left us in a highly dramatic manner, she had a snow-blower delivered. Some insisted that there would be no need for such a machine in Pettneu, but of course she also had the last word on that. In the days following her passing a blizzard of epic proportions ensued, and as friends and family gathered from around the world in the guesthouse to rally and pay respects, the snow-blower was put to good use. In fact, the first slither of sunshine that we saw was as her remains were delivered to the church in Pettneu. Until the previous day the roads were closed and we were not even sure that the service would be possible on the 27th of January, 2018.*

*But the beautiful service did go ahead, and the church was full. My sister Tina and I ensured that the service was conducted in both Austrian and Australian as she was equally passionate about both. Following that we had a warm and casual wake at Gasthof Edelweiss which is owned by a young couple (Miriam being Austrian and Dave being Australian). Mum was very fond of the place, perhaps because not only is the mix of modern and traditional perfectly executed, but I suspect also that Miriam and Dave's projects reminded mum of her and dad starting up Berni's.*

*At the wake, Jerry presented me with Tricia's oral history for me to go through. It has taken me many months. Not due to laziness and procrastination, but the emotions it summons at times have been overwhelming. I can imagine her sitting there on a cold winter's day in the kitchen with Bruce the poodle lying at her feet regaling her history and adventures. I feel that Jerry was the perfect person to undertake the task, as due to their friendship she was honest and frank with her voice coming through.*

*Aside from the age part.*

*She was always very coy about her vintage, and at times asked me to please start lying about my age as I was making her look old. From then on, when people asked how old she was, I would respond, "Old enough to have a 30 year old daughter. She was a child bride". We also did not put her date of birth on the gravestone. We literally let her take it to the grave.*

*Many of the words above are a little too humble for my liking. She insinuates that she had other people look after our father, and whilst that is true she had help – such as dad's wonderful carer Otilia – she was relentless in her twenty-four hour care for him. Aside from spoon-feeding him, she had good looking young physiotherapists for him, ensured he had everything he needed and loved him unconditionally until his very last breath. She really was there until death did they part. All the while she was fighting for everything that she had created that had been taken off her.*

*Our mother was a formidable woman. She was wildly intelligent, incredibly beautiful and fiercely loyal as well as being my sister's and my closest friend and a loving grandmother to Raphael and Allegra.*

*Whilst we miss her on a daily basis; it brings me solace to know that she died at a very high point in her life, and there was no suffering or illness. She was never weak, and never will be.*

*Not to mention eternally young.*



***Tricia touring in France in 2017 with Bruce***



***Pettneu am Arlberg***



***Churchyard in Pettneu am Arlberg  
looking towards St Anton***