

2/19/07 Day 35 – Cairns – Monday: The ship pulled into the harbor at Cairns (pronounced CANS), Australia about 7am just as it was getting daylight. There was a light rain but no wind and it was pleasantly warm. The city is surrounded in the distance by low hills. The south side of the harbor was flat land covered with dense undergrowth. Cairns is on the north side of the harbor. Here is where Cairns is located in Australia.

The Amsterdam was docked at the Trinity Wharf in Cairns as shown by the star on the map to the right.



We were tied up next to the cruise ship terminal building.



In this view to the right most of the high rise buildings in downtown Cairns are visible in the background behind the terminal building.



Barbara lost no time in getting her picture with the Oak Ridge Library card in Cairns, Australia.

We took a bus tour through the city of Cairns and out to a suburb on the west side of Cairns where we

toured the Royal Flying Doctors Service (RFDS) visitor's center. The Queensland State of Australia is about the size of Texas but there are few cities and health care facilities for people living in the remote areas. The Royal Flying Doctors Service provides the state of Queensland with clinics for sick people, preventative medicine clinics, immunization, and medical evacuation for people who do not have access to health facilities.

The visitors' center gave a brief introduction to the Royal Flying Doctors Service organization and then we were free to tour the museum.



Here is the type of airplane that the Flying Doctors have used to provide services to far flung places in Australia.

Displayed on the left is a tabulation of the types of medical service that had been provided by the Royal Flying Doctors Service (RFDS) in January 2007. We saw that 2008 patients were helped by the Royal Flying Doctors Service in January 2007.

After the tour of the Royal Flying Doctors Service we spent about an hour on the bus touring the countryside and getting a panoramic view of the Cairns area. We noticed that the price of gasoline was about \$4 USD per gallon. This was the same as in Sydney.

FOR MONTH OF <u>JAN 07</u>	
CLINIC PATIENTS	...1150
TRANSPORT PATIENTS	...100
CONSULTATIONS	...858
TOTAL PATIENTS	...2008
HOURS FLOWN	...263.7
KMS FLOWN	...88,601
PATIENTS TRANSPORTED BY QLD. R.F.D.S. IN <u>JAN</u>	
<u>778</u>	

The driver also pointed out some large trees in town that has colonies of fruit bats, also called flying foxes, hanging from the upper branches. These animals are about the size of a small cat



and have bat-like wings that they wrap around themselves when they are hanging from a tree and sleeping. We had seen them also in the Koala Park tour in Sydney. For a picture of what they look like check out the Koala Park tour on Days 31 and 32. The guide said these are not actually bats but are related to the lemur family.

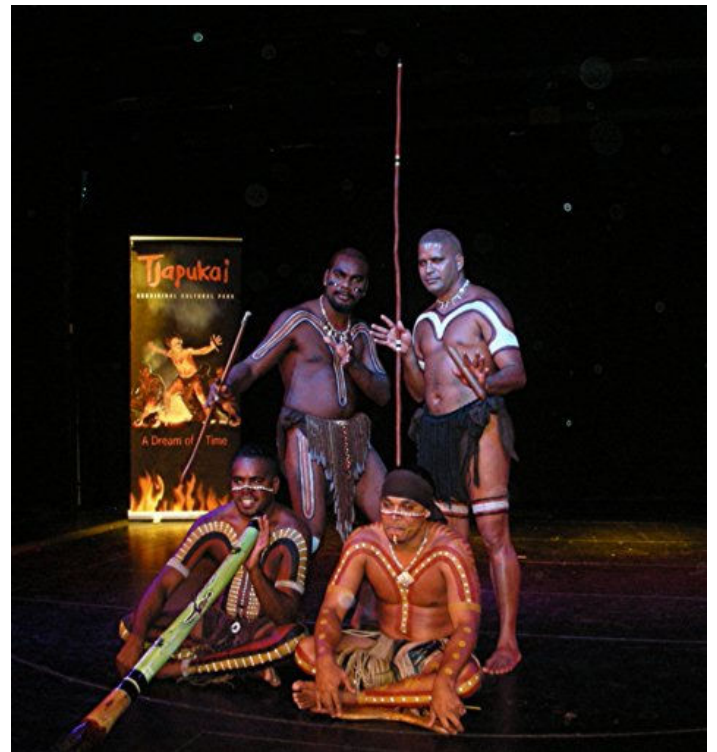
In the afternoon we just walked around Cairns and took in the local sights. We saw that they have a wading pool next to their beach area. There is a reason for a wading pool so close to a nice beach area. We had been warned not to go into the ocean water along the beaches of Australia. The reason for the ban is that a creature known as Box Jellyfish infests the waters at this time of year. They are about the size of a grape and transparent so they are not easily seen in the water. The first indication a swimmer has of their presence is a sensation of intense pain if his body touches them. The Box Jellyfish only inhabits the beaches close to the mainland. Further out (25 – 30 miles) on the Great Barrier Reef it is safe to swim. However, in Cairns the beaches are hazardous at this time of year so they have constructed a nice wading pool for the citizens as shown on the next picture.

In the evening, after dinner, we had entertainment provided by a group of Australian Aborigine men known as Tjapukai. The program opened with a man playing a didgeridoo. A didgeridoo is a hollowed out tree limb about four feet long and 3 inches in diameter. The person playing the instrument makes a sputtering sound with his lips into the small end of the tube and when the sound frequencies resonate an eerie base sound is created. The man playing the didgeridoo is shown on the right.



The Tjapukai men put on demonstrations of Aborigine dances and chants that told a story about hunting kangaroo.





Finally  
at the end they posed for pictures and several ladies  
couldn't resist the opportunity to ham it up with the  
guys.

On the right - our Amsterdam neighbor, Sandy, joins  
the group.







Then another neighbor, Jane, gives it her best shot.

Finally, our ultimate ham, Barbara, joins in the fun.

The leader of the Tjapukai group had a good line to entice the ladies to pose with them. He said all of his guys were strictly vegetarians.

The ship got underway at 10pm and we were off to Darwin.

