

1956

CHAPTER 50
TRIP TO AUSTRALIA.

The year 1956 brought us one of the greatest experiences of our lives, a trip to Australia. It was Hedy's greatest wish to see her brother Erich again and his wife Lisl and the two children, John and Aviva. Before we left, we took Johanna to a camp, where she was again working as a counsellor. The planning was not too good, as we did not think of it that Australia was on the southern half of the hemisphere and that there was winter there. Fortunately, the winter in Australia and especially in that part, where Sydney is, is rather mild and we could enjoy it very much.

We went first to Los Angeles and stayed there for 5 days in the Hotel Ambassador on Wilshire Boulevard, visiting with Hella Leinkauf, Maurice Ziegler, and also, since we had rented a car, with Leo and Ella Ziegler, who lived north of Los Angeles

in Santa Ynez, where we spent 2 of the 5 days. It was a special pleasure to see them again and be with them again, also with Maurice and Hella. Paul Bruell was at that time Hella's guest, and we went with him on a trip to the Marineland.

The 5 days were over and we left for Hawaii, which was again a wonderful experience. We stayed there in the hotel Moana. The weather was pleasant and we went every day for a swim. Right on the first day, Hedy got a very bad sun burn. She had the idea of going out on a surf board, lying on her belly. But she went too far out and it took her a long time to paddle with both hands back. It was an enormous sun burn, but in 2 or 3 days the skin had calmed down again. We went on a picnic, arranged by the hotel, were driven along the coast quite far, passing at the foot of the famous Diamond Head. The Hawaiians called it pikiniki, and they offered excellent food and entertainment, with Hula-girls, of course. I loved the Hawaiian singing. On one of the next days we went on an arranged tour to the Botanic Garden, to the Dole pineapple factory, to a tunafish cannery, and to a wood-cutting shop.

For the 4th day in Hawaii, I had planned a fishing trip. Hedy had the sun burn and had to stay in the hotel anyway. It was a trip that was announced for days, but there were only three participants, including me. We went out quite far. The sea was rough and I was not too well prepared for it and got sea sick. But I somehow could overcome it and enjoy it. The ocean was simply beautiful. For a long time, there was no strike, for more than two hours. But then, suddenly, there was a strike; it was a dolphin, one of the most beautiful fishes. I took a picture, which showed the beautiful blue

and green fish, going in long strides from left to right and then again from right to left, but getting closer and closer, till it could be hooked with the gaff, pulled out and dropped into a big crate in the floor, after the cover was removed. It weighed about 25 pound. Right afterwards another strike, this time apparently a bigger fish, putting up a strong fight. I was the one to handle the reel, and it required much work to get the fish closer to the boat. The captain was there and hooked him finally with the gaff and brought him in. It was a wahoo, about 25 pounds in weight, a fierce fish and a very fast swimmer. The captain had difficulties to take the hook out of the mouth of the fish, as it wiggled very much. The hook was finally out, but the captains finger was caught by the hook and injured. He dropped that fish also into the crate and had then to run to the steering wheel, as the boat was going in a circle, to bring it back under control. I felt that I should take care of his wound, as a doctor, and went out to him. It was not too bad an injury, and a clean handkerchief was wound around the finger and the hand. Then something very bad happened. I went back to the deck and had not noticed that the captain had not put the cover, which was a part of the floor, back over the crate, and I fell with one foot into the deep crate. In the fall, I stretched out my right arm, otherwise my head would have hit the floor, and stopped the fall, but felt a terrible pain in my shoulder joint. I knew immediately that I had dislocated my arm, that the head of the humerus was out of the joint. But I knew what I had to do: I relaxed my arm muscles, bent forward and wiggled the arm, and, miraculously, the head of the humerus snapped back into the socket. The re-

