

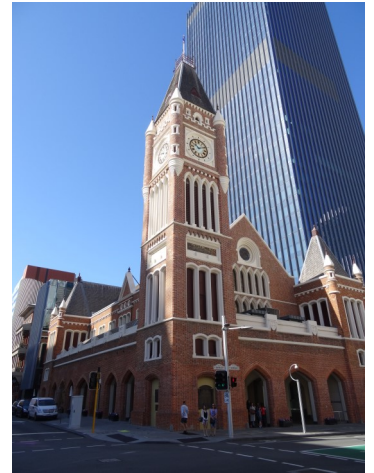
We stopped in Busselton for a light lunch and then drove directly back to Perth along the main motorway. The road was relatively quiet until we were within 20 miles of Perth so it was a very easy and pleasant drive. In addition, the phone GPS took us directly to the hotel with no problem so we were back at the Holiday Inn by about 2:30. I took the car back and then we walked a little way to the post office, had a coffee and relaxed until dinner time.

Tonight we walked a couple of blocks north of the hotel to a very nice restaurant called 1907 – after the vintage building in which it is housed. It was a very good meal in plush surroundings and it was difficult to understand why it was so quiet on a Friday evening. Once again we had a good chat with the waiter who was from Italy. It seems that most of the service staff we have met have been relatively recent immigrants or in Australia for only a short stay.

Saturday April 8

It was only 52F when we walked to breakfast this morning but it was bright and sunny and promised to be another nice day. We spent the entire day doing two self-guided walks in the central business district of Perth. On the first we saw the “Icons of Influence” which covered many of the early buildings of the city and gave us an interesting perspective on the days both before and after the gold rush of the 1890s.

The city is much like Sacramento in that it was built on the gold mined a few hundred miles to the east and, just as the California town, many of the richest were not the miners but the business leaders who stayed in the city. They in turn built many beautiful churches, theaters, banks, schools and private homes which were the highlights of our walk today.



“Icons of Influence”

Magnificent early Perth buildings and their modern counterparts



St George's Anglican Cathedral opened in 1888

We were particularly struck by the light from the stained glass windows illuminating the palms around each pillar



The Lieutenant Governor's Home and all that is left of the Pensioner Barracks



Perth Boys School, constructed by convicts in 1854. It was constructed to look like a church to impose a "sense of duty, attentiveness and obedience" on its students.

The home of an early city benefactor, now preserved as a pub in a modern shopping area

In the afternoon we covered a slightly different route which emphasized the boom in the form of hotels and theaters and the rapidly rising population – from a few thousand to almost 30,000 as the decade of the rush ended. Again we were struck (as we have been in many similar places around the world) by how rapidly the infrastructure grew and how quickly civic, spiritual and civic needs were satisfied in these new developments



***More fine buildings from early Perth including
The Opera House and one of the first hotels***



The weather was perfect for strolling and we thoroughly enjoyed our final full day in Perth. We were very impressed by the city; its overall cleanliness and sense of prosperity, as well as the way in which early buildings have been preserved and maintained in what is otherwise a very modern metropolis.

A friend we met along the way

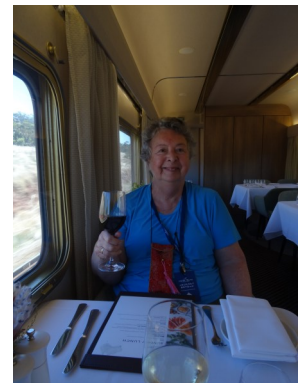
(Little did we know that this would be the only kangaroo we saw in the entire trip!)

We ended the visit with a return to the Halo restaurant on the waterfront. Again, we enjoyed a good meal in very pleasant surroundings.

Sunday April 9

We were up shortly after 6:30 and finished our packing before checking out. Our ride to the train station was waiting for us and we were soon on our way. It was only about 15 minutes to the station where we were greeted by the dedicated "Platinum" staff and checked our bags. We had chosen to do the two day train ride in style and spend the extra dollars on the ultimate experience, with dedicated staff, all inclusive, "full size" room.

