



We're in Australia!

Hi Friends and Family,

Thanks for your overwhelming responses to our first newsletter. (Did you miss it? [Click here to view a copy](#)). We're so glad many of you found it funny, entertaining, and informative.

The last few weeks in the U.S. were a figurative, and occasionally literal, rollercoaster as we got rid of almost all of our things, put most of our remaining things into a small room in our basement in Madison, and then packed still far too many things into far too many suitcases and flew to the other side of the world.



It was a thrill.



An absolutely voluntary nightmare.



So many things crammed into a small room in our basement in Madison.



And somehow still more things crammed into six suitcases and two backpacks (Plus the two suitcases I (Emily) packed and am storing with our friends, Dan and Kari, for later travel to Australia). The suitcase on the right was 72 pounds by itself (or, 44% over the weight limit!).

We absolutely could not have gotten through all of the stress of moving without all of you who made time for us, offered your emotional support, and occasionally let us offload stuff onto you. (Big shoutouts to our moms, Ann and Barb, for saying yes to almost anything we offered them. Thank you, Amanda, for helping us clean out the pantry. Thanks, Dan and Kari, for storing

some of our stuff. Big thanks to Nathaniel and Abby for hosting a going-away gathering for us).

We also wanted to especially thank Matt's parents, Tom and Barb, for visiting twice to help us pack up, clean, and get rid of furniture.

We arrived in Melbourne on Tuesday morning (3/26), which is Monday afternoon in the U.S. This was after a delay meant we missed our connecting flight to Melbourne from San Francisco, so we spent an extra day in California. We admired our "Sea to Shining Sea" a little longer, ate okayish-for-California Mexican food, and one of us slept through most of the new Ghostbusters movie. (Insert Matt joke: one of us "ain't afraid of no ghosts".)



California is pretty.

The good news is that we obtained (relatively) inexpensive last-minute upgrades on the 16-hour Melbourne flight so we both got a decent rest before we arrived in Australia.



SFO before our flight to Melbourne!

And it turns out we needed it! Not to bury the lede but during our busy first day of running errands around Melbourne, **Matt managed to break his ankle!** He will tell the tale below but know that he is healing and we've had an overwhelmingly positive introduction to the Australian medical system.



(Don't worry, he only *looks* miserable).

Bits and Bobs:

