

Post



Scott Farnsworth

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From Sydney to Hobart - April 8, 2025

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SUMMARY

Took a history tour of our hotel which used to be the General Post Office. Wandered the Queen Victoria building, well restored and now a high-end shopping center. Nice al fresco lunch at Manon. More walking around Central Business District then sat in hotel lobby to blog. Flight to Hobart. Nice bar for Negroni and pasta bolognese at our hotel. - Karen

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DETAIL

We're up at a relaxing hour. Our flight out of Sydney isn't until almost 6 pm. We clean up, pack, and abandon our wonderful rooms. Tricia has again procured croissants from Lune and the girls enjoy their breakfast. Our first order of business is to take the hotel's "Heritage Tour" to learn its history.

High tech, back when this building was started, was mail that traveled from the UK to Sydney and back. Getting the news meant going to the post office and you got very dressed up for the daily occasion. As such the building had to be similarly impressive. There was housing for the queen (Victoria) when she (and her entourage) came to visit. It's fancy.

Originally it was just one corner of the block. Later they added the other corner and a fancy middle. Then they added two more floors. The "high tech" went from mail to telegraph to telephone, and all the while this central Sydney building was the hub.

Due to situations they HAD to employ women but laws prohibited hiring married women, lord only knows what might happen. Girls were hired and trained and worked hard, but as soon as they were married they were out. Some hid their wedding rings on a gold chain around their necks until HR found out and out they went. Thankfully that barbaric rule was repealed in 1970.

Now the building is a hotel and a comfortable one at that. We've enjoyed our stay. After the tour we hiked down the wide boulevard towards the impressive QVB (Queen Victoria Building) built in 1898. It's now an oh-so-shee-shee shopping mall. It's modern stores but definitely Victorian architecture.

Lunch is thirty minutes out so we split up, Tricia and Don shopping the mall, and Karen and I headed over to the Woolworth's grocery store across the street. The grocery is huge, on two stories. The food price is reasonable. The Jump Steak (Kangaroo meat) is bright red and unappetizing to us. We do buy TimTam cookies, supposedly the unofficial official cookie of Australia.

We lunch back at the QVB, outside at Manon, French. It's good and the beer is just in time. We tour the downtown businesses a bit more and eventually we retrieve our bags and head to the Sydney Airport for our flight to Hobart, Australia's island to the south and one of the states.

Going through security we're surprised that there's no requirement to empty your water bottles. A beer or two as we wait makes the time before, and on, the flight go by quickly. I'm surprised by the "sharps" disposal container in the toilet on the plane. What goes on in here!

In Hobart we step off the plane outside, as there's no 'modern' jet bridge. We walk down the ramp to the tarmac and towards the terminal in the evening chill. We're a lot further south. Inside a customs officer is asking everyone if they have any fruits or vegetables. And there's a trained canine giving everyone a sniff. These people take their agriculture seriously!

Luggage retrieved we catch an oversized taxi to our hotel, a fair distance away. The taxi's odometer goes to 240 (kilometers per hour) which we don't think is even possible. Thankfully our driver's going a good bit slower.

At our hotel we check in and are offered fresh apples. What is it with this place and fruit? I ask if they're local and the reply is "Aye, they're Tassies!" It takes a second to parse that phrase. It turns out we're staying in an old Jam Factory. Henry Jones has had a major jam business in these parts since forever. His motto was "IXL - I Excell At Everything I Do". These letter are everywhere, including as the name of the bar.

We drop our bags in our rooms (our room is a "studio" with the sleeping area built up some stairs above the bathroom/living and kitchen). In the IXL bar we have drinks and dinner. Quite good, including a delicious local Pinot Noir. Who knew. Eventually back to our room to sleep, with the heater turned up against the cold of the night.

Photos



On our hotel Heritage Tour. The outside, and inside both, are ornate and impressive. The lodging for the queen (Victoria) is one of those windows!



There is symbolism and stone carvings everywhere. In the upper right a tavern girl is interacting with the postmaster. Back in the day this was tantamount to porn. Such a scandal!



The clock on the Post Office was how people knew what time it was.



Truely an impressive building. You can't tell it was built in three stages or that the tower was temporarily removed during WW II (to say "I'm nothing important, just a regular building")



The GPO (General Post Office) goes over the main fresh water source for the city. The PO's horses were kept here and drank of that water.



Also impressive, of course, is the QVB (Queen Victoria Building) down the street, now a very fancy mall.



The inside of the QVB is everybit as impressive as the outside.



K-ROO Jump Steaks (i.e. Kangaroo meat).
So red. Haven't tried yet.



The Queen herself standing guard (ok, sitting guard)



We're sitting, too, here at Manon, a French restaurant for lunch and a beer.



At the LEGO store, this 6' x 9' mural of the Sydney Opera House proved to be something I do not need to own.



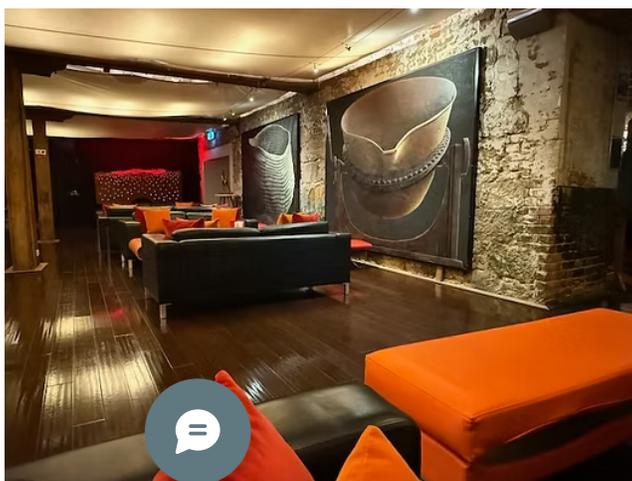
Ditto this LEGO eucalyptus tree with a cockatoo, koala, and kookabura



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At the Hobart airport, this art of some mischievous tasmanian devils signal we've arrived.



The lounge/reception/bar of our art hotel, previously a jam factory.



Our sleeping area is upstairs above the rest of our room. Interesting!

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