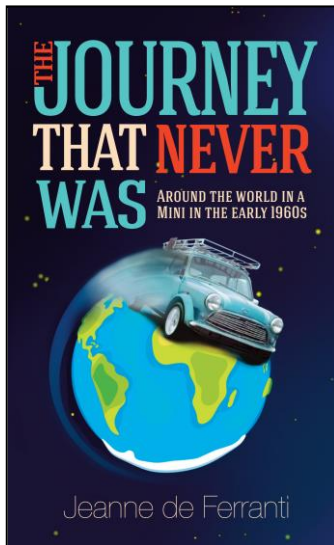


## MEREO NEW BOOK: PRESS RELEASE

The first-ever round-the-world journey in a Mini was made by two intrepid, young British women between 1961 and 1963. Now one of them tells their story for the very first time.

PUBLICATION DATE: May 2015



# THE JOURNEY THAT NEVER WAS

## AROUND THE WORLD IN A MINI IN THE EARLY 1960S

by Jeanne de Ferranti

*"The Morris Mini-Minor, a British icon of the 1960s, was designed for BMC (the British Motor Corporation) by Sir Alec Issigonis in 1959 ... My father loved it and so, on my twenty-first birthday, I became the proud owner of a pale blue Mini. I christened her Honey. She was my passport to freedom ..."*



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(Also available as an ebook)

This new book tells the true story of Jeanne and Jane who in 1961 (in their early twenties) set off from England in a Mini to drive to Australia. Displaying a mixture of optimistic innocence, immense courage and sheer determination, they ended up driving around the *whole* world on the adventure of a lifetime.

However their story was never reported in the newspapers or on the radio or TV and they never made it into any record books. Very few people knew what they had achieved. Jeanne's parents had discouraged any publicity and, on returning to England, it seemed to Jeanne and Jane as though their adventure had never actually happened – and so it became known as "The Journey that Never Was."

Now, almost 55 years later, working from her diaries, photos and letters-home from the time, Jeanne (who went on to become the first female British helicopter pilot) recounts what really happened on that two-year trip around the world in the days before mass tourism had developed.

*5<sup>th</sup> September 1961 – Honey the Mini (plus Jeanne and Jane) board a flight from Lydd Airport to Le Touquet, France at the start of their two-year round-the-world adventure >*



For two years Jane and Jeanne slept in a bivouac on the roof rack of the Mini; they dealt with mechanical breakdowns in remote places; survived a road accident in Turkey; dealt with thirst, hunger, illness, money-problems, bureaucratic red tape, language difficulties and petty thefts – as well as unwanted attentions from men who thought that Western women were 'fair game'. They even fought off a knife-wielding, would-be rapist.



Nonetheless, along the way the girls also experienced much kindness, generosity and hospitality from ordinary people of all cultures and faiths. They learned a great deal about other people – and about themselves.

*"I now realize how privileged we were to cross continents without any restrictions, to visit places of interest, cathedrals, mosques and monuments without prior bookings or battling with tour groups. Western-style hotels and fast food chains had not yet proliferated in far-flung places. Two girls travelling alone in a Mini were a novelty, and people took delight in helping us."*

< Jeanne (left) and Jane pictured in 1962 on their journey

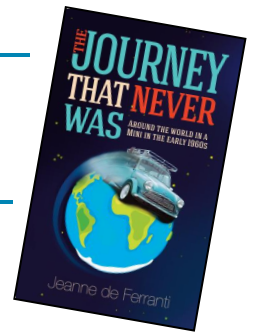
**Please see over for more photos and further information >>>>**



To request a review copy or to be put in touch with the author, please contact Elly Donovan PR  
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## MEREO NEW BOOK: PRESS RELEASE continued

### THE JOURNEY THAT NEVER WAS: Around the World in a Mini in the Early 1960s by Jeanne de Ferranti



*"I heard a rumble and roaring. The ground started to lurch and shake, like a ship plunging deep into the troughs of an angry sea. I felt dizzy and stood rooted to the ground, hanging onto the basin to steady myself. Suddenly it dawned on me that this was an earthquake."*