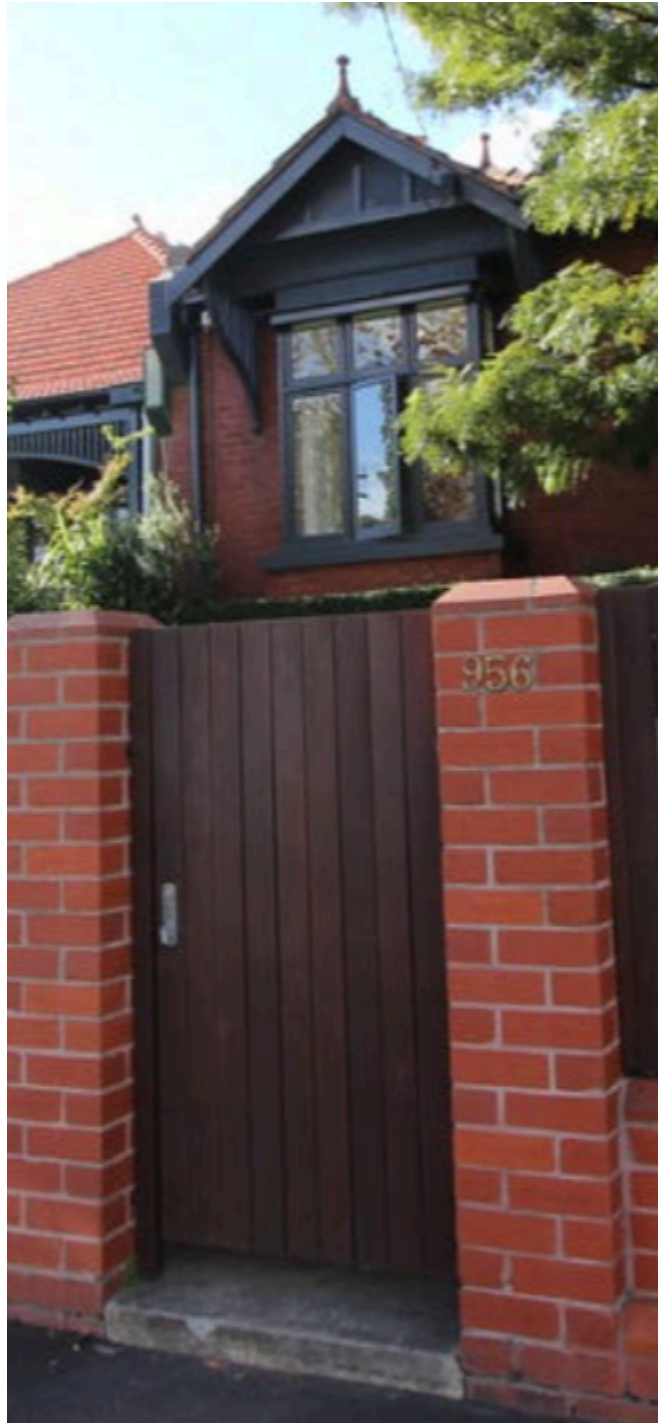
- We have a place to live! Our Australian address is **956 Lygon St., Carlton North, VIC 3054**. We'll cover more about our new place/the rental market in Melbourne in future newsletters.
- **We are still reachable on our American phone numbers**, so feel free to text or call as you normally would. Email is great, too. And for those of you on WhatsApp, you can find us there, too.
- **We're 15 hours ahead of U.S. Central time** for the next few months. Good times to try to reach us are late afternoons and evenings in the U.S.--that's when our mornings and early afternoons are. We are also very much up for scheduled calls over the phone or Zoom. (Note: our weekends start and end before yours, so Friday night in the U.S. is our Saturday morning/midday.)
- **Pupdates:** The importation of our dogs is still pending. We'll continue to update you in future newsletters.
- **Read to the end for the fabulous responses we received from our first pouch post.**
- For obvious reasons, for the next newsletter, we'd love for you to share a travel "whoopsy". [Send them our way via Pouch Post:](#)



The Matt Minute

The Ankle Bone is (supposed to be) Connected to the Shin Bone Edition

One of the most common questions I got when people found out we were moving to Australia was: What about the spiders (or snakes, or sharks, or crocodiles, or...)? Of all of the dangerous things people asked about, no one mentioned the most dangerous feature of Australia: the fence gate.



Pictured: my new worst fenc-emy

Let me take you all on what happened on our very first day in Melbourne.

1. Land in Melbourne! Yay!

2. Breeze through customs and pick up our luggage.
3. Get our Australian phone numbers.
4. Check into our hotel (we had temp housing for the first week while we got settled).
5. Take a nice walk where we:
 - 5.1. Open our Australian bank account
 - 5.2. Eat some gelato
 - 5.3. Go back to get Emily's passport, which she left at the bank
 - 5.4. Pick up our house keys. Yay!
6. Finish walk to the house and...fail to open the front gate for an hour.
7. Get a maintenance guy to show us how to open the gate.
8. Look around in our house! Yay!
9. Decide to go back to the hotel because we were tired.
10. Fail to open the front gate (again).
11. Forget that I am 42 and not 18.
12. Decide to jump the fence to see if I can open it from the outside.
13. Hurt ankle when landing (but was able to open the gate!).
14. Remember that we're kind of "between insurances" until I actually start working in the Australia office.
15. Decide to go to the Priority Primary Care Center anyway (via cab, not walking)

16. Nurse and doctor literally just look at the ankle and write a referral for an x-ray that we decide to get the next day.
17. Pay \$0 for the visit and crutches!
18. Go back to the hotel to do [R.I.C.E](#) and sleep.