We were offered coffee/tea and pastries as we waited on the station platform; we were expecting to have breakfast on the train but that was a (minor) disappointment. At nine, we boarded the train and found our cabin and soon were welcomed by one of the staff who gave us a description of what to expect on the journey to Adelaide.



Settling in on the



Once settled in, we walked to the restaurant/lounge car where we sat and watched as we passed the outskirts of Perth and entered the farmland, and then desert, of Western Australia. We had lunch as we journeyed east through farms and open land, alongside a large pipeline that we assumed was carrying natural gas to the coast.



For the most part the land was quite flat (a few modest rises in parts) and ran alongside a river (Avon?) for a while before becoming much more barren. There were still trees along both sides of the track but there were only occasional hamlets and villages in this vast farmland.

There were very few animals to see, so we

must assume that the farming was predominantly grain crop – but at this time of year it was difficult to tell.



The train on which we were riding – The Indian Pacific – was about ½ mile in length with dozens of cars and had various classes of service. As we said, we had chosen the “best”, so we had a private cabin with full bed and bathroom and, presumably, the highest level of service. Certainly the staff were very accommodating and pleasant and the room was adequate if not spacious. The Indian Pacific as such has been operating for less than 50 years as the cross country route was changed to a single gauge in 1970. Before that, the cross-country route demanded several changes as the gauge changed.

Lunch was a three course meal, with a choice of main and dessert courses, and was very good. In our class of service, all food and beverage was included, so we were able to sample the Australian wines with impunity! Following the good meal (our first of the day since we had mistakenly assumed that we would have breakfast on the train!) we returned to our room and spent the afternoon watching the (mostly flat) terrain roll by.

We were soon on the vast plain that extends through most of Western and into South Australia. There were fewer trees as we traveled east and eventually we were in true desert with little but red soil and brush. We had dinner about 7:30 (it had



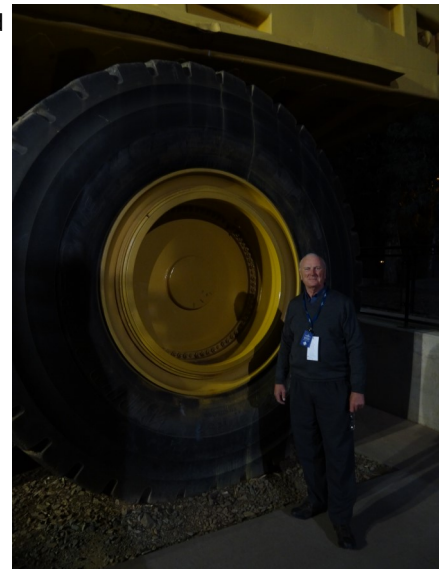
gone dark around six) and then we stopped at the mining town of Kalgoorlie. This is where the gold rush really got started and it is still a big mining town with a population of 32,000 – not unlike the size to which it grew in the late 1800s. Today, mining is via deep drilling and open pit.



We were taken by coach on a drive through the town which appeared to have some very impressive buildings, although by now it was fully dark and it was difficult to see much detail. The town center has wide, clean streets with a total of (we were told) 38 roundabouts. Our first stop was at a museum dedicated to mining but which apparently is all but closed after millions have been spent trying to make it a major tourist attraction. Our bus driver was quite critical of the leaders of the communi-



ty who had failed to provide a first class attraction. We sat and watched a short play in which two people re-enacted the early days of the original gold rush in which a prospector allegedly kicked up a few nuggets, laid his claim and the rush was on. Then we were ushered to the gift shop but passed by two of the enormous trucks that are used to carry ore up from the deep pit mine. They are very similar to the ones we have



seen several times at the Bingham copper mine in Salt Lake City.



We were then driven to an observation deck overlooking the “Superpit” – the largest open pit mine in Australia. Again, it was a little difficult to see much at this time of night but we were able to get a sense of its immense size. At the moment it is 3.3 by 1.5 Km and is 750 meters deep—very similar overall to Bingham Canyon. It is currently anticipated that mining will continue here until 2029 so it is likely to grow even larger. Again, the similarities to Bingham Canyon are amazing.



