

Lifestyle & Leisure

Social Classes

Lifestyle and leisure in Australia in the early 1900s greatly depended on social class.

Upper Class people were very rich and owned large amounts of land, large businesses, or had inherited their wealth. They had more time for leisure.

Middle Class people were made up of small shop-keepers or people who earned a living from professional occupations such as lawyers, teachers and accountants, or those who were self-employed.

Working Class people made up a majority of the population. They worked under a boss and usually in a manual job. They had little money and did not have the opportunities for leisure that the wealthier members of society enjoyed.

Clothing

Clothes were often long and conservative- with high necklines, and women's dresses covered their arms and legs.

Aprons and dust coats were worn to protect clothes.

Handkerchiefs were used instead of tissues and hats were regularly worn.

Activities

Reading was very popular in Australia with one third of Britain's books sent over for Australian's to read.

Those that could afford pianos often hosted music sing-a-longs.

Sunday Sabbath was a special day. No shops were open and no one worked so families could spend the day together. On these days families often attended church and had picnics.

Dancing was popular for all classes as it was a chance to meet the opposite sex.

Hotels were also popular as Australians were big drinkers. There were 'men-only' bars and ladies lounges.

The beach was also a popular place of leisure. Until 1904 people could not swim during dawn and dusk and must be fully clothed, so people often walked on the sand/water's edge. The law was contested and allowed swimming to occur however swim suits must be worn that covered the neck to the knee. There was also single sex areas and hours for women only to bath to prevent both sexes swimming at the same time.

SOURCE ANALYSIS

Complete these questions in your workbook.

Describe the scene, what do you see?

What are the main differences between this scene and the beach scene today?