The next day, we scheduled an x-ray for 11:00 that morning, hoping that the x-ray would show a sprain. The radiology site warned that, because we don't have insurance, **we would have to pay a whole \$47** for the x-rays. We said "We're from America, that's definitely ok". The radiologist who took my x-rays looked at them for about 6 seconds and said "Congratulations, you won a trip to the emergency department." So, we went to Royal Melbourne Hospital (they already use Epic!). They took some more x-rays and a CT scan and decided that they wanted to fix my ankle before letting me leave. I was admitted to the hospital and the next morning, I got surgery! The surgeon said he spent a decent amount of time removing "**bone dust**" and "**fragments**", so I guess it was pretty badly broken. I stayed one more night, then got discharged.

The next two weeks were spent learning how to use crutches, sitting in so many Ubers, and repeating the story over and over. But, good news, I got my cast off now! **If you are curious, scroll to the end of the**

newsletter to see the damage. (Emily's note: these pictures are a little gross.)

All in all, everyone that I or Emily interacted with was very nice and very helpful, and most of them had good things to say about Epic when they found out I work there, so that's good. I do need to give some special thanks to Emily for now doing pretty much everything that requires movement. As most of you know, she's the best! Also, a good number of people I work with deserve thanks for offering rides, helping with insurance questions, figuring out logistics, picking us up from the hospital, helping us book a more accessible hotel, helping us move luggage to our new hotel, and generally offering support. And, of course, all of you readers for thoughts, prayers, etc.

Well, this was definitely more exciting than the last newsletter's "Matt Minute". Hopefully, the next one is just as exciting but much less painful!





Meet the animals you want to talk to!

In the last newsletter, we asked the most important question of all: If you could talk to any non-human species of animal, what would it be and what would you talk about?

Here are some of your responses:

“[Crocodile!](#) As one of the oldest known species in the world, it would be fantastic to learn about how they view the ever-changing world.”

–Steve V.



“The [Quokka](#)! For being such a small creature, I would ask why it's so bold and curious, and where it found its bravery! I wonder if they each have a memorable "selfie" moment with a human (they are popular selfie subjects, you know!) or even a favorite moment or interaction with a human. I bet they have a lot of stories, probably quite funny and entertaining.”

–Betty Ness aka “Black Widow”



“[Cats](#), my cat in particular, so that we could discuss his toilet habits”

–Ann W.



“[Dolphin](#): surfing, underwater views. How do they sleep? Do they take naps?”

–Andrew H.



“[Ants](#)! So I could send a colony of ants to all my enemies.”

–Izzy W. (who none of us should mess with)



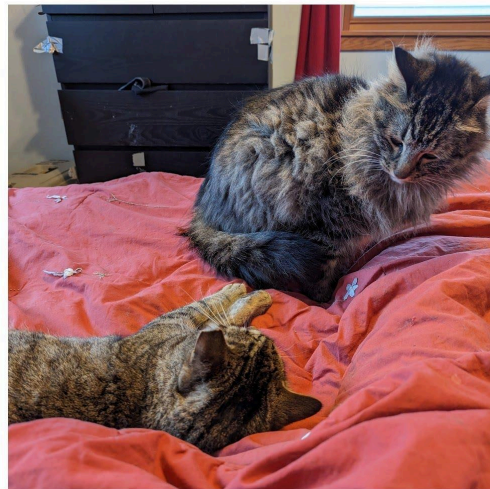
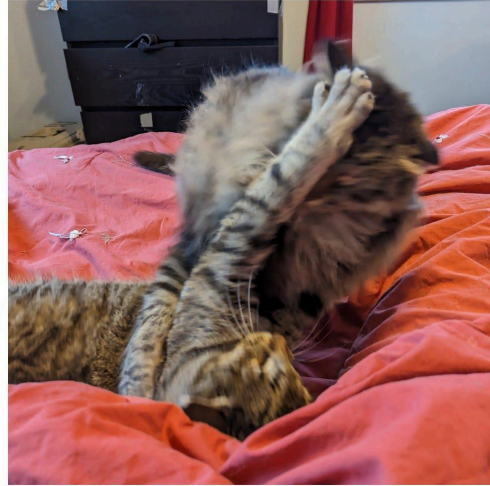
“[The Sugar Glider](#): how do you glide so far at night??”

