

Day 5 and beyond. (Hawaii – have hammer, will travel)

Well, my month in Hawaii wasn't quite what I was anticipating.

First up I had to get a train from Berry to the Sydney airport and checked out the options the day before. You can buy tickets, or you can buy an "Opal" card which can be topped up like a credit card – but only for use on Sydney trains (although some bus services are starting to use it as well). The fare was about \$24 but the lovely man at the station said to buy an Opal card and put \$20 on it. When you get off at the airport and 'tap it' to exit it, it will show a negative credit but still let you out. The man said not to tell anyone that he told me that.

So I got to the airport a couple of hours early (Jetstar to Hawaii) only to find it was delayed 4 hours. That was a bit of a drag but at least they were giving out food vouchers that could be used in participating food outlets. You were only supposed to get one but the man felt sorry for me and gave me 3 (\$10 each).

I was going to stay with Gina who was an old friend of Elli's for many many years. I was there in 2015 for 2 months to look after her house while she was away for a month, and to do some house maintenance. One bit of 'maintenance' was building a small deck off a room in the back lawn – using second hand timber. But I was flat out all that time on many other jobs – I even sewed curtains.





This visit she was getting contractors in to remodel her kitchen and wanted someone with some building experience to make sure they didn't do anything dodgy. Gina only got home late in the day before I arrived very early the next morning. On the way to a bulk food place to get my sort of food the traffic was bumper to bumper, and then you could barely move in the store for the number of people with full trolleys.

When we got home we heard on the TV that there was a hurricane approaching and the public were being told to have 14 days food, and being told where the shelters would be. Hurricane 'Lane' was still hundreds of miles away and after studying the situation we decided it had all the signs of weakening and not hitting the island of Oahu which has Honolulu, Waikiki, and Pearl Harbour.

The TV programmes were constantly being interrupted in mid-stream to give these warnings. There was even an air-raid siren went off in our neighbourhood – I thought Pearl Harbour was being attacked again. Several days later 'Lane' went past to the south of us as a rain depression with almost no wind, but days of steady drizzle. But before that it did hit the Big Island and one of the others as a hurricane and caused heaps of damage and loss of power to thousands, and extensive flooding.

After that we got a couple of sunny days and then we got all the warnings again about another hurricane approaching from the north. Despite all the panic (and people actually going to shelters) this was another fizzer by the time it got to Oahu.

The contractors for the kitchen remodelling fell through and she had to get another one who couldn't start till November. Not wanting to see me sitting around getting bored for a month Gina started thinking of other jobs.

Like:

Removing two layers of UV film off a window and putting a decorative one on.

Replaced two faulty smoke detectors.

Installed a new kitchen faucet.

Removed a board from behind the new stove so it wouldn't stick out so much.

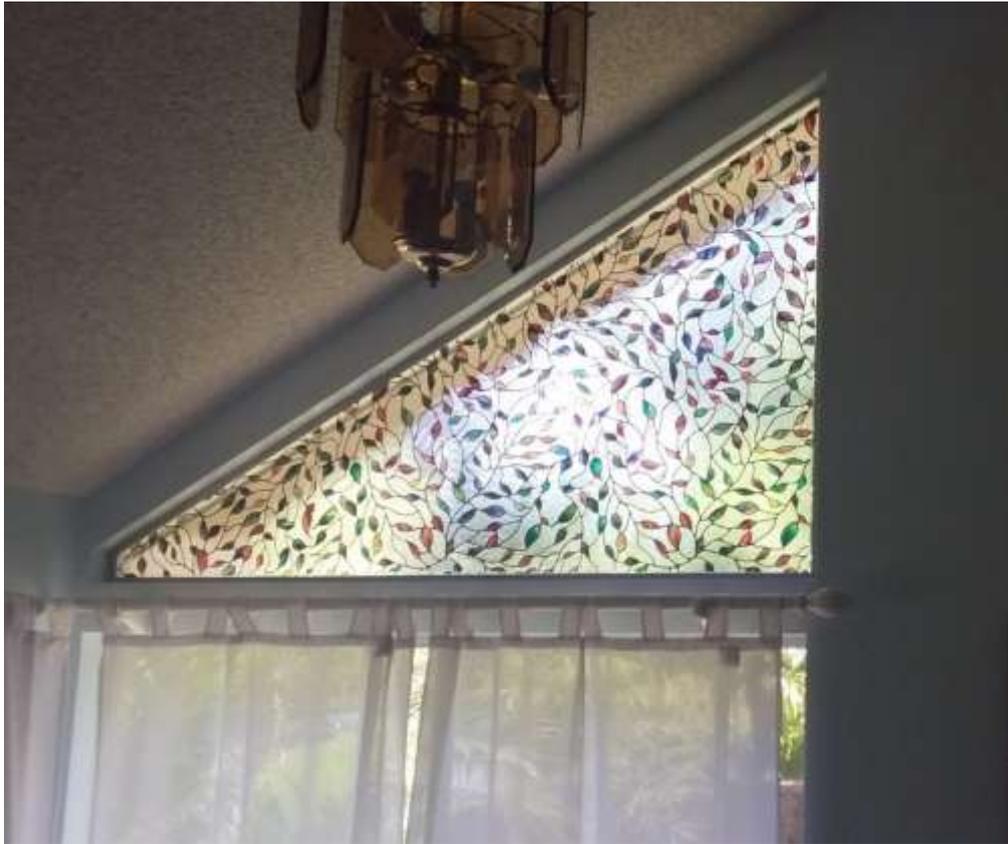
Unblocked a hand basin.

