

Ken and Dave's Big Adventure 2001

In May and June of this year several things started to fall into place.

One, Bob Wilson was bringing his Chaparral trailer to Australia and it had nothing inside. It is a late model trailer that is a little wider than mine is. His trailer is leaving Vancouver in October for shipping to Oz. Currently it is empty.

Two, my 1965 Chevelle is still in Danny McCord's barn in Winchester Kentucky. The Chevelle will fit in Bob's trailer.

Three, my Mom is not feeling well and I have not seen her in six years and September is her 80th birthday.

Four, this is the 50th anniversary of NHRA and the US Nats are on in Indy in late August and early September and that will be big.

Five, the workshop is not all that covered up with work right now so I have a little spare time.

Six, I can buy some race car parts and put them in the car and luggage to bring home. I'll take photos along the way to document the trip but I decide to take my old film camera instead of the digital as the film format gives me more control and a guarantee of results as the digital format is good but I feel less sturdy in travelling situations. If you are reading this with no photos it is only because the film is not ready yet.

I organized a bunch of friends we can stay with on the way. This helps us reduce the cost of travel and increases the time we can have to catch up with old friends.

The weeks leading up to our departure I am writing and placing orders to suppliers in the US to have the parts shipped to Mom's house in Tampa where our trip will start in the US. We will fly Brisbane, Sydney, LA, Chicago, Tampa. Drive a rental car from Tampa to Kentucky where we will pick up the Chevelle (a 36 year old car that has not been started in 10 years) get the Chevelle running and then drive it to Vancouver (over 3000 miles) stopping at the US Nationals for 5 days along the way. Pack the car in Bob's Chappy hop a plane from Vancouver to LA to Sydney and then home to Brisbane. Easy if you say it real fast!!

Monday 20 August 2001

Close up loose ends; pack the bags and work on the update for the LFS book.

Tuesday 21 August 2001

Check to insure all the orders have shipped to Mom's house so they will be there when we get there. I work until 3:00am on the fuel book. Tracey should get it printed and shipped while I am gone.

Wednesday 22 August 2001

We are up at 5:00am to leave for the airport by 7:00 am. The flight to Sydney was uneventful (good) but when Dave and I got to the 747 we found the plane completely booked full - not one spare seat!!! They had seated Dave in the middle of the row and on the 747 there is NO LEG ROOM if you are 6'6" as Dave is. They tried to put him in an exit row where they had a little old 5' tall lady and even tried to pay her to move but she would not move. Dave could not move for the 14 and one half-hour flight to Los Angeles. He was like a bear with sore tooth and justifiably so. We cleared customs in LA and made our way to the terminal to catch the plane to Chicago only to find out the plane could not take off because of bad weather over Chicago. Several hours late it took off and we are on the way but a bit

concerned about our connecting flight to Tampa. As we approached Chicago the bad weather had not cleared and we circled Rockford for two hours. We were assured our connections to Tampa were still OK. The longer the plane circled the more I knew eventually it would come down soon; I just hoped it would be in Chicago where our connection to Tampa was. If it landed in a regional airport to escape the weather I knew we would miss our connection. Finally we do land in Chicago only to find out that United had cancelled 167 flights in and out of the busiest airport in the world - Chicago. Ours to Tampa was one of them. We hang out at the airport waiting for them to decide where they can find a plane and then an aircrew that can take us to Tampa. Finally 12 hours later we fly out of Chicago. The plane is not too full and Dave moves up to a forward seat where he can see out and have more room. The seat next to me is a guy with an Arabic accent and we chat all the way to Tampa. He seems like a nice guy and he has lived in the US for over 10 years. We arrive in Tampa at 3:15am and wait for my brother in law to pick us up. He does not show and I don't have his phone number with me. I know he is asleep at home on the couch. I can't fault him, as how could he know when we were coming when the airlines did not know when we would get there. For \$60.00US I book a taxi driven by a guy from Nigeria complete with the hat and clothes. I give him Mom's address but I can't understand him and he can't understand me and Dave is completely lost. He does not know where Mom's address is (though he said so when I booked the cab) and we are driving around in the dark looking for her house. I have never been to this house as she has moved since I saw here last so I am not much help. The cabbie is on the phone to his dispatcher asking for directions all the while mispronouncing Mom's street name, Dave and I had to keep repeating the street address so he would not give the dispatcher the wrong address. How hard is it to say "Big Pine Drive"? We stop at a servo and ask directions and wind up in the scrublands although I did not know where Mom's house was I knew this was not it. Finally we do find it and at 4:00am Dave and I reach our first destination on this trip. It only took 37 hours of travelling. Dave tips the cabbie \$20.00US by accident - he is still grizzly about that one!! We hit the sack upstairs and sleep until 11:30am



