



COMMENTARY

Hello everyone. Welcome to The Popeye. We will be departing here from Elder Park, travelling down to the Torrens Weir where we will turn around and travel back up towards to Adelaide Zoo and then back to Elder Park. The trip should take approximately 45 minutes.

We are now travelling along the Torrens river or Karrawirra Parri.

The Popeye Launches acknowledges that the land and the river on which its site is located is the Traditional lands for the Kurna people and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their country. We also acknowledge the Kurna people as the custodians of the greater Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still as important to the living Kurna people today.

At its 1836 discovery an inland bend was chosen as the site of the Adelaide city centre and North Adelaide. The river is named after Colonel Robert Torrens, chairman of the colonial commissioners and a significant figure in the city's founding. We are now passing the Adelaide Festival Centre which is undergoing a \$90 million upgrade and celebrated it's 40th anniversary in 2014. Built in 1973 under the Dunstan government, 3 months before the Sydney Opera House, it is Australia's first capital city arts venue and hosts more than one million people annually. It is home to world class arts companies and festivals such as the Adelaide Festival, the Adelaide Fringe and the famous Adelaide Cabaret festival.

To our left we are now passing the Adelaide Convention Centre, the 1st purpose built in Australia and opened in June 1987. It holds around 700 individual events annually, hosting approximately 200,000 delegates and guests.

To the left is the 1856 built Adelaide railway station which houses the Adelaide

casino and handled all passenger, freight and livestock traffic at the North Terrace Site.

There are 12 rowing boathouses dotted around the river including both adult and school rowing clubs.

If you look to your left you will see The Adelaide Rowing Club, Adelaide's 2nd oldest rowing club, est in 1882. The Club's current boatshed on the River Torrens is the third edition, after the first and second sheds were destroyed by flood in 1889 and fire in 1931 respectively.

You are now passing beneath the Morphett St bridge which opened in 1968, replacing the Queen Victoria bridge from 1872. and carries 6 lanes of traffic, city side to North Adelaide via Montefiore Hill. During the 1800's the area saw a lot of colonial bush ranger action with many robberies reported in the papers of the day. On the bank of the Torrens to our left, the colony housed a shanty town for 100 years, made up of passengers from the HMS Buffalo, called Buffalo Row and Corramandel Row. It lasted until after the Great Depression of the 1930's when the local councillors closed it down.

Passing also on our left is the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute or SAHMRI. Colloquially known as 'The Cheesegrater', it opened in 2013 at a cost of \$200 million and is home to over 600 researchers.

Next door to SAHMRI is the our new world-class Royal Adelaide Hospital which houses 800 beds and provides a range of care to 85,000 inpatients and 400,000 outpatients annually. The hospital features the largest automated microbiology system in the southern hemisphere, and is home to one of the biggest Automated Pharmacy Distribution Systems in the nation. At a cost of \$2.3 billion, the building was recently named as the fourth-most expensive building in the world (it is now in seventh place). Its original cost was \$2 billion plus another \$245 million for medical equipment. The hospital is built on the same grounds as the old livestock markets and abattoirs from the 1800's.

The old stone structure you can see up ahead is The Old Adelaide Gaol, which was in operation from 1841 to 1988 and housed approximately 300,000 prisoners during its 147 years of operation. The gaol is one of the two oldest buildings still standing in South Australia. The turret you can see there is the old Hanging Tower. It was the place where Elizabeth Woolcock was hanged for the murder of her husband by mercury poisoning. She remains the only woman ever executed in South

Australia and is buried between the outer and inner prison walls. The cost blow out to approximately £40,000 (2011: \$10,740,000), being a fifth of the total funding for the establishment of the newly settled colony was the main cause of a statewide depression and numerous bankruptcies. The prison is now a museum, tourist attraction and function centre. The gaol is believed to be haunted and ghost tours are available through Haunted Horizons Ghost Tours.

Here we are at the Torrens Weir, built in 1881 to dam the river and form an ornamental lake. In 1867, prison labour from Adelaide Gaol was used to build a wooden dam near the site of the current weir. The dam was poorly constructed and almost immediately the Torrens washed it away. Construction of a permanent concrete weir was begun in November 1880 and completed, at a cost of £7,000, in 1881. During the 1889 flood, the weir was overwhelmed, its gates jammed, and in trying to free them the weir's designer John Langdon was crippled. The weir was rebuilt from 1928 to 1929 with its footbridge relocated and the centre section replaced. The gates can now be fully raised and the river allowed to flow unimpeded. The latest structure holds water back to depth of 7 metres. The river starts at Mt Pleasant in the Adelaide Hills, flows through the city and then continues for 10 kms to the river mouth at West Beach. It's full length is 80 kms. The river and its tributaries are highly variable in flow, and together drain an area of 508 square kilometres (196 sq mi).

The building here on our left started out as Ernest's Restaurant from 1962 and is now the Red Ochre Restaurant upstairs offering modern Australian cuisine and the River Café on the lower level offering an Italian style kitchen menu. The Popeye will often pull-in to the restaurant for those attending weddings and functions. The two gondolas you see there are genuine Venetian and used for weddings, anniversary tours and are privately owned. Simply Google Adelaide Gondolas for more Information.

