

an open mining pit, and there are also several walking trails.

After a quick morning tea stop at the café next door to the Discovery Centre, I continued on towards the Donnelly River Holiday Village. The original mill town built in the late 1940s has been refurbished, and all of the 36 cottages are now heritage listed. Complete with flying fox, volleyball and tennis courts, native animal feeding, and a nearby dam for fishing, swimming, and kayaking, this village is a very holiday popular destination.

My next stop was at the Manjimup Timber & Heritage Park. The park was opened in 1986, and I enjoyed wandering through the historic hamlet village, grassed picnic areas, and State Timber Museum. My late afternoon stop was at the Northcliffe Pioneer Museum. The history displayed here is astounding, particularly with the various records of school students and group settlement from the 1920s. A rock and fossil collection with over 1200 items from around the State takes up one whole room!

I next began my journey west towards my stop for the night, Augusta, and travelled via the Old Vasse Road through the Warren National Park. Even

though there are sections of gravel road, I'm glad I took this route – the trees towering over me, the wildflowers that lined the road edges and the lovely fresh forest smells that wafted through the car made it well worth it.

WILD WEATHER

My third day began with bright sunshine but by 10am the sea breezes had brought heavy rain clouds and strong winds.

I ventured out to the Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse and was nearly blown off the most south westerly tip of WA. I had great fun fighting my way through the wind to the lighthouse and around the historic buildings on site. The visitor centre offers a thorough insight into the working life of the lighthouse keepers and their families, and of the gruelling repetitive tasks associated with the day to day running of the lighthouse back in the 1890s and into the 1900s.

After the lighthouse I wandered into the Augusta Historical Museum and was very impressed with the various displays, featuring shipwrecks, first settler living conditions, industries of the time, World War memorabilia, beached whale rescues, and antique furniture and musical instruments. My next stop was the Yallingup Shearing Shed. I had just missed the shearing demonstration but enjoyed wandering through the



Inside the Coalfields Museum in Collie visitors enjoy a fascinating insight into the life of the region's early settlers.

shop, which features an impressive variety of items made out of sheep's wool.

Next I moved on to Busselton and walked the length of the 1.84km Busselton Jetty. The rain had passed, the sun was out and visitors were enjoying the walk and the mini train ride on the jetty, while others fished or swam in the surrounding waters.

I found the Busselton Museum not far out of the main town centre, housed in the Old Butter Factory. There was so much to see I could have spent hours there, but I was particularly impressed with two full bottles of beer that had somehow survived the decades from 1898, when they were found

after a shipwreck. The museum displays every aspect of life from the days of early settlement.

My last stop of the day on my way back to Perth was Wonnerup House, a National Trust listed settlement. The homestead, sheds and outer buildings have withstood the years and have been well preserved. The history of Wonnerup House and the Layman family who first settled in the area is very interesting. Tragedy and hardship were overcome and a thriving farm and community were eventually established.

To find out more about the South West Working Life Heritage Trail and its many attractions, visit workinglife.com.au.

HERITAGE ATTRACTIONS SOUTH WEST OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



WORKING LIFE

FOLLOW THE TRAIL

Read the article inside provided courtesy of the RACWA member magazine Horizons – January 2012

Before you go

- **Plan your route and plot your daily destinations. Work out how long each day's driving will take and don't forget to factor in stops for meals, rest and sight-seeing.**
- If you plan to leave the main roads or travel at odd hours, get yourself equipped with a satellite phone, as reception can be very poor in remote areas.
- **To avoid the chance of breakdown, get your car checked and serviced before you go.**
- Make sure you have the right RAC Roadside Assistance for your journey. If you plan to travel outside the metropolitan area, it might be worth upgrading to Classic, Ultimate or Ultimate Plus. Classic and Ultimate cover both provide 200km of towing in country areas from your breakdown point, while Ultimate Plus cover provides 300km towing in country areas (including trailer or caravan).

The Yarloop workshops contain a collection of working steam engines.

