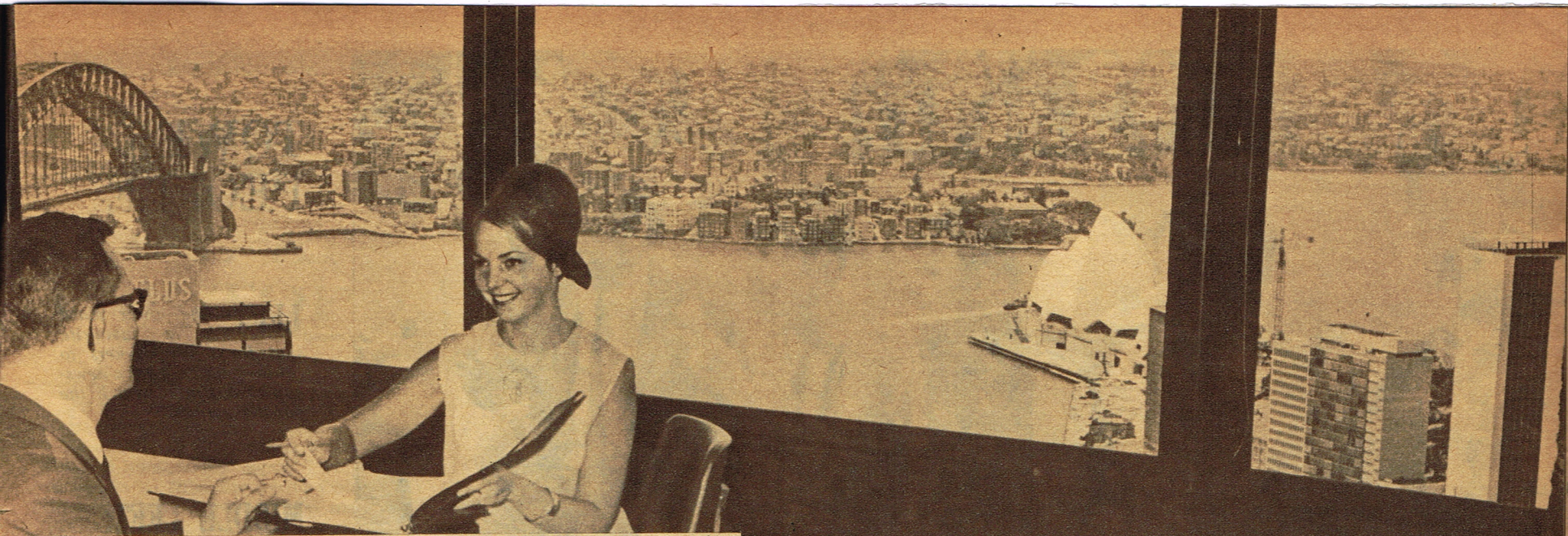




THE standard wide angle lens of a Speed Graphic Press camera is not nearly wide enough to get in the whole of the Australia Square Tower in one picture. So the simple single lens of an ancient Baby Brownie was used in the Press camera to get this unusual angle shot. The lens, value about 20 cents, is uncorrected — hence the odd, striking distortion.





Where **PEOPLE** work

*LIFE at the top has its rewards, such as the magnificent view of the Harbour from this executive office on the forty-first floor.*

# THE AUSTRALIA SQUARE TOWER: LIFE AT THE TOP

*What's it like in Australia's tallest office building?  
Writer **KEN MATHERS** and photographer  
**VIC JOHNSTON** went to the top for the answers*

**I**N the rarefied atmosphere of the soaring Australia Square tower, right in the heart of Sydney's business centre, the rustle of a bank cheque can be heard more clearly than the bustle of the traffic in the crowded streets below.

This is where big deals are made, where the talk is often on an international level. This is a focal point for visiting businessmen and a show-place for trade promotions.

It is the tallest building in Australia, a landmark and a tourist attraction that can be mentioned in the same breath as the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Opera House.

## 5,000 PEOPLE

The tower is 600ft high and has 50 floors, including three underground parking levels which accommodate 400 cars.

It is virtually a city within a city, with its own shops, offices, restaurants, hairdressers, dentist, medical suites, theatre, travel bureau, conference rooms, exhibition floor and post office.

The circular tower and the adjacent 13-floor Plaza office block have a total working population of about 5,000 people, and at any time there could be another 1,000 visitors.

Visiting the tower for the first time is something like driving into Canberra — you find yourself moving in circles wherever you go.

On any floor you can walk right

around the central lift-core and find yourself exactly where you started, but once you become accustomed to the novel layout, the building will charm you.

The view from the upper floors is magnificent — almost distracting if you happen to work there, but you can always close the venetian blinds.

The double windows are sealed as the entire building is aircondition-

ed. This reduces outside noise and keeps out dust and soot, an important consideration in smoggy Sydney.

Comes morning tea and you open the venetians. There! The city is at your feet and you can sit back and see how the other half are managing.

They seem to be buzzing around in toy cars and buses, and hurrying like ants along the crowded footpaths. You

wouldn't be human if you didn't get just a slight sense of satisfaction from your commanding position.

