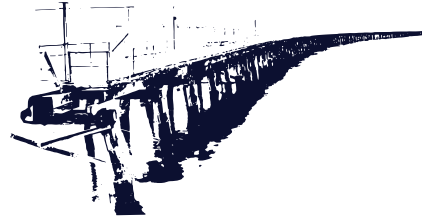


TANKER CHRONICLES

Tales of the Esperance Tanker Jetty





TANKER CHRONICLES

Tales of the Esperance Tanker Jetty

A collaborative, historical recollection, as told through personal memoirs, written stories, poems, artworks and photographs.

The Tanker Chronicles pays tribute to 86 years of community pride, engagement and emotional connection with the Esperance Tanker Jetty.

Stories & images supplied.

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The Tanker Chronicles Project was a joint community project between the Shire of Esperance and Wayward Nation.





THE ESPERANCE TANKER JETTY

Construction of the iconic Esperance Tanker Jetty commenced in 1933 and was officially opened on 18 March 1935. The Jetty itself had a total length of 873 metres with a railway line running from the shore to the head of the jetty, aiding operations.

The Esperance Tanker Jetty was originally built for the purpose of shipping grain from the Mallee region, inspiring a new era of prosperity for the port and the town of Esperance. When the Port moved its operations away from the Tanker Jetty in the 1970s, the Jetty remained as a significant part of daily life – an iconic tourist attraction and recreational facility for the entire community.



Tanker Jetty 1980's
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

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Start of the Tanker Jetty, submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

MERV ANDRE

MEMORY #1

My father had been working on the mines in Kalgoorlie and he wasn't too happy about the short term or long-term safety of working on the mines, so he decided to come and live in Esperance. We moved down here in January of 1934, on a T-model Ford truck: Mother, Father, 4 children. I was the youngest, about 2 years old. Only took us two and a half days to drive here from Kalgoorlie. Soon after we arrived, the construction of the Jetty started and my Father got a job. He worked on the construction of the new Jetty for quite a long long time, which now seems to be called the Tanker Jetty.

They started building it [the Jetty] early 1934 and it was opened officially in about March 1935, so they were working on it over the summer. It was pretty hot and some of the blokes used to dive off and have a bit of a swim and climb back on and go back to work.

This fella said,

"I think I might go for a dip" and his other mate said,

"I wouldn't jump in there if I were you mate."

"Why not?"

"You might get eaten up"

"Aw codswallop, I'm going to have a swim" the fella said.

"See that fella down there? He's waiting for you!" and there was a dirty great hammerhead shark sailing up and down underneath the Jetty.

"Perhaps you're right, I may not go for a swim".

