

NORTHERN ADVENTURE

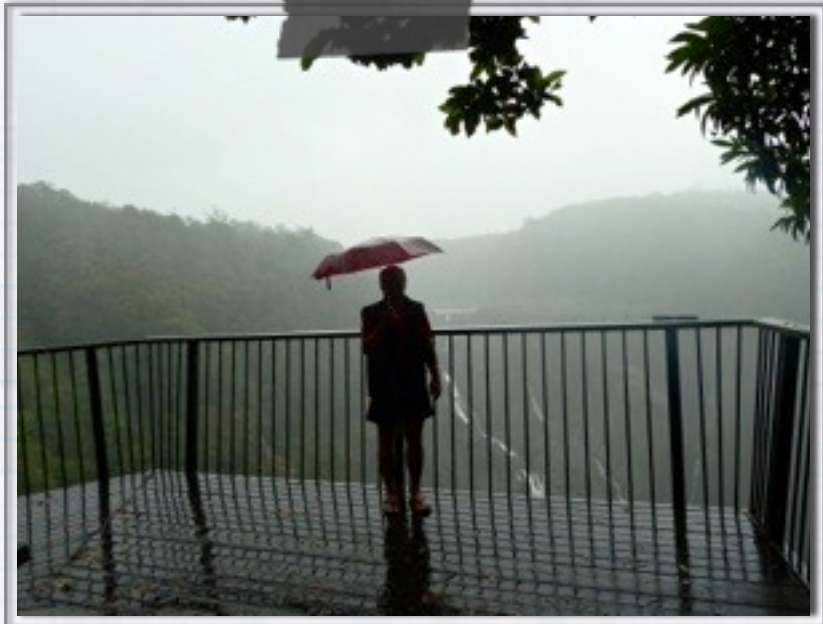
NOWAK TRAVELOGUE | APRIL, MAY | 2012

Cairns

On our drive towards the coast to Cairns we stopped to enjoy Mareeba wetlands and then the Barron Falls near Kuranda where the Barron River makes its major descent down to the Cairns coast. We saw the falls from the Skyrail cable car in drier times a few years ago. This time the heavy rain meant we saw lots more water over the falls - and lots more rain on the walk to get there.

We arrived in wet Cairns and relaxed. The next day we planned to take a bike ride. The lull in the rain allowed us to take a short ride around the CBD and port area. We were very impressed with what we saw. The bike track and walkway along Cairns marina and foreshore was cleverly arranged into recreational activity areas (such as water parks for kids) and historical monuments with information boards. Despite the drizzle there were people enjoying the outdoors.

It poured rain on our second night and continued to rain heavily on our drive out of Cairns through Innisfail to Paronella Park - a "castle" built in the early 1900's that has been ravaged by time, floods and cyclones. It is considered to be one of top Queensland attractions and we were not disappointed.



Queensland's Highest

At 1622m, Bartle Frere is we are told. Most people, (including Queensland's highest mountain. It us), are more familiar with the was shrouded in mist when we Australia's more recognised Mt drove past today - a common sight Kosciusko.



INTERESTING FACT We came across this early gun emplacement and read the inscription. It was erected in 1885 in anticipation of a RUSSIAN attack. In Cairns? You have got to be joking!!!



SPIED IN CAIRNS MARINA Imagine the cost of the rather large luxury "runabout" sticking out the back of this super yacht. Goodness knows how many millions the big mother yacht cost.



DANGER The second language on signs is regularly German! Does this indicate that the majority of of non english speaking tourists are German? We must say, we have seen a lot of Germans,

ATTACK

KILLER EMU



We were warned about cassowaries. Evidently they can be very dangerous and have been known to actually kill people. It is suggested that we give them a wide berth and never provoke them. Evidently they can run very quickly. The signs warn to be “cass -o- wary”.

Imagine our horror when we came across a large bird on our bike ride around a swamp. Heather advised me to be “wary”. When the bird walked towards us we quickly backed off but we needed to get past it somehow. The standoff lasted some minutes before Heather thought we could bluff it and take a large circle around the bird and back on to the track. Halfway through our maneuver, and much to our surprise, it came toward us. Heather quickly made herself very large by lifting her bike up in the air and screaming profanities. The bird kept coming over so we took off on our bikes in alarm through the scrub and managed to escape with our lives. Can you imagine two old foggies roaring out of the bush with a killer bird in hot pursuit. I am so glad my wife is so brave. Evidently Mrs Emu scares the shit out of every walker here. Emus can look very very nasty if you want them to.