Thursday 23 August 2001

Photos of Mom and I in her living room. Mom and Sugar (now 21 years old-Sugar not Mom)

Up at 11:30am and check out the orders that have been shipped to Mom's house. Everything is there and the orders are all correct. I'm as surprised as you would be. I call the hose people to see if the hose I ordered is in and it is ready for us to pickup. I make a few phone calls to confirm with friends we will be visiting them along the way.



Shopping today to get the following. We get sleeping bags in case we need them along the way. Tools to work on the Chevelle along the way if we need to. Some gifts for Tracey and Sam.

Friday 24 August 2001

Dave and I borrow Mom's Thunderbird to drive to Bradenton and have a look at Mullis Race Cars.



They were very nice and gave us the tour. I am impressed with the amount of money spent on DYQ cars.

Locate the hose supplier so we can pick up the hose on Monday on the way out of town.

Saturday 25 August 2001

Final shopping for the road trip and lunch at Mom's

Sunday 26 August 2001

Photos of Lou, Ken and Bo and then Annie, Ken and Ethan



We have lunch with my sister Lou and her family and at dinner they ask how we are getting to Winchester where my Chevelle is and I explain we are renting a car and picking it up this afternoon. They have an 86 Saab turbo they want to get rid of and decide to give it to us for the trip and we will get the license transferred tomorrow morning and we can use it for the trip to Kentucky.



Monday 27 August 2001

We were to pick up the rental car this morning but set out to transfer the license for the Saab and spend a lot of time getting that done only to find out the license department is closed in Monday's. Bummer - we bolt off to pick up the rental car and leave about 11:30 am Our first stop is Daemons' shop in Leesburg. Dave and I both come away from there impressed as I count nearly 50 cars in production. The rows of aluminium race engines and complete aftermarket Powerglides ready to install impressed me as well. Business must be good.

We leave Garlits' Museum and stop at Sonny's Real Pit Barbeque and have a full slab of baby back ribs. Now we are ready to hit the road. After all it is only 3:30pm and it is 900 miles to where we have to go. As we drive through the night we are just barely travelling with the traffic as most are passing us and we are running about 90 mph (not KPH!!)

We encounter fog near Richmond Ky. and drive to Lexington and take I-64 east to Winchester. We get to Winchester through the fog and get to McCord's at 4:30 am and zonk out in the car in his driveway.

Tuesday 28 August 2001

After the sun comes up a couple of hours later Danny comes out and wakes us. We go in and have a shower to freshen up. Danny gives us the complete tour of the barn and



some of the cars in the barn. We pull the Chevelle outside and pull the cover off the top of the car. You should see the look on Dave's face. It says, "What have I got myself into?" We wash off the car getting most of the dirt off the car and hook up a battery to the car to see if it will go. We take a squirt bottle and fill the carb through the vents and crank it over. It hits!!!! It starts !!! but it does not keep running and we determine it is not getting fuel to the carb. We make a parts list and head into town to get the parts.

Danny takes Dave and I as well as the dog all in the front seat of his Chevy pickup. We pickup the parts and head back to the barn to work on the car. Change the oil and filter, top up the transmission, and check the air in the tires. The tires were new 10 years ago and although had good tread the side walls were slightly cracked. We decide to give them a go

and if we had to we would purchase new ones on the way to Vancouver (over 3000 miles away). We determine the fuel pump is OK but the new one does not just bolt on so we decide to make the new one work as it will be easier to install it here rather than on



the road. We find the fuel line back to the tank is clogged and a little bit of pressure blows it free. We decide to replace all the hose on the fuel line from the tank forward. It was a good choice. Add a fresh fuel filter and some gas (petrol) in the tank and it starts and runs purring like a kitten. I take the car out for a blast down the road and it runs well. Some mice have decided to make a home in the car and have pulled some of the padding out of the seats and one of them must have had a stroke or something as the body was still there. Probably died of old age or something.

