The Construction of the Narrabri Dome — 1992 August

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Aug. 3rd - 28th. Depart U.K.

Aug 4th Tues: Arrived in Sydney. 10.30 p.m. 2hrs. delay in Bangkok.

Aug. 5th Wed: Rest day in Sydney, had a look around.

Aug 6th Thurs: Left Sydney 10.50 a.m. to drive to Narrabri. Rained almost from start. Torrential rain made drive difficult. Arrived at Narrabri 8.00 p.m.

Aug. 7th Fri: Checked dome looks O.K. No electrics or phone. Got power to dome late afternoon. Took two small crates to dome. Ground very boggy.

Aug 8th Sat: More rain. Area around dome like a swamp. Went to town to buy wellies and hardboard for bench. Built bench 80. At least somewhere to work. Fitted panel.

Aug. 9th Sun

Start dome insulation and wired control panel. Will ask tomorrow if it's possible to install mount. Depends on weather.

Aug 10th Mon.

Almost completed insulation, just short on mat. Will have to strip adhesive from sheet to complete. Decided to attempt mount installation. Larry got bogged down had to pull it out with tractor but finally managed to get mount in.

Aug 11th Tues: Continued with wiring loop. Phone installed temporarily. Fitting works ok.
Notes:

1. Trap door wrong way round.
2. No handrail on steps or grab rail at top.
3. Big gap under front door.
4. Get site cleared and tidy.

Attic:

Pier aligned North/South (magnetic)!!!
Main interface wired incorrectly.
Servo needs beefing up. Cut out on arm angle!
Dec. 1 R.A limit switch EE needed. Bushes in bottom ends and should have H-rc at either end!
No grease in worm bearings, why?
Rotary cam switches. Problems with coupling. The shaft is plastic and grub screws are not adequate, should be man thdr shaft.

Aug 13th Thurs: Wired mount, run earth to mount and dome. Build work benches in outer room.

Aug 14th Fri: Finish work benches and shelves. Unpack computer etc. Main interface to panel wrong. Will have to re wire.


Aug 17th Mon: Put another bench along north wall. Tidy up and fit spectrometer. Problems with dome means we cannot run on auto. Very cloudy typical after a week of sunshine. The day we fit spect. Cloudy. FAX phone broke with shopping list. Get another box sent data post.

Aug 18th Tue: Re fitted dec gearbox. Drill wall for cooling pipes. Went to Narrabri for couple of hours. Bought 49' en shirt and jumper for Max.
Aug. 19th Wed:
Fitted cooling system. Broken pipe on rear cooling plate. Had to be soldered and shortened slightly. Problems with heater servo. Was it ever working correctly?
Slew motor problems - computer error. Is slew too slow?
Slew motor problems - programme errors (points wait for sun up).

Aug. 20th Thurs:
Checked on drum. Cut brass and removed rings from center for trap door. We decided to have a day off and went to Kings Springs. Had a guided tour of the AAT and around the 3:1 m AU.
Very interesting.

Aug 21st Fri:
Made new trap door to replace steel plate.
Stripped out slew bearing & couplings. No grease on bearing whatsoever. What is the point of seals?
Found magnetic switch fitted & window removed.
Site cleared 4 handrail fitted.

Aug 22nd Sat:
Laid bricks outside door & cemented. Finished door insulation. Painted floor in main area to seal.
Fault on top cable tray 4 rotary switch on R.A.
Solves a few puzzles as to alignment at dawn seat pos.

Aug 23rd Sun:
Removed grub screws from R.A drive to cat switch. Had trapped thru. Made cable duct for top of yoke.
Re-fitted rear cable swivel & 2nd floor coating.

Aug 24th Mon:
Collected dome drive Gryasby & fitted.
Fitted dome skirt. Rod & back arrived.


Aug 27th Thurs: Went shopping for last time. Airport 13:00 hrs. Took off 17:30 hrs.

Aug 28th Fri: Arrived Heathrow 07:00 hrs. Back in good old U.K. Tipping it down.
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