



CEREMONY REPORT

Sale Swing Bridge

Sale, Victoria

Sunday 15 November 2009

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1 Introduction

The ceremony for the marking of the Sale Swing Bridge with an ENGINEERING HERITAGE NATIONAL LANSMARK was conducted at 12 noon on 15 November 2009 as a part of the celebrations for the opening of the River Heritage and Wetlands Trail Stage 2. The Port of Sale marking ceremony had been held earlier in the day.

The ceremony was held near the bridge on the north bank of the Latrobe River.

Approximately 50 people attended the ceremony.

2 Invitation

The following invitation was used:

INVITATION



The Wellington Shire Council and
Engineers Australia, Victorian Division



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Victoria Division

to the unveiling of two Engineering Heritage marl

SUNDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2009

at 9.30am and 12.00noon

- **The Port of Sale
and the Sale Navigation Canal**
to mark the recognition of the site as an
Engineering Heritage Marker at 9.30 am
at the Port of Sale, Canal Road, Sale



- **The Sale Swing Bridge**
to mark the recognition of the site as an
Engineering Heritage National Landmark
at 12 Noon at the Sale Swing Bridge , off the
South Gippsland Highway, 5 km south of
Sale



Please RSVP by registering online at

<https://events.engineersaustralia.org.au/ei/getdemo.ei?id=138&s= 7JC0K7T6T>

or contact Adele Fitzpatrick on 03 9321 1707 or afitzpatrick@engineersaustralia.org.au

DIRECTIONS TO PORT OF SALE: If proceeding from Melbourne on the Princes Highway (A1) take McMillan Street to the right one block before reaching the South Gippsland Highway intersection and take the next right into Canal Road. The ceremony will be held in the open space between Canal Road and the waterfront. Parking will be available just off Canal Road in the Council car park Refer RACV VICROADS, Map 693, Reference O7.

DIRECTIONS TO SALE SWING BRIDGE: From the centre of Sale take the South Gippsland Highway approximately 4 km south and take the sign posted turn to the right to the Swing Bridge. Follow this road to the bridge. The ceremony will be held near the bridge. Refer RACV VICROADS, Map 99, Reference C4. Note that a bus service will be provided from Port of Sale to the Swing Bridge and return starting at 10 am and running every 15 minutes until 3 pm.

3 Address List used for Invitations:

FOR SALE SWING BRIDGE & SALE NAVIGATION CANAL CEREMONIES

This list covers Miscellaneous contacts outside Engineers Australia and the Wellington Shire Council Lists

1 HERITAGE VICTORIA

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8 Military Historical Society of Australia

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10 Melbourne Steam Traction Engine Club

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OWEN PEAKE

4 Program & Running Sheet:

Rotary Club of Sale Inc.



"Service Above Self"

80 YEARS

OF SERVICE TO THE SALE
REGION

1928 – 2008



RIVER HERITAGE AND WETLANDS TRAIL STAGE 2

OFFICIAL OPENING

SUNDAY 15TH NOVEMBER 2009

PROGRAM

TIME	ACTIVITIES	Location / Involvement
Week preceding	Distribution of 20 Question Trivia Sheet (Trail Map on Back) \$500 worth of vouchers Sale Business Association	Businesses in Sale Also available on day from 10.15 am
7.00am - 1.00pm	Sale Variety Market (a regular event in close proximity)	Canal Reserve
8.00 - 9.00	Civic Breakfast	
9.00	Registration for Fun Run Begins	
9.30	Welcome to Country by a descendant of the Brayakukung clan of Gúnnai Kúrnai; their ancestors occupied Gippsland for many hundreds of generations, and many thousand of years.	

