

Journal of Trip to Kalgoorlie and Lake Ballard, September 2016

The trip took 3 days, including train travel from Perth to Kalgoorlie and back (590km each way).

The Prospector train left East Perth at 7am on Wednesday, 28-Sep-16, and arrived in Kalgoorlie at about 2pm. We stayed at the Palace Hotel, a short walk from the train station (we had last stayed there on our honeymoon, on our way from Perth to live in Adelaide, in 1964).

We met up with Helen and Paul Kenny for drinks across the road, before having dinner at the Palace.

The next morning, we had breakfast in the Hoover bar (where Herbert Hoover was remembered, who came to Kal as a mining engineer in 1898, and had been a regular guest at the Palace Hotel). We were booked on a Big Sky Red Earth tour taking us to Lake Ballard, but Helen felt very unwell and decided it would not be wise to go, so I went on my own. The Tour company was good enough to allow such a late cancellation. There were 2 other couples on the tour.

The tour took in the Paddington mine, Broad Arrow (famous for its “broady burger”) and Goongarrie station, with the first stop at Menzies (still quite an active town, with a great Town Hall – but no clock for 100 years – the original having gone down off Garden Island on the S.S Orizaba in 1905). Then reached Lake Ballard at 11:30. An hour was provided for exploring the dry salt lake and the 51 Antony Gormley statues (called “Inside Australia”), then lunch was taken. See www.lakeballard.com. The carbonised steel statues were created from laser scans of the inhabitants of Menzies.

Returning via Menzies and Ora Banda, we reached Kalgoorlie by 16:45 and stopped to look at the KCMG Open Pit lookout, and then the Boulder main street.

We dined at the Exchange Hotel that night (Helen having felt well from almost as soon as the tour departed), and the following day visited the Kalgoorlie Museum, had lunch at Paddy’s, Exchange Hotel, then caught the Prospector back to Perth (from 3pm to 9:45pm).



Figure 1 Map showing Lake Ballard and Kalgoorlie



Figure 2 The Prospector train



Figure 3 The Palace Hotel, Kalgoorlie



Figure 4 Kalgoorlie goldmine and narrow pub



Figure 5 Paddy Hannan, who first found gold in Kalgoorlie



Figure 6 Antony Gormley statue on Lake Ballard



Figure 7 Antony Gormley statue on Lake Ballard



Figure 8 Antony Gormley statue on Lake Ballard



Figure 9 Antony Gormley statue on Lake Ballard



Figure 10 Kalgoorlie Superpit Open Cut Mine



Figure 11 Pincushion flower near Menzies



Figure 12 Homalocalyx flower near Menzies



Figure 13 Calandrinia flower at Lake Ballard



Figure 14 Spinifex grass near Menzies



Figure 15 Menzies Town Hall