

## Travel Stories by Amaru & Suzanne



### Canberra, the capital of Australia

by Amaru & Suzanne, February 10th 2006

The time to visit Australia's Capital City had now arrived....although I wouldn't really call it a city, it's more like a town. And a small town at that!

Canberra was built in between Sydney and Melbourne in 1913 and its design was the result of a competition. The winning entry happened to be a very symmetric one in many ways. The first thing that strikes you though isn't that but the fact that the whole town feels like a big park. There are trees and big lawns everywhere... Not really a bad thing, but it just leaves so much empty space.

Well, we were here now....and our first stop was *The Australian War Memorial*, which shows the details, paintings and armor of the different wars that Australia have been part of. It also contains a large wall called "Roll of Honour", showing the Australian soldiers who died in battle. It was actually more interesting that I originally thought, but then again... I've always had a big interest in World War 1 & 2 and its battles.



**Beware of Snakes**  
An interesting sign

After spending a while strolling the museum we took off and headed into the town centre....and it was dead empty!



**Suz**  
at the Australian War Memorial

I had been told that nothing really goes on in Canberra and that it's really boring, and I was starting to see why. But then we spotted lots and lots of tents....a few of them put up and the rest of them lying around just waiting to be pulled up. We found some information and saw that the next day Canberra would host a Multicultural day, well....something to look forward to.

After lunch a walk around the area, where we by the way almost found my street, Amaroo St, we got back in the car and headed to the Parliament building. It was too late in the day to be able to enter so we just strolled the area, climbed to the top of the building to have a look at the view (the building is kind of embedded in the ground so you can just stroll up a hill to its top) and like any good tourists, we had our photo taken!

We even made it over to the old Parliament House (it's around 3-400m to it so we just walked there), and here in front of the building on its lawn we got to see the *Aboriginal Tent Embassy*, which is just what it sounds like. A group of semi-permanent housing claiming to represent the political views of the Aborigines. It is obviously not recognized as an embassy by the government, but they have still been able to be there since 1972 when they presented a list of demands to the Parliament.

After all this sightseeing it was time to meet some of Suz's friends. We went over to Kate's house and there I was introduced to Kate's boyfriend Phil, Murray & Kath (the couple that Suz had gone over to Cook Islands to visit), Thomas with his girlfriend and Narelle.



**The view towards The Parliament House**  
and the Anzac Parade

We spent that evening having a few drinks and having fun looking at others while they played Playstation Dance, which involved following the steps on the screen by stepping on the appropriate steps on the dance mat.....hilarious. We finished up the evening by playing other Playstation games such as Buzz (lots of quiz's) and Singstar (kind of like Karaoke).



**The Australian War Memorial**  
walking towards the Unknown Soldier's tomb

The next morning after saying our goodbyes we headed back into the town centre and this time it was packed with people!! All the tents were up and all of them were offering something from some other country, most of them were offering food which suited us perfectly!

We walked up and down sampling a few things here, a few things there and even got time to watch a few cultural shows before we headed off again.

We made it over to the Parliament house again and this time were able to enter. We just strolled around for a while having a look and we managed to see The Senate and the House of Representatives. We then got back in the car and drove around the area looking at all the embassies and some of them are enormous and really elaborate

(specially the Chinese and Papua New Guinea one's). I even managed to find the Swedish one ;)

Next place on our list to visit was the *National Museum of Australia*, a very odd looking building but it did contain some interesting information. I especially found the area devoted to the Aborigines and Torres Islanders interesting.

A short drive with the car later we found ourselves on top of Mt Ainslie where we had an awesome view over Canberra.

Before we headed back to Sydney we went back to the town centre for a final time and since the cultural day was still on, we had dinner there. A few german sausages, some serbian meats, chilian empanadas, some turkish gozleme and washed it all down with some Polish beers....I love fairs like this!



**The exhibition contains**  
loads of planes, tanks etc.

So, what do I think about Canberra....well, it's not much really! It's a very small town with not that much to do, it has a few good and interesting museums, but other than that, it's just like any other small town. We still had lots of fun there though and we were lucky that the Cultural Day was on at that time.