9.35 - 10.00		Unveiling of ENGINEERING HERITAGE MARKER denoting Port of Sale and the Sale Navigation Canal as Site of National Engineering Heritage	Port of Sale IE Aust. WSC Rotary Club Sale Talk Peter Synan
10.00	Bus Service to Swing Bridge Starts		
10.15	Swing Bridge Challenge (Runners V Rowers) 5km fun run against Rowers and Paddlers		Port of Sale Wellington Athletics Club Dennis Huffer Philip Davis Starter Gun Drink Stall
11.00 11.30	Swing Bridge Opens		Talks by Madelaine McManus on Engineering Aspects and Peter Synan on the heritage
11.30 11.45	Sale City Band March to Bridge and play a selection Percy Grainger (son of designer) compositions		Drink Stall Hugh Davies Band Leader
12.00 -12.30		Unveiling of ENGINEERING HERITAGE NATIONAL LANDMARK denoting Swing Bridge as Landmark Site of National Engineering Heritage	Swing Bridge IE Aust. Peter Godfrey Nat Pres WSC Rotary Club Sale Welcome to Country
12.30	Piper leads People to Picnic Area		John Jackson Piper
11.00 -3.00pm	Activities at the 3.5km Picnic Area on Walk BBQ & Drinks Sale City Band Briagalong Bush Band from 11am Young Spirits Dance Group Stratford Singer Also on Trail		Rotary Club of Sale Generator
1.00 - 1.30	Official Opening		WSC Rotary Club Sale Parks Vic John Leslie Welcome to Country
1.30	Entries Close Trivia Quiz		
2.00	Drawing of Trivia Quiz and distribution of prizes		

3.00	Final Bus service back to Port of Sale Swing Bridge opens as per normal Saturday arrangements	
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RUNNING SHEET

Sale Swing Bridge – 11.30 AM - 15 November 2009

Unveiling of Engineering Heritage National Landmark

- **Welcome (by Master of Ceremonies)** **2 minutes**

- **Madeleine McManus, State President, Victorian Division, Engineers Australia (describes the mechanism of the opening of the bridge as the bridge is opened).** **5 minutes**

- **Councillor Darren McCubbin, Mayor of Wellington Shire Council (emphasis on ownership and role of bridge in the local community)** **4 minutes**

- **Peter Godfrey, Engineers Australia National President, (emphasis on the story of the Swing Bridge)** **4 minutes**

- **MC Invites the Mayor and EA National President to unveil the marker** **2 minutes**

- **Closing (MC) Instructions to next event** **2 minutes**

TOTAL

19 minutes

5 Speech Notes:

The following speech notes were used at the ceremony:

- Madelaine McManus
- Peter Godfrey

SPEECH NOTES – SALE SWING BRIDGE – MADELEINE McMANUS

- **Cr Darren McCubbin, Mayor of Wellington Shire Council**
Other distinguished guests
- Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen
- **John Grainger** demonstrated a great understanding of structural engineering when he applied a new design concept to this bridge and incorporated mechanisms to convert the moveable section of the bridge from a double cantilever structure into a simple end-supported beam structure by incorporating lifting jacks into the corners of the bridge deck.
- This was the first swing bridge in Australia to incorporate this feature and possibly the first in the world.
- I will lead you through the sequence of events which start with the bridge in the “closed” (that is to say “closed“ to river traffic and “open” to road traffic.
- The usual arrangement was for the gates at each end of the bridge to be closed to prevent people or vehicles getting onto the bridge whilst it is being swung for safety reasons.
- However today people will be able to stand on the movable section whilst the bridge is swung. There will be safety officers to ensure that people don’t get too close to the edge. Be careful!!

- The first operation is to lower the two **FRICTION ROLLERS** which are located in the centre of the roadway at each end of the moveable section.
- This is done using a crank handle operated through an opening in the bridge deck. The crank operates a screw which lowers the two wheels into contact with a curved iron roller path.
- Next the **SCREW JACKS** at the corners of the moveable section are retracted lowering the bridge deck onto the **FRICTION ROLLERS**. This operation has to be done at both ends of the bridge.
- This operation is done with a crank handle inserted into an operating shaft at each corner of the bridge.
- When the **SCREW JACKS** are withdrawn the moveable section is then free to swing.
- The next operation is the rotation of the moveable section. Originally this was done with two **GEAR TRAIN MECHANISMS** located at the centre of the bridge on either side. These are equipped with high and low speed ratios selected by a dog clutch. Two people were required to open or close the bridge.
- Now the opening operation is done with a portable hydraulic motor and a power pack mounted on a trailer on the bridge deck.
- The bridge can be swung in either direction to open the river to traffic.
- When the hydraulic motor is set in motion it operates through the **GEAR TRAIN MECHANISMS** to drive onto a large diameter ring gear mounted on the bridge centre pier near the supporting rollers. The moveable section is rotated through 90 degrees to open the bridge and set it parallel to the river channel.
- When the bridge is to be closed to river traffic the operating sequence is reversed:
 - the bridge is closed
 - the **SCREW JACKS** are lowered to take the weight of the cantilever span
 - the **FRICTION ROLLERS** are raised to prevent wear to them during road traffic operations
 - the gates are re-opened.
- So that's the full story of how this bridge opens and closes.

