

# ESPERANCE

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## Brief Outline of Esperance's history since World War One

### WORLD WAR 1.

The Esperance District Honour Roll for 1914-1919 contains these names :

ASHTON, J.	*EGGELING, E. C.	McCARTHY, E. J.
BLAKE, P. J.	EVANS, F. E.	McNAMARA, P.
BLAKE, R. H.	*FREARSON, C.	*MORAN, F.
BAKER, W. L.	GILMORE, G. R.	MALONEY, J. R.
BAKER, F. R.	GRIFFIN, J.	*ORR, John B.
BASEDEN, F.	HEENAN, N.	ORR, Jas. B.
BASEDEN, J.	HEENAN, E.	ORR, W. E. B.
*CAVANAGH, R.	*HENRY, G.	OTTREY, A. G.
CAVANAGH, G.	HENRY, D.	STRICKLAND, T. H.
COOK, M. S.	HEARNE, F. A. G.	STEWART, A. P.
CLATWORTHY, R.	HARDMAN, W.	STEWART, T.
*DICKINSON, G.	*HOLMAN, M.	SHORTLAND, W.
DICKINSON, H.	HOLMAN, P. S.	SINCLAIR, M.
*DUNN, J.	*JENKINS, H. T.	*TURNBULL, A. P.
DUNN, W. H.	JONES, J. S. E.	TOWNSEND, F. McP.
DUNN, F.	JONES, W. H.	TOWNSEND, J. D.
*DOAK, J.	JACKSON, A. L.	TILLART, J. M.
*DOAK, C.	*KIPPING, R.	TAYLOR, S.
DAW, F. C.	*LEWIS, A.	*VIVIAN, E.
DAW, K. J.	*LEWIS, P.	*WATSON, W.
*DOUST, C. J.	*LEWIS, C.	WATSON, R.
DOUST, J.	LEWIS, J.	WOOD, A.
DOUST, G. E.	LOGAN, A.	WOOD, F.
DOUST, E. H. E.	LOWMAN, F. A.	WILKINSON, H. E.
DOUGLAS, A. R.	McCARTHY, R. J.	WADDELL, H. M.

1914 - 1919

\*Killed

When World War was declared on the 28th July 1914 it was a time of severe drought in the wheat growing areas and many settlers walked off their properties.

**1915** Premier Scadden visited town. Esperance state school children were given half a day off from school. The Premier was present at the morning school sports day which featured a girls' race and a boys'. The races took place on the road beside the school. The Premier had his vehicle transported by rail to Norseman, then drove via Dundas, Salmon Gums, Grass Patch, Gibson, Esperance, Ravensthorpe and Kundip. The vehicle was shipped from Hopetoun. The Premier's party had an official reception and function held at the Esperance Roads building which was the original government school.

Premier John Scadden and the government introduced emergency legislation whereby a special authority, known as the Industries Assistance Board was formed to assist or partially assist farmers so that crops could be put in for the following year. The Board's operations were administered by the Agricultural Bank.



It was heavy work for man and beast. The Public Works Department oversaw the construction and engineering.



Turning the Sod Ceremony.

Mr Thomas Walker, government representative with a crowd, (E. J. McCarthy, reading). Mr Thomas Walker had announced the railway line will go ahead (Photographer unknown-Courtesy Esperance Museum)

**1916** The Royal Commission to enquire into the possibility of Land Settlement and successful farming in the Mallee Belt and Esperance Lands at Esperance. Charles Edward Dempster, Esq (Chairman), Mathew Thomas Padbury, Esq, Ranald McDonald, Esq. were representatives on the board. The Commission held 111 sittings, and at 24 of these, evidence was taken. The

remainder were occupied with the inspection of land and the study of departmental files and reports. There were 86 witnesses, including settlers and owners of property, in the Esperance district, departmental officials and the Parliamentary member for the district.

### Work on Railway Line Ceases

Work was suspended on the Esperance to Salmon Gums construction, and work ceased when plate laying reached Collier, four miles away from the shore. Many miles of earthworks beyond this point had been completed and were adopted temporarily as a roadway. For some years thereafter, the Collier section was worked by the Public Works Department in conjunction with the jetty tramway operation. The siding at Collier, with a loop line running to the lakes salt works, was a much-needed improvement.

The settlers faced extreme hard times on the land. The extended delay in the railway line further hindered the settler's market opportunities.

