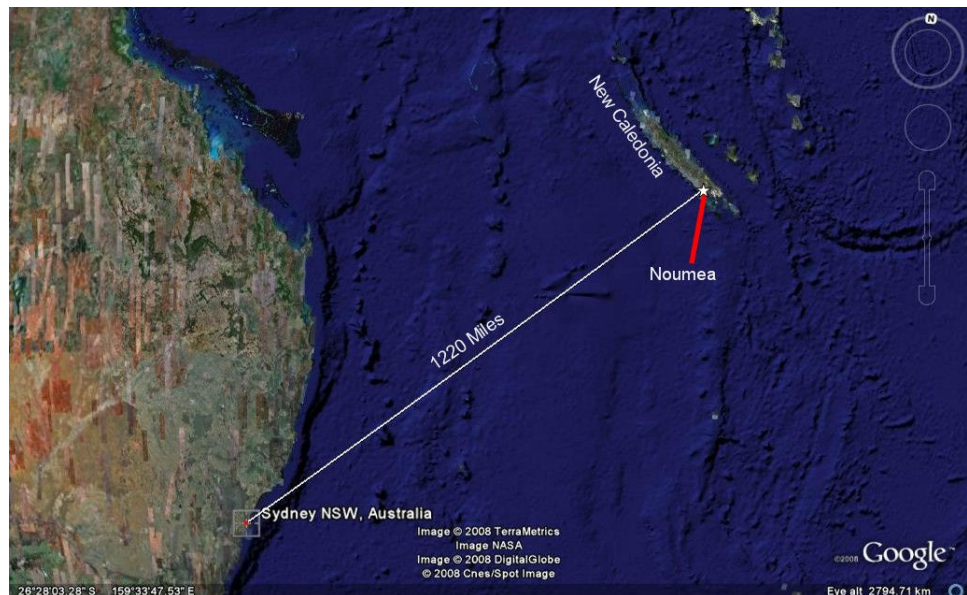


Day 48 (Thursday, 11/06/08) At Sea

The day started with temperatures in the high 60s, broken clouds, light breeze, and calm sea. We were cruising in the Tasman Sea for the early part of the day and then we passed into the Coral Sea on the way to Noumea on the island of New Caledonia. The map on the right shows the route we are taking to Noumea.



It was a typical day at sea with no special events. We spent some time writing the blog describing the visit to Sydney.

In the afternoon we attended the lecture by Dr. Wolff who is giving a series of lectures that consist of well crafted summaries of historical events in the various regions of the world that we are visiting. Today the story he told was about Ernest Shackleton who is most famous for his voyages to Antarctica and exploration in the early 1900s. On one expedition to the South Pole he was forced to turn back less than 100 miles from his goal. During his last trip in 1916 he and the group he led were marooned in Antarctica and it was only through Shackleton's incredible endurance and dedication to rescue of his people that all survived.

Tonight the dress for the evening was formal. The menu featured kangaroo and ostrich entrees as well as more traditional plates. Orlin tried the kangaroo which looked pretty conventional as seen in this picture on the right. Our table mate, Esther, wanted to have a piece of kangaroo cooked well-done but the chef refused to prepare it that way because it would be too tough. She opted for some other dish. The non-gourmet report by Orlin on a rare to medium cooked piece of kangaroo is that it tasted a lot like beef pot roast but was more chewy.



The entertainment for the evening was the Australian cabaret act called "Black Tie". It consists of two brothers, Con and Yuri Mavridis, and their wives, cellist Sue and pianist Valerie. We had seen them on a prior cruise and were looking forward to seeing them again. They put on a good show with the men singing popular and opera songs and the ladies playing several solos. We enjoyed the act. Compared with our prior experience the act seemed to place more emphasis on the instrumental performance of the ladies than the singing of the men. Valerie was our favorite.