

Greetings from Western Australia.

We arrived in Perth last Sunday (April 2) after a 36 hour journey from home. However, we soon recovered and spent two days in Perth and surroundings before driving south to Margaret River. We returned to Perth on Friday for two more nights before boarding the Indian Pacific train for our two day journey east to Adelaide.

On our first two days in Perth we toured the city by bus on Monday and went by boat to Freemantle via the Swan River on Tuesday. Perth is a beautiful clean city and gives an air of prosperity virtually everywhere. It has some great turn of the century (19-20) civic and commercial buildings, several Victorian era shopping arcades and many beautiful brick-built churches of every denomination.



The highlight of our city tour on the first day was the 2+ hours we spent in Kings Park, one of the largest city center public parks in the world. It reflects the desert landscape of Western Australia in many gardens through which paths meander for the visitor to get



close to the fauna. There are dozens of varieties of trees and three tree-lined avenues dedicated to the heroes of the wars in which Australia has fought.

The park affords some fantastic views of the Swan River (named that by the first Dutchman to navigate the river in 1697) and the



modern Perth city skyline, particularly from the war memorial park area at the highest point of the park.

The trip to Freemantle on Tuesday was also a very interesting day. We sailed down the Swan River about 75 minutes and then



Sailing the Swan River

took a tram tour of the old city of Freemantle. The city is perhaps most famous for its prison, built to house convicts sent over from Britain in

the 1800s. We chose not to tour the inside of the prison but admired its great stone wall and the warders' and other officers' quarters.

The old city has some wonderful streets lined with late 1800 to early 1900 buildings,



a number of which have wrought iron balconies reminiscent of those in New Orleans. We walked through the central area for a couple of hours admiring the churches and civic and commercial buildings on a beautiful sunny

afternoon.

Freemantle is the port for the city of Perth and has two large harbors in which container and other ships offload



goods from Asia, not only for this part of Australia but for all other cities across the country.

On Wednesday we picked up a rental car and drove about 200 miles south of Perth to the area known as Margaret River. It was a very pleasant drive down a fast highway near the coast but with only occasional views of the ocean.

Margaret River is a major tourist area of Western Australia and sits in a heavily forested area stretching inland from the coast.



The town itself is very small but the surrounding area has many tourist attractions, particularly for outdoor lovers, including caves, wineries, hiking and, of course, surfing.

On our full day in the area (Thursday) we visited Cape Leeuwin, which is the most southwesterly point of Australia and the point at which the Southern



and Indian Oceans meet. An enormous lighthouse (built in 1895) stands on the promontory and a self-guided audio tour tells of the building and manning of this important navigational aid.

The lighthouse is still functioning, although is now fully automated, and judging by the rocky islands and the seas that we saw, is still necessary for world shipping.

On our way back from the Cape we stopped at a couple of scenic areas right on the coast and admired the sandy beaches and rocky shore-



line—in contrast with the nearby heavily forested area just inland.

On Friday we returned to Perth and spent our remaining full day there (Saturday) walking through the area close to our hotel. Here we were able to spend a little more time admiring the magnificent buildings—both old and ultra-modern—and take in the sights of this vibrant city.



Now we start our journey east, the first 1300 miles of which are on the Indian Pacific Railway which will take us as far as Adelaide. More from there!

