

# HISTORICAL FACTS ON VICTOR HARBOR

- 1923 **The Griffin family picture theatre and the Wonderview de Luxe Beach Theatre** were built.  
Electric light was extended to private homes.
- 1924 **Electricity** connected to Granite Island.
- 1925 **The tennis clubhouse** was built on the foreshore.
- 1926 **New railway station** built.
- 1927 **Second Newland Memorial Congregational Church** in Victoria St completed.
- 1928 **The Masonic Lodge** was built on Hindmarsh Rd.  
**Castlemaine** was built for Sir William Sowden.  
**Scouts' and Guides' Halls** were opened.  
**Road to Adelaide** sealed.
- 1929 **South Coast District Hospital** opened.
- 1930 **The Convent of Mercy School** was opened.  
**The Church of Christ** was opened in Seaview Rd.
- 1933 **The Salvation Army Citadel** was opened in Victoria St.
- 1934 **Griffin family picture theatre** burnt down.
- 1936 **State centenary celebrations** at Victor Harbor.  
**Grand Prix** attracted 40 000 spectators.
- 1938 **The Bluff** and surroundings declared a **recreation reserve**.
- 1941 **The Amscol Dairy Factory** was built on Adelaide Rd. It closed in 1978 with the building converted to the Lutheran Church Centre.
- 1948 **A new Newland bridge** over the Inman River was completed.
- 1954 **The Methodist Church** was established at Adare.  
**The horse tram ceased running** and was replaced by a tractor train until 1986 when the horse tram resumed.
- 1955 **The public baths and Victoria Pier** were demolished after storm damage.
- 1961 **A new Hotel Victor** was built.
- 1965 **Council Chambers** on Bay Rd opened.
- 1969 **Meals on Wheels** established at Victor Harbor.  
**Granite Island** declared a **Fauna Sanctuary**.
- 1971 **Deep drainage** installed in the town.
- 1975 **The Corporation of Victor Harbor and the District Council of Encounter Bay** amalgamated to form District Council of Victor Harbor.
- 1976 **Urimbirra Wildlife Park** opened on land given to Victor Harbor, later on run by a private enterprise.
- 1982 **Nangawooka Flora Reserve** established as a community project.
- 1984 **The Primary School** on Torrens St closed and a new one opened on The Parkway in 1985.
- 1986 **National Trust** was granted use of Old Customs House as a museum.

- 1989 **Tourist Information Centre** first opened in the Old School House.  
**Council donated land** adjoining the Council Chamber to **Meals on Wheels**.
- 1991 **Around 125 000 people** visited Victor Harbor to see the whales.
- 1992 **Granite Island sea lion sculpture** carved by Silvio Apponyi.
- 1993 **The Whale Tail Fountain** by Silvio Apponyi was installed.
- 1994 **Horse tram centenary** and opening of the Tram Barn.  
**Whale Centre** opened in the old railway goods shed.
- 1996 **A Penguin Interpretive Centre** was established.
- 1996 **The chairlift on Granite Island**, erected in 1964, was removed.
- 1997 **Encounter Coast Discovery Centre** was built adjacent to the **Customs House** by the Victor Harbor Branch of The National Trust.  
**The Rotary clock**, celebrating 50 years of Rotary in Victor Harbor, was erected in Temple Gardens.
- 1998 **Tourist Information Centre** moved to the Causeway kiosk building.
- 2001 **Launch of the Kondoli sculpture** at the Kleinigs Hill Lookout. This was a joint project between the Victor Harbor R-7 School and Fregon Anangu Aboriginal School.  
District Council of Victor Harbor became **City of Victor Harbor**.
- 2002 **Sculpture, On Occupied Territories**, designed by Margaret Worth to commemorate the meeting between Flinders and Baudin, was opened.  
**Ring Road** west of the city was constructed.  
Approximately **90 formally identified Local Heritage listed Places** created.
- 2007 **Opening of the new Council Chambers** on the site of the 1965 Building, incorporating the library.
- 2009 **The Bluff Boat Ramp** opened for upgrade.
- 2012 **McLaren Lane** was created to provide a walkway between Ocean Street and Railway Terrace.  
**Causeway Plaza upgrade** completed.
- 2014 **150 years anniversary** of the Victor Harbor to Port Elliot Railway Line.  
**32 Blue coloured heritage interpretation plaques** were installed on State and Local Heritage listed Places around the town centre.