Anyway it was a little (actually a lot) smelly so we took the seats out and gave the car a good clean from top to bottom. Most of the smell went away except for the last 20% but we can drive with the windows down.

After the Chevelle was clean and running good we packed all the gear out of the rental car into the Chevelle so we could drop it off tomorrow and save some rental dollars. Parts and suitcases filled the car. I had never had that much weight in the car and now we find the right fender just barely rubs the tire. I take the tire off and grind out the lip on the fender to get it to clear, bolt the wheel back and test to see if it clears. I have to do this at least six times so we have enough room.

Go to the house and have a shower before dinner.

Wanda cooked us a terrific meal and we sat down and had supper with the family. I love home cooking - you don't get food like this at a restaurant. After supper Danny and Wanda's two daughters came over for a visit. Angela 30 and Sherri 27 and we talked until just after midnight.

Wednesday 29 August 2001

On the way out of town we stop and get some rubber blocks to put in the rear coil springs to stiffen up the back a little bit. We drive to Lexington and drop off the rental car. Then we drive on to Cincinnati, along the way we stop for some Gold Star Chili. We locate Eric Hinderberger's new shop and next door is where Tim Osgood is working and who is visiting Tim at work is Mark Glaze. Hell- this could be



an afternoon back at the old LANDA when I had my shop here in Cincinnati ten years ago. It was so good to catch up with all the guys from years ago. There is a lot of history here. After we leave there we drive by Bill Floyd's house and Kim is home and Bill is on his way home. Bill, Kim, Dave and I go out for supper. We spend the night at Bill and Kim's house staying up late talking. These are some really terrific people.

Thursday 30 August 2001

Bill takes off work today and we chase around Cincinnati looking for parts deals. We go to John Davis's shop to say G'day as I haven't seen him in 10 years. We stopped at a petrol station in Elmwood Place and I saw one of my old service trucks from The LANDA Company I used to own here in Cincinnati. The name was not on the truck but it still had the distinctive paint and the lift gates and special tool boxes we made. We stop in and visit Barry Faxon at Faxon Machine - he too has done well for himself in the last 10 years.

Dave and I take the Chevelle out to Bill's shop so we can jack it up and put the rubber spacers in the rear coil springs to help the car ride a bit more level with all the load of the parts and luggage in the back.

Bill has decided to take off work for a few days now and go to the US Nats with us. Robbie Helton comes out and has a visit when he gets off work. Good to catch up with him after all these years. Rob has been helping my good friend Danny Townsend on his Top Alcohol Funny Car until Danny got fed up with NHRA and sold the car.



**Rob Helton, Kim Floyd, Bill Floyd, Dave Coles
Photo taken by Ken at Bill's Magnum Race Cars shop in
Cleveland Ohio.**

On the way from Cincinnati to Indy we have to drive by Indy Cylinder Head and I want to stop in and say hello to Russ and Fred Flagle the two brothers who own the shop. We get there just as they are closing and after they close they give us the full tour. The last 10 years have been good to them as well. They have grown to at least 400% of the size they were and still don't have a sign on the front of

the shop.

We get to the US Nationals about 8:00pm and they are still running the Super Comp cars (they have nearly 300 of them at this race). Bill Floyd's dad (Bill Floyd Snr) is running the staging lanes and he gets us a Guest Pass for the Chevelle to get it in at the races tomorrow. This is huge, as you cannot purchase a pass to get your car in at this race. Even if you are a racer then you only get one for your car. I meet my old Division Director, Jay Hullinger and he says he can get us some passes for a corporate seat for the race. I have to look him up tomorrow.

Bill, Kim, Dave and I get a room at a local motel for the night.

Friday 31 August 2001

Up early and off to the racetrack. We use our guest pass to get in the back gate and park the Chevelle at the end of the staging lanes.