maining pains were not too bad. Later on the sea was very rough and I got again seasick and had to bend over the edge of the boat to vomit, holding on to the vertical post, and a moment later the boat moved sharply to one side, while I was holding on to the post, and that caused again a dislocation of the arm. The same as before, I relaxed my muscles, bent forward, wiggled my arm, and the head of the humerus snapped again back into the socket. I don't exaggerate; this happened two more times, since I had to hold on to the boat on account of the rough sea. We caught afterwards also a big white marlin, at least 100 pounds in weight. We all were happy, when the boat finally pulled into the harbor and we could get off. Before that, while we were still out, I had put down on paper the names of the captain and of the two other passengers. We took pictures of the fish, hanging down from hooks, and of the proud passengers and left. I went straight to my hotel, and afterwards there was still time to go to a doctor, who took X-ray pictures and put my arm into a sling.

By the way, on that same day in the evening, we had dinner in a fine restaurant and I asked the waiter for the best fish she would recommend. She said "mahi-mahi." She brought a big plate for both of us with creamed fish, and it was the finest we had ever eaten. We found then out that it is dolphin, which they call there mahi-mahi.

The next day, I went again to the doctor, and he wrote a report and gave it to me, also the X-ray picture, which showed that a piece of bone, where the tendon of a muscle - the latissimus dorsi muscle - was attached was broken off. That meant that the muscle, which is important for certain movements of

the arm, was left without attachment to the bone. This remained that way for the rest of my life, but had in reality no bad consequences.

The next day, we continued our flight to Australia. It was a very long trip and the airplane made two more stops. The first stop was 2000 miles south of Honolulu on Canton Island, a tiny island in the Phoenix Islands group, situated exactly on the equator. It was early in the morning, which was good, as it was not hot and we could walk around and look at the plants. Most of them were of the ginger family. We then continued our flight and we landed after many hours at Nandi airport on Fiji. That was quite interesting, as we saw there people of different types, Polynesians, Indians, and Chinese. The Polynesian men were wearing an enormous amount of hair, standing up, almost a foot wide, around the head, and the Indian women were wearing long saris, almost all of them with children on their arms. We bought there beautiful brooches, made from mother of pearl, in the shape of sea horses, and we were served in the waiting room black coffee and refreshments. On that trip we lost one day, as we ended the day, let us say on a Thursday, and the next day it was Saturday.

When we arrived in Sydney, a crowd of about 10 people was there, waiting for us. Erich and Lisl we knew, but not the children John and Aviva. There were Claire Schiller and Walter Ziegler, whom we knew from Vienna, her husband Hans, his brother Kurt Schiller and his wife Grete, and their son Peter, and there was also Mr. Star, whom we had met, long ago, when he came to Vienna. He was there for a short time my patient. There was much joy and kissing. There was another young man there, who

was not related to us. I don't remember who it was, but I was later told that I had kissed him also. So, there was still more reason for laughing.

We spent four extremely pleasant weeks there. There were parties after parties, invitations to the homes of friends, of Walter and his wife, and Renee, the daughter of Emmy and Walter Meisl, and many excursions. It was July and winter, but they have never snow there. In the South, in the Alps, near the capital Canberra, there is snow and people go skiing there, but otherwise there is no snow anywhere in Australia. But it was cold in Sydney, the temperature around 40 degrees Fahrenheit, and it was necessary to wear a sweater, even in the house, which was not well heated, and a coat outdoors. The Zieglers lived in a suburb, Auburn, quite far from the center of the city. They had there a nice house with garden, and the doctors office was in the same house. Erich had a very busy practice, since it was winter, and Lisl was helping him with the paperwork, was quite efficient. John was a pleasant young man, about 14 years old, very sympathetic, helpful, and friendly. I gave him my camera and that made him very happy. Aviva was lovely, about 10 years old, full of kindness. For the nights, we had a room in a house next door, terribly cold, when we went to bed. But in the morning, Aviva came, before going to school, to wake us up with a kiss. She would not give me a second one. Then we got a fine breakfast from Mrs. Evans, a lovely old lady, which included always a little lamb chop. They were good friends of the Zieglers and held them in high esteem. Erich was all the time on the run, when not in the office, on house calls and visits in the hospital, and he took me along on some of his