José's Dream



DREAMS FULFILLED

José Paronella's dream was to build a castle. He chose a special part of Australia and created Paronella Park. On 5 Hectares beside Mena Creek Falls he singlehandedly built his castle, picnic area by the falls, tennis courts, bridges, a tunnel, and wrapped it up in an amazing range of 7,500 tropical plants and trees (now a lush rainforest!). It opened to the public in 1935 and was powered by a home built hydro electricity system! The system is still working to power this computer today. In its heyday it was the talk of the state. But gradually over time the estate fell into ruin. A number of devastating floods, a major fire and two recent cyclones caused considerable havoc but despite this tourists still come in droves to see and imagine its former glory. Gradually the ruins are being revitalized and the story of José Paronella's dream lives on.

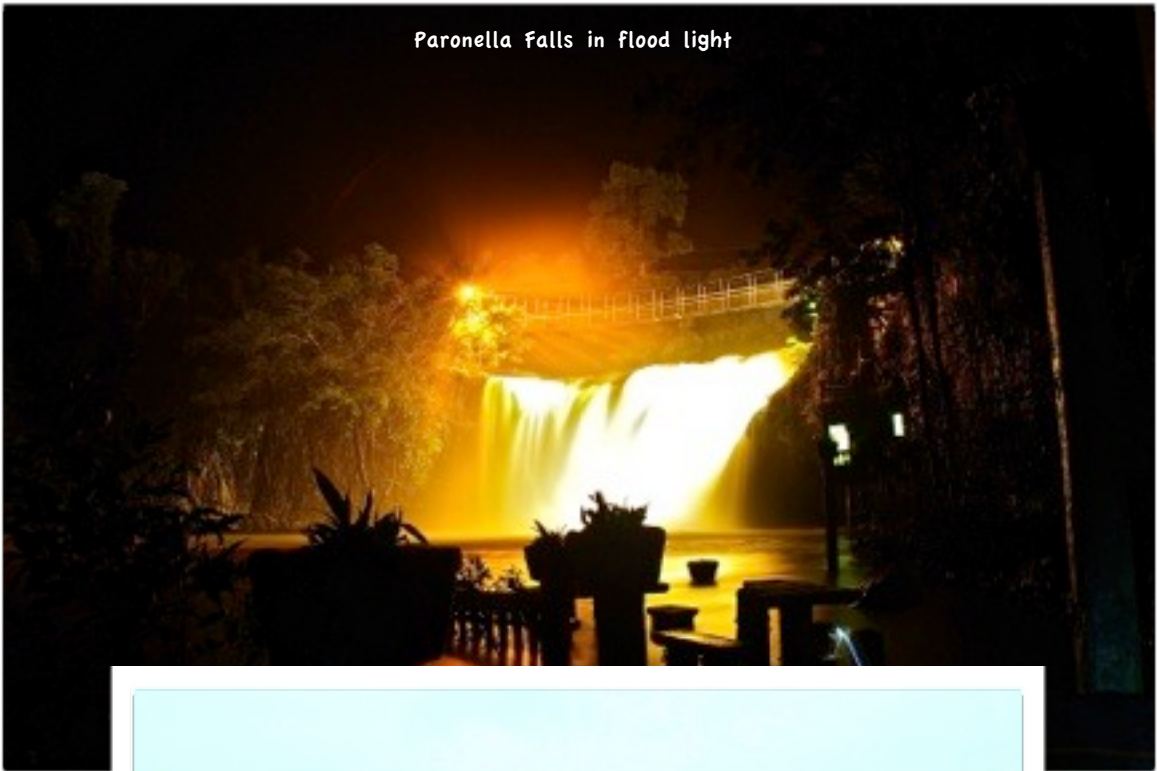


Grand Staircase - Paronella Park
Note the flood water heights



Lovers Walk - Paronella Park

Paronella falls in flood light



Paronella Castle ruins at night