Planning your trip

RAC Travel can help you plan for your Western Australian self-drive holiday. RAC members enjoy discounts on a range of maps and guides, including *Go See Discover Stay* guides which are FREE for RAC members. For more information visit rac.com.au/travel, call 1300 655 179 or come and see one of our expert Touring Consultants at your nearest RAC Travel Centre.

A WINDOW INTO THE WORKING LIFE STORY

Follow the Working Life Heritage Trail and be transported to a magical era of steam engines, working lighthouses and pioneers.

Alongside pristine beaches and nestled between towering karri trees you'll find 20 heritage sites offering a window into the region's fascinating past and the life of its early settlers.

Visit the area where May Gibbs drew much of the inspiration for her stories and illustrations, explore a replica mine and walk the longest wooden pier in the southern hemisphere. It's all part of Working Life, your passport to the past.

If you want to discover what life on a pioneer dairy farm was all about, or how families in the 1800s lived, simply follow the Working Life Heritage Trail.

Working Life Attractions

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Augusta Museum | 9758 0465 |
| Alverstoke | 9726 1073 |
| Busselton Historic Museum | 9754 2166 |
| Coalfields Museum | 9734 1299 |
| Dardanup Heritage Park | 9728 0552 |
| Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse | 9758 1920 |
| Boyup Brook Pioneer Museum | 9765 1005 |
| Busselton Jetty | 9754 0900 |
| Collie Historical Rail Precinct | 9734 1470 |
| Greenbushes Discovery Centre | 9764 3883 |
| White Rocks Farm | 9726 1085 |
| Harvey Heritage Precinct | 9729 1122 |
| Manjimup Timber & Heritage Park | 9771 7777 |
| King Cottage | 9721 7546 |
| Yarloop Steam Workshops | 9733 5215 |
| Northcliffe Pioneer Museum | 9776 7022 |
| Wellington Dam | 9734 2051 |
| Donnelly River Holiday Village | 9772 1244 |
| Featured Wood Gallery & Museum | 9797 2411 |
| Collie Replica Coal Mine | 9734 2051 |

WA GREAT DRIVES:

THE WORKING LIFE HERITAGE TRAIL

FOR MOST WESTERN AUSTRALIANS, THE SOUTH WEST OF THE STATE IS A FAMILIAR HOLIDAY DESTINATION FOR EITHER WEEKENDS OR LONGER BREAKS. BUT AS **COURTNEY BOWEN DISCOVERED**, IT HAS MORE TO OFFER THAN JUST ITS BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPES, FINE FOODS AND WINES.



Courtney Bowen is the Tourism Coordinator at the RAC's West Perth office. She enjoys travelling and believes that self-drive trips are the best way to see WA because they're flexible, convenient, affordable and fun. She loves the history that the south west holds as well as everything else the region has to offer.



Alverstoke features heritage buildings, vintage farm equipment and a large display of school memorabilia.



The Coalfields Museum in Collie provides a unique insight into the town's history.

Calling all travellers

Do you have a favourite great Western Australian drive? If so, we would love to hear from you. Visit rac.com.au/rediscoverwa and tell us about your great drive. Your entry could be loaded onto our new Trip Planner and shared with other members to help them rediscover WA. (There is no guarantee that all entries will be loaded onto the Trip Planner). We are also looking for WA discoverers! Are you planning your own road trip or self drive holiday in WA? Do you fancy yourself a budding travel writer or photographer just waiting to be discovered? Then listen up! We are looking for couples, families and independent travellers who are passionate about touring in WA and want to share their holiday with other Horizons readers. To register your interest and find out more visit rac.com.au/rediscoverwa.



