LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

COSTS OF ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING.

For the information of members we reproduce below the text of a letter sent by Allways Travel to a member who wrote to the Secretary of SPUMS pointing out that his travel agent could offer a cheaper fare to the Maldives.

Allways Travel Service
168 High Street
Ashburton
Victoria 3147

25 January, 1991

Dear Sir

I have recently received a copy of your letter to the Secretary of SPUMS in relation to this year’s SPUMS meeting in the Maldives and feel there are certain matters you have brought to his attention that require immediate clarification.

Allways Travel Service works very hard at securing the best possible hotel rates and air fares for the SPUMS group and it is always our intention to keep costs at a minimum.

Your letter prompted me to phone the group department at Singapore Airlines in order to air your views and I was given this response which I will detail in point form.

1 The airline package you are referring to has limited availability and on each departure Singapore Airlines will only accept up to ten people. Once the ten seats have been sold, the package is considered full, and anyone else wishing to book are requested to pay a more expensive air fare. They will not fill an aircraft of passengers travelling on cheap fares due to the very low profit margin involved.

2 The flights to the Maldives continue on to various European cities and Singapore Airlines will not release a large number of seats, at a substantially reduced rate, for a group terminating their travel arrangements in Male. The reason, of course, is that it is far more profitable for them to protect the bulk of their seats for their passengers travelling through to Europe.

3 We are very fortunate to have secured the number of seats we have.

Our cost for this years meeting is $1,860.00 which includes return air fares, seven nights accommodation, breakfasts daily, two evening meals and transfers. This price is not subject to air fare increases. The Singapore Airlines package is $1,849.00 and offers the same as our package with an additional four evening meals. This price is subject to increases and I believe we have secured a very good price in comparison.

I should point our that a lot of hard work is put into the organisation of the SPUMS meetings to ensure that reservations are handled efficiently, the diving is handled with safety and care, the Conference is run successfully and the non diving programme is varied and interesting.

I believe it is of great assistance to all members to have the staff of Allways Travel in attendance each year with queries and generally oversee arrangements for the group.

These advantages would not be made available if all members were to book independently. Individual travel would also mean you would have scattered arrivals and departures which would be a difficult situation when organising the actual meetings.

I trust I have responded adequately to all points set out in your letter and I would be more than happy to answer any further queries you may have.

Adrienne McKeone
Group and Convention Manager
Allways Travel

THE MALDIVE MYSTERY

GPO Box 1317
Hobart, Tasmania 7001

January 16th 1991

Sir

I have just read Thor Heyerdahl’s “The Maldive Mystery”, published by George Allen and Unwin, and recommend it to the members going to the Maldives as a useful update on the Maldives from the cultural and ethnic point of view.

Some members know of my interest in marine archeology. I have to report an interesting correspondence with the Maldives Department of Linguistic and Cultural Studies touching topics mentioned in the book.

Peter McCartney

Editor’s note

A review of this book appears on page 49.