**1917** The report of the Royal Commission was printed. Recommendations included: Railway construction to commence as soon as possible and no experimental work was to be undertaken on Esperance lands until the railway was completed. Settlers were to be financially assisted and land costs extended over 40 years.

In 1917-18 the provisions of the Industries Assistance Act were made available to returned soldiers to enable them to finance cropping operations.

The Israelite Bay Post and Telegraph station which had remained in use since 1877 ceased. The telegraph station was purchased by Heinrich Dimer of Nanambinia Station. The timber and iron roofing materials were removed and taken to be used for a building at the station.

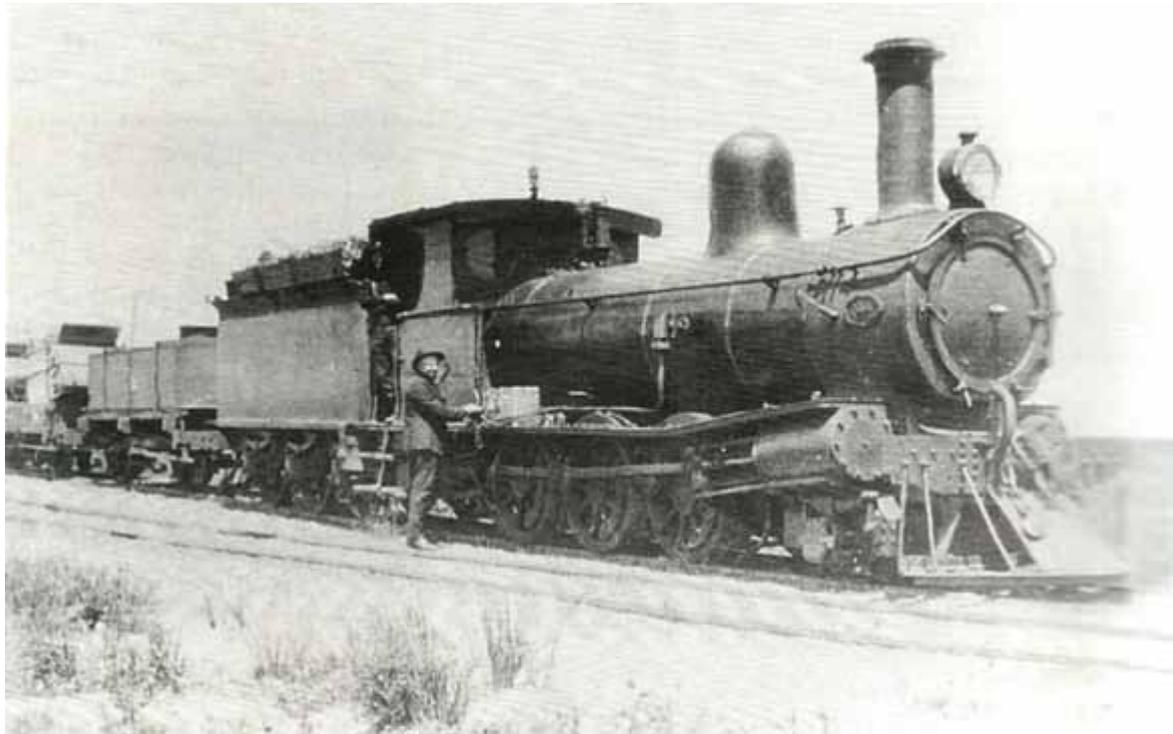
**1919** Under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act of 1919 the Agricultural Bank was empowered to make advances to returned soldiers, in order to settle returned men as quickly as possible, some returned soldiers were offered land that was partly improved.



Carting Hay Turners at Truslove.  
(Photographer unknown- Courtesy Esperance Museum)

**1921** Laurence Sinclair was commended by the Royal Humane Society of Australasia, for saving Eric Hearne, aged nine years from drowning in the sea at Esperance.

**1922** Work recommenced on the Esperance to Salmon Gums Railway. A Locomotive No. 156 "C"- class was shipped to Esperance for the Public Works Department. This was for use on the railway line construction.



“The G156 was originally sent to the Hopetoun line in 1911. After ten years or so on the Hopetoun to Ravensthorpe railways it was partially dismantled and shipped to Esperance Bay, where it freighted railway materials and good inland on the line extension and on its return carried freight back to the Port of Esperance”.

(Caption taken from Old Esperance pictorial history 1897-1947-Don Voigt)

(Photographer unknown -Courtesy Esperance Museum, file 127)

**1922** The War memorial built.

**1923** Laurence Sinclair critically injured on the Esperance Race Track. He died from his injuries the 4<sup>th</sup> January.