Only a stone's throw from Wynyard Station (mind the glass) the entire \$30 million Australia Square project covers one and a half acres bounded by George, Bond and Pitt streets, and Curtin Place.

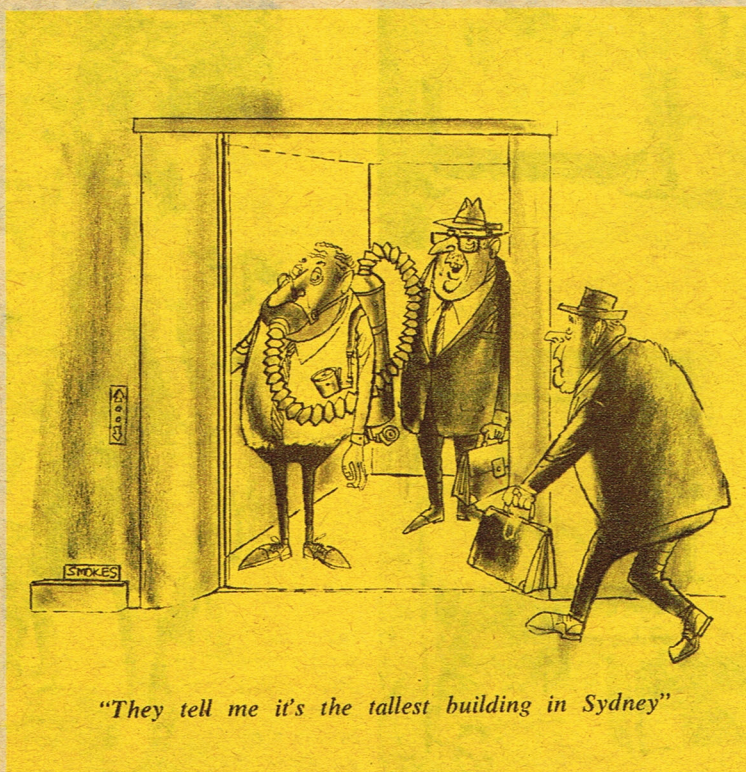
The whole building exudes status. And for that reason, girls clamour for office jobs in the tower building. Advertisements for staff draw a flood of inquiries.

From all appearances, the bosses are very selective. Well-groomed, mini-skirted secretaries and typists abound in the building, and the Lower Plaza, leading to Pitt Street, is alive with smartly dressed girls at lunch-time.

Some use this open-space area as a short-cut to George Street, while others sit in the sun and eat their sandwiches. It is a pleasant spot to relax and watch the passing parade, or the multi-jet fountain.

There are more than 30 shops in the shopping circle directly beneath the George Street level of the tower, including fashion boutiques, a newsagency, delicatessen, cake shops, dry-cleaners, snack bars, jewellers, shoe shop, chemist and a camera shop. A post-office branch is also here.

Entering the tower building at the George Street level, the big glass doors swing open at a touch and you face an impressive bank of lifts, reputed to be the fastest in Australia.



**NEXT PAGE**





## TOWER PEOPLE

**LEFT:** *The lower plaza is a favourite spot for office workers to eat their lunch, read a newspaper or simply watch the passing parade.*

### MIDDLE LEFT:

*The shopping circle below the George Street level has something for everyone. There are more than thirty shops and a post office, all within one hundred yards.*

### BELOW LEFT:

*Interior designer Deborah Knox in a smart showroom office on the eighth floor, on which are situated medical suites, secretarial and other services.*

**BELOW:** *On the lower plaza there's an open air restaurant, adding a continental touch.*





## THE AUSTRALIA SQUARE TOWER

# LIFE AT THE TOP

continued

There are 19 lifts operating in three stages. One set of lifts serves the lower third of the building, another the middle and another the upper. Two express lifts go from the top to George Street level in 33 seconds. Top speed, attained about midway up — is about 1,200ft per minute.

The lifts are controlled by a computer which analyses the demand for service and responds immediately. This means they don't hop needlessly from top to bottom, but wait in between for the nearest call.

All lifts stop at the eighth floor because this has service establishments, including a secretarial and copying service, medical suites, hairdressers, coffee lounge, photographic studio and a travel bureau.

The two top floors are occupied by mechanical plant and cannot be reached by the public. But the Skywalk observation terrace on the forty-eighth floor gives you a bird's-eye view of Sydney from a point well above the arch of Sydney Harbour Bridge.

## REVOLVING

The observation terrace is about 250ft higher than the top of the 29-storey A.M.P. building at Circular Quay. On a clear day you can see to the Palm Beach area in the north, the Blue Mountains in the west and the high ground just north of Wollongong in the south.

The revolving restaurant on the forty-seventh floor is reputed to be the largest in the world.

Who enjoys life at the top?

Tenants include Chrysler International, the car company; Sir Howard Beale, former Australian Ambassador to the United States and now chairman of Pye Industries Ltd.; Alcan Australia Limited, the aluminium products company; Helicopter Utilities, Australia's biggest helicopter charter company; Intercontinental Investments Company Ltd.; Chartered accountants, solicitors and a public relations firm, P.A.N. Public Relations (N.S.W.) Pty. Ltd.

