

Langtrees 181

by Allan Fox, November 2005

Kalgoorlie is located approximately 600 km from Perth in the south west Goldfields of Western Australia. You can get there by air in less than 90 minutes, by road if you have 7 hours to spare and by train in a similar time but with a lot more comfort and a lot less stress.

Kalgoorlie is an historic town with a reputation for having been a wild, wild place in which to live. Afghan camel drivers were once the only source of fresh water. Chinese immigrants scraped the ground looking for gold and transient traders sold their wares from the tents that they lived in.



Nowadays Kalgoorlie is a mining town, or should that be *miners* town.

The Super Pit, developed by Alan Bond as one of the largest sources of gold in the world, dominates the landscape. One of the major events on the town's calendar is the annual Diggers and Dealers Conference that attracts mining identities and stock brokers from around Australia and the mining world for presentations, debate and a darn good time.



The population of Kalgoorlie is approximately 30,000 people which coincidentally are about the number of people that visited the Historical Bordello **Langtrees 181**, located at 181 Hay Street, last year [2004].

Langtrees 181 was conceived by the owner Mary-Anne Kenworthy after a trip to Amsterdam where she was surprised at the number of everyday people that were visiting sex museums. The original Langtrees 181 'tin shed' was bulldozed and re-opened in 2000 offering Historic Guided Tours of a working brothel and it soon became a major tourist attraction for the town.

Tours operate several times each day and your experience commences as soon as you arrive at the front door. After all it's not every day that you get to walk through the front door of a brothel.

The first person you meet is the receptionist Fanny, who it turns out is also the Tour Guide.

The reception desk and adjoining lounge area resemble a boutique hotel with comfortable leather armchairs, a piano, antiques and curios, and an air of quiet sophistication and money.

There are a number of different themed rooms at Langtrees 181 and the tour starts in the 'Madams Suite'. Dedicated to brothel madams throughout the world and complete with rotating bed and gold satin sheets. 'This is always the last room that is used' Fanny told us, suggesting that the competing movements might make customers a little seasick after a few drinks.

'Langtrees Love Nest' pays tribute to the French ladies who were brought to the goldfields on the pretence of working as housemaids only to find after 6 months of travel by sea and 16 days by camel train, that they were to be enlisted to entertain miners.

The 'Great Boulder Shaft Room' is named after the first mine in the goldfields and features timber sleepers and the clever use of glass to create what Langtrees call the 'tunnel of love'. Hard hats and steel toecaps not required.

Dedicated to the Japanese ladies that worked in the brothels in the 1890's, the 'Eishen Room' reflects the taste of Asia. In the gold rush days payment was made by token, purchased from the owner, to ensure that the ladies had no money of their own..



If sex is the most popular sport in the world, then the 'Sports Locker' is the room for you. A boxing ring for a bed, a punching bag, lockers and a basketball ring with handcuffs. Adorned with sporting memorabilia and a surprising number of well-wishes and autographs from sporting celebrities, we were assured that they had all visited as tourists.

In memory of the camel train drivers the 'Afghan Boudoir' has a desert theme, with throw rugs and pillows galore. You can imagine the surprise when a silver haired tour member exclaimed that she had exactly the same ones at home.

The 'Coolgardie Tent Room' is a replica of a tent brothel, and wall murals depict the days when no less than 70 tent brothels plied their trade in Coolgardie in the 1890's. The drink of the day for a prostitute was homemade gin and the average age at death was 29 years old.

The largest room and possibly the most sumptuous is the 'Roman Orgy Suite'. Not one, but two beds and a spa bath big enough for you and all of your friends. The very graphic and athletic murals are based on Pompeii originals. The faces are those of friends of Langtrees.

In memory of a good old fashioned day in the English countryside is the 'Roll in the Hay Room'. If you have a quiet moment see if you can find the pixie frolickers skilfully included in the mural.

The final archetypical Australian room has to be the 'Holden on Room' which has; yes you guessed it, an authentic EK Holden at the drive in as the centrepiece. The gear stick and steering wheel have thankfully been re-positioned whilst the windscreen wipers and horn are, reputedly, orgasm activated.



At the rear of the property is 'Shangri La, The Oasis of Pleasure', featuring a pool, Jacuzzi and a sauna. The Oasis of pleasure was booked for a 21st Birthday Party on the day of this tour, a memorable one no doubt.

The final themed room that we visited was the 'Alan Bond Lounge' dedicated to the man who developed the Super Pit. Cosy and sumptuous this room has original art works by Mr Bond and other collectables that reflect the rich history of Kalgoorlie.



As the tour comes to an end Fanny invites everyone to visit the gift shop, where a range of adult souvenirs (all shapes and sizes) are available for purchase and to sign the Guest Book. A quick flick through these pages and you can see that there are comments from visitors from far flung corners of the world, and that they thoroughly enjoyed their visit to the Historic Bordello, Langleys 181.

Enjoyable! Educational! Brilliant!

This tour is a lot of fun if you have a broad mind, you have the chance to see what a brothel looks like, you learn a little of the history of prostitution, and you meet people that you may not have met otherwise.

For the particularly adventurous, if you're heading to Kalgoorlie and haven't booked your accommodation yet, you can book a room at Langtrees 181 from \$250 per night including continental breakfast.

For the rest of us, tours are conducted 3 times daily at a cost \$35 per person (\$25 for seniors) running for approximately an hour.

Bookings can be made by calling Langtrees 181, on (08) 9026 2181 (and ask for Fanny).