–Bringa J.



[Cats.](#) *What do they really think about people?"*

-April M.



“A [chameleon](#). I’d like to ask what the mental and emotional impact of code-switching so often is. I’d also ask when they are their most authentic self, and what color that is. We’d talk about the evolution of our own self-awareness as we age. And also we’d catch bugs with our tongue.”

–Kari T.



“I would want to talk to a [bald eagle](#). I want to know what it's like to soar and hear about the best views!! :)”

–Grace W.



“A [corgi](#) (probably my corgi). Talk about? The queen of England, did faeries really ride corgis, and if my corgi is as smart as she thinks she is.

“Otherwise, a [coral reef](#). What's it like? How's global warming going?”

–Melissa E.



"I'd like to talk to a female [ruby-throated hummingbird](#). I would talk about how to build an invisible nest and how to eat while sitting in a nest. I want details about teaching the young to fly and how to avoid the very aggressive male.

“I would like to play her the “Flight of the Bumblebee” and see her reaction.

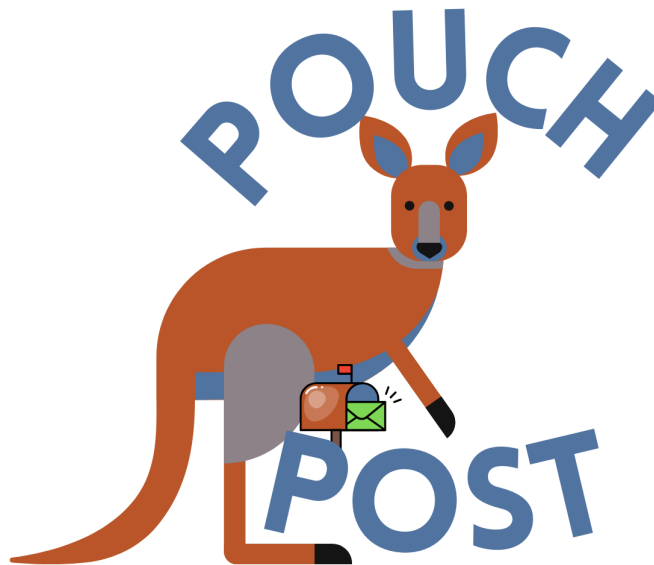
“I’d want to know how she feels about the difference between summer and winter quarters, the insane commute and the intoxicating smell and look of RED. I’d like somehow to get to feel the speeeedy passage and perception of time for a hummingbird - or is it slowed down? - and I want to know how she feels about the male mating dance-flight. I am curious.”

–Karoline K.



To celebrate Matt breaking his ankle by jumping over a fence on our first day in Australia, **we'd love to hear about your travel "whoopsies"**--whether it's injuries, humiliations, misjudgments, blunders, or general acts of stupidity.

Submit your thoughts to the [Pouch Post](#):



For those who are comfortable, we may share your responses in the next newsletter.



Until Next Time...

Here are photos of some of the cats that ignored us when we visited the [Cat Cafe](#) here in Melbourne:









Subscribe others to this newsletter [here](#). Bonus gratuitous medical content follows. (If the email truncates, click the link below that says “view entire message” to see Matt’s ankle pics.)



BONUS CONTENT:

**WARNING! MEDICAL IMAGES BELOW! ONLY
PROCEED IF YOU HAVE A STURDY STOMACH!!!**

The aftermath:



Note: this is not how my ankle usually looks.

The cast:



A good clobberin' cast

The incision:



Ewwwwww

Post-cast:



Normal???