- Thank you

SPEECH NOTES – PETER GODFREY – SALE SWING BRIDGE

- **Cr Darren McCubbin, Mayor of Wellington Shire Council**
List other dignitaries
- Distinguished guests, fellow members of Engineers Australia, Ladies and Gentlemen.
- In Australia designers of bridges capable of being opened to allow the passage of river traffic have more commonly chosen horizontal lifting span designs, particularly in the Murray Darling river systems. Hence the use of swing bridges in Australia has been quite limited and this bridge is the **oldest** of the **six remaining swing bridges**.
- This bridge is arguably the greatest engineering work of the renowned Australian architect and civil engineer **John Grainger**. Grainger, most famous for his buildings, was also a skilled civil engineer. The condition of this bridge after 126 years of service is a testament to Grainger's engineering skills.
- **Grainger** has not received proper recognition for his great contributions to Australia's built environment and the recognition of the **Sale Swing Bridge** in this ceremony goes some way to redressing this.
- The bridge was built between **1880 and 1883 by Peter Platt**, a local contractor under **Grainger's supervision**. There were considerable

difficulties in building satisfactory foundations as the ground conditions at the site were poor. The original design had to be modified during construction. However Platt and Grainger overcame these problems and, as you can see, the bridge has had a long life.

- The bridge was pivotal to the **development of Gippsland**. After early exploration the primary access to Gippsland was from the sea – either through **Port Albert**, south of Sale, or through the **Gippsland Lakes**. Either way **Sale** became the transport hub of the **Gippsland area**. The construction of a direct land link to Melbourne by road or rail was delayed due to difficult swamp conditions **north of Western Port Bay**. When the **railway** was completed in **1879** it competed for business with the **Port of Sale** for several decades but the railway, and later the road, eventually forced the **closure of the Port of Sale in 1938**.
- For the rest of the twentieth century the bridge operated as a **fixed bridge** and gradually became less adequate for the **South Gippsland Highway** as traffic demands and loads increased over the years.
- In **2002 VicRoads built a new bridge** for the **South Gippsland Highway** and set about **restoring the Swing Bridge**. This work was of a very high standard and is a great credit to **VicRoads**. Since **2004** the old bridge has been back in operation, now owned by the **Wellington Shire Council**.
- As we saw this morning the **Wellington Shire Council** has recently reconstructed the **Port of Sale**, primarily for the use of fishing and pleasure craft. So after more than a century and a quarter the **Swing Bridge and the Port of Sale** are once again working in unison with the bridge being opened to meet the needs of traffic to the port.
- And how did the bridge stand up to a century and a quarter of use? Both abutment structures have been strengthened or rebuilt. Work was done on the **Longford abutment in 1936** and more substantial rebuilding of the **Sale abutment in the 2002 to 2004 restoration**. The timber deck has been replaced several times during the life of the bridge. By any standards that is a pretty good record and a tribute to the designers, builders and maintainers of the bridge.
- I now call on **Cr Darren McCubbin, Mayor of the Wellington Shire** to come forward and unveil the marker with me.