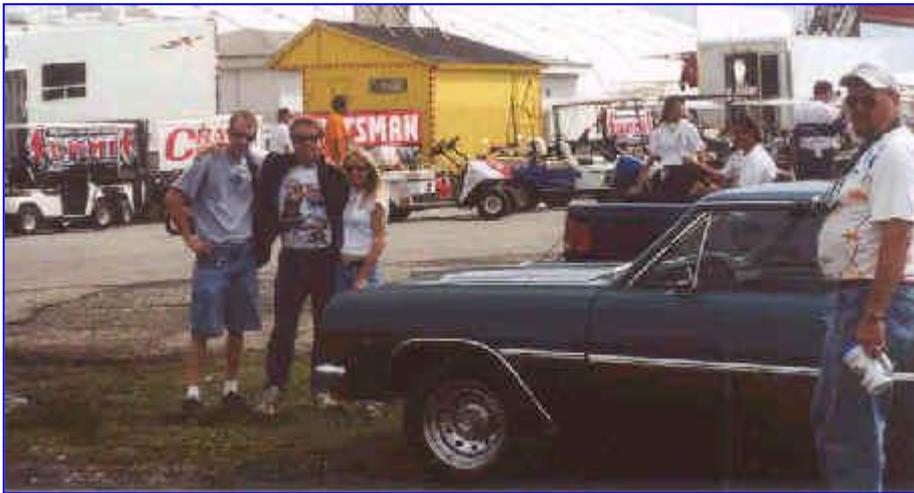


Photo from left to right Bill Floyd Jr, Ken Lowe, Kim Floyd, and Bill Floyd Snr.

Dave and I check in at Keith Starks and get the pit passes organized. Keith and I catch up on some old racing

memories.

Keith's crew situation is better than he thought it would be so our assistance is not critical. This gives us a little extra time to poke around and say hello to all the old friends here racing. After we are all squared away here I locate Jay Hullinger to organize our corporate passes. Jay takes Dave and I up into the tower to Race Central and we watch a round of Alcohol qualifying standing behind Buster.





Dave chatting with Jay Hullinger NHRA Div3 Director

I thought Buster quit after he left the starting line but not so. He is running the show from the air-conditioned seat in the tower. What a great job he is doing. With his radio in hand he conducts the

racetrack crew with the skill of an orchestra conductor. It is a thing of beauty to watch. Linda Vaughn comes over to say hello and her and Dave have a nice chat. Dave McClelland has a nice chat with us as well. After the first round of Alcohol qualifying Keith and I have a chance to sit down and have a nice chat, it sure is good to catch up. The day stretches into night and Dave and I hook back up with Bill and Kim. Different night, different motel.



Saturday 01 September 2001

Again up early and off to the track. Visit with Earl Datwiller, Mike and Janet Koksy, Duane Muelling, John Reynolds, Danny Townsend. One of the things that catch my attention is the price of food here in the US. I know the race is a closed market but \$12.00US for a hamburger and \$3.00US for a Coke is ridiculous.



Drag race crews at the US Nationals have reserved seating as part of their package. This is great as usually when you are racing you don't get to see a lot because when you get a chance to have a look there are no seats left.

Sunday 02 September 2001

Again up early and off to the track. Visit with Bob Stange at Strange in his motor home. Buckeye Ben takes us over for a feed of deep fried chicken breasts and all the beer we can drink.

"Buckeye" at the back gate chatting with Bill Floyd Snr "Buckeyes" pit where the beer and chicken are.

Monday 03 September 2001

Race day. Now everything counts up till this point it has just been qualifying. A couple more of Keith's normal crew arrives so Dave and I head for the seats for first round. Andrew Cowin and Keith Stark both win first round.

Andrew loses a very close race in the second round to Schumaker. After this round Dave and I head off for Cowin's trailer to have a chat before they pack up. Graeme and I chat in the lounge for nearly two hours. Subjects range from racing fuel today to the condition of drag racing back in Oz.

Keith is still in, going fast and not hurting anything - he goes on to win the race.
FYI - The following weekend he reset the A/FD record at 5.30 @ 273 mph

Tuesday 04 September 2001

Up early (again) pack and we are on the road. Drive north on I-65 to McKinney's shop. Dave and I visit for nearly 2 ½ hours, during which Murf shows us a few tricks, Dave even did a little welding there. We get back on the road by 11:30am. We stay on I-65 north to Chicago and turn west on I-80. We drive all day logging in 611 miles and stop in Council Bluffs Iowa. Our stop at McKinney's cut into our travel time but it was worth it.