#### Jeanne & Jane's early 1960s journey in the Mini took them to:

- France • Switzerland • Italy • Greece • Turkey • Persia (Iran) • Pakistan
- India • Ceylon (Sri Lanka) • Australia • New Zealand • Fiji • Hawaii
- Mexico • The USA • and Canada

The journey took place at a time when few people had a television and there were few documentaries about life in other countries. Mass tourism had not yet been invented and foreign travel was rare. And, of course, there was no internet to help with their research before or during the journey.

When Jeanne and Jane embarked on their journey, they had very little notion of what to expect in some of the countries they were to visit. They knew little about the cultures of South Eastern Europe, The Middle East, Asia, Australasia or The Americas. What they discovered was a revelation and an education. The book contains rich descriptions of the places visited – the architecture, the scenery, the food, the clothes, the traditions and local history. The girls met people of many different faiths and Jeanne has included fascinating descriptions of places of worship and religious ceremonies.

*"The generosity we encountered was fantastic. Everyone was so helpful, insisting that it was their duty to do so; that it was an honour to invite us for a meal or to give us accommodation. Unable to thank them enough, we gave them our home addresses and invited them to visit us in England, should they ever travel to our country."*

The two women camped as much as possible to save money but they also received hospitality from people they befriended along the way – people of all nationalities and cultures.

*Campers' laundry day in the Mexican Desert >*



#### About the author:



**Jeanne de Ferranti** was born in London and brought up in Cheshire. She was educated at schools in France, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal and London – as well as spending one year at University in Germany. After her journey around the world in a Mini, Jeanne went on to become Britain's first female helicopter pilot. She married an architect and, after seven years in the Middle East, they and their four children settled in Andorra. Jeanne still lives in Andorra.

*< Jeanne today*

*Jeanne in 1963 >*



Jeanne and Jane remain good friends to this day. **Jane** went on to have a successful career with Wang and IBM. She married and lives in Boston USA. Sadly nobody knows what became of **Honey, the Mini**. She arrived back to the UK from Canada and was collected by an employee of Jeanne's father but was not seen again.

**Media opportunities:** Extracts/serialisation. The author is available for telephone and email interviews. Lots of photographs from the journey are available on request.

*< Jane & the Mini on the mountain pass into the Baluchistan region of Pakistan in 1962*

**Please see over for more photos and feature suggestions >>>>**

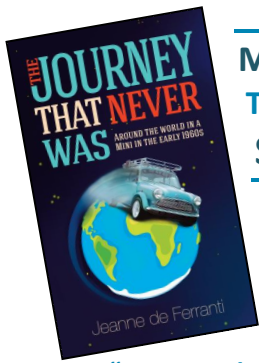


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## MEREO NEW BOOK: PRESS RELEASE continued

### THE JOURNEY THAT NEVER WAS by Jeanne de Ferranti

#### Some feature suggestions ....

**Attitudes to women traveling alone: have things improved during the last 50 years?**  
The vast majority of people that the Jeanne and Jane met on the journey were kind, generous, respectful and eager to help them. But, from time to time Jeanne and Jane did experience unwanted attentions from men and aggression.

*“It was rather disconcerting to walk alone in Ankara; the men put down whatever they were doing to turn around and stare. The drivers of large cars and taxis slowed down and hooted their horns. Young women just didn’t walk around unchaperoned.”*

*“I had yet another flat tyre. Nobody stopped to help. The Australian attitude was: ‘You wanted emancipation, you got it mate!’ After all the help and consideration we had experienced in India, this came as a total shock.”*

#### Personal safety and the threat of violence

Jeanne and Jane had to fight off knife-wielding attackers at one point in their journey. Can self-defence classes help women to protect themselves abroad and at home? Or is it just a matter of attitude?