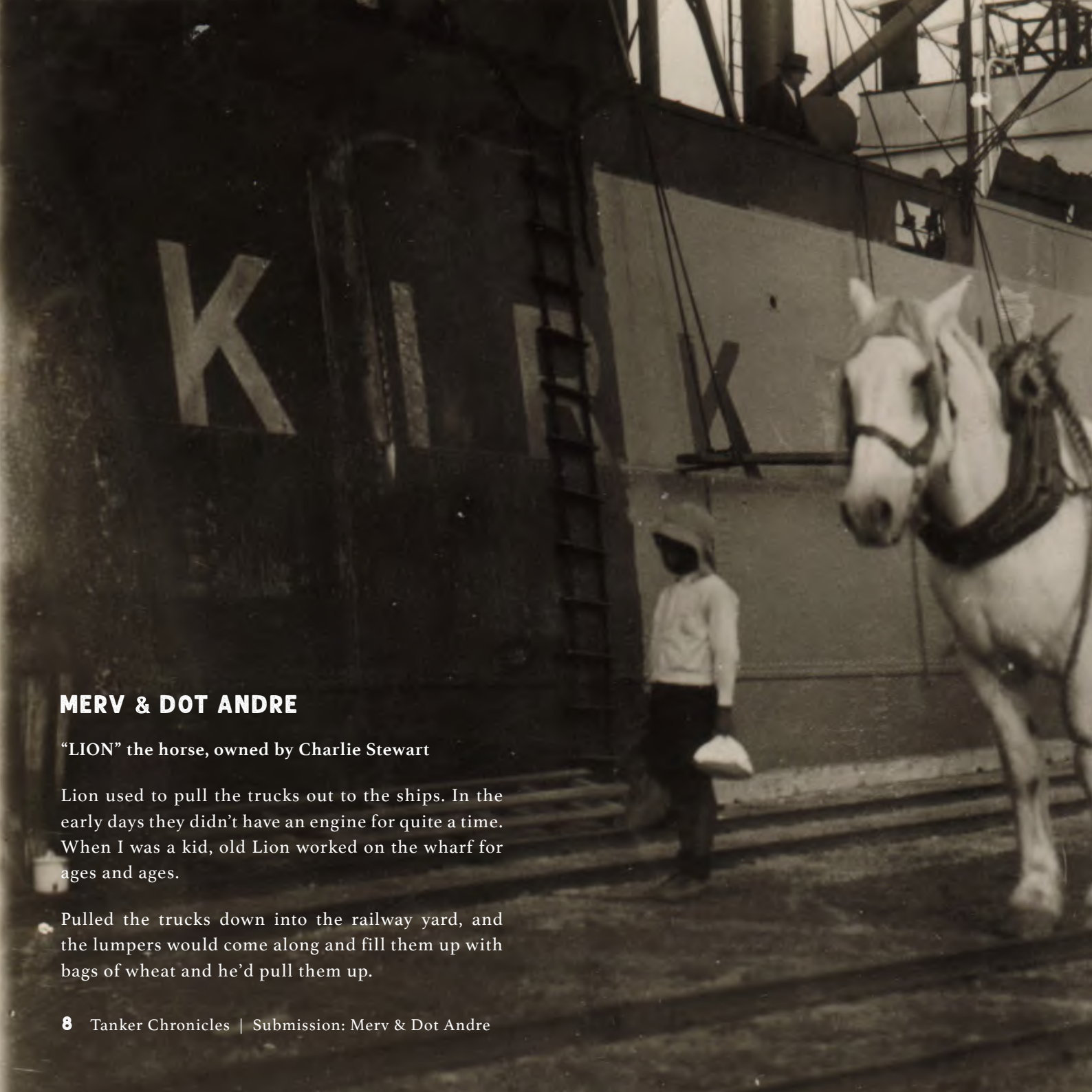
MEMORY #2

He [my father] used to work periodically when a boat came in. The boats used to come very infrequently, sometimes three or four a year. The main cargo that came in through that Jetty was oil, that came from Abadan in the Persian Gulf for the mines in Kalgoorlie. Lots of groceries too, for local shops from the Eastern States

I remember fishing on the Jetty. We used to go onboard ships, all us kids, and we'd go downstairs and into the engine rooms and look through them. It was marvelous. People used to be sitting all around the ships, fishing as well of course. My eldest brother and I did quite a bit of fishing on the Jetty. My father fished on the Jetty, and my siblings and my children and my grandchild and my great grandchildren - have all fished off it.



Fishing Day, submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



MERV & DOT ANDRE

“LION” the horse, owned by Charlie Stewart

Lion used to pull the trucks out to the ships. In the early days they didn't have an engine for quite a time. When I was a kid, old Lion worked on the wharf for ages and ages.

Pulled the trucks down into the railway yard, and the lumpers would come along and fill them up with bags of wheat and he'd pull them up.