6 Ceremony Handout:

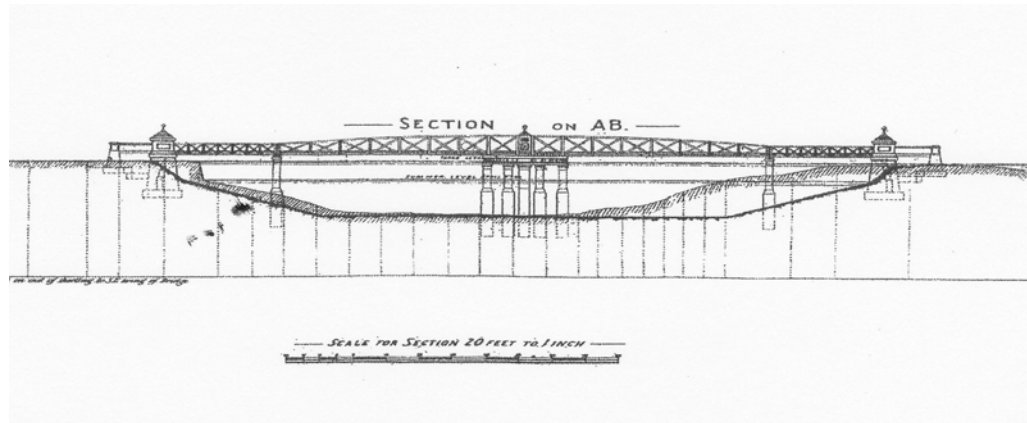
The Sale Swing Bridge

The Sale Swing Bridge is arguably the greatest engineering work of the renowned Australian architect and civil engineer John Grainger. Grainger, most famous for his buildings, was also a skilled civil engineer. The condition of the bridge after 126 years of service is a testament to Grainger's engineering skills. Grainger has not received proper recognition of his great contribution to the fabric of Australia's built environment and recognition of the Sale Swing Bridge goes some way to redressing this.

The bridge was erected in 1880-1883 by Peter Platt, a local contractor under Grainger's supervision. It is supported on a combination of cast iron, concrete-filled piers and brick abutments. The bridge structure consists of the swinging span plus two short approach spans constructed of wrought iron half-through lattice girders with a timber deck.

The use of swing bridges in Australia has been limited and this bridge is the oldest such bridge and one of only six remaining in Australia.

Sale Swing Bridge was pivotal to the development of Gippsland. After early exploration the primary access to Gippsland was from the sea – either through Port Albert, south of Sale, or through the Gippsland Lakes. Either way Sale became the transport hub of the Gippsland area. The construction of a direct land link to Melbourne by road or rail was delayed due to swamps north of Western Port Bay. When the railway was completed in 1879 it competed for business with the Port of Sale for several decades but the railway, and later the road, eventually forced the closure of the Port of Sale in 1938.



Facts about the Sale Swing Bridge

Dates: construction commenced 1880 and completed in 1883

Location: 4.5 km south of Sale on the old alignment of the South Gippsland Highway (A440)

Owner: Wellington Shire Council since transfer from VicRoads in 2004

Designer: John Grainger, prolific architect and engineer from Melbourne.

Builder: Peter Platt, builder from Sale

Physical Description: The bridge consists of a swinging section rotating around a vertical axis in the centre of the river through 90 degrees from closed to fully open position. There are two fixed approach spans with their shore ends resting on brick abutments. The three spans are wrought iron lattice girders of half-through configuration with a timber deck with the timbers running parallel to the bridge length. The swing span is moved by two hand-operated cranking systems located over the central pier. A portable hydraulic motor drive has been provided for operation since 2004. The width of the roadway on the bridge is 22 feet (6706 mm), originally designed to be a two-lane bridge.

Major Repairs: Both abutment structures have been strengthened or rebuilt. Work was done on the Longford abutment (south) in 1936 and more substantial rebuilding of the north abutment in the 2002-2004 restoration.

Physical Condition: The bridge was fully restored by VicRoads in 2004. This work was of a very high standard and is a great credit to VicRoads.

The Wellington Shire Council has recently rebuilt and upgraded the Port of Sale, primarily for the use of fishing and pleasure craft. This has renewed the need for the Sale Swing Bridge to be opened for the passage of higher boats. The bridge is now fully operational and is opened and closed on a regular basis by Wellington Shire Council.



Engineers Australia, Victorian Division wishes to thank the Wellington Shire Council and the Rotary Club of Sale Inc for their assistance in recognising the Sale Swing Bridge as an Engineering Heritage National Landmark.

