

Women take off

A love of travel and a stay-at-home husband have spurred a Coast woman to action – starting her own business just for female travellers. Here's her story.

WHAT'S a woman to do when she's been bitten by the travel bug but her husband of 30 years has so far proved immune to the normally contagious virus?

If you are Judy Polkinghorne the answer is quite simple. After some careful thought you throw in your day job, start a travel business catering for women only and leave your husband sitting happily at home while you go off to see the world.

"I love to travel but my husband has no desire to leave the Coast so about two-and-a-half years ago I came up with the idea of sharing my passion with other women and taking away fully escorted, organised tours for women only.

"I registered the business name and secured the domain name back in 2004 but as my 'real' job is financial controller for an IT company in Brisbane I put it on hold until recently.

"It's like the old tourism ad, 'if you never, never go, you'll never, never know.'

"So I bit the bullet, gave notice and made a start. I am still working part-time but am trying to make my dream happen.

"I've recently launched my website, www.girlsontour.com.au, and my goal is to take women only tours to exciting and fabulous places around the world."

Knowing she needed some expert support Judy has aligned her business with Suncity Travel at Caloundra and Made Easy Tours so women joining the trip know their plans are backed by many years of travel industry experience.

So where is Judy taking her first group of girls? Egypt, one of her favourite places in the world.

"Egypt is the most amazing place I have ever travelled to in my life. Cairo is a hectic, bustling city of some 16 million people."

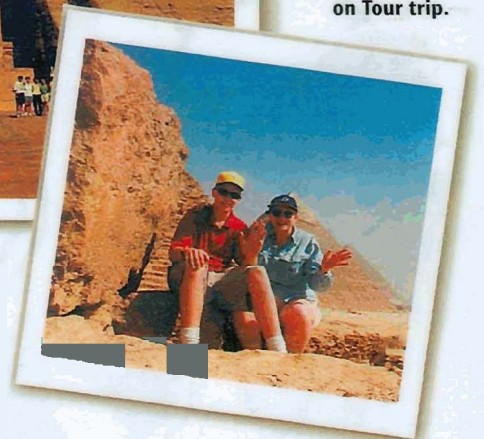
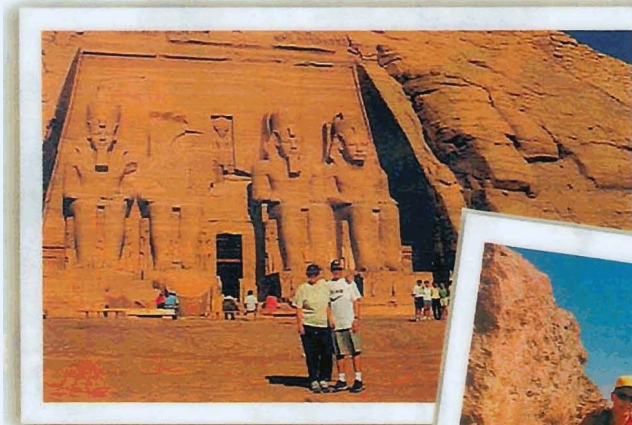
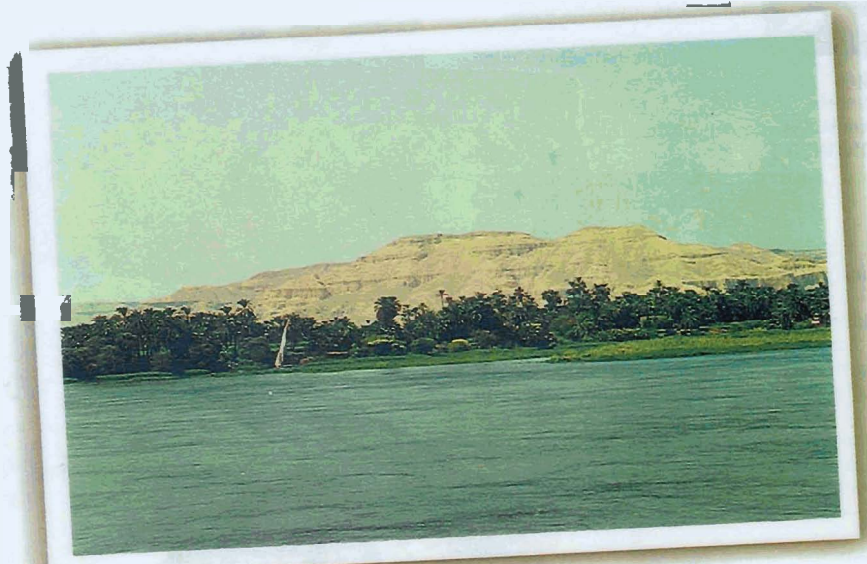
Judy says she had dreamed of going to Egypt for as long as she could remember.

"I can't explain why, but I was fascinated by its history and splendour and I knew I had to go there and see it with my own eyes.

"We made our way to the Giza Plateau where we hired a camel and a horse from the local traders and meandered our way through the Coptic Cemetery towards the Pyramids and the Guardian of the Pyramids, The Sphinx.

"Standing next to the Great Pyramid of Khufu makes you feel so insignificant.

"At the Egyptian Museum I cried when I stood before the treasures of Tutankhamen. I had read many books and watched many documentaries before travelling to Egypt but I was really there, right in front of the gold



Judy Polkinghorne was amazed by the wondrous scenes of Egypt and you can be too, on a Girls on Tour trip.

Snapshot:
The tour will include: 17 day Wonders of Egypt departing September 14 and returning September 30. Cost is \$6287 twin share including flights, professional guide and Australian escort.
Contact:
Girls On Tour, 0409 05 7417 or info@girlsontour.com.au

outer coffin, the death mask and all the wonderful artefacts that Howard Carter had uncovered in 1922.

"I can't imagine going to Egypt and not going to Abu Simbel. The Great Temple of Ramses II is guarded by four huge statues that stand 20 metres high ... a trip to Abu Simbel is an unforgettable experience.

"Cruising the Nile was something else ... we visited the Temple of Philae, The Temple of Horus, Kom Ombo, Aswan, Esna, Karnak, Luxor and the amazing Valley of the Kings. The tomb of Ramses VI has beautiful pastel paintings and hieroglyphs all through it that defy their 3000 years.

"The feeling of awe and amazement that I felt at times was overwhelming. No book,

video or pictures can substitute for being there."

All too soon her Egyptian experience was over.

"I made a promise to myself that I would return to Egypt."

She's making good on that promise in September this year as she leads the first Girls on Tour holiday experience. Will you be going with her?