We returned to the train shortly after 11pm and immediately settled into our cabin – now converted from a sitting area to a bedroom. We both slept quite well as the train reached its maximum speed of 115 km/h (72 mph) on the longest stretch of straight rail in Australia. We were now on the Nullarbor Plain which extends across eastern Western Australia and borders South Australia.

Monday April 10

We were up about 6am as we were to have breakfast off the train at a stop “in the middle of nowhere” in the sheep farming “town” of Rawlinna. It sits on a 2.5 million acre sheep ranch! Within 10 minutes of the train stopping, the staff had set dozens of tables near the track and we were ushered off for a breakfast of sausage, quiche and mushrooms – all remarkably hot under the circumstances. The sun was now up and, although a sweater was advised, it was a very pleasant way to start the day as we sat next to the half-mile long train.





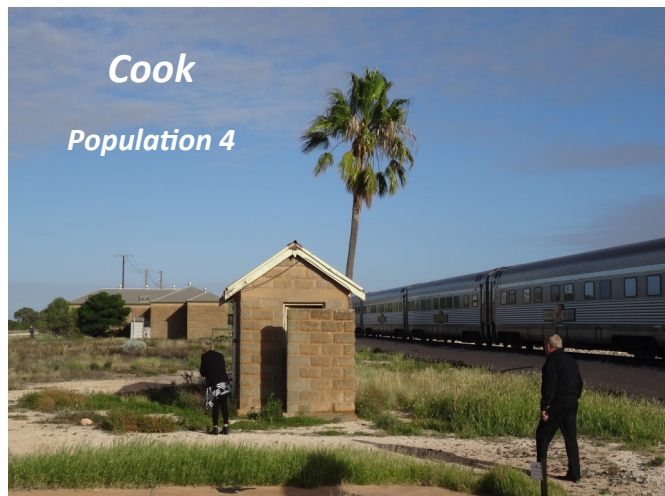
Somewhat surprisingly I was able to get a cell phone signal and sent proof of our stop in the desert to our kids in the US!

***Breakfast
in
the middle
of
NOWHERE***



Then, after 1 ½ hours on land, it was back to the train for more high speed travel across the dead flat terrain truly living up to its “no trees” name. The nearest thing we saw to a tree for the next several hours was the odd scrub brush and maybe a few saplings trying to look like trees.

We had another stop mid-afternoon at the tiny hamlet of Cook. This had been a town with a population of 200 until the privatization of the railways caused it to shrink overnight to a now permanent resident population of four. They provide servicing (water, fuel, supplies) for the passing trains and also maintain a few cottages providing accommodation for drivers.



***Cook
Population 4***



We were now in South Australia and on Central Standard Time, 1 ½ hours ahead of Perth. Our next stop was our destination of Adelaide but first we had another 15 hours traveling east and then south through the evening and night. Just before sunset, the view alongside the track changed quickly and dramatically to heavily forested. After the best part of two days of flat desert, it was amazing to see lots of green and some undulations in the terrain.

Sometime close to midnight we passed Woomera, famous for its tracking capabilities and its contribution to the successful 1969 moon landing. We missed seeing that, having retired shortly after our final dinner on board the train.



The Indian Pacific is an Australian passenger rail service that operates between Sydney, on the Pacific Ocean, and Perth, on the Indian Ocean. It is one of the few truly transcontinental trains in the world. The train first ran in February 1970 after the completion of gauge conversion projects in South and Western Australia.

The train's route includes the world's longest straight stretch of railway track, a 297 mile stretch over the Nullarbor Plain.

The service was originally operated jointly by four different railroad companies until February 1993 when Australian National took full ownership. In October 1997, the Indian Pacific was sold to Great Southern Rail.

The entire journey from Perth to Sydney takes 65 hours; our destination of Adelaide was reached in about 46 hours. A truly interesting way to travel across one of the world's most desolate regions.

Tuesday April 11

We were up at six again as we were due to reach Adelaide around 7:30 and there was only a minimal breakfast service until 6:30. This was certainly adequate and we were all packed and ready and ready to disembark when the train stopped. We were greeted by a driver who took us directly to the Crown Plaza downtown. Unfortunately our room wasn't yet ready (it was only about 8am!) so we walked for a coffee and then sat in the hotel lobby until we could get into the room.