7 Press Release:

Engineers Australia, Victorian Division

Press Release

Engineering Heritage Unveiling – Port of Sale & Sale Swing Bridge

On Sunday 15 November two Engineering Heritage Markers will be unveiled at Sale in conjunction with the opening of the River Heritage & Wetlands Trail Stage 2.

The first will be the Port of Sale and the Sale Navigation Canal at 9.30 am at the Port of Sale near Canal Street just south of the Princess Highway in the centre of Sale.

The Port of Sale was constructed between 1886 and 1890 and included a 5 km long canal from the Swinging Basin in Sale to the confluence of the Latrobe and Thompson Rivers south of the town. The canal allowed

steamers and sailing ships to reach Sale from Lake Wellington, one of the Gippsland Lakes.

At the time of its construction such work was largely carried out by large numbers of navvies with some assistance from horses. However some new technology was used in this project including, reputedly, a device called Chesney's Automatic Earth Scoop, an early crude form of scraper, pulled by two horses. A steam traction engine was also used on the project.

The project was the largest civil engineering project ever undertaken in Victoria at the time and remains the longest navigation canal in Australia to this day.

After the construction of a railway and road connection to Melbourne the Port of Sale fell into disuse and was closed in 1938.

In recent times the Wellington Shire Council undertook a reconstruction of the Port of Sale which was completed in 2004.

Engineering Heritage Australia, a special interest group of Engineers Australia, has awarded the Port of Sale and the Sale Navigation Canal

an Engineering Heritage Marker under its national Heritage Recognition Program.

The marker will be unveiled by Philip Davis MP, Member for Eastern Victoria and Peter Godfrey, National President of Engineers Australia.

The second ceremony will be at 11.30 am at the Sale Swing Bridge, off the South Gippsland highway, 5 km south of Sale.

This bridge was constructed between 1880 and 1883 to replace a fixed bridge nearby so that ships could pass up the Latrobe and Thompson Rivers to the Port of Sale.

The bridge was designed by famous Australian architect and engineer John Grainger who was also responsible for the design of the current Princes Bridge in Melbourne. John Grainger was the father of renowned musician Percy Grainger.

The bridge remained in service with a bridgekeeper to open and close it until 1938 when the bridgekeepers position was abolished. After that the bridge remained as a fixed bridge until a new high level bridge was built by VicRoads for the South Gippsland Highway some distance upstream.

After the new bridge was completed VicRoads restored the old bridge with great care and it is now back in full operation.

Engineering Heritage Australia, has awarded the Sale Swing Bridge an Engineering Heritage National Landmark award under its national Heritage Recognition Program.

The marker will be unveiled by Councillor Darren McCubbin, Mayor of Wellington Shire Council and Peter Godfrey, National President of Engineers Australia.

The Chair of Engineering Heritage Australia, Owen Peake, said “The recognition of these two important and closely associated engineering heritage sites is a significant milestone for heritage recognition in Victoria and for Sale in particular”.

Engineering Heritage Australia congratulates Wellington Shire Council and the Rotary Club of Sale their initiative in opening the River Heritage & Wetlands Trail Stage 2.

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8 Press Articles:

ARTICLE FOR ENGINEERING HERITAGE AUSTRALIA NEWSLETTER

Engineering Heritage Unveilings at Sale

On 15 November 2009 two Engineering Heritage markers were unveiled at Sale, 150km east of Melbourne, in conjunction with the opening of a River Heritage & Wetlands Trail. It was a big day for the town with Wellington Shire Council, the Sale Rotary Club and the Parks Victoria involved as well as Engineers Australia.

The Port of Sale was constructed between 1886 and 1890 and included a 5 km long navigation canal from the Swinging Basin in Sale to the confluence of the Latrobe and Thompson Rivers south of the town. The canal allowed ships to reach Sale from Lake Wellington, giving access to the Gippsland Lakes and Bass Strait.

The project was the largest civil engineering project ever undertaken in Victoria at the time and remains the longest navigation canal in Australia. After the construction of railway and road connections to Melbourne the Port of Sale fell into disuse and was closed in 1938.

In 2004 Wellington Shire Council completed the reconstruction of the Port of Sale, now catering largely for fishing and pleasure craft.