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*Brochure created by the Victor Harbor Visitor Centre 2022.*

*Contents is correct to the best of our knowledge, but may be subject to change without notice.*

# VICTOR HARBOR

FEEL IT CALLING

- 1802** **Encounter Bay** discovered and named by Capt Matthew Flinders in the ship Investigator after his encounter with Capt Nicolas Baudin in the Geographe near the Murray Mouth.
- 1830** **Captain Sturt** & his party reached the Murray Mouth.
- 1836** **South Australia** proclaimed as a British Province by Capt John Hindmarsh, Governor.
- 1837** **Two whaling stations established**, one at the Bluff and the other near the site of the railway crossing on Hindmarsh Rd.  
**Capt R Crozier in HMS Victor** anchored in the lee of Granite Island and named Victor Harbor.  
**Mootaparinga Cottage established** for the Hindmarsh family
- 1838** **Port Victor** was proclaimed on June 26.
- 1839** **Rev R W Newland and his party**, first permanent settlers, arrived at Encounter Bay aboard the brig Lord Hobart on July 4.  
**Amalgamation** of the two whaling stations.  
**The Bluff named Rosetta Head** by Governor Gawler.
- 1843** **The first Police Station built** on Police Point which later became Warland Reserve. The Aboriginal word Poltong was used for this area.
- 1844** **A wind powered flour mill** was built at Encounter Bay by Porter Helmore. It later became part of a private residence in Gibson St.
- 1846** **The first church, the Tabernacle**, was built for Newland's congregation at Yilki (Yilki, Yelki, Yeilkey, Aboriginal for place by the sea).
- 1847** **The road from Adelaide to Victor Harbor** via Pt Elliot was opened.  
**Fountain Inn**, which replaced the Ship Inn at Yilki, was opened. It was closed as a hotel in 1870 and purchased for use as a private residence in 1894 by Dr Jefferis. The Inn was used for early District Council meetings.
- 1851** **Pt Elliot was selected as the port** for the Murray trade and proclaimed as a town.
- 1853** **The first District Council of Encounter Bay** was formed and met at Pt Elliot.  
**A road connecting Goolwa and Victor Harbor** was opened.
- 1854** **The small jetty at the Bluff** was built.  
**A railway for a horse drawn tram** was completed between the Ports of Goolwa and Pt Elliot. This was the first public railway in Australia.
- 1855** **Edward Truslove built a store and Post Office** on the corner of Bay Rd and Maude St, Encounter Bay.
- 1859** **Huge losses from a bushfire** that decimated farms in Hindmarsh Valley and through the hinterland of Pt Elliot and Middleton.
- 1862** **Victor Harbor chosen as the Port** in preference to Pt Elliot. The Government laid **strong moorings** on the seabed near Granite Island.  
**Victoria Pier** was commenced.
- 1863** **The town of Victor Harbor** was surveyed and the first stone buildings were constructed.  
**Victor Harbor House** licensed as a hotel.  
**Road connecting Victor Harbor and Yankalilla** was opened.  
**Two river bridges** were opened, the Alexandra Bridge over the Hindmarsh and the Newland Bridge over the Inman.  
**Coolanine copper mine** worked on the Bluff.
- 1864** **Railway extension from Pt Elliot completed** and the goods shed was built.  
**First vessel to arrive** direct from overseas.  
**Victoria Pier**, which had cost £8 800, was opened.
- 1865** **Port Victor proclaimed.**  
**South Australian Bank** opened in Coral St. The building was later used by the Union Bank.  
**General store was opened** by Henry Sparkes. It was built to two storeys by William Heggaton in 1868. Philip Wheaton became the owner in 1870 and in 1894 it was sold to David Bell. Known as Bells for many years.  
**Crown Hotel** built and licensed as a hotel.
- 1866** **The Harbourmaster and Collector of Customs House** was built.  