The small town of Grass Patch was originally gazetted as Warren Town site on 1<sup>st</sup> August. It was re gazetted as Grass Patch on 19<sup>th</sup> December. The name was adopted from a farm located to the east of the town site. (Source Esperance & Districts Street Names)

**1924** The Scadden Hall was opened on the 29<sup>th</sup> October.

**1925** The Opening of the Esperance to Salmon Gums Railway, while still awaiting the link to be completed to Norseman.

With the completion of the railway to Salmon Gums, the Esperance representative on the Esperance Roads Board for the Mallee resigned, to allow the Mallee to elect their own representative to the Esperance Board.

The first shipment of wheat from the Esperance district took place. A German-owned auxiliary powered sailing vessel, a four-mastered barque, the *Carl Vinnen* lifted 18,132 bags of wheat (6460 tons) from the Jetty.



Photograph. Taking the loaded wagon wheat carts to the outer berth of the jetty

(Photographer unknown- courtesy Esperance Museum)



The *Carl Vinnen*

(Photographer- C. Sandell)

The Population had increased after the World War and again there was a need for a hospital. Tenders were called for the relocation of the Wellard Hospital to Esperance

The ownership of the Thomas River Station (Lynburn) was transferred to John Frazer Chisholm.

Salmon Gums was gazetted and declared a town site on the 6<sup>th</sup> February with 22 lots advertised for sale. The town was named after the Eucalyptus salmonophloia (Salmon Gum) that grows there.

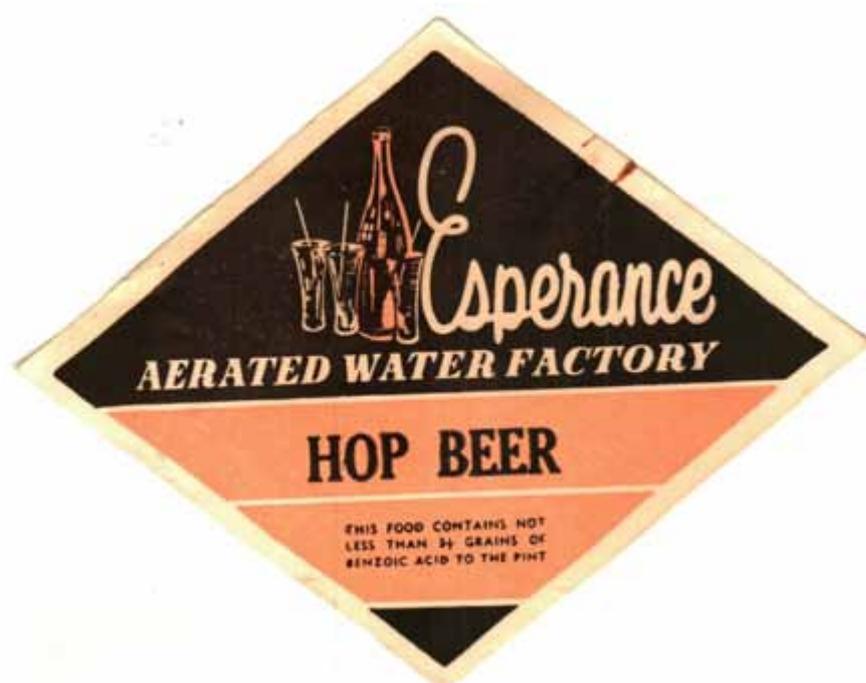
**1926** Esperance suffered a severe drought, resulting in many settlers walking off their properties.

**1927** The Railway line was finally completed. The completion of the link between Salmon Gums to Norseman meant all the railways of the state were open.

The population of Esperance is about 250

Esperance had gained popularity as a holiday resort for goldfields residents.

Esperance Aerated Waters Factory relocated, to Lot 67 Windich Street. Boswell Synnot built a residence, and factory on Lot 67 Windich Street. The factory operated until the 1980's.



The Grass Patch School is opened, and school commenced in the Agricultural Hall until a new school was built.

The Rich Meadows School was built by Boswell Synnot, in the Mallee, classes had been previously held at the home of Mr & Mrs Townsend. Red Lake, Grass Patch and East Grass Patch schools combined to form Rich Meadows School.