Engineering Heritage Australia awarded the Port of Sale and the Sale Navigation Canal an Engineering Heritage Marker which was unveiled by Philip Davis MP, Member for Eastern Victoria (Victorian Parliament) and Peter Godfrey, then National President of Engineers Australia.

A second ceremony was held at the Sale Swing Bridge, 5 km south of Sale, later in the day. This bridge was constructed between 1880 and 1883 to replace a fixed bridge nearby so that ships could pass up the Latrobe and Thompson Rivers to the

Port of Sale. The bridge was designed by famous Australian architect and engineer John Grainger and built by local builder Peter Platt.

The bridge consists of a swinging section rotating around a vertical axis in the centre of the river. There are two fixed approach spans with their shore ends resting on brick abutments whilst the river supports are tubular cast iron piers. The three spans are wrought iron lattice girders of half-through configuration with a timber deck. The swing span was moved by two hand-operated cranking systems located over the central pier however a portable hydraulic motor drive has been provided for operation since 2004. The bridge was originally designed for two traffic lanes but is now used for pedestrian traffic only.

The bridge remained in service with a bridgekeeper to open and close it until 1938. After that it remained as a fixed bridge until a new high-level bridge was built by VicRoads for the South Gippsland Highway some distance upstream in 2002. After the new bridge was completed VicRoads restored the old bridge with great care and it is now back in full operation.

Engineering Heritage Australia awarded the Sale Swing Bridge an Engineering Heritage National Landmark which was unveiled by Councillor Darren McCubbin, Mayor of Wellington Shire Council and Peter Godfrey, then National President of Engineers Australia.

Engineering Heritage Australia congratulates VicRoads for the restoration of the Sale Swing Bridge and the Wellington Shire Council for the reconstruction of the Port of Sale. We also congratulate the Wellington Shire Council, Sale Rotary Club and all the others involved in the organisation of the day of events which was a great success.

OWEN PEAKE

PHOTOGRAPH CAPTION

Sale Swing Bridge

9 Letters of Thanks:

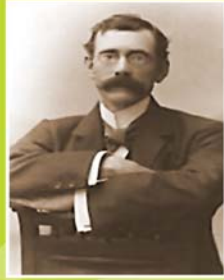
Letters of thanks were sent to the following:

- Mr Philip Davis, Member for Eastern Victoria
- Councillor Darren McCubbin, Mayor of Wellington Shire Council
- Mr Chris Hastie, Director of Assets and Operations, Wellington Shire Council
- Mr Mark Vitlin, Director of Public Relations/Marketing, Wellington Shire Council
- Mr Peter Godfrey, Engineers Australia, National President
- Ms Madeleine McManus, Victorian President, Engineers Australia
- Ms Glenda Graham, Executive Director, Engineers Australia, Victorian Division
- Ms Adele Fitzpatrick, Engineers Australia, Victorian Division
- Mr Rod Exton, President, Rotary Club of Sale
- Mr Peter Synan, Historian, Sale
- Mr Alan Lewis, Event Organiser, Sale

10 Interpretation Panel:

This new interpretation panel was erected near the bridge by the Wellington Shire Council:

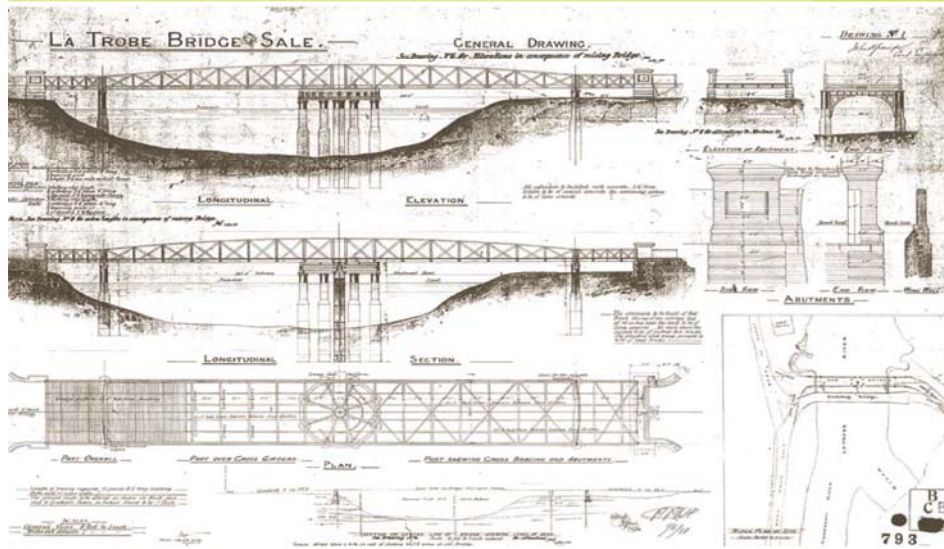
Swing Bridge Historic Precinct



Opened to traffic in 1883, this is the oldest operational swing bridge in Australia. It is very rare, intact and unaltered example of a type of bridge providing both for road traffic and shipping.

It was designed by distinguished Australian engineer and architect, John Grainger, the father of the world famous pianist and composer Percy Grainger.

Built of cast iron with wrought iron cross beams and trusses, and manually operated, this bridge was remarkable for its exceptionally wide movable span and for transferring deadweight to the end fixed spans by way of a system of jacks.



The Builder was Sale based contractor Peter Platt, the casting supplied by Tyne Foundry in Melbourne.

This superb bridge is a palpable reminder of the critical role of navigable lakes and rivers in Australia's early transport story, and how shipping shaped the pattern of development in this part of Gippsland. This bridge which accommodated the early Gippsland arterial road from Port Albert enabled both coastal and lakes shipping to reach Sale which became an important port town



Earliest bridgekeeper was George Bailey. Principal bridgekeepers following Bailey were John Towner, 1888-1891 and 1893-1912, Eliza Ball, 1891-1893, and Tom Kivlighon, 1912-1938.



11 Brochure

The following brochure is used as a handout for tourists who visit the Sale Information Centre and other outlets:

Experience

the historic Swing Bridge

Interesting facts about the National Trust classified Swing Bridge

- It is the oldest surviving swing bridge in Australia.
- It is regarded as one of the foremost engineering wonders in Gippsland.
- Without the Swing Bridge there would not have been a Port of Sale.
- Until recently, the Swing Bridge was last publicly opened over thirty years ago.
- The Swing Bridge Project (road re-alignment & bridge restoration) cost \$15.6m.
- In 1909 Sale hotelkeeper Mrs MJ Dinneen offered a gold medal for the best dive off the Swing Bridge.
- Sports at the Swing Bridge were important social occasions.
- Bridgekeeper Tom Kivligham fixed lamps on the bridge, red for closed, green for open.
- Speed was a contributing factor to many of the accidents on the Swing Bridge with some cars even plummeting into the river.
- The bridge is operated & maintained by the Wellington Shire Council.

For current opening times call the Wellington Visitor Information Centre
1800 677 520






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The Wellington Shire is full of things to see and do and great places to stay. From cosy seaside B&Bs, Motels and family accommodation through to Camping and Caravan parks.

Wellington is a great place to base your holiday in Gippsland.

Call the Wellington Visitor Information Centre - Sale
1800 677 520
www.tourismwellington.com.au
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"The Heart of Gippsland"
Gavin Murray, Trust Specialist, 1800 677 520 - Saleport

Discover

The National Trust classified
Swing Bridge
A Hidden Treasure of Wellington Shire



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12 Photographs:



Madelaine McManus delivering her speech with the bridge in the background.



The bridge being swung open during the ceremony.



Engineers Australia National President Peter Godfrey and Mayor Councillor Darren McCubbin with the Engineering Heritage National Landmark marker on the north-west abutment of the Sale Swing Bridge.



Trailer mounted hydraulic power unit on bridge deck with Council operator ready to swing the bridge open.

OWEN PEAKE
Member of Engineering Heritage Victoria Committee
With responsibility for the Sale Swing Bridge Marking

23 March 2010

CHANGE CONTROL
VERSION 1 23 March 2010
VERSION 2 19 June 2010 Minor editing