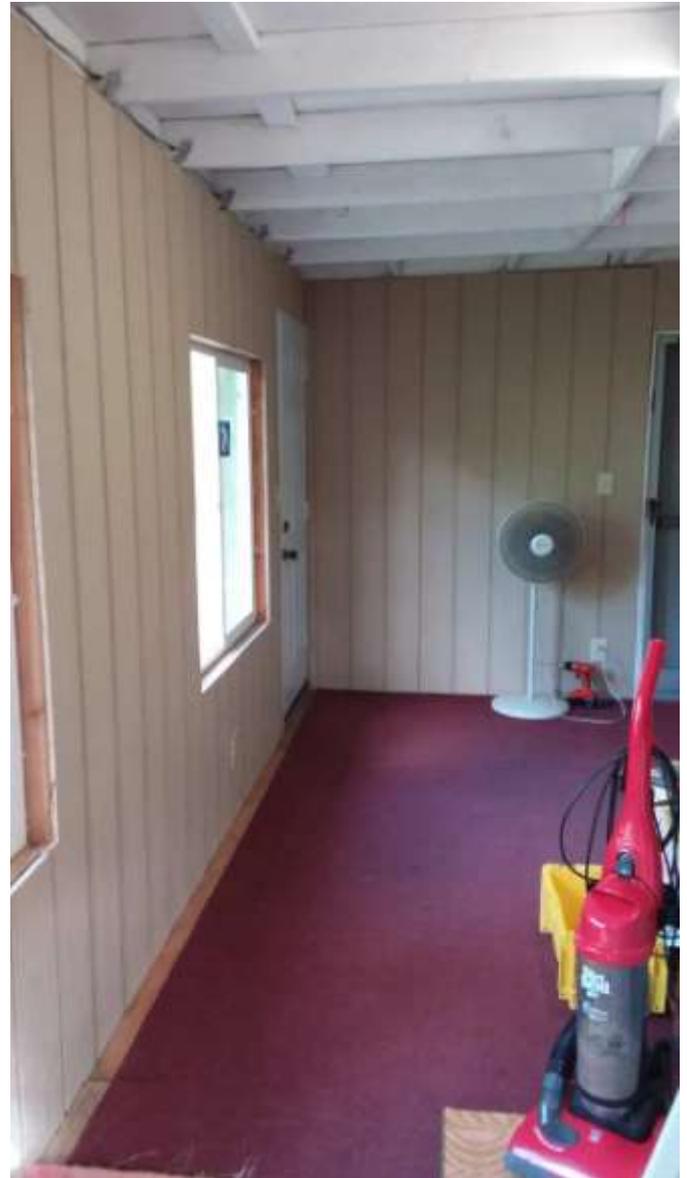
Installed new handles on bedroom doors.

Repaired a faulty extension lead.

But the biggy was fitting a new door in the back room out onto the deck, and then insulating and lining the inside. The temperature was in the 30's just about every day and the humidity must have been 100%. It was overcast every day except for maybe 3 or 4. You could take your shirt off in the middle of the day and wring the water out of it.

I could only do a couple of hours work in the morning and a couple in the afternoon most days – there was a lot of walking up and down to the room, and a lot of up and down ladders. I was pretty stuffed by the end of the month and did nothing for the last 3 days to try and recover for all the walking tours in Russia.





I have to say I would have been bored to death if I hadn't had these projects to tackle. I had to run cables for lights and power points before putting the lining up. The lining was in 8 feet by 4 feet sheets, three quarters of an inch thick. I only got 3 out of the 4 walls finished.

The room was up these steps, or by a much longer path with no steps.