trips to see interesting patients. They all adored him. At home, at the meals, he showed special kindness towards his children. On a warm day, there was a garden party in our honor, and all the good friends came. I took plenty of movie pictures. Lisl took us out on trips, one of the first to the Paramatta Zoo, where we could see the first Koala bears, platypusses, and touch kangaroos, which were running about freely. Hedy tried to touch the young one, which had stuck its head out of its mothers pouch, but that she did not allow and pushed her hand gently away. Otherwise you could stroke the kangaroos. Lisl had arranged a trip for Erich and us to a hotel in Katoomba in the Blue Mountains, about two hours from Sydney. We stayed there for three days with him alone, and made also a trip from there to the Jelonan Caves, quite far away. On the way back, he took us to Warragamba, where he had lived for 3 or 4 years and worked as a doctor. It was a position with a fixed salary for the workers, who were building an enormous dam for a water reservoir for Sydney. We could see the work, while in progress, also the house, where he and the family had lived, when the children were still small. Later, we made other trips, one of them to Wiseman's Ferry, driving through country of almost endless stretches of orange and grapefruit trees. Otherwise, the main tree of that part of the country is the Eucalyptus, wherever you looked, and a little less common the Norfolk pine, which we knew from Europe as the Araucaria, but only as small houseplants. One of the most common birds, besides sparrows and pigeons is the magpie and less common the pee-wee, of the size of a robbin, and the Kookaburra, the laughing jackass, one of the most loved birds of Australia. The Zieglers had two cars,

a little French car and a Holden, the English Ford. I drove that car too, a few times, got accustomed to drive it on the left side of the road, with the steering wheel on the right side, and went even the long way from Auburn into the city along George Street, also called the Western Highway. A very interesting trip was to the Sydney Zoo, where I again saw Koalas, and a leopard-seal, a very dangerous animal, as ferocious as a leopard, living on seals. It can also run very fast on land, and a man, pursued by a leopard-seal, is lost, since the seal can run faster. We could see there also the emus, a relative of the ostrich, flying foxes, quite common in Australia, but also hated, because they eat the fruits in the gardens, also Echidna or spiny ant-eater, which, like the platypus is an egg-laying mammal. The young animals are carried around in a temporary pouch. They are not mammals, belong to a special group of animals, the monotremes. The platypus has a beak like a duck and the spiny ant-eater a tube-like beak. We could see in that zoo also the Kiwi, which lives in New Zealand.

One of the friends of the Zieglers was Mr. Weiss, whom we knew in Austria at the time, when we went with the ski club to Annaberg, way back in 1923, and now we saw him again, 37 years later, and he and his wife took us once on a long trip to Palm Beach north of Sydney. Once the Zieglers took us to a concert of the violinist Isac Stern. I remember that there were 4 or 5 electric heaters on the podium, as it was winter-time and not enough heat in the house.

