

Treasure Hunt Answers 8

Whilst I was in Hobart, I started to hear serious discussion about an infection that appeared to be spreading across the world.

It was called Covid-19. I didn't know what Covid-19 stood for. Do you?

Covid-19 is the short name for coronavirus disease 2019. This isn't its official name, which is: Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) <https://www.newscientist.com/term/covid-19/>

The first case in Tasmania had just been confirmed. When was this?

The first case in Tasmania was confirmed on 2nd March. A 40-year-old man from Launceston who came back on 29 February from a flight which left Melbourne and landed in Launceston on the same day. I wonder whether he would have got the infection if it hadn't been a leap year?!!

I felt a sense of foreboding.

I tuned my cat whisker to radio 4 to hear what was happening in the UK. (BTW why is a cat whisker so called?)

It is, or at least was, an essential component a crystal radio, effectively a radio receiver reduced to its essentials. Early sets used a "cat whisker detector" consisting of a small piece of crystalline mineral such as galena with a fine wire touching its surface.

I heard the Government had the situation under control, and immediately panicked!

What should I do? I really wanted to ring on the Swan Bells, but wasn't sure exactly where they were so I looked it up in Doves. Where are the Swan Bells?

Bell or Swan Tower, Barracks Square (Barrack Street & Riverside Drive), Perth, Western Australia.

There was one other ring of 10 or more bells in Australia, I hadn't yet visited and it was sort of on my way to the Swan Bells. So I made up my mind to travel immediately.

I caught a Jetstar flight on the 3rd March to this city, a journey of just 1 hour and 55 minutes.

Alas, when I arrived and phoned the Tower correspondent I learned it wouldn't be possible to ring and none of the other towers in the City would be appropriate as I was in a rush to get to the Swan Bells before the virus.

However, there was a special railway trip I wanted to take from here to the City that was home to the Swan Bells and this would be good compensation. What is the name of this railway journey?

Indian Pacific. To quote the advertising material "Named after the two oceans that it travels between, the Indian Pacific will take you from one edge of this continent to the other, East to West (or vice versa) across the Blue Mountains and the vast Nullabor. The Indian Pacific delivers so much more than an extended train ride. It promises access to parts of Australia no other holiday can come close to, the perfect balance of comfort and adventure culminating in an experience that will move you in every sense of the word." <https://www.greattrains.com.au/indian-pacific-train/indian-pacific-rail-journeys> . I was, of course only travelling part of the journey, but hey.....

And so it was on the evening of the 5th of March I had dinner with my companions who would be with me for 2 days and I departed on my long-awaited train journey at 21.40.

There is another famous railway journey I could have made from this city, but this time north, not west. What is the name of the rail journey and where does it end up?

The Ghan goes from Adelaide to Darwin in Northern Australia.

It also goes through a town that sounds like a Lewis Carroll character jumping. What is the name of the town?

Alice Springs

Will I beat the virus, or will it beat me?