West Red Lake School is opened. The school was situated on the Swan Lagoon road and operated until May 1933. The depression had forced the schools closure as many of the settlers left the Mallee.

**1928** The Esperance 3,500 Farms Scheme under the Immigration Amendment Act of 1924 proposed to settle 3,500 farms in the area between Southern Cross and Salmon Gums. A letter from the Chairman of the Esperance District Business Association expressed deep concern over the number of unsecured loans already extended to existing settlers.

The wheat shipment from the Esperance district increased to 261,000 bags approximately 6,803 tons.

Pioneer Sarah Theresa Brooks of Balbinia Station, painter, botanist dies in Norseman. Sarah Brookes is buried in Norseman.

4,376 tons of grain crops exported from Esperance.

In 1928-29 The Esperance Pine Forrest Ltd. commenced with the development of pine plantations.

The hospital at Wellard was dismantled and transported from Fremantle to Esperance by sea on the SS *Kybra*. Re-erection proved a challenge, as the available machinery in Esperance was relatively primitive. Horse scoops and light railway lines from mines at Kalgoorlie were used in the erection.

The Wellard Hospital opened and remained in use until the Esperance District Hospital was built in the 1960's. The building was then converted into the Nurses Quarters and continued in that role until 1986.

**1929** A second storey is completed on the Pier Hotel.

6460 tons of grain crops exported from Esperance.

**1930** Many farmers walk off their farms. There is no assistance available from the government to support the stricken farmers.

**1931** The Great Depression was at its worst and the prices of primary products fell well below the cost of production. The government had to curtail the 3,500 Farm Scheme and other major public works programmes.

15,344 tons of crops exported from Esperance district. There were around 200,000 bags of wheat shipped from the town jetty along with salt and wool.

**1932** 15,131 tons of crop exported from Esperance district.

The Truslove School opened on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1932, school classes were held in the agricultural hall, an unlined corrugated iron building.

**1933** The population of Esperance dropped to 949.

The Chairman of the Esperance Roads Board was Mr Edward.



The West Red Lake School children.

(Photo Courtesy of Esperance Museum, Mallee Collection)

**1934** 7,236 tons of crop were exported from Esperance. Prices fell faster than production could be increased.

The West Scadden (Lake Echo) School opened. A public meeting resulted in an association being formed to raise finance, despite the depression. Dances, picnics, sports and socials were held which raised the money to purchase building materials.

Mr Emil Nulsen, M.L.A. summed up the position when he said, "Then, of course, the depression made matters worse. Wheat cost 2/9d a bushel to produce, but the farmers were only receiving 1/8d a bushel for it. Wool was fetching 10d and the poor unfortunate farmer – the primary producers – were living on boiled wheat and molasses, plus a few birds ... I suppose only 25 per cent of them remained on their farms; and, of course, the younger ones benefited later. I remember the conditions in those days, because I was on the sustenance committee for the Mallee, where the people were lucky if they could get sufficient to keep them going."

(Hansard, Vol. 158 p.607)<sup>1</sup>



(Photographer Unknown-Courtesy Esperance Museum. File 115)

<sup>1</sup> John Rintoul Esperance Yesterday and Today: (printed by Scott Four Print Pty Ltd Perth Western Australia First Edition 1964,) p. 112



(Photographer Unknown- Battye Library Courtesy)

The Esperance Deepwater Wharf (Tanker Jetty) started at Hannett's Point, built, by WA Government Railways. The first pile was driven in by Hon. Alex McCallum, 29<sup>th</sup> January and Mr. Emil Nulsen MLA, addressed the crowd. It was officially opened by State's Mines Minister, Selby Walter Musie on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1935.

School classes began on the 19<sup>th</sup> November with eight pupils at the West Scadden Hall, which was known as the 'Lake Echo School'. As years passed, it became known as the 'West Scadden School'.



(Photograph-Courtesy Joyce Daniel)

**1935** The New Jetty was opened. The New Jetty was 2,190 feet long, with head 557 feet long (820 metres) and 48 feet wide (14 metres) at a water depth ranging from 26 feet at the inshore end to 36 feet (11metres) at the seaward end.

**1936** The Norseman-Esperance News newspaper commenced.

**1937** The installation of the bulk fuel storage at the New Jetty on Hannett's Point followed the introduction of diesel power introduced to the goldfields, to serve the Lake View & Star Gold Mine.

The Synnot brothers take over the salt lease on Lake Spencer.

**1938** The Royal Commission on Light Lands or Poison Infected Lands with C.G. Latham as the Chairman was called, and the proposed development was shelved.

