Journey #14212 - Des Moines to Perth and Auckland

Daily Journal - Part 1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **October 9 – Shelley**  Surprisingly, I was one of the last to arrive at the airport for our departure and was told of the first problem of the journey; Janette’s date of birth on her Australian ETA didn’t match her passport. She called the travel agent and a new ETA was rushed to the airport. Problem solved.    **October 11 - Charlotte**  Arrived in Sydney after a long day and night of traveling. Where did October 10th go? Mary and I explored the Harbor, Opera House and rode the train through the Botanical Center where we saw some of the oldest trees known to humans. The exhibit “Plants That Bite” was both informative and creative. Bonuses: The perfect gelato place for our “lunch” and the UGG store. | | | | | | | |
| https://tse2.mm.bing.net/th?id=OIP.vXnMmXUX7s2pv8TlQy572gHaFP&pid=15.1&P=0&w=214&h=153 | | | |  | | |  |
| Sydney Opera House | | | | Royal Botanic Garden | | | Royal Botanic Garden |
|  | | | | | | | |
| **October 12 - Jane**  Day 3 found us in Sydney riding the hop-on/hop-off bus. We decided to get off at Bondi Beach. Janette and I decided to dip our toes in the ocean and were surprised by a pretty big wave, which resulted in getting soaked and no good pictures so here is our feet before getting down to the water. Luckily, we saved ourselves and no lifeguard was required. Even though we were wet we perked up when we found a wonderful gem store near the beach and found opals and crystals. We are still finding sand in our shoes and purses! | | | | | | | |
|  | |
| Inline image | | Inline image | | | |  | |
| Feet at the Beach | | Bondi Beach | | | | Luna Park | |
|  | |  | | | |  | |
|  | |  | | | |  | |
| **October 13 - Cherie**  Woke up this morning after spending the second night at the Sydney Harbour Marriott Hotel at Circular Quay. I'm sharing a room with Shelley and Jane, and so far, we seem to have adjusted well to the time zone change, considering we completely lost October 10th getting here!  Looks like we might see rain today...I found the Concierge in the lobby, and after getting a map and asking directions, Shelley, Claudia and I headed off to find the Pancake House, which seemed to be the closest thing to an American breakfast within walking distance. We passed by the transit stop where we had taken the Hop On Hop Off sightseeing bus yesterday, and over breakfast decided to take the Hop On Hop Off Boat to see another side of Sydney today.  From breakfast, it was a short walk to the Harbour dock to get the ferry...the rain cleared on and off all day, and it turned out to be a great day of seeing the sights around Sydney and getting to know Claudia and Shelley better. One of our stops was to the Chinese Gardens, where we enjoyed a live performance on the Erhu. Saw some interesting winged Sydney residents, too...  We joined up with the others for dinner: we had reservations for the Four Frogs Creperie, and it turned out to be a fun evening of introducing ourselves to each other, enjoying great food, speaking a little French, and being served by a wonderfully personable and entertaining waiter, all just around the corner from the hotel.  Tomorrow is our last day here...it's going to be hard saying goodbye to Sydney early Monday morning. | | | | | | | |
|  | |  | | | |  | |
| Ibis at McDonald’s near Darling Harbour | | Chinese Garden | | | | Chinese Garden | |
|  | |
| **October 14 - Claudia**  I started the day with a McDonald's McMuffin just down the street and around the corner. There aren't a lot of restaurants open early Sunday morning unless you want the $38 buffet at our hotel. Then I walked to St. Mary's Cathedral. I got there between the 7 and 9 o'clock morning services and had time to move about, enjoy the beautiful stained-glass windows, find the 3 organs, and choose my seat. If you didn't sit facing the altar, media screens were set up to allow viewing. After the service was over, I visited the nearby Hyde Park. I enjoyed several fountains, a memorial to soldiers, statuary and beautiful walkways littered with many benches. From there I walked to the Sydney Opera house where I watched a performance of Evita at the Joan Sutherland Theatre. Great! | | | | | | | |
|  | | |  | | | http://media-cdn.tripadvisor.com/media/photo-s/03/05/31/36/the-rocks-discovery-museum.jpg | |
| St Mary’s Catherdral | | | Fountain at Hyde Park | | | Discovery Museum | |
|  | | |  | | |  | |
| Perth Program for Monday 15th October  6:00 am Ambassadors arrive & airport pick up  4.00 pm Highlight tour of World Heritage listed Old Fremantle Prison  5.00 pm Welcome function – at adjoining Women’s Prison (now YHA) | | | | | | | |
| **October 15 - Janette**  Left Sydney at 6:15 a.m. We arrived in Perth, Australia, after a 5-hour, 5-minute, 2,035 mail flight. We were met at the airport by our hosts. A morning and early afternoon rest was planned for us. We had a chance to get a glimpse of Perth on the drive to our Host’s home. Home for Jane and I were on the 15th floor or a condo overlooking the Perth Swan Bridge and the new football stadium. The Journey began with a tour of the World Heritage listed old Fremantle Prison and dinner in the Women’s Prison. Menu was fruit, lettuce salad, potato salad (different than ours), chick pea salad and a cake decorated with a welcome. Home and in bed early. | | | | | | | |
|  | |  | | | |  | |
| Perth Welcome Party | | Entrance to Fremantle Prison | | | |
|  | |  | | | |
|  | |  | | | |  | |
| Perth Program for Tuesday 16th October  9.45 am Perth City orientation walk (approx. 2 hours)  Yagan Square, Northbridge, Cultural Centre, City Malls, Supreme Court Gardens to the Bell Tower.  12.00 Lunch (own expense)  12.30 pm Visit to Bell Tower with bell ringing. The bells are from St Martins in The Fields, London.  2.00 pm Mayoral Reception at Council House  Free evening | | | | | | | |
| **October 16 - Dean**  On our first full day in Perth we had a two-hour walking tour of downtown. It was a beautiful spring day with highs in the low 80's. Our hosts took us to the Tourist Information Center at the Murray St. Mall. From there our guide took to Yagan Square, Northbridge, the Cultural Centre, City Malls and Supreme Court Gardens. Perth is an affluent city due to rich mineral deposits found within the state. The statue below is a salute to the country's indigenous people, the Aborigines.  The Supreme Court gardens were very well kept with flowers in bloom that were unique to Australia. One particularly striking was "Kangaroo Paw". | | | | | | | |
|  | |
|  | |  | | |  | | |
| Ambassadors ready to tour Perth | | Sculpture honoring Aboriginal People | | | | Kangeroo Paw | |
|  | |  | | | |  | |
| We had a light lunch on our own that day then it was off to the nearby Bell Tower. The bells in the tower are from St. Martins in the Fields, London. We all rode or climbed to the top about 6 stories up and took turns ringing the bells.  Our last activity that day was a reception with Perth's mayor at the nearby Council House. After a short welcome and presentation of gifts we all enjoyed a lovely tea together. It was a great beginning to our week in Perth! | | | | | | | |
|  | |  | | | |  | |
|  |  | | | |  | | |
| Perth City Crest | Ringing Bells at the Bell Tower | | | | Reception at City Hall | | |