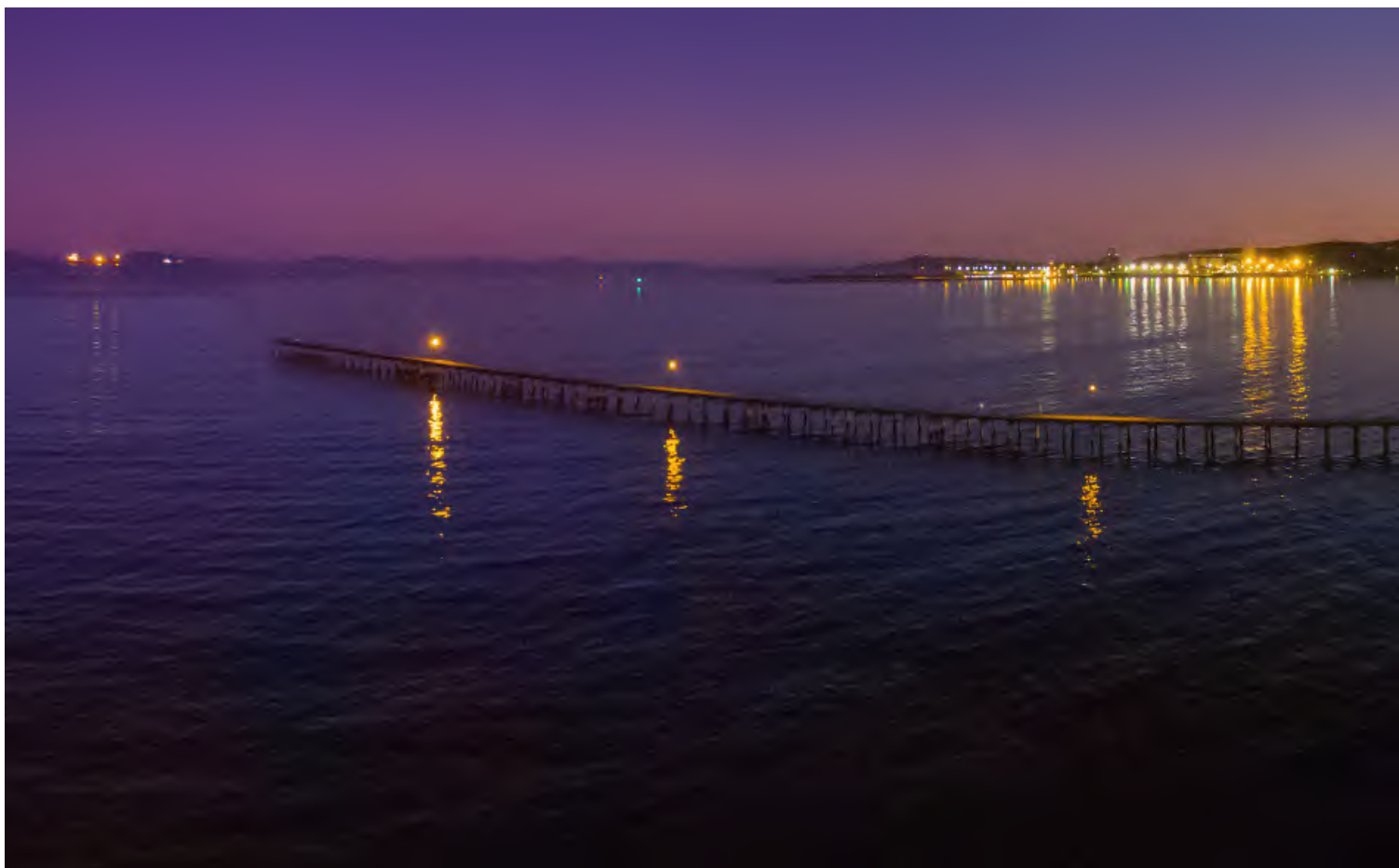


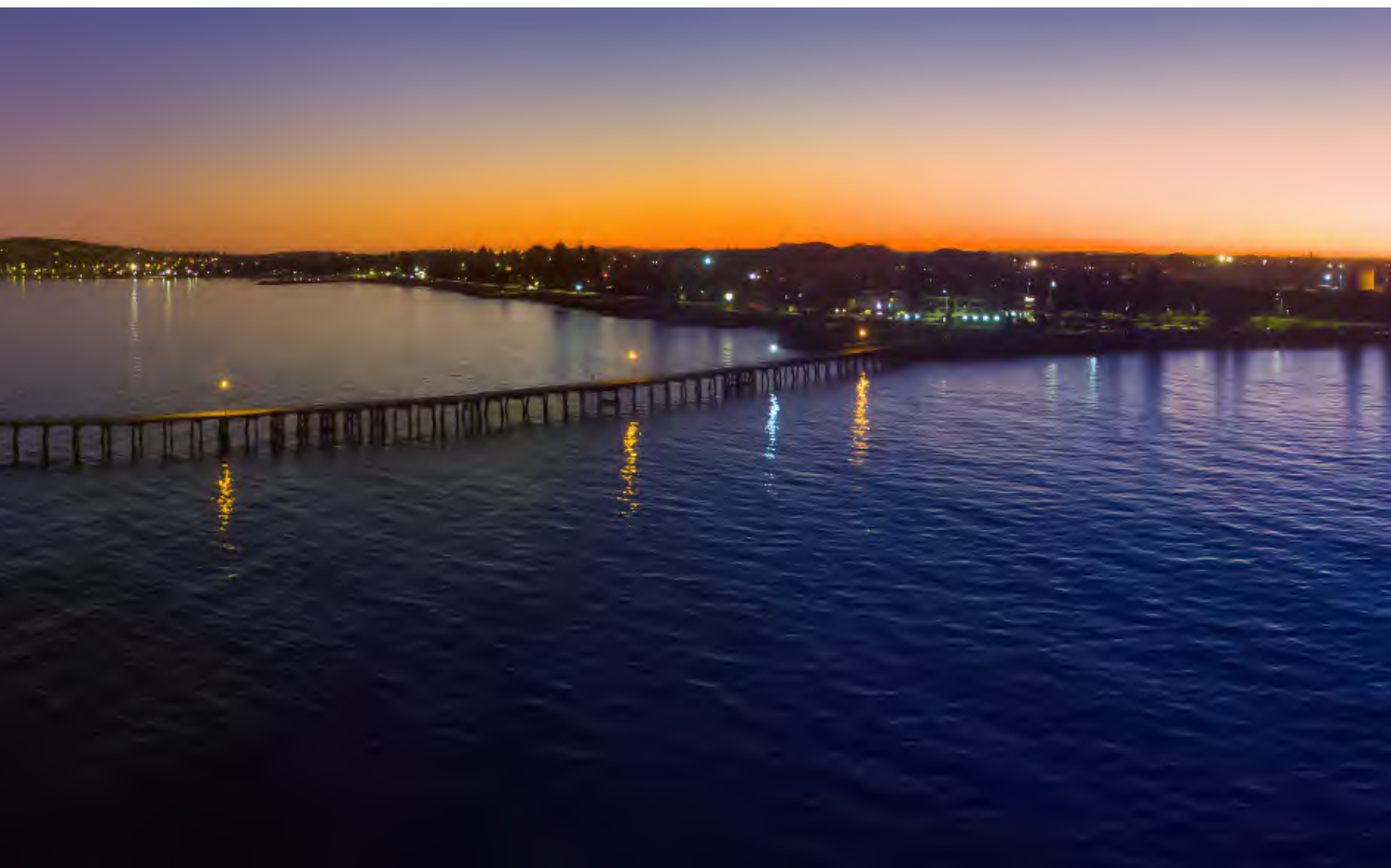


Loading the Hold, submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Working Hard, submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

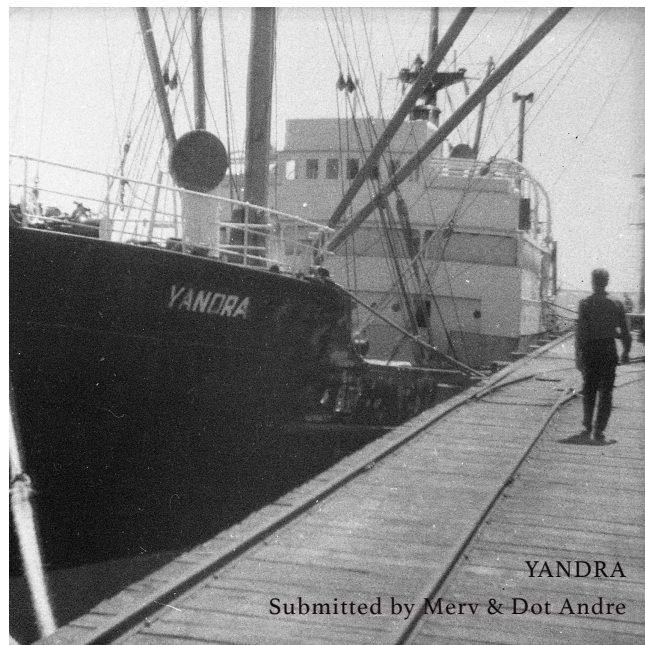




Mrs George and her dog, 1927
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Ship docked
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



YANDRA
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

HARLEY GREATREX

MEMORY #1: c. 1962

We came down from Carnarvon with our 6 month old daughter - our son was born here, David. In those days the company I worked for, Dalgety's, they'd only leave you in an 'Out Port' (away from Fremantle or Perth) for a maximum of 4 years, so when 1967 came around, my four years was up.

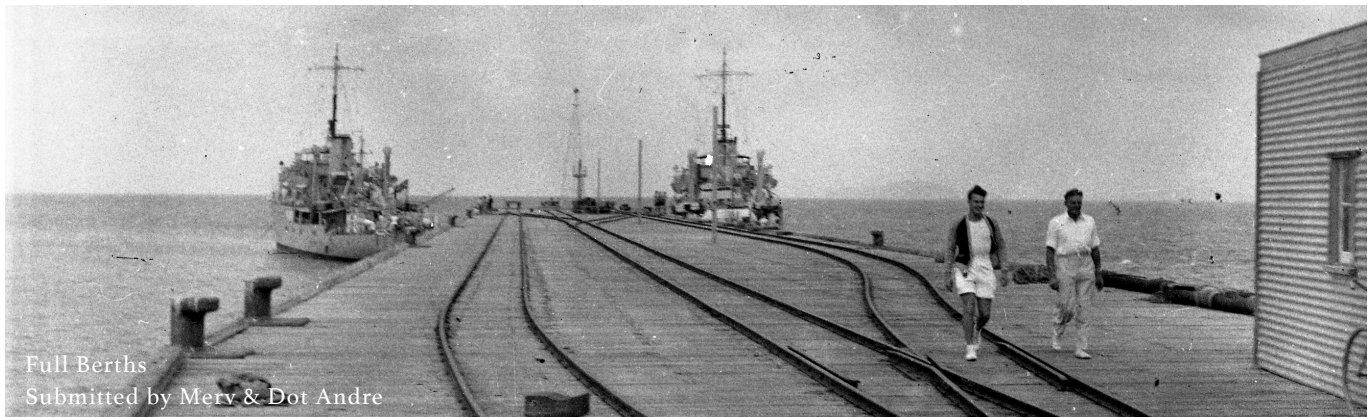
We were the agents, we did all the customs, we paid all the accounts, the towage, the pilot and all the light dues, we were the main connection between the ship and the shore. We used to have a lot of little Russian ships come in for grain and CBH used to load them with a big vacuum cleaner thing, and when they were loading you could see the lights in the town go down a bit because we were using all the power!

We were agents for the ship and Wesfarmers were the agents for Australian Wheat Board. They used to load the ship, it used to take several days, even though it was a small ship, about 5-10 thousand tonne, which these days isn't a hell of a lot, no

bulk ships of course. So they used to send someone down from Perth, for the Wheat Board, the pilot used to fly down or drive down to bring the ship in, and the Customs used to come from Albany. A fella by the name of Jack Tooey, used to drive across (from Albany) because we didn't have a Customs Officer, and when he wasn't available sometimes the Post Master, a chap by the name of Mick Malamby, he used to fill in occasionally. Provador, he used to drive across from Albany in a big chevy station wagon he'd have a ton of stores.

There wasn't a lot of waterside workers in those days, it was mostly casual labour, farmers that lived in close proximity. They'd put an announcement over the radio that there was a pick-up for labour. "Such-and-such" ship at "such-and-such" time, and the regulars were allocated first jobs, from then on it was whoever showed up.

It was a bit of a bonus for them.



HARLEY GREATREX

MEMORY #2: c.1962

One particular story that sticks in the mind involves the Russians, because I was only a young fella at the time (about 21 or 22). The Captain was the Captain of the ship, but the one that used to rule the show was the Commissar, because this is back in the day of Lenin, and he had complete rule over the ship including the Captain, so none of the crew were allowed to come ashore on their own. They were a little bit like catholic nuns, they had to go in pairs or more. Anyway, this particular ship, because the Russians were very heavy drinkers, not beer, mainly spirits; whiskey, vodka, whatever they could lay their hands on.

Me being a young fella, and the Wheat Board fella who was also only a young fella, we used to dress up in suits and ties in those days and when the ship finished we used to go up to the Wesfarmers office, on the corner there, sign the documentation, all the manifests and customs documents etc. then the ship would sail, we'd go back [to the ship] and have a couple of farewell drinks. This particular night it was early hours of the morning, 1 or 2 o'clock, they

didn't hang around, they just sailed when they were finished loading. Because it was all rail trucked out there, we thought we would be clever and grab hold of one of the trucks to get a free ride (rather than having to walk out to the end of the jetty).

There was canvas hanging over something and my mate grabbed it, it let loose and he went over into the drink. No lights, all the lights were turned off at that stage, so it was pretty black. So I said, "can you swim?" and he said, "aww yeah". There was no one else on the wharf, the mooring gang had gone home, and we were the last two to depart the ship, so he must have found a ladder going up one of the pylons. It was pretty cool from what I remember, I went ashore picked up the vehicle, little Volkswagen and drove out, straddled the railway lines, picked him up and took him ashore.

The car was chock-a-bloc of seawater! I got home drunk as a lord to where we were renting, a house at the back of Red Synnot's cool drink factory - where Woolworths is now - and fell into bed!



An iconic curve
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Loading Cargo
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Carting cargo to and fro
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



DONALD BANKS

My dad worked for the PMG. I remember as a child driving out on the jetty as dad had to connect a phone for the ships.
Great memories!



Loading at the Tanker Jetty
Submitted by Merve & Dot Andre



RAY WARD

From 1969 to 1971, when I was working for Dalgety's in Esperance, we managed a lot of the shipping documents. One task that I have great memories of is delivering fresh bread to the BP Enterprise berthed at the Tanker Jetty. I got to drive my boss's car, on my own, out along the Jetty. Turning the car around out the end of the Jetty was a bit worrying. Then I had to carry the boxes of bread up the gangway and deliver to the Captain.

Another memory is going aboard the MV Arago. The Arago was a very small vessel that delivered gas to Esperance. The gangway was tricky getting down the vessel.



MUNDALLA mooring in 1951

Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