**1939** World War Two.

Agriculture scientists identify and researched trace elements deficiencies in soil.

**1940** The Chairman of Esperance Roads Board from, 1935 – 1941 was Esmond Francis Heenan.

**1941** Esperance State School gets electricity connected.

**1946** The Chairman of the Esperance Roads Board from, 1945 – 1946 was, Mr. E. McGinn. The secretary during that time was Mr Frazer Charles Fitzgerald.

**1947** The Esperance Land Development Committee was formed, instigated by W.C. Stewart.

The Synott brothers ceased production on the Salt Lake. Lake Spencer had produced fine quality table salt and pink crystal salt for export.

**1948** The town was at low ebb, but there was an influx of visitors over the December to February holiday season, mostly from the goldfields.



Camping grounds, below Dempster Head.

(Photographer Unknown-Courtesy Lucy Orr)

**1949** Gibson Research Station established, as sub-station to Salmon Gums Research Station. Most of the success on the Esperance Downs was the result of the work carried out at Gibson. The value of trace elements, zinc, and copper was realized, and safe farming practises pioneered.

**1950** The first Government assistance given out for agricultural purposes was allocated to Esperance Downs Research Station. The cabinet had approved the recommendation of a grant of 10,000 pounds, and a maximum of 1,000 pounds to any individual applicant.

The land at the Research Station was found to need extensive fertilising, and despite a heavy workload developing the research station, the first experimental crops were sown in June.

There were 191 motor vehicles registered per thousand head of population in Esperance.

**1951** Esperance and Districts Agricultural Society held its first annual agricultural show.

**1952** Esperance Downs was declared a special area and began attracting interest from settlers, and an influx of American and Eastern states investment capital.

The population of Esperance is 700. A total of 40 farms were occupied.

Esperance was surviving on the fishing industry and tourism.

**1953** Esperance Primary School had 164 children enrolled.

**1954** The Esperance Downs Development Advisory Committee, appointed by the government was formed. Their main objective was to gain more Government support, vital for new land settlers. Their reports suggested that the land was potentially viable, as experimental crops had proven the fertility of the soil. Hopes were high. The progress in development was slow, with only a total of 36 farms settled and 20,000 acres developed.

The Population of Esperance was 1087.

**1955** Gibson Research Station progressed from a sub-station to a full research station in February 1955. The research station developed legumes such as clover and lupins which thrived in the sandy soil and provided nitrogen for extra fertility.

There was a strong demand for conditional purchase leasehold blocks from the eastern states, as there was a belief that the unproductive land could become a major agricultural region.

**1956** Mr Alan Chase, the American promoter heading a syndicate of American business, Chase Syndicate Esperance Plains (Australia) Pty Ltd, applied for land. The syndicate entered into an agreement with the Government to buy 1,500,000 million acres of land at 4 pounds an acre, plus survey fees.

Hunts Cannery (Old Cannery) was built by Hunts Cannery of Albany to process, herring, sardines and salmon. However, it only operated for one year.

**1957** The major factor in the Chase Syndicate failure was an unapproved planting method; the methods recommended by the Agricultural Research Station were not adopted. The syndicate failed, and Alan Chase returned to America for consultation with Syndicate members. These include, American television personality, Art Linkletter and financier David Rockefeller, film stars Anne Baxter, Robert Cummings and Rhonda Fleming who all had a stake in the development.

The Norseman-Esperance News newspaper ceased after 21 years.

**1958** The Last race meeting was held at Bow Farm race track.

The original Esperance Hotel was burned down, and the townspeople who had gathered could do nothing to save it.

The Esperance Wireless station established contact with Wilkes Base in Antarctica.

**1959** The Chase Syndicate sold about 60,000 acres of undeveloped land and handed back 21,000 acres in Neridup area to the government.

The Esperance Bay Turf Club opened the new Race course, which was located below six-mile hill.

The population of Esperance was 1592.

**1960** The Chase Syndicate assigned its interest in the land to Esperance Land and Development Company.

**1961** The first school at Condingup was opened on the 20<sup>th</sup> February, with eight children. The Education Department supplied one teacher. The school was known as Linkletters Place School as it was situated on Art Linkletters property at Condingup. The school student population grew to 27 children and when the school closed on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 1964, the students transferred to the newly built Condingup Primary School, which opened the following day on the 28<sup>th</sup> September.