Behind the restaurant carpark is an historic site of the Kurna people and the site of the first school in South Australia which was run by German Lutheran missionaries that recorded their language and customs.

We are now passing Pinky Flat on the north side of the riverbank which may be a reference to the pingko bilby a small marsupial once abundant there. The name was also associated with the drinking of cheap pink wine. It was also infamous for being the location where professional ladies offered nocturnal activities to their clients. Today, Pinky Flat has become a popular home for outdoor festivals and events.

The circular vessels you see on the North side of the river are the BBQbuoys business which contain a BBQ in the centre of the vessel. They have been operating since Oct 2016 and are German designed and built and can accommodate up to 10 People.

To our left, folks, is the War Memorial Drive Tennis Centre, home to the world tennis challenge with Centre Court about to undergo refurbishment.

We are now passing beneath the riverbank footbridge which was constructed as part of the Adelaide Oval redevelopment. The bridge launches directly west of the Dunstan Playhouse at the level of the Adelaide Railway Station concourse. It is 255 metres long 8 metres wide and is illuminated along its length at night-time and contains the water cascade feature. The Adelaide Oval has a crowd capacity of 53,500 and walking tours are available to the public. Folks, you'll notice the copper cladding on the roof which honours South Australia's copper mining heritage. Adelaide Oval was also the home to Australia's greatest batsman, Sir Donald George Bradman, often referred to as "The Don", and widely acknowledged as the greatest batsman of all time.[2] Bradman's career Test batting average of 99.94 is often cited as the greatest achievement by any sportsman in any major sport. In the 1930's, Bradman's appearance generated standing room only to a crowd of 60,000 Supporters.

The Sir Donald Bradman collection in the museum is open Monday to Sunday from 9am to 4pm (except Public Holidays & Event Days), and is free for the public to view. The Oval is also home to the exclusive Hill Of Grace restaurant.

To the right is the Elder Park Rotunda built in 1882. Wealthy businessman and philanthropist Sir Thomas Elder bequeathed the rotunda to the City of Adelaide. The octagonal rotunda was made at Macfarlane's Saracen Foundry in Glasgow and shipped from London on 14 February 1882. It was constructed of decorative wrought iron with a zinc roof and has storage space beneath it for band equipment. The 5 little boats that we are now passing to our right represent early settler transportation vessels and is an installation by noted Adelaide artist Shaun Kirby called Talking our way home, and are constructed of glass and steel. The origamilike boats appear translucent and fragile and suggest movement and transport, and the idea of a journey.

We are now passing beneath the King William St bridge or the City Bridge,

completed in 1931. In 1937 it was used to carry trams, travelling to North Adelaide in the early days and is the widest single span of its type in the southern hemisphere. To our right on the south side on the river you can see Jolly's Restaurant which had humble beginnings as Jolley's boathouse. The original building burnt to the ground in 1911 and is now an a la carte restaurant.

The next building on the bank is the Lounders Boatshed Café which opened in 2016 and is one of the oldest buildings on the Torrens Lake. It was built in 1913 and was the only one specifically built for the construction and repair of rowing boats. The first boat was launched on the Torrens Lake by Gordon Watts in 1935. For much of this shed's existence, many of the Torrens recreational paddleboats as well as the 'Popeye' launches were managed and maintained here and the Popeye Launches business is housed at the rear of the building. In March 1962 Keith Altman, owner of riverside eatery "Jolley's Boathouse", took over the Popeyes and introduced recreational paddle boats to the river.

The building you can see up on the verge is the Old Water Police Station built in 1928 is a prime example of the Spanish Mission style which was popular between 1915 and 1940. Built by the South Australian Public Buildings Department, the former water police station housed two water police officers who monitored activities on the River and in the vicinity. It is now used by the parks and gardens authority. St Peter's Cathedral is on our left is a landmark neo-Gothic Anglican cathedral operating since 1878 with notable stained glass & sculptures and is open daily to Visitors.

Adelaide University campus is on our right and was established in 1874 on 5 acres of land. It now covers more than 40 acres and is listed amongst the top 200 universities in the world.

The University footbridge was built in 1937 and was the first welded bridge construction in SA and designed by the University engineering department and is a popular spot for wedding and graduation photos.

The gardens on the port side were landscaped in the 1940's and the stone you see is from Carey Gully in the Adelaide Hills.

To your left is the Adelaide Zoo, opened in 1883 and houses 2500 animals and 250 species of exotic and native mammals, birds, reptiles and fish and is home to the Pandas Wang Wang and Funi, on loan from China Zoo for 10 years. Opened daily 9

– 5. The Popeye will be returning to the Zoo landing every 30 minutes.

In front of us is the Prince Albert bridge built in 1879 and is the oldest bridge on the Torrens. This state-heritage listed bridge is named after Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert. Opened in 1879, the bridge was made from iron brought over from the UK at a cost of £9,000.

We will be turning around at this point as the river continues another 70 kms and starts in Mt Pleasant in the Adelaide Hills.

Thank you for choosing the Popeye today. We hope you've enjoyed your cruise.

Please remain seated until the vessel has come to a complete rest before disembarking. Enjoy the rest of your day.