**Roll of Honour**  
A Wall of Remembrance



**The wall shows the wars Australia**  
took place in and its casualties



**We found a few cockys in the trees**  
They didn't want to speak to us though



**A very strange statue**  
on the main walking street



I almost found my street close, but not really



The Parliament House the new building



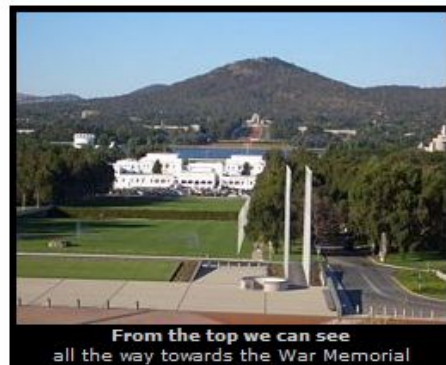
Looking towards the old Parliament House



Suz having a bit of a rest



Standing at the top of the Parliament House



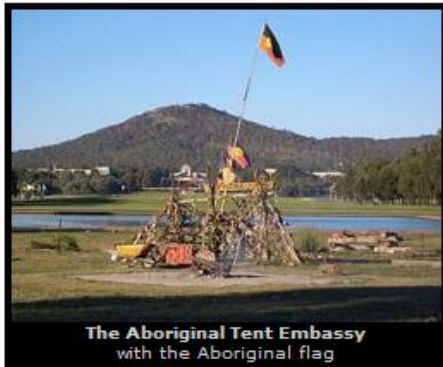
From the top we can see all the way towards the War Memorial



Suz at the top



The Aboriginal Tent Embassy Right in front of the Old Parliament House



**The Aboriginal Tent Embassy**  
with the Aboriginal flag



**At Kate's house**  
Before we all starting dancing and singing



**Thomas going at it**  
on the dance mat



**Same dance mat**  
but this time Phil is having a go



**Suz**  
is trying it out as well



**And I....**  
get forced into trying it.



**A Singstar competition**  
Suz and Kate on the microfones



**Canberra city centre**  
was hosting a multicultural day



**Dutch Pancakes**  
Tiny but yummi!



**Fiji dancers**  
There were lots of different dancers



**Lots of tents and all of them**  
offering a diffent kind of food



**Packed full of people in Canberra**  
Must be the first time



**Inside the Parliament House**  
The Senate



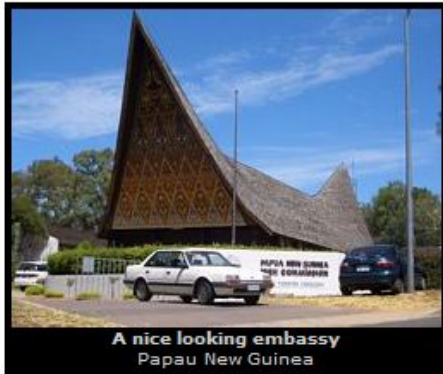
**Inside the Parliament House**  
In the corridors



**Inside the Parliament House**  
House of Representatives



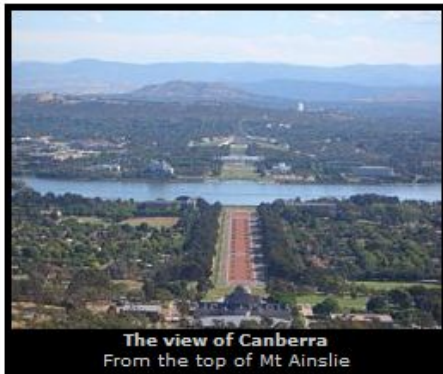
**That's me**  
in front of the Swedish Embassy



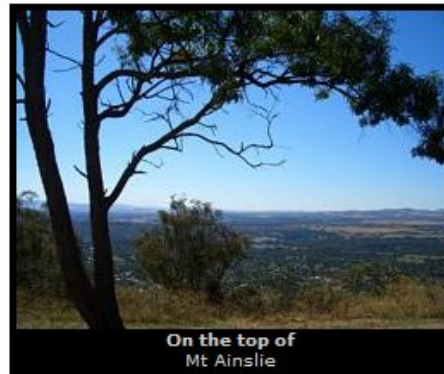
**A nice looking embassy**  
Papau New Guinea



**That's our car!**  
With the Chinese Embassy



**The view of Canberra**  
From the top of Mt Ainslie



**On the top of**  
Mt Ainslie



**Finishing our day in Canberra**  
With some Turkish food and Polish beer

[Back to Top](#)