There are now 394 farms in the district. The sheep population increased from 17,000 to more than 120,000 from 1953 to 1961.

A proposal for a new protected harbour was prepared, following a survey of the Esperance Bay and an economic study of the district development. The study was prepared under the direction of Engineer for Harbours and Rivers N. J. Henry.

The population of Esperance was 2285.

The name of the Esperance Roads Board changed, following the introduction of the Local Government Act on 21<sup>st</sup> June. The local government authority is now known as "Esperance Shire Council".

**1962** A Co-Operative Bulk Handling Depot was established in town in Brazier Street.

With the increase of farming families in the district, new classrooms were added to the Esperance Primary School.

There are 394 farms in the district.

Work commenced on the dredging and reclamation of the land backed berth and breakwater at Dempster Head and Wireless Hill, as part of the harbour development plan. There were 67 acres dredged, 90 acres reclaimed and 2,500,000 cubic yards of dredged quantity.

A new Church of England built on the original site. The old Anglican Church built in 1896 was demolished.

The population is 4,500.

Work commenced on building 40 new State Housing Commission homes in the Sims Street area.

The Esperance Shire Council builds a new caravan park, ideally situated for view and facilities.

**1963** Esperance Land Development Company saw rapid development, with 273 farms being established. The land was being subdivided into holdings of about 2,000 acres and as half were to be sold, there would be about 350 holdings in all. In accordance with the agreement with the Western Australian Government, 700 acres were to be developed to pasture, before freehold title can be obtained.

Premier Hon. David Brand opened the Agricultural Show.

Construction continued on the breakwater, with work commencing on berth 1 of the land-backed wharf.

The town's population was 4500 and there are 600 school children enrolled at Esperance Primary School. The Esperance Primary School is demolished to make way for a bigger school.

**1964** Esperance celebrated its Centenary, 100 years of Settlement 1864 – 1964, with a festival.

The Souvenir Programme was packed with celebration events.

The Esperance Fertilizers Pty Ltd superphosphate plant was built under agreement with the WA Government and began superphosphate manufacturing in 1964. The design and construction of all plant and equipment was carried out entirely in West Australia. It met the requirements of the district, with 45,000 tons of superphosphate supplied direct from the new works. Farmers were able to have one of the lowest on farm costs for fertilizers in Australia, which provided a unique advantage.

The Town Library opened in the Roads Board Office.

**1965** The Esperance Harbour land backed wharf No.1 berth, was opened by Premier Brand on the 19<sup>th</sup> November.

The First shipment from the land backed wharf from Berth 1 was on the fertilizer vessel, '*Cape Wrath*'.

The Esperance Shire Council Office in Windich Street was opened by the Minister for local government, L. A. Logan on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

The Esperance Junior High School built on Pink Lake Road.

The Black Street Kindergarten was purpose-built and was opened by the shire president W. Patterson on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. The previous location for the kindergarten was in Dempster Street in the Waterside Workers Hall which is the present site of 24-hour service station.

The Co-operative Bulk Handling group constructed eight concrete grain storage silos at the new berth.

The population of Esperance is 5,300. There are approximately 650 active farm holdings.

The "Esperance Advertiser" newspaper commenced publishing a weekly edition.

**1966** Floodwaters cut the Esperance to Ravensthorpe highway, with the Oldfield and Young River crossings washed away. The Norseman highway was also cut off by the flood waters. Many of the surrounding creeks' flood waters washed out roads.

The Esperance High School was officially opened 7<sup>th</sup> October by The Hon, E.H.M. Lewis.

The Castletown Primary School opened.

ABC Radio station 6ED began broadcasting

Cape Le Grand had been gazetted as a Class A reserve for National Park in 1948; it is now vested in the National Parks Board.

The town's population was 4,891

Twilight Cove road, previously a limestone track, was constructed between Dempster Head to Observatory Point.

Her Majesty, The Queen Mother visited.

**1967** The town's population increased to 5,300

The Esplanade foreshore was severely eroded during a storm that brought waves crashing across the road on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of June.

**1969** Esperance attracted the Swan Brewery Company to extensively redevelop the 'Pier' spending approximately \$600,000 on a two story, brick and concrete building, occupying Lots 3,4,5, and 17.

The "Star of the Sea" aged accommodation homes opened.

The Meteorological weather station was constructed and opened the 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

The Esperance Bay Turf Club Cup and other trophies was presented by Governor Sir Douglas Kendrew.

