

2/21/13 - Day 46 – **Kangaroo Island, Australia:** Kangaroo Island is located about 15 miles off the south coast of Australia and it is part of the state of South Australia (SA), as shown in the map below. The Amsterdam arrived and anchored at Kangaroo Island

about 6 am after about a 50 mile cruise from the dock at Adelaide, Australia.

## KANGAROO ISLAND (SA) AUSTRALIA



About 9am we joined forces with our friend, Karen and caught a tender boat going ashore. We didn't have any specific plans for the day other than to walk around the small towns of Penneshaw and Kingscote to get a feel for the people and where they live. A map of Kangaroo Island showing the nearest mainland and sites of interest (Penneshaw and Kingscote) that we would visit today is shown below.



The decision to do the island on our own instead of taking a tour was helped along by the high cost of tours on Kangaroo Island. For example, the 4.5 hour HAL tour cost \$200 USD, another 9 hour HAL tour taking in the island's seals, kangaroos and a formation called "Remarkable Rocks" cost \$400 USD. From what was reported the tours did yield wonderful views along with lots of kangaroos and other animal life.

Our tender boat took us to the passenger landing that was part of the ferry boat terminal at Kangaroo Island. All the passenger foot and vehicle traffic bound for the mainland

goes through this port so there were periodic moments of high activity throughout the day as the ferry boats came and went. The picture on the left shows an Amsterdam tender with orange markings on the roof unloading passengers at the



dock intended for small boats. The large white ship in the background is one of the vehicle and passenger ferry boats that run between the mainland and Kangaroo Island.

We got off the tender boat and headed for the ferry terminal building on the shore. We had to stop momentarily at a poster on the dock that served as a great backdrop for documenting Barbara's library card visit to Kangaroo Island, as shown on the right.



There was a tourist information center set up in a tent on the dock. There were numerous polite men and women volunteers who helped us get our day going well. Free shuttle buses were running from Penneshaw village to a beach area 8 miles away. Then there was a free shuttle that could take us to Kingscote, the largest town on the island. They were very well organized and had a sign-up system where Amsterdam passengers could sign up for shuttle buses with pick up at specific times. We signed up for a quick 16 mile round trip to the nearby beach area and we got a ticket for a later bus running to and from the town of Kingscote.





While we were waiting for our shuttle bus loading time we took a quick walk around the Penneshaw village area. First of all we walked along a path above the large rocks that formed the coast line. The boulders had an attractive orange lichen cover, as shown in this picture on the left.

Going further in to town we took a picture of the Penneshaw Hotel. It had simple brick architecture typical of the other buildings in town.



We came across a gas station. The gasoline prices were not posted but it was possible to take pictures of the prices indicated on the pumps, as shown on the right. Unleaded regular gas was selling for \$1.739 AU or \$1.83 USD per liter. Assuming 4 liters per gallon this works out to \$7.32 USD per gallon. In Adelaide yesterday we saw regular gas selling for \$6 USD per gallon. The higher price on Kangaroo Island probably results from the higher cost of



transporting the gasoline from the mainland. A tour guide on one of the buses later in the day indicated that it cost \$300AU (\$315 USD) to take an automobile to or from the island so transportation costs for freight, like gasoline, could be significant.

We took our first shuttle bus ride out to a local beach. Along the way we got this photo illustrating the typical kind of tree growth we saw along the shoreline of the island. They were attractive, low growing trees and obviously drought resistant.



Down at the beach there was a flock of black swans swimming in the ocean. The picture below shows the typical appearance of the pasture land which had dried out during the summer season.



Our shuttle bus took us back to Penneshaw and after a short wait we caught our second shuttle bus that took us to the town of Kingscote. The ride to Kingscote took about 45 minutes on a well paved road. The driver gave a nice commentary on the passing scene and life on the island. He said that commerce was heavily dependent on the ferry boat service. When the ferry service is interrupted by bad weather or mechanical problems, activity on the island slows down to conserve resources. Shortages of fuel and food take



place if the ferry service is interrupted for 3 or more days. Also, because of the high cost of taking a personal vehicle to the mainland on the ferry (~\$315 USD) people who need to go to the mainland usually just go as a pedestrian and then rely on public transportation when they arrive in Adelaide.