*“It must have been close on midnight when I awoke, disturbed by somebody tampering with the car door. There they stood, very tall and thin ... Both men carried long curved knives. They looked menacing and evil ...”*

#### How to maintain and repair a small car on such an arduous big journey

Jeanne taught herself some basic car mechanics and had a production manual for the car with her throughout the journey. The many unmade roads they travelled took a terrible toll on the Mini. As far as possible, Jeanne repaired the car herself but there were times when local car mechanics were needed – many of whom had never seen a Mini before, never mind worked on one. In Turkey, just one month into the journey, they had a crash. Thankfully nobody was injured, but the Mini was very badly damaged. Jeanne and Jane experienced weeks of frustrating delays waiting for spare parts and the repairs to be made – but, eventually, they were able to continue their journey.

*Honey the Mini festooned with Sikh flower blessings>*



#### How to choose the right travel companion?

Jane and Jeanne met when they were both working in Switzerland – but they did not know each other very well when they set off on their journey together. It took them a while to adjust to each other but they did become firm friends. What are the pitfalls of travelling with a friend? What can both people do to minimize friction?

#### The emotional strain of long journeys: how to cope with missing home?

Many of today’s travelers will recognize the highs and lows that Jeanne describes about being away from home for so long. However, when Jeanne and Jane made their journey there were no mobile phones or internet to let them stay in touch with home. All contact with family at home was made by letters which the girls would pick up at post offices – but sometimes there were no letters and then the disappointment was hard to bear.

*“No way was Jane going to forego celebrating Christmas properly. In sweltering heat in that tiny kitchen, she set to and cooked the turkey, with all the trimmings that go with it; little sausages, prunes wrapped in bacon, and stuffing.”*

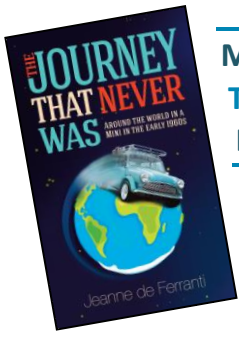
**Other feature suggestions:** The impact of mass tourism: how much have places such as Greece and Turkey changed in 50 years? • As many students finish their exams and head off to travel on gap-years, what lessons can they learn from Jeanne and Jane’s 1960s adventure? • Jeanne and Jane had several jobs during their journey to pay their way. How to work abroad and pay for your travel as you go? • Tips for travelling on a tight budget.

As well as appealing to all people who love travel and adventure, “*The Journey That Never Was*” will be of interest to Mini enthusiasts; people with an interest in the 1960s and in the changing role of women in those days. It is a thoroughly enjoyable, exciting and inspirational tale of life on the road.

**Please see over for more photos >>>>**



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**MEREO NEW BOOK: PRESS RELEASE continued**

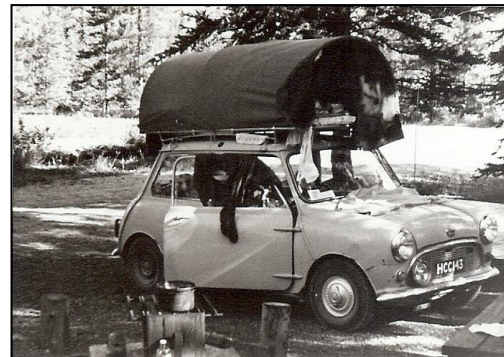
**THE JOURNEY THAT NEVER WAS: Around the World in a Mini in the Early 1960s**  
Examples of more photos from the 1961-1963 journey – available on request



Above, L to R: Typical dirt road in Greece; Turkish mother & Son; Mules in The Grand Canyon



Above, L to R: Trucks in the USA; Fisherman in Ceylon (Sri Lanka); The long, straight road through Texas



Above, L to R: Refuelling in Mexico; Buddhist monks in Ceylon; Camping in France



< Left: Indian car ferry, north of Calcutta  
Right: Baluchistan camels (in Pakistan) >



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