**1970** The State Electricity Commission (S.E.C.) assumed control of the town's power supply. The power station plant in the Dempster street location was shut down.

The Esperance Music Festival was established with Esperance Senior High School students making their first venture into the Musical and Drama Festival Programme.

Shipping, live sheep exports commenced.

**1971** The historic stone Post Office, built in 1896, was demolished. A new concrete Post Office built.

With the addition of upper school students in Years 11 and 12, the name Esperance High School changed to Esperance Senior High School.

In March, the Esperance Theatre Guild leases the Bijou Theatre from Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes.

The Esperance Seafarers centre was opened. The funding and building of the centre was a local community effort.

The Library was opened on the 15<sup>th</sup> January by Hon. L.A. Logan, Minister for local Government.

The town's population was 7,175

\$40,000 was presented by Aviation Minister, Senator Cotton, for an upgrade to the Esperance Aerodrome.

The last horse transport delivery by Mr. A. Smith and Nellie the horse signalled the end of a chapter in the town's history.



Courtesy Esperance Museum

**1972** A second berth at the Land backed Wharf is built.

The WA Wild Life Authority approved an application to allow Esperance professional fisherman and launch proprietor, Don McKenzie to take tourists to Woody Island.

**1973** The Esperance Express newspaper commenced.

Co-operative Bulk Handling storage capacities grew from 8000 tons in 1965 to more than 185,000 tons in 1973. Loading time was improved to 300 tons an hour with the introduction of grain augers. With the use of the salt loader, ships were loaded at an hourly rate of 800 tons.

**1974** A new Standard gauge railway line Kalgoorlie to Esperance, was completed. This is a freight only railway, as passenger services ceased. The Circle Valley siding was not upgraded to a standard gauge line and no longer used.

The Western Australian Government Railways relocated from the town site to a new site on Harbour road.

The War memorial built in 1922 is relocated to the former croquet green.

The "Esperance Advertiser" newspaper ceased its weekly publication.

**1976** The Esperance Municipal Museum opened on the 9<sup>th</sup> October in the original Customs-Railway Goods Shed.

“Alchera” Homes for aged people were opened. They were administered by the Recherche Aged Welfare Committee. A hostel was opened for the frail aged, funded by Rotary, the Recherche Committee and the Shire of Esperance.

Cape Le Grand, although vested in the National Parks Board, came under the control of the newly created National Parks Authority. The national park covers an area of 31,390 hectares. In 1972 the Western Australian Museum undertook a major biological survey as there was little known about the biological and geological features of the park.

The town’s population was 8070

**1977** Bijou Theatre, built 1896, was purchased by Esperance Theatre Guild from the R.O.A.B.

The last ship to berth at Tanker “New” Jetty 14<sup>th</sup> April 1977, was the *B.P. Enterprise*

**1978** Over one million live sheep had been exported since program began in January 1971. Prime Exporters Pty Ltd of Esperance, loaded the biggest single consignment of 1,000 head of cattle aboard the *San Capo San Marco*, along with 5,000 head of sheep to Kuwait

A community resource centre established.

**1979** On 12<sup>th</sup> July, about 30 tonnes of the American space station, Skylab, fell locally. The San Francisco Examiner offered \$10,000.00 for the first piece of the craft delivered in person. Stanley Thornton Jnr and his parents flew to San Francisco to collect the prize amid international media furore.

The Esperance Senior High School Band played for Prince Charles during his visit to the school.

The old Cannery was officially designated as an Arts Centre.

**1981** The Esperance Civic Centre opened.

The Returned Soldiers League (RSL) moves to new premises, the old stone school building and former Town Library.

The town’s population was 9640

**1982** The Masonic Retirement Village opened in May.

‘Baker’s born Free, Esperance’ wild life park opened in November. Barry McKinnon MP gave an opening speech.

The New Roman Catholic Church, built in Giles Street, opened.

**1983** Esperance Fishing Boat harbour opened at Bandy Creek. Fishing vessels and recreational craft now have a sheltered marina.

The Senior Citizens’ Centre, near Library and Shire offices, was completed.

**1984** Esperance Port Authority Office Complex opened.

After a decade of mostly voluntary work, the first racing trials took place on the new racecourse. Esperance Bay Turf Club Racecourse established on Fisheries Road was officially declared opened by W.A. Premier, Brian Burke.

The old Cannery Arts centre gallery was refurbished, with new studios, a music centre, artists flat and verandas were added to the complex.