Our first impressions were that Adelaide, like Perth, was a very a very clean and prosperous city and had a number of very impressive late 1800s to early 1900s buildings and Victorian arcades. During our walk we were also able to arrange tours to the nearby Adelaide Hills and to the Barossa Valley wine region for the next two days, which would still leave us one full day here to walk around the city center.

Adelaide is the capital city of the state of South Australia, and the fifth-most populous city of Australia. Adelaide has a resident population of almost 1 1/2 million. South Australia, with a total of 1.7 million inhabitants, has the most centralized population of any state in Australia, with more than 75 percent of its people living in greater Adelaide,.

Adelaide is north of the Fleurieu Peninsula, on the Adelaide Plains between Gulf St Vincent and the low-lying Mount Lofty Ranges which surround the city. Adelaide stretches 12 miles from the coast to the foothills, and about 60 miles from Gawler at its northern extent to Sellicks Beach in the south.

Named in honor of Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen, queen consort to King William IV, the city was founded in 1836 as the planned capital for a freely-settled British province in Australia. Colonel William Light, one of Adelaide's founding fathers, designed the city and chose its location close to the River Torrens, in the area originally inhabited by the Kaurna people.

Light's design set out Adelaide in a grid layout, interspaced by wide boulevards and large public squares, and entirely surrounded by parklands. Early Adelaide was shaped by prosperity and wealth—until the Second World War, it was Australia's third-largest city and one of the few Australian cities to not have convict history. It has been noted for early examples of religious freedom, a commitment to political progressivism and civil liberties. It has also been known as the "City of Churches" since the mid-19th century.

As South Australia's seat of government and commercial center, Adelaide is the site of many governmental and financial institutions. Most of these are concentrated in the city center along the cultural boulevard of North Terrace, King William Street and in various districts of the metropolitan area. Today, Adelaide is noted for its many festivals and sporting events, its food and wine, its long beachfronts, and its large defense and manufacturing sectors. It ranks highly in terms of livability, being listed in the Top 10 of the World's Most Livable Cities.

We relaxed throughout the afternoon and then walked about 15 minutes to the Mayflower restaurant in the Mayfair Hotel (a little confusing but we worked it out!) We had an excellent meal there and a very interesting chat with the waiter. He was probably about 50, born in Fiji of Australian parents but discussed aircraft and aircraft engines with more apparent knowledge than me (and that was supposed to have been my career for 30+ years!). We had a great conversation and he was very amusing, which, with the ambiance and the food, made for an extremely enjoyable

Wednesday April 12

We had a late start today and it was about 10am by the time we had finished breakfast at a coffee shop right next to the hotel. We then started our walk towards the Torrens River which meanders through the north end of the center of the city.

It was a lovely morning for strolling and we saw several impressive buildings along the way and we plan to spend more time in this part of town before we leave. Close to the river is the University of Adelaide campus which is a very impressive site with a mixture of old and new buildings in a very green setting (aerial view to right). There wasn't much activity on campus so we assumed that Easter recess is underway.



Once at the river we walked on a footpath on the south side and found a bench on which to sit and admire the river, the bird life and the beautiful trees. At the point where we left the river and headed back into town we had some great views of the Adelaide Oval cricket ground, apparently one of the



The Adelaide Oval

most popular additions to the city, not only for cricket fans but as a major event facility with a number of banquet rooms.

Around 12:30 we found a coffee shop for a light lunch and then walked to the bus station where we picked up our small coach for a tour of the city and into the nearby Adelaide Hills. The city tour was too quick to get much more than an overall impression – but what a good impression it was: wide streets laid out in a grid with parklands all around the central area and five major parks within the grid. Definitely we need to find time to cover this on foot.



The Adelaide Hills are about 15 miles east of the city and rise to about 2000 feet rather rapidly. Our first stop was at Lofty Mountain lookout where we had immense panoramic views of the city and the beaches to the north. It seemed a little odd to be on the south coast of the state and looking north to the

water but Adelaide sits near a major river estuary and a huge bay so all directions seemed a little confusing. The views were not spectacular today as we were looking directly into the sun and there was a little haze in the flat valley. However, it was a great place to spend a few minutes and see the whole city.



