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Purse-snatcher mars dream trip - South America

STOUFFVILLE Ann Wideman's 12-week trek through South America ended, not out of choice, but out of necessity, when highly professional thieves stole her remaining funds.

It was 'the old squeeze play' on a Peruvian bus that resulted in the victim having her wallet, with \$200, whipped out of her purse as deftly as a conjoiner's rabbit.

There is, apparently, a 'School for Thieves' in Peru and Ann is sure the graduates on the bus must have attained top honors. (Previously, a 'dropout' who had made a grab for her handbag, got it - smack across the face).

Ann, a registered nurse, is obviously a gal who can take care of

herself, especially on the road to Rio and all points beyond.

The journey down South America way, began from her home near Dickson's Hill, Jan. 19.

The flight from Miami to Sao Paulo, just south of Rio de Janeiro, took 12 hours and was followed by a 400 mile bus trip, "over the worst dirt roads in the world", to the inland city of Maringa.

There, Ann stayed with Ron Faw, who had been minister of Dickson's Hill Church, and his wife Jeanette. Her first impression of life there was that conditions were more civilized than she had expected. Maringa, in the middle of Brazil's dairy belt, marketed milk, pasteurized and in bags. Children never had to be cajoled into going to the bars where it was sold (along with more potent liquids), for change from a purchase was given in gum or candies.

Ann taught conversational English to 4 Brazilian students, during her visit to the city. "They had difficulty with colloquial expressions," she relates. "I remember I went to great lengths to explain 'way out' and didn't seem to be getting anywhere when one of the boys suddenly said, 'Oh, you mean like groovy!'"

While in Brazil, Ann visited the beautiful

Copacabana Beach in Rio, and the Iguacu Falls.

"Niagara is pale by comparison," she says of the spectacular cataract on the borders of Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina. In urban areas she found a strong American flavor to life, but that it paid to let people know you were Canadian for there was then much resentment towards the States, particularly because of its Vietnam policy.

The young traveller left her Brazilian hosts after 6 weeks and journeyed west to Chile. There, the government has a unique system that ensures every tourist spends \$10 a day while in the country. Ann stayed in Santiago 2½ short but memorable days. She contracted food poisoning from mayonnaise served at a "reputable" restaurant. "I knew I was going to be very sick for a while," she recalls, "but that I couldn't afford to be sick in Chile at \$10 a day."

She quickly moved on to Bolivia where medical drugs are available without a doctor's prescription. There nurse Wideman prescribed for her own illness and thankfully settled into a hotel room in La Paz.

It was 2 weeks before Ann was well enough to continue her travels. She



Ann Wideman, R.N., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Wideman, Dickson's Hill, displays the beautiful Alpaca rug she brought home from Peru. The spear is an item she wished she had, when someone stole her purse and \$200.

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