An immediate halt in salt mining on Pink Lake was called, until a thorough study was undertaken in order to establish that the industry has no effect on the colour of the area's best known attraction.

**1986** The Boulevard Shopping Centre opened.

The Esperance Port Authority took on the old Nurses' quarters (previously Wellard Hospital), and the building was moved to Taylor Street Beach front where it served as offices for the consulting engineers who were supervising the deepening of the Port of Esperance.

The Bay of Isles Motel opened.

The town's population was 9906

**1987** The Salmon Beach Wind farm, built as a research facility started generating power. It was the first wind farm in Australia.

**1989** After extensive renovations, The Wellard Hospital building was opened as a Tea Rooms in September.

The town's population was 10,074.

**1990** The town's population was 10,505

**1991** The Esperance Community Nursing Home opened. The Esperance Aged Care Facility, or nursing home as it is known, was officially opened on 11th November.

The vessel Sanko *Harvest* hit a reef and sinks in the Recherché Archipelago, spilling crude oil and a cargo of fertilizer into the ocean, polluting islands, coastline and maiming and killing wildlife.

**1992** The New Shire Council Administration building was opened. There were monies still owing on the old premises.

The town's population was 11,222

**1993** CBH Storage had a total of 342,500 tonnes in their facilities.

The Balbinya Station shed was restored. A Land care and Environment Action Program (LEAP) involving unemployed youth, contributed to the restoration of the shed, which had fallen into ruins. It was restored to its former structure.

**1994** The Esperance Port Authority iron ore doors were thrown open for a family fun day. The shed has a massive 11,275 square metre floor area.

The export of iron ore (1.5 million tonnes per annum) commenced. Westrail had gained approval from the EPA after the environmental management plan met requirements, which included taking steps to reduce noise levels within the town caused by the operation, possible dust pollution and level crossing protection.

The Ten Mile Beach Lagoon, Wind Farm opened, and an estimated one quarter of the districts power needs were supplied from the wind generation farms.

Residents of Esperance and District were invited to a heritage celebration, as part of the process of compiling a Municipal Heritage Inventory, undertaken to comply with the Heritage Act of 1990.

A central block of shops, involving four adjoining buildings in Dempster Street, were sold at auction for \$400,000.00. The property was the estate of the late Reg Synnot.

Monjingup lake and park area project commences.

The town's population was 11,651

**1995** Esperance celebrated a centenary of Local Government.

The Soundshell opened in Museum Park.

There are 604 Farms operating in the Esperance and Mallee regions.

**1996** A Regional Industrial development plan completed for the development of commercial agroforestry in the Esperance region.

The town's population was 12,171

The Native Title area extends to 12 Western Australian shires, including the Esperance District.

**1997** Exports of nickel from the Esperance Port totalled about 200,000 tonnes per annum.

A record cargo arrived in Esperance from Adelaide. The biggest freight movement ever seen in Australia –a barge carrying two 38.5 long autoclaves, which tipped the scales at 550 tonnes each, arrived at the Esperance Port. To transport the autoclaves from Esperance to the Murrin Murrin mine site, each autoclave was placed on two trailers and hauled by six prime movers, over a 732.5 km road journey. The mine site is Anaconda Nickel's billion-dollar project between Leonora and Laverton.

**1999** The town's population reaches 13,000

**2002** Uncontrollable fires ignited by lightning strikes threatened to wipe out the rare wildlife on Mondrian Island south of Cape Le Grand. The island is the second largest in the Recherche Archipelago. Six CALM Officers braved difficult conditions, a large swell and the steep slopes on the island, to fight the fire.

**2003** A model lighthouse was installed at Port Authority Beach.

**2007** Esperance experienced what was named "The Perfect Storm." Wind gust of up to 110km/h with 155mm (6in) rain in a 24-hour period, caused severe flooding. Bandy Creek was severely eroded, and bridges, homes, trees, roads and boats were damaged. The government declared the area a natural disaster zone. An estimate of around 29,000 sheep was killed in the storm.

**2015** The "Jetty Island", part of the Tanker Jetty, was removed by the Southern Ports Authority. Work commenced 25<sup>th</sup> May and the last visible signs of Jetty Island were seen on 14th June 2015.

A devastating bushfire occurred. Two men and two women were killed in the fires.



The Tanker jetty is closed for the last time to the public November 2015.

This Time line history is not completed and will be continued.....

Thank You. Any corrections, additional information please contact the Esperance Bay Historical Society.