WORKING LIFE SITES

- 1 Yarloop Workshops
- 2 White Rocks Farm
- 3 Alverstoke
- 4 King Cottage Museum
- 5 Wellington Dam
- 6 Coalfields Museum
- 7 Collie Historical Rail Precinct
- 8 Dardanup Heritage Park
- 9 Old Goldfields Orchard
- 10 Greenbushes Discovery Centre
- 11 Boyup Brook Pioneers' Museum
- 12 Donnelly River Holiday Village
- 13 Manjimup Timber Park
- 14 Northcliffe Pioneer Museum
- 15 Wonnerup
- 16 Busseton Jetty
- 17 Busseton Historic Museum
- 18 Yallingup Shearing Shed
- 19 Augusta Historical Museum
- 20 Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse

Information centres

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100km

Western Australia's south west is justly famous both locally and internationally and as well as its better-known attractions, the region is also home to a variety of sites that offer a window into the area's past. The Working Life Heritage Trail is a self-drive route that takes travellers to some of the many historical-themed attractions of the area, with a particular emphasis on the early settlers who helped shape the region.

As part of our ongoing series on WA's great drives we despatched RAC Tourism Coordinator Courtney Bowen to check out some of the attractions along the way.

When did you go?
I did the trip on my own in the first week of October after my would-be travelling companion had

to change their plans at the last minute. The fact that I was a solo traveller didn't in any way diminish my enjoyment of the trip – I had a great time.

How far did you drive and how long did it take?
In total, I drove 1024km and I went for three days.

Where did you stay?
My first night was spent in Balingup at the lovely Oakfield Bed and Breakfast, which sits atop a hill and has beautiful views over Balingup and the surrounding area. On day two I stopped at the Best Western Georgiana Molloy Motel in Augusta, which was very pleasant.

What sort of group do you think the journey would appeal to most?
I really enjoyed the drive and

believe that there's something on this trail for everyone. It's great for learning about the history of the region, and there are many interactive experiences that would entertain the kids while holding a lot of interest for any age group. The drive winds through some of the loveliest landscapes in the State and offers a great opportunity to get off the main roads and visit some of the south west's lesser known towns.

ON THE ROAD
I began by following the South West Highway via Pinjarra and Waroona to my first stop, the Steam Workshops in Yarloop. These were once part of the Millar's milling operation and maintained the steam locomotives of the extensive and complex Millar's railway system, developed to transport timber and to service

the other 26 mills. The workshops are now a fascinating museum spread over several buildings and house steam-driven saws, winches, generators and locomotive engines, tools, stores and even a library. Demonstrations of the steam-powered machinery are held on the second Sunday of each month.

My second stop was Wellington Dam, in the Wellington National Park near Collie. Constructed during the Great Depression, the dam wall measures 366m across, is 34m high and stores about 186 million kilolitres of water when full. From there I headed to Collie and the Collie Historical Rail Precinct. This was a fantastic place to visit, with carriages, locomotives and coal-carrying wagons, and, in the Old Goods Shed (designed by C Y O'Connor), a unique café has been set up in a carriage which is

open on market days. The amazing restorations have been completed with the help of local businesses and committed volunteers of the Collie Heritage Group – among them Keith, who gave me a great tour of the site.

My last stop for the day was the Old Goldfields Orchard and Cider Factory. Ian, the enthusiastic owner, explained to me how the farm aims to move into organics and bio-organics for their production of cider but right now their visitors can enjoy aquaculture tanks, animal petting yards, fly-fishing and kids' cooking courses. A reconstructed gold mine shaft and poppet head offers fantastic views over the surrounding orchards, paddocks, bushland and hillsides.

FLOWERS & FORESTS
On day two I took the scenic drive along the Golden Valley Tree Park

to Greenbushes. The drive winds through farming areas, forests, plantations and large water catchments. Wildflowers were in bloom throughout the whole trip, especially the wattle, which was a particular feature on this road. The Eco-cultural Discovery Centre in Greenbushes was absolutely amazing. The Centre offers an insight into the mining, timber and farming industries that have supported the town and surrounding region for more than 100 years. The enthusiasm behind the reconstruction of the industries on display is commendable. There's a replica mine you can descend into, a forest trail which demonstrates the full processes of timber milling, an Indigenous Story of Creation display and much more. Around the town you can view >