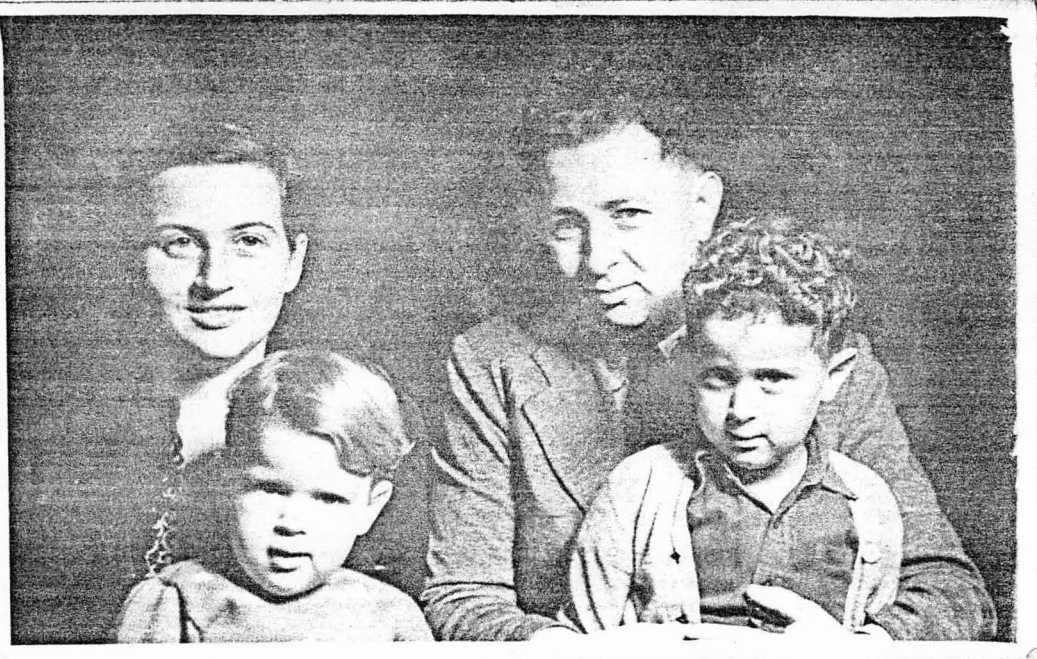
Once Aviva came home from school and told us that she had told the teacher or the principal that an uncle and aunt had come from America to visit with her family, and that we were

invited to come to the school the next day for a visit. When we did that, we were introduced to the principal and teacher and then were asked to wait in the school yard at the top of a staircase. Then a phonograph started to play a march and out of the building children came marching, first the whole class of little ones, then bigger ones, and stopped in front of us in nice order in groups of eight rows, till the whole school yard was filled with a few hundred children. We were standing there like the president and his wife of a foreign country, and there was no way out for me than to give a speech. What else could I have told them without any preparation than how beautiful their country is, how we liked it, how different many things were from other parts of the world, the animals, the plants, the flowers, and that they can be proud to live in such a civilized country. More or less something like that. We were then invited to a cup of tea with the principal and some teachers. I have the whole scene of their marching on a movie film. That was quite an experience. One longer trip we made with Russell Evans and his wife Hilda, who had come from their home in Cronulla, and his mother, our landlady, in his car to Wollengong, the Pittsburgh of Australia, south of Sydney, and we saw many interesting things, among others the blowhole, where the ocean water shot high up into the air every half minute or so.

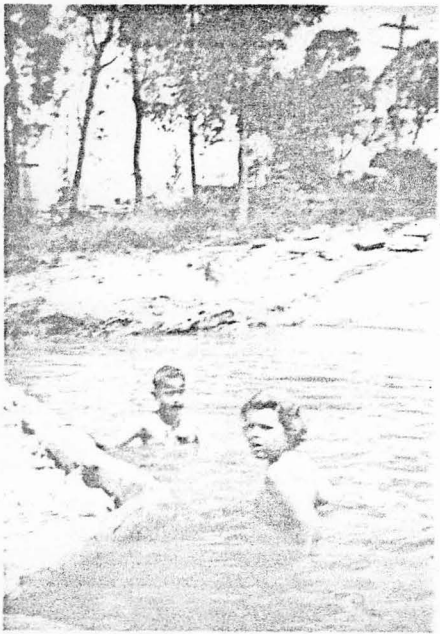
Once Lisl took us to Botany Bay, the entrance to Sydney harbor, and we saw there some aborigines. One of them, who was selling among other things boomerangs, with pictures of animals burned in, showed us how he could throw the boomerang in such a way that it returned to him. He was successful on

the third throw, not on the first and second. I then bought one from him, and now one of my grandchildren has it. On that excursion we came also to a kind of a memorial-stone with an engraving of the name of count Jean Francois de La Perouse, a famous French navigator, who left on his last expedition in 1788 from that place, never to return anymore.