Public servants, too, are enjoying the benefits of working in the tower. The Commonwealth Department of Works occupies floors 10 to 21, excluding floor 19, which contains air-conditioning plant.

Chrysler International has its headquarters for operations in the Far East and Africa on floors 40 and 41.

Mr Harold Dodd, widely travelled advertising and sales promotion manager for Chrysler International, described the building as "very unusual and distinctive." He is on the forty-first floor.

"It's very handy to be able to have a meal and do shopping without leaving the building," he said.

Another Chrysler employee, Mrs Eileen Craig, secretary to the person-

nel manager, said: "It's nice in the morning to have a look out the window. It's a fringe benefit.

"We have been advertising for secretarial staff and have been inundated with replies from girls who want to work in the building."

The layout of the building is such that the larger offices, the executive suites, have the window views. The secretaries and staff occupy smaller offices near the central lift-well.

The exhibition area is on the sixth floor, 11,000 square feet of open space with an 18-ft ceiling.

A conference centre on the seventh floor is designed as a central location for conferences, promotions and seminars.

It has a theatre which seats 150 people and three conference rooms. By folding partitions, all three can be combined with the theatre into one area of 3,000 square feet.

Visiting businessmen can get a special service on the seventh floor — two fully furnished suites with offices for secretary or receptionist.

The suites can be hired on a casual basis for a morning, day, week or

fortnight. "Apart from Brussels, which has a complete building equipped with visitors' suites, this is the only place which supplies such a service, so far as I am aware," the Australia Square project manager Mr Alan Woodroof said.

"A businessman can write to us from New York and say he is going to be here for 10 days, for example, and he wants an office, typist, morning and afternoon coffee, daily papers, flowers in his office and so on.

## MONUMENT

"He can say that on such and such a date he wants to hold a small party.

"From the day he arrives to the day he leaves we will provide all these services. He can use the conference centre and if he wants to launch a product we can arrange a complete presentation, including films and lectures."

The tower is a monument to the

# AT THIS TIME . . .

Being the anniversaries of some famous people and things compiled by Dr R. L. Brasch.



German troops marching into Cologne.

**FEBRUARY 22, 1814:** The first road from Sydney to Liverpool was built. Previously, only a bush track for horsemen and pedestrians, but not for vehicles, had joined the two townships.

**MARCH 3, 1885:** Australia's first Expeditionary Force embarked at Sydney for the war in the Sudan. Patriotic crowds mobbed the 750 men who marched through the city to the tune of "The Girl I Left Behind Me." Gifts were showered on the soldiers and one resident promised an annual donation of 20gns for five years to whoever won the Victoria Cross. The contingent was commanded by Col. J. S. Richardson.

**MARCH 6, 1788:** Australia's first execution took place. A youth of 17, James Barrett, was hanged for robbery in N.S.W.

**MARCH 6, 1788:** Norfolk Island was taken possession of by Lt. Philip King (later Governor of N.S.W.) and a party consisting of two naval ratings, six other free men, nine men and six women convicts. They carried with them a six-months supply of provisions and livestock. The occasion was celebrated by hoisting the British

colours and drinking the health of the King, the Queen and the Prince of Wales.

**MARCH 7, 1936:** Defying the Treaty of Versailles, Nazi troops entered the Rhineland. Under the Treaty, which ended World War I in 1919, Germany ceded certain territories, including Alsace-Lorraine, to France and Posen and the Corridor to Poland. Germany undertook to disarm, to abolish universal military service, to keep only a small army and navy. Hitler took unilateral action against the Treaty, especially in regard to rearmament and the annexation of Austria. His attempt to change the eastern frontiers was the immediate cause of World War II.

**MARCH 8, 1794:** The Rev. Samuel Marsden arrived in Sydney on the William. Born in Yorkshire, England, he had been appointed Associate Chaplain to the Colony. He became one of the most controversial figures in the early history of Australia. During 40 years he had such varied occupations as clergyman, police magistrate and expert sheep-breeder. Contemporaries described him as "the flogging parson," "the chief malcontent in the Colony" and "a pioneer of civilisation."

man who built it, Gerardus Jozef Dus-seldorp, Dutch-born chairman of Lend Lease Corporation Limited, parent company of the building contractors, Civil and Civic Pty. Ltd.

This dynamic Dutchman's first assignment in Australia was to build 200 houses at Cooma for workers at the Snowy Mountains hydro-electricity project in 1951. Since then he has added a string of notable buildings to the Sydney skyline, including Bankstown Square shopping centre, Lend Lease House, Caltex House, Blue's Point Towers and the first stage of the Opera House.

The Australia Square project survived early opposition from critics who claimed it would destroy the architectural harmony of the area and create a serious traffic problem.

Architect for the scheme, Harry Seidler, said the circular shape was selected for the tower because it eliminated the deep, sunless canyons created by ordinary, rectangular skyscrapers.

It is the tallest lightweight concrete structure in the world.