

Editorial Preface

Crossing the International Date Line and Counting Continents

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FROM UP OVER TO DOWN UNDER¹

During parts of June and July of 2015, for 28 days, I finally had the opportunity to cross the International Date Line (Morris, Albert, & Tiller, 2010; Albert, Morris, & Tiller, 2014a) and unofficially joined the ranks of the Trusty Golden Dragons on route to the “Antipodes.” Having previously checked off the four hemispheres (northern, southern, eastern, and western), once even standing across two hemispheres at the equator in Kisumu, Kenya, a recent trip to Australia allowed me to check off a fifth continent. Ah, while such milestones are exciting for geographers, most others could care less. The impetus for this trip “down under” was to participate at the Institute of Australian Geographers (IAG) 2015 Conference from July 1 to July 3. While the conference took place in Canberra at the Australian National University, I had an itinerary that also include visits to Sydney, Cairns, and Alice Springs (Figure 1). During the conference, I gave an oral presentation titled “Recapping the history of the Antipodes: Reappraising absolute and relative connotations” (see Albert, Morris, & Tiller, 2014b).

More importantly, attending the IAG 2015 Conference offered an opportunity to network and promote the *International Journal of Applied Geospatial Research* to potential authors, guest editors, and reviewers (see Albert 2014 for a synopsis of IJAGR’s first five years). One of the keynote speakers was Professor Patrick Dodson, an indigenous leader from Broome, Western Australia. He noted an appreciation for the contributions of IAG members for their use of GIS to support indigenous issues. Professor Dodson recognized that GIS is a tool needed to engage the debate by providing evidence on how indigenous peoples are being impacted by corporate and government development plans and schemes. Further, planners must consider implications from social and cultural value systems and not just focus on cost constraints from a traditional development perspective. Dodson sees this as a struggle between human and corporate forces. He said that great planners will be “inspired by the richness of diversity” and incorporate indigenous cultural values within the built environment. This is an important message that needs to be heard and embraced all over the world.

During the IAG 2015 Conference I also met with leaders and members of two nascent specialty groups (health geography and military geography) that expressed an interest in the *International Journal of Applied Geospatial Research*. Both these groups are involved in promoting and conducting cutting edge applications so perhaps there will be opportunities to collaborate. I met and spoke with many other participants and expect some will have further interaction with IJAGR. Finally, I want to thank all the IAG officers, conference organizers, staff, and participants for their dedication in supporting the IAG and for me personally, their hospitality.

Figure 1. Scenes from site visits

a) Sydney Opera House



b) Great Barrier Reef (Cairns)



c) Uluru (southwest of Alice Springs, Northern Territory)



d) Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra

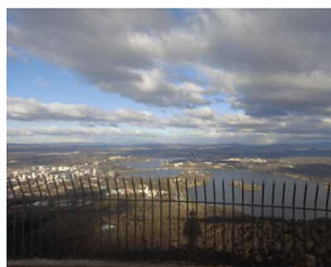


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ENDNOTES

- ¹ Janice Monk wondered whether “up over” is ever contrasted with “down under” (personal communication, July 2, 2015).

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