

Palindromes From Perth

Jeff Grant, Hastings, New Zealand

In July this year my wife Pat and I travelled to Perth in Western Australia (WA) to spend a fortnight with our daughter and her husband. While there, I jotted down a few short palindromes, some more fanciful than others. On our travels we came across **Tumut** Road, **Sebbes** Road and a brand of child's pop-up toy called **Zeebeez**. There is an **Oorooro** Creek and a town named **Arwarra** in New South Wales on the other side of Australia. It was great to see some of the unique Australian animals and birds, both at a wildlife park and in the wild. Koalas were extinct in WA, but they have been reintroduced and small colonies are thriving. How about a bumper sticker to show our support?

Koala, OK!

One of the dingoes (wild dogs) at the wildlife park was aptly named 'Velcro', because he always sticks around and so does his strong smell (nidor):

Re: 'Velcro', dingo (dog) nidor - clever!

The park had several echidnas, one of only two mammals that lays eggs (the other is also Australian, the platypus). The CHAINED ECHIDNA is easy to pin down transpositionally, but much harder to palindromise. In the park gallery we saw a picture of a little intellectually handicapped (IHC) girl sitting beside a spiny echidna. It was captioned:

An echidna and IHC Ena

One of our group was fascinated in the gallery by a large lizard made of Meccano:

Anna ogled (O man!) a model goanna

Our guide at the park, Agnak, was unlucky to step in a pile of dung:

Kangaroo poo - poor Agnak

The town of Nannup is famous for claimed sightings of the legendary 'Nannup tiger', or thylacine, an extinct carnivorous marsupial. Nannup is also known (apparently) for its unusual annual dance, where older female residents undress, paint their bodies, and hop around like kangaroos:

Nannup's nude 'Kangaroo Rag' - naked, unspun Nan!

Rottnest (rat nest) Island off the coast of Perth was named by early Dutch explorers who from a distance mistook the quokkas for giant rats. You can visit Rottnest by taking the high speed ferry 'Star Flyte' from Perth.

'Rats' not sent to Rottnest on 'Star'

Cape Leeuwin is Australia's most southwesterly point. From the top of the lighthouse you can often see whales passing where the Indian and Southern Oceans meet. It is quite exciting!

Wo! Whale! (eel?) Ah, wow!

The Mungaroona Range Nature Reserve is in NW Western Australia, and the numbat is the state mammal emblem. We didn't go to this place, and hopefully nobody with these ideas ever will either:

Stab Mungaroona man (oo!), rag numbats!

The possum is protected in Australia, but considered a pest in New Zealand. We met one lady who puts out bread soaked in milk which she calls:

Possum/emus sop

Generally the native animals of Oz (Australia) don't mix with introduced species. They are usually found in separate zones:

ZONING is a sign in Oz

Trying to get certain creatures to interact only leads to disappointment:

Wallaby, alpaca, play ball - aw!

One species of Australian taipan has the most deadly venom of any terrestrial snake. We saw signs warning there were snakes in the area, but we never came across one. What did the snake say when he was accused of sleeping beside a cat for warmth?

Nap? I attack cat! - Taipan

Australian wolf spiders are scary-looking and can give you a nasty bite, but they aren't venomous. Watch out for their webs in hollows, by running water, in ploughed fields or gardens.

Beware dips, flow zone, drag row or garden - Oz Wolf Spider (a web)

A bush at the back of our daughter's place in Perth was covered with 'spitfire' (mottled cup moth) caterpillars. These little devils have stinging hairs and can shoot out a liquid. If they happen to ingest alcohol things can really get lively!

Hey, spitfire is sassier if tipsy, eh!

The black swan is the state bird emblem of WA. they can certainly give you a good nip, but only a feeble-minded person would think they like meat.

Feeb, no swan gnaws on beef.

The flightless emu is the world's second largest bird after the ostrich. Emus thrive all over Australia and their intimate habits are recorded in a book subtitled 'Mating Secrets of Australia's Largest Bird':

Emu Love Volume

We went to Emu Beach at Albany and searched in vain for the Emu Yacht Club:

Emus sail, I assume?

The 'laughing' kookaburra is the largest member of the kingfisher family. If things have gone a bit too far, maybe there is an Australian version of the rabbit's foot you could try to change your luck:

Too far? Rub a kookaburra foot!

Another iconic Aussie bird is the galah, a noisy grey and pink cockatoo. We saw a flock of them in King's Park in Perth and heard a tourist call out:

Hal, a greyer galah!

In 2008 a huge 750-year-old baobab tree was transported 3200 km from the Kimberley region to King's Park. The Aussies call this tree a 'boab', suggesting the possible dictionary definition:

baobab - a boab

The Busselton Jetty at nearly 2 km in length is said to be the longest wooden pier in the Southern Hemisphere. Although structurally sound there is a weight limit for vehicles. (U/B = under body)

Not less U/B, tare (I pen) not 8 tonne - Pier at Busselton

On our second to last night we all went out for a meal. Pat was wondering what jewellery to wear, so as Australia is the world's leading opal producer I naturally made the obvious suggestion:

Slap on opals!

At dinner we enjoyed a couple of Australian wines - **Oomoo** (Aboriginal for 'good') and Omrah. We didn't overdo the latter as we had heard about its effects and didn't want to suffer the next day from:

Harm of Omrah

On the final two nights in Perth our base was the Mantra Hotel next to the transposable Bra Bar in the arty city centre:

Art names a Bra Bar base 'Mantra'

It was our pleasure on the last day of the holiday to share lunch with fellow 'Word Ways' contributor Anil. We spent a most enjoyable couple of hours discussing Perth, words and life. In the spirit of famous introductions such as **Harpo - Oprah** and **Errol - Lorre**, if Anil ever met the top Chinese lady tennis player it would be:

Anil - Li Na

When I asked Anil what his nom was all about, he replied cryptically:

My 'no dues' pseudonym

Pat and I flew home to New Zealand the next day with lots of happy memories of our time in Western Australia.