Wednesday 05 September 2001

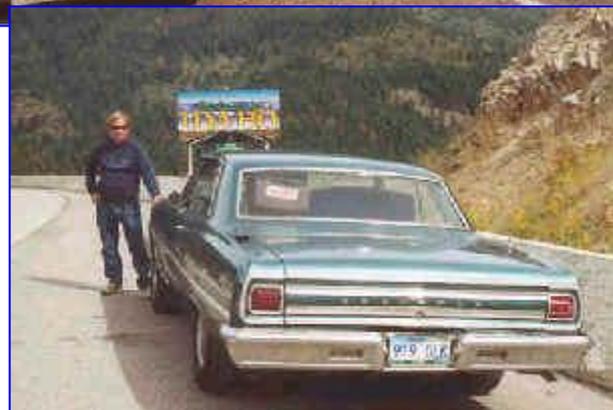
We hit the road at 4:50am to make up some time for yesterday. Stop in Sioux Falls South Dakota for breakfast at 7:00am. Travelling across the "Bad Lands" of South Dakota you get to see the rolling prairie like was shown on "Dances with wolves".



When we stop in Gillette Wyoming for fuel the bottom radiator hose is dripping but no coolant is missing so it must have just started. A twist with a screwdriver stops the drip. We have supper at Fudruckers in Billings Montana at 6:00pm. We drive until 9:00pm to Bozeman Montana and stay the night there. 990 miles today.



Ken standing next to the Chevelle in the Badlands of South Dakota. This is no place for your car to break down and the Chevelle only required a fuel filter change. What a good car. You might notice here that the car has Ohio plates on the front and Kentucky plates on the rear. The last time I drove the car before storage was when I lived in Ohio. The car was stored in Kentucky and I had to get Kentucky plates before I could drive it to Canada. In Kentucky they only



have rear plates as front plates are not required and they do not care what you have on the front. This info will develop into a little story later in the trip.

Going into Idaho in the Chevelle loaded to the roof with parts and race car stuff and a few clothes. If you have noticed that the chrome bezel around the left tail light is missing, it is



not as I have it in the glove box.

Thursday 06 September 2001

Hit the road at 6:55am and hit the continental divide (6832 feet) about 8:01am.

We are up in the clouds here.



The roads are very good but we now know why they are called the Rocky Mountains - there are some very big rocks here. At 9:55 we stop in Missoula Montana for breakfast. Up here in the mountains the air is quite cooler than it was down on the plains. At 5:30pm we stop in Ellensburg Washington after crossing the massive Columbia River. The river is so big it has white caps on the waves. The front end of the car had an alignment done to it when the new tires we installed (years ago) but I think the guy got it wrong. The outer edge of the right front tire is wearing prematurely so we stop and have the front tires rotated and keep going. At 6:30 we make Seattle at rush hour. Actually it is 5:30 as we are now in the Pacific Time Zone. We make our way to the I-405 North to the I-5 North towards Vancouver BC. I called Bob to say, "We are close". We exit the highway and cross the border at Sumas Washington and get on the Canada 1 towards Vancouver. As we get close I called Bob again and he talked us in right to his front door. 9:30pm - 842 miles today.

Friday 07 September, 2001

Bob is working today so Dave and I have a big rest. Wow do we need it. After work Bob and Tom take Dave and I out for supper and then a visit to a local "men's entertainment club". Now this was interesting - more interesting was to watch the "kids" (Tom and Dave).

View from Bob's apartment in North Vancouver looking over the water to Vancouver city.

View from Bob's apartment at night looking down on Lonsdale Ave towards the Quay.



Saturday 08 September 2001

Bob has to work so Tom picks us up and we drive out to Surrey and visit Mission raceway. No drag racing today but the road race motorcycles are there. Tom gives us the complete tour of a great racetrack. We go by and have a look at the trailer. It is buried in the back of a trucking company parking lot. The owner of the trucking company is a friend of Bob's and the trailer has been setting there for nearly 3 years since Bob has seen it. We ask him if he can get it move out so we can load the trailer with the car early next week. We all have supper at the White Spot.



Bob's Chappy where it has been setting for the last 3 years.

Ken and Tom at Mission Raceway -



Dave's taking the photo.

Sunday 09 September 2001

Dave and I did laundry today while

Bob was at work and after work the four of us went to a Chinese restaurant for supper.