We arrived in Kingscote about noon and we had 3 hours to explore before we were to catch the return shuttle bus at 2pm. We walked with Karen along the sidewalks which were mainly filled with people we recognized as coming from the Amsterdam. There are only 4600 people on the island and not a lot of local people were moving about. Here on the right is a photo taken down one of the main streets in town. We found the stores and facilities well maintained and the clerks very friendly.



Here on the right is a photo of some typical residence houses a block or two from the center of town. The Queenscliffe Family Hotel was nearby. We liked what we saw in this quiet little town.



We have been surprised by the high cost of food and housing in Australia. Today a passing Amsterdam acquaintance told us about an amazing shop where a coat could be purchased for \$3 USD. Out of curiosity we followed the directions he gave and wound up at the “Odd Shop”, with the sign shown on the right. It turned out to be what we call a thrift store where used items are donated and sold to support a charity. This one was sponsored by the local Lions Club.



We walked to a narrow park along the water front of town. There was a nice beach and grassy area with benches. Karen thought that since we were on Kangaroo Island we should do something special. In a sudden burst of hilarious nonsense Karen decided to pose as a Kangaroo and we got her picture. You gotta love that “Red Hatter” sense of humor. After all she is Kween Karen.



Kangaroo Island is known for having the small blue penguin visit from Antarctica for part of the year. There was a museum-like facility set up to provide information and tours to see the birds but unfortunately at this time of year hardly any are on the island. It turns out that a few weeks from now, in March, they will start to return in large numbers. We got the message that the blue penguin is an important tourist attraction on the island.





All the public facilities for a comfortable visit were provided in Kingscote. After an hour or so of walking around town, Karen and Barbara were happy to see that a public rest room was available, as shown on the left.

We decided to get a snack to tide us over until dinner on the ship. We bought a small pastry item in a grocery store and found a park bench at the beach to have a little picnic. One of our Amsterdam neighbors was nearby and volunteered to take our picture to record this fun day we were having in Kingscote.

We walked around some more and took pictures of interesting sites around the town. Some photos are shown below.











We had seen a 24 x36 inch poster for Kangaroo Island at an information center and wanted to buy one to take home with us. We stopped at every souvenir and tourist type shop in town to inquire about a poster but none were available. We will have to see if they can be purchased on-line when we get home.

At about 2pm we returned to the bus stop and waited to catch the shuttle bus back to Penneshaw and the boat landing. While waiting we noticed an unusual two story house across the street from the bus stop. This house, shown on the right, appeared to be about 15 feet square and two stories tall (~450 sq ft). The entry was through a small side attachment that didn't look big enough to be a kitchen. An outdoor privy was nearby. We all wondered how the apartment sized house was arranged on the inside, with hardly enough room for a stairway to the second floor. Although it might belong to someone with limited resources, it appeared to be very well maintained and freshly painted. The surrounding homes appeared to be normal tract homes you would find in any prosperous neighborhood. Just another interesting sight during our visit to Kingscote.



Our bus came and took us back to Penneshaw. We were very pleased and grateful for the hospitality showed by the citizens of Kangaroo Island during our visit today. The provision of free shuttle bus service was a particularly nice gesture and so helpful to visitors like us. One of the bus drivers said that Kangaroo Island doesn't have enough people to justify the large buses that we were riding in today. Therefore, he had to bring his bus over from Adelaide on the ferry this morning and he would be taking it back tonight. That will make for a very long day and significant cost for the organization sponsoring this service.

We got back to the Amsterdam after a tender ride that featured a lot of rocking and rolling because of large swells coming across the bay. The Amsterdam pulled up anchor and got underway at about 6pm. During the next two days we will be sailing west to our next port of call in Albany, Australia. We have not been to Albany before and look forward to the visit.