Mt Lofty Fire Tower

We then drove through several small but exclusive villages in the Hills in which there were many high-priced homes for those who didn't want to be in the city itself. It is a heavily forested area and there have been a number of occasions in recent memory where forest fires have destroyed several homes and caused a number of deaths – but people tend to forget quickly and rebuild.

We then drove on to a tourist trap called Hahndorf, a German village founded in the late 1830s by Prussians who came to practice their Lutheran religion in peace. The first ship came in 1832 and the town was founded shortly thereafter. It has maintained a German feel over the past 200 years but I suspect that the café and boutique owners are no longer concerned so much with their heritage as they are with servicing the tourists. Our tour included afternoon tea at one of the oldest inns but it would be a stretch to call a cup of tea and a slice of cake by that name almost anywhere else. Nevertheless, it was a nice drive and (especially after two days on the plains) it was great to climb a few hills and see fields of crops, vineyards and trees (in their beautiful fall colors).



Hahndorf

We returned to the city and were back at the hotel by 5:30 – in time to figure out plans for dinner, clean up and go out! We walked from the hotel to the next parallel street which was wall-to-wall restaurants of every style and ethnicity. We had read about Iberia – a Spanish-Portuguese tapas restaurant – and went there. Once we had sorted out the menu we selected a large plate to share and a couple of small dishes and had a thoroughly enjoyable meal, sitting outside on the sidewalk.



Thursday April 13

We were up about 7:30 and walked to a local coffee shop for breakfast before getting on our tour bus that was to take us through the Barossa Valley (about 37 miles northeast of the city) and give us wine tastings at five estates.

We made a quick stop at a café/park/play area (where there is the largest rocking horse in the world—but it doesn't rock!) and another at a huge dam wall that has interesting



acoustic properties – and is called the Whispering Wall for obvious reasons – before our first tasting.

Here we were presented with small samples of four different wines which we tasted while standing at the bar. The attendant gave a brief description of each wine and obviously each was for sale but there was no pressure to buy.

The next estate gave us six or seven samples which our party (there were only four of us on the tour) felt were nicer wines. The next stop gave us four or five and we also had a very good lunch on this estate.

After lunch we did two more tastings of four or five wines each and then were driven back to Adelaide after a very good day in some beautiful countryside.



The Five Wine Estates



The wine tastings and their presentation reminded us of the few we have done in California and Washington; stand at the bar, be presented with a very small sample, minimal discussion and a pleasant but somewhat “bar like” setting. Obviously there is nothing wrong with this and as we said we had a great day out, but we were all the time comparing with the ones we have done in South Africa. There (and admittedly we were chauffeured and taken to the best) tastings were much more than

a sample of several different wines. It was an experience! The setting was a shaded courtyard or veranda overlooking the vast vineyards, the table and chairs were comfortable and the presentations were given with obvious by attentive and knowledgeable staff. We were usually charged a nominal fee but the samples were larger, often accompanied by appropriate snacks, and the experience took an hour or two rather than the 20 minutes spent in each today.

We should not take away from the Australian experience and we had a wonderful day – but the South African experience takes first prize.



Tonight we walked around the corner again and found another restaurant, this time Italian. Once again we sat outside and enjoyed our shared pizza and bottle of wine, which was about \$60, certainly the cheapest dinner since we arrived in Australia.

Friday April 14 (Good Friday).

Today was a National Holiday so we wondered exactly what would be open and running as we started our walking tour of the center of Adelaide. Virtually all the stores were closed but we soon found a café serving breakfast so we were ready to start the walk by 10am.

We started in Victoria Square, which is the biggest of the five squares in the inner city. It is reminiscent of the large squares in major European and South American cities, although this one is more diamond shaped and has a lot of green space.

Statue of Queen Victoria in Her Square.