Monday 10 September 2001

Bob is working today so Dave and I visit the big "Q" at the end of Lonsdale down at the pier. Trendy mall with lots of shops. We have lunch there. Dave and I do a bit of laundry and when Bob gets home we have supper at the White Spot restaurant

Tuesday 11 September, 2001

Bob has gone to work very early and left Dave and I asleep. I am awakened early by a phone call from Bob at work telling me to turn the TV on to CNN - NOW!!! As I do the image of the World Trade Center building with a big hole in the side and the building on fire appears. As the information develops we are all glued to the television and incredibly we see a second airline turning toward the WTC and watch in horror as flies into the center of the building.

More developments show an airliner hitting the Pentagon and crashing in Pennsylvania. We come to the immediate conclusion we will not be leaving for home tomorrow because the proverbial "shit has hit the fan". Our predictions come true as all the airports are locked down. We, like the rest of the world is glued to the television all day.

Wednesday 12 September 2001

North America is under lock down; every time you drive somewhere there is a roadblock. You should have been there when Dave and I went through one at Mission when we were putting the Chevelle in the Chap. If you remember the car was originally registered in Ohio where I lived at the time. I registered the Chevelle in Kentucky where it was stored for the last 10 years (Danny McCord's barn). Kentucky does not require a plate on the front of the car so when I put the new Kentucky plate on the rear I left the Ohio one on the front. Whoops!! As I drove up with Ohio plates on the front the officer asked me about the seat belt I was not wearing. Whoops!! Then he asked about the registration and insurance papers for the car. I handed them to him (with the Kentucky info) then he looked at my Florida driver's license ??? - Now he asked why I had Ohio plates on the car (front) and Kentucky (rear) and where I lived. This really freaked him out when he asked where I lived and I said "Australia" – pondering for a moment he responded "You could not make up something this weird", told me to put on my seat belt, move the beer from the back seat into the trunk (boot) and go. We got to leave and never had to get stripped searched. I think we were lucky but then Dave and I do not look Arabic. We stopped at Princess Auto Supply to get some larger ratchet ties to lock the car down with. We loaded the car in the Chap with at least 1" of room to clear !!!! Top Alcohol racer Ken Rempel owns the trucking company where the trailer was stored. Ken came out and had a chat with us and showed us around. His and Bob Wilson's friend across the road from the trucking company is Leo Grocock . Leo runs the Drag Racing School here in the Northwest so we had a few notes to compare on the school stuff. I tried to talk Ken into bringing his TAD and trailer to Oz to race. Sounds like a good idea to me.

Chevelle is loaded with goodies (parts and tools) and all strapped down in the back of Bob's trailer all ready to be loaded on the ship for the trip to Oz.

Bob's Mom takes Dave and I to the Salmon House for dinner. It is a very nice upscale restaurant in West Vancouver. I order the Chef's special Salmon and am not disappointed very nice seafood.

Thursday 13 September 2001

On the phone all day trying to get info to see when we are going to be able to fly. I speak to no one, just listen to busy signals on every phone number we have. Looks like we are not flying tomorrow either.

Bob and Tom take Dave and I out to dinner at the Boat House. Again a very nice restaurant and I had the Blackened Halibut - it was a good choice as it was very nice.

Friday 14 September 2001

Again on the phone this morning I have phone numbers of every airline but to no avail just a busy signal, just like yesterday. Wait finally I get to talk to a real person the best she can do is book us on a flight for 19 September and gives us a confirmation number. You know that that confirmation number is worth ?? Zip, if they cancel the flight and most of the flights these days get cancelled. Then we have to rebook at the back of the queue and that will no doubt be 3-5 days. More is the US has geared up for war by that time.

I talk to Tracey and she has us on a plane on the 18th with a confirmation number as well. If we get on the first plane on the 18th then we will cancel the second booking but we will hold on to both bookings just in case the 18th flight gets cancelled.

Here we sit at Bob's unit just waiting to get to leave. Of the 36 planes that sat down on that awful day only 9 have left so far and none to the USA.

We are supposed to leave on 18th but I don't actually hold much hope. Each day thousands of people queue up to get a plane and each day they are turned back - it's a mess. They have set up tents in the parking lot to hold the people not able to get into the ticket desks in the terminal. They are passing out water and sunscreen to everyone as well. I feel like Sam will be ready for uni when I get home. The "Hill" is looking pretty good right about now. I went out to the grocery store last night and got some food so we are stocked up for a couple of days. The Chevelle is loaded in the Chap so we are without transportation (except feet) so we don't go too far during the day. Each evening we do something. Last night Tom and Dave went to Mission for the street races where Dave was hailed as the exalted guest from down under on the public address system. Bob and I went and picked up his new computer chair and had dinner and went to the grocery store. Tracey's computer is down so I can't even send her email.