There came finally the sad day of our departure on about the 28th of July, 1956, when almost all of the relatives and some friends had come to bid fare-well to us. On the way back we landed at Nandi airport on Fiji Island, then on Canton Island, where we picked up some very large and heavy shells, and finally in Honolulu. One day had passed on that trip, but the calendar did not show it. We had left Sydney on Friday at 3 in the afternoon, and we arrived in Honolulu on Friday at 3 in the afternoon. In that way we gained back the day, which we had lost on the way to Australia. In Honolulu everybody was sent to hotels and we were sent to our hotel Moana for almost the entire day, as no plane was available for the continuation of our flight. The airline paid the bill for the meals in the hotel. It was nice to sit at the seashore again in Hawaii. In the evening we continued our flight, and went this time to San Francisco, where we had arranged a ren-dez-vous with Hella Leinkauf, and we spent three days there, visiting the city, the China-town, and many other interesting places, again with a rented car, also went to San José to visit some friends of Hella, whom we also knew from Vienna, made also a trip to Auklând across the San Francisco bay, and to Piedmont, where we visited some friends of ours, who had long ago moved to California. Finally, we left for home and Hella for Los Angeles. It was



The Zieglers in Australia. March 1947.



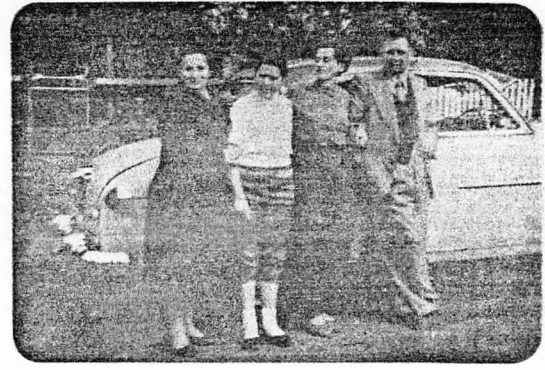
Aviva and John. 1950.

for us a marvellous, unforgettable trip.

At home, we found the house and garden in good condition, and life continued as before. The practice had not suffered and I became soon as busy as before. Busy also with the movie films, having them developed and then spliced in 4 big reels, showing them during the next few months to friends and also at bigger gatherings at our Ethical Society and our Physicians Club. As to the accident on the boat trip in Hawaii, where I had dislocated my right shoulder, I handed the case over to a lawyer, a friend of mine, who handled it very well with the result of a settlement of \$ 2250.-, of which the lawyer kept \$ 500.-, and I got the rest. It was quite satisfactory, and the sum, which I received paid for the fare to Australia and more, almost the entire expenses of the trip.



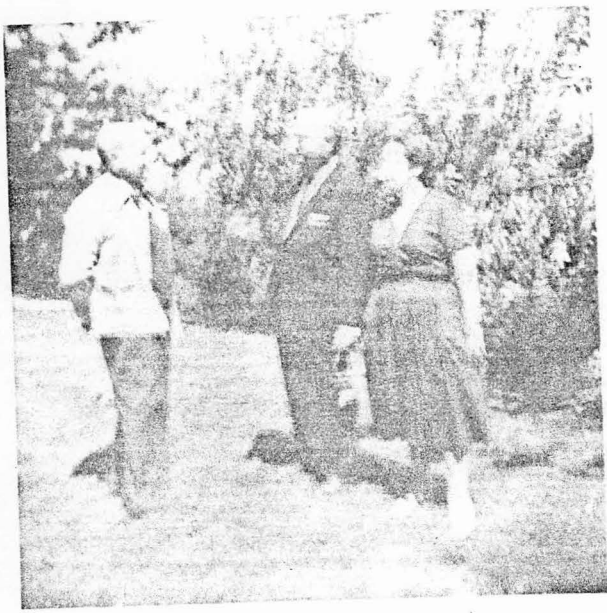
John Ziegler. 1955.



1956



With John and the Evans on a trip to the South



Leo Ziegler with Adolph and Hedy
in Santa Ynez



Ella Ziegler