Adelaide Central Business District, including:

***Victoria Square,
one of the many in the City of Churches,
the entrance to Chinatown,
Haigh's Chocolate (a city institution),
the old Town Hall
and the Central Markets***

We walked north along the main street, King William Street, until we reached North Terrace. The one square mile city proper is bounded by four terraces so we had walked from the center of the city to its northern edge. This was a straight line distance of only $\frac{1}{2}$ mile but we crisscrossed the road and went off the main street occasionally. Along the way we admired many fine Victorian and early 20th century buildings which have been well preserved as a result of Adelaide's strict Heritage rules.



Once at North Terrace we walked past the railway station, the old and new Parliament buildings, the library and the war memorials, all within a few hundred yards and bordering the University of Adelaide campus which we had seen two days ago.

By now it was early afternoon on another glorious day (sunny and 75F) so we decided to take the city tram to the beach suburb of Glenelg. This was about a 30 minute ride on a modern light rail system and took us through the southern residential areas of the city with some very large homes as well as many smaller bungalows to see along the way.

Glenelg is a small but vibrant community and today (a national holiday) it was packed with locals who had come to spend a few hours in the play areas and on the beach. There were several large hotels and apartment complexes overlooking the ocean (Southern or Pacific?) and a long pier over the beach and water. We strolled around for a while, found a coffee shop (charging a 15% surcharge due to the holiday!) and then took the tram back to the center of town. We felt good at having mastered the public transit system and had had a very interesting and pleasant day in what is a very beautiful city.



Adelaide's Beach at Glenelg

We were back at the hotel by four and relaxed until dinner time; tonight we chose Thai.



Saturday April 15

We walked to breakfast in the beautiful Victorian Adelaide Arcade once again and then completed our packing and checked out. Molly stayed with the bags at the hotel while I walked to the Hertz rental car office and picked up our car. We were on the road soon after 10am and, after taking the expressway up the Adelaide Hills, we were in another very dry and flat region. At first we thought we were back in the desert but in fact much of the land had been harvested of its grain and it was the residual stubble that looked so dry. There weren't many trees, however, and not much green to be seen.

After about an hour we left the main route to Mt Gambier (where we would spend the night) to dip south to the coast road. This was not part of The Great Ocean Road that we would follow later as we traveled east but we were able to see the ocean for a few miles. For a while we were at sea level and hugging the coast, and stopped briefly at the Cape Jaffa lighthouse (relocated from offshore recently for preservation), but for the most part we were separated from the water by huge sand dunes with a little brush-type vegetation.



After a relatively short time the road left the coast again and we continued inland until we stopped at the town of Kingston which was once again on the water. Here we had a second stop for a snack – it was now almost 3pm – and then it was about 100 miles across country to our destination. We were still very much in farm land with grain predominating but we saw more and more sheep and cattle as we traveled in a northeasterly direction. We also saw hills off to our left (north) and for the final 20 miles or so the land was very heavily forested. Clearly it was planted for future harvesting but it was a significant change in vegetation and certainly in color.

We arrived at our motel in Mt Gambier (a bigger town than we had anticipated) about five and scanned the road for likely restaurants as we drove along the main road. We didn't see any but were relieved to see that the motel had a rather nice looking restaurant of its own. This euphoria didn't last long, however, as we were told it was closed for the Easter weekend. Still, the receptionist was able to recommend a place that was open and which she said was the best in town – so we made a reservation! It wasn't as "up-market" as it appeared from the literature and web site but we had a very good meal in pleasant surroundings.

Mount Gambier is the second most populous city in South Australia with an estimated urban population of about 30,000. The city is located on the slopes of Mount Gambier (volcano) in the south east of the state, about 280 miles south-east of the capital Adelaide and just 11 miles from the Victorian border. It is the most important settlement in the Limestone Coast region and the seat of government for both the City of Mount Gambier and the District Council of Grant.

The peak of the dormant volcano was the first place in South Australia named by European explorers. It was sighted in 1800 by Lieutenant James Grant from the survey brig, HMS Lady Nelson, and named for Lord James Gambier, Admiral of the Fleet. The peak is marked by Centenary Tower, built in 1901 to commemorate the first sighting, and at 630 feet above sea level the landmark is the city's highest point.

The city is known for its geographical features, particularly its volcanic and limestone features, most notably its Blue Lake, parks and gardens, caves and sinkholes—something of which we were unaware, but which proved to be of significant interest.