Saturday 15 September 2001

I decide to write the story of the trip. I spend all day on the computer. Dave had a big night last night so he spends most of the day asleep on the couch.

Dave and Tom go out for drinks and Bob and I go to the sub shop for a sandwich. We all meet back at the unit and watch some more CNN until we go to bed at 11:00pm.

Sunday 16 September 2001

I awoke this morning to see nothing but fog. A quick check of the Vancouver airport web site (www.yvr.com) shows that there are no flights into the US yesterday and today's are cancelled. I'm fretting over if the local airport will be flying into US air space when we are due to do so (Thursday). I know the girls on the phone at United are working hard and doing the best job they can, but they sit at a computer terminal and I have little doubt they are NOT at Vancouver Airport. I am not sexist, but I want to talk to someone with a penis. I

called the maintenance department at Vancouver airport and when a guy answered I apologized and explained what I wanted to know. Are any planes taking off from Vancouver to the USA. He said absolutely not and that they had over 5000 people backed up there. Decision time.

I then called United Airlines and finally get through to a person instead of a machine and I learn that today the first planes left from San Francisco today for Australia and Singapore. If we can get to San Francisco by tomorrow night (it's only a thousand miles) then we can get out from there. The next problem is that we cannot rent a car and drive it across an international border and drop the car off in another country. We have to find someone to drive us to Seattle and pick up a rental car from there to drive to San Francisco. Bob gets off work today at 4:00pm and very kindly drives us to Seattle where our rental car is booked. We get to Seattle about 8:00pm and pick the car up and say "Good by" to Bob. He has been terrific putting us up for all this time and very generously allowing us to invade his life and take over his house. Dave and I drive until we can go no further and stop about 2:00am at Eugene Oregon and get a room for the night.

Monday 17 September 2001

Awake, showered and on the road. We want to get to SF several hours before the boarding time, as we are concerned about having enough time to get cleared. Driving down I-5 to San Francisco we pass Mt Shasta.

When it first appears off the left side window of the car it looks like an ordinary mountain with a bit of snow on top (remember it has been summer here for 5 months). As you drive past even after three hours on the road... Mt Shasta is still there – damn it is big.



Photo of Mt Shasta in northern California.

Along the way we stop in Redding California for lunch and eat on the road to save time. We arrive in SF just after 5:00pm and catch the rush hour traffic. The airport is on the west side of town and the main interstate highway is on the east side of town. The drive to the airport is about 70 miles and we have to negotiate local traffic to get there. Note: San Francisco has a suburb of Brisbane!!! We had to drive by it on the way to the airport but there is not much there except a big railroad yard. After we get to the airport at about 7:00pm we walk easily through airport security with no waits or no dramas. Go figure?? Our plane boards at 10:35pm so we have some time to wait. Once on the plane I introduce myself to the girl setting next to me. Turns out she lives on the Gold Coast and works in Oxenford (where I live) we have a nice chat on the way back home I learn from her that she was in New York when the terrible event occurred. She said a few days after the event she made her way

downtown to have a look. She got within 4 blocks and saw the steel sticking up and it made her so sick she just turned around and left.

Tuesday 18 September 2001

Because we were travelling forward in time, this day lasted only a few hours while we were asleep on the plane.

Wednesday 19 September 2001

We get to Sydney at 6:00am and go through customs. Now we have to find a plane that will get us to the Gold Coast as while we were away Ansett Air lines has gone bankrupt and our United tickets were covered by Ansett. A little searching found that we could get some seats on Qantas, which had taken over some of the Ansett routes. Our plane did not leave until 2:00pm so we had some time to kill. We made the plane and arrived in Brisbane at 4:30pm. We got home by 5:30 and I'm a little out of phase but very glad to be home. I'm asleep by 7:30pm

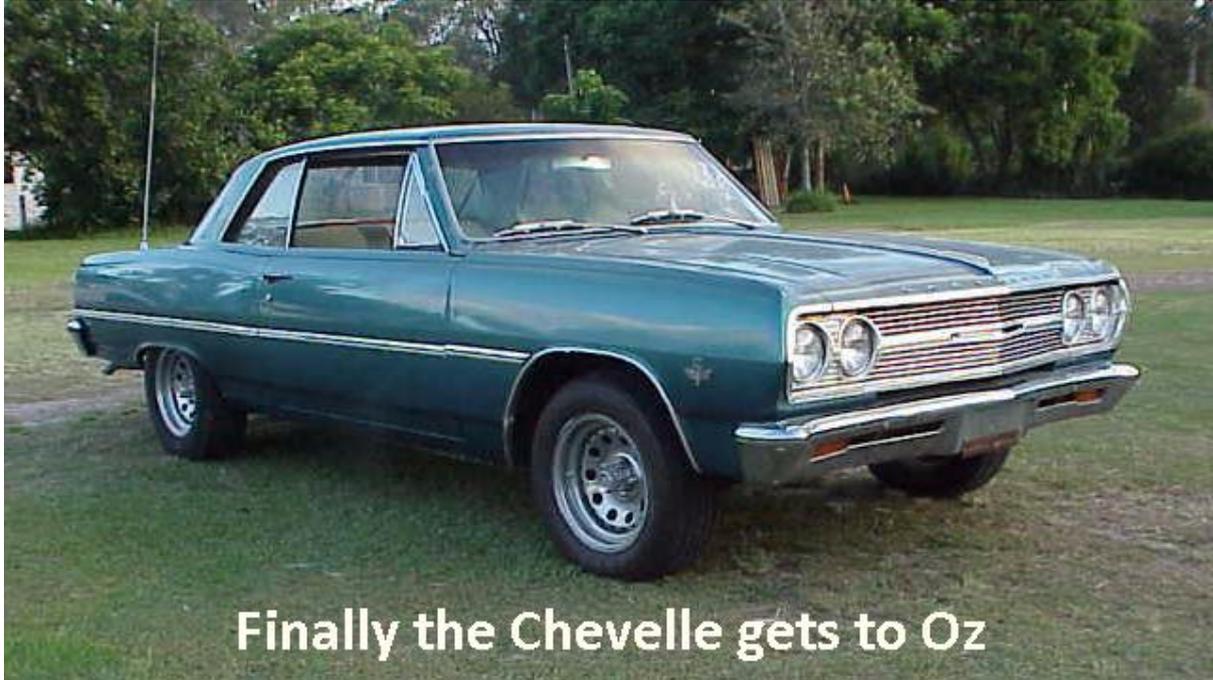
Thursday 20 September 2001

I awake at 4:30am (still dark outside) have a shower and go for a walk around the property to see what has been going on while I was away. Our 2001 adventure is over and the settling back in to a normal routine is slowly going to happen. I'm looking forward to it.

Update to the story.

The Chevelle and trailer were to be shipped in October 2001 and arrive either in late October or early November 2001. I ordered a disk brake kit and sway bar kit for the Chevelle and had a bunch of part in the car to be shipped with it. In fact it sat there over the winter and in the spring Bob decided to lease the trailer out and someone removed the car and parts from the trailer and put them in someone's workshop. I am not sure how long the trailer was leased out and how long it sat in someone's workshop but after a year or two the car was put back in the trailer and stored in Cousins Transport shipping yard. After dozens of phone calls and emails to Bob the trailer and car was just never shipped. Eventually in 2007 I was finally able to contact Ken Remple at Cousins Transport and ask him if he knew about my car. He said he did and that someone had broken into the trailer and it looked like someone was sleeping in the car so he moved the car to a friends of his that is a auto shop teacher and had a barn full of cars (sounds all so familiar doesn't it) and that is where the car was as the time. I asked Ken if he would put the car in a container for me if I had a container dropped at his door, he said he would and did after I had the container dropped off. Too bad almost all the parts were missing and a lot of tools but at least I had someone in Canada that would pack it for me.

21 January 2008 I pick up my Chevelle from the shipping company here in Brisbane. We put it on a trailer and bring it to the workshop where we unload it. It won't start because the



battery is dead so Wiggy cajoles me to stick a fresh battery on and start it up which we do and take it for a burn down the road. What a cool car, still goes good too.