**The Telegraph Station and Post Office building** was built in Coral Street.  
**The first vessel sailed** from Port Victor directly for overseas.  
**The Southern Argus newspaper** began circulation with news items covering an area from Strathalbyn through to Yankalilla.
- 1867** **A liquid tan factory and a sawmill** were established in McKinlay St.  
**Davies shoe shop** was opened on Railway Tce.
- 1868** **Mr R B Williams appointed** as the first Harbourmaster.  
**Landseer and Read established wool stores** beside the railway on Flinders Pde.  
**The Cut Hill retaining wall** on the Adelaide Rd was completed.
- 1869** **Newland Memorial Congregational Church** completed by July 19 and St Augustine's Church of England finished on Dec 11.
- 1872** **After a brief revival of the whaling industry**, the last whale was caught off Victor.
- 1874** **First licensed school** in the town was opened in Alexandra Cottage by William Evans. Later the site of the **Ambulance Station**.
- 1875** **Jetty extended to Granite Island to become the Causeway.** The Working Jetty was built.
- 1876** **The first guesthouse, Gertymore (Smugglers)**, was built by the Baaner family in Crozier Rd.
- 1877** **The first public school** was opened in Torrens St.
- 1878** **Work commenced on the Screwpile Jetty and the Breakwater.** This was completed in 1882.
- 1880** **Mt Breckan was built** for Alexander Hay at a cost of £10 000. It burned down in 1909 and rebuilding commenced in 1913.
- 1885** **Railway to Victor Harbor** converted to steam.
- 1892** **First lighthouse** operated from Granite Island.
- 1893** **Adare was built** for the Cudmore family. It incorporated the original home of John Hindmarsh.
- 1894** **Horse drawn tram** commenced running to Granite Island. Tim Mahoney first driver (charge 3 pence return).
- 1896** **The Grosvenor Hotel** was built for the Humberstone family.
- 1902** **Plaque on the Bluff** was unveiled by Lord Tennyson to commemorate the meeting of Flinders and Baudin.
- 1904/05** **Victor Harbor Town Hall** built next to the Institute building which had been built in 1877/78. The Institute building served at various times as a Corporation office, Library, RSL Museum and is now an Art Gallery.
- 1910** **Higher Primary classes** were started at the Public School.  
**High School classes** were first established in the Wonderview Theatre on Flinders Pde and later in the Newland Memorial Church Hall. The High School building was opened in 1937.  
**Warringa (Anchorage)** was built.  
**Kiosk** built on Granite Is.  
**Bowling green** opened.
- 1911** **Foundation of the Victor Harbor Golf Club.**  
**Customs House and Harbourmaster's residence** became the Stationmaster's house.
- 1912** **Victor Harbor Times** published its first newspaper.  
**A new Police Station** was built in Ocean St and the original one was demolished.
- 1914** **Corporation of the Town of Victor Harbor** was proclaimed.  
**Work started on the Hindmarsh Valley Reservoir.** It was completed in 1917 and provided the first piped water to the town.
- 1917** **Work, mainly voluntary, began on the Soldiers Memorial Gardens**, Flinders Pde.
- 1919** **A Delco electric light plant** was installed for street lighting in Flinders Parade.
- 1920** **Capt Harry Butler piloted the first plane** to Victor Harbor.
- 1921** **The Post Office** in Ocean St was completed.  
**The town's name was gazetted as Victor Harbor** rather than Port Victor.  
**St Joan of Arc Catholic Church** was built in Seaview Rd.
- 1922** **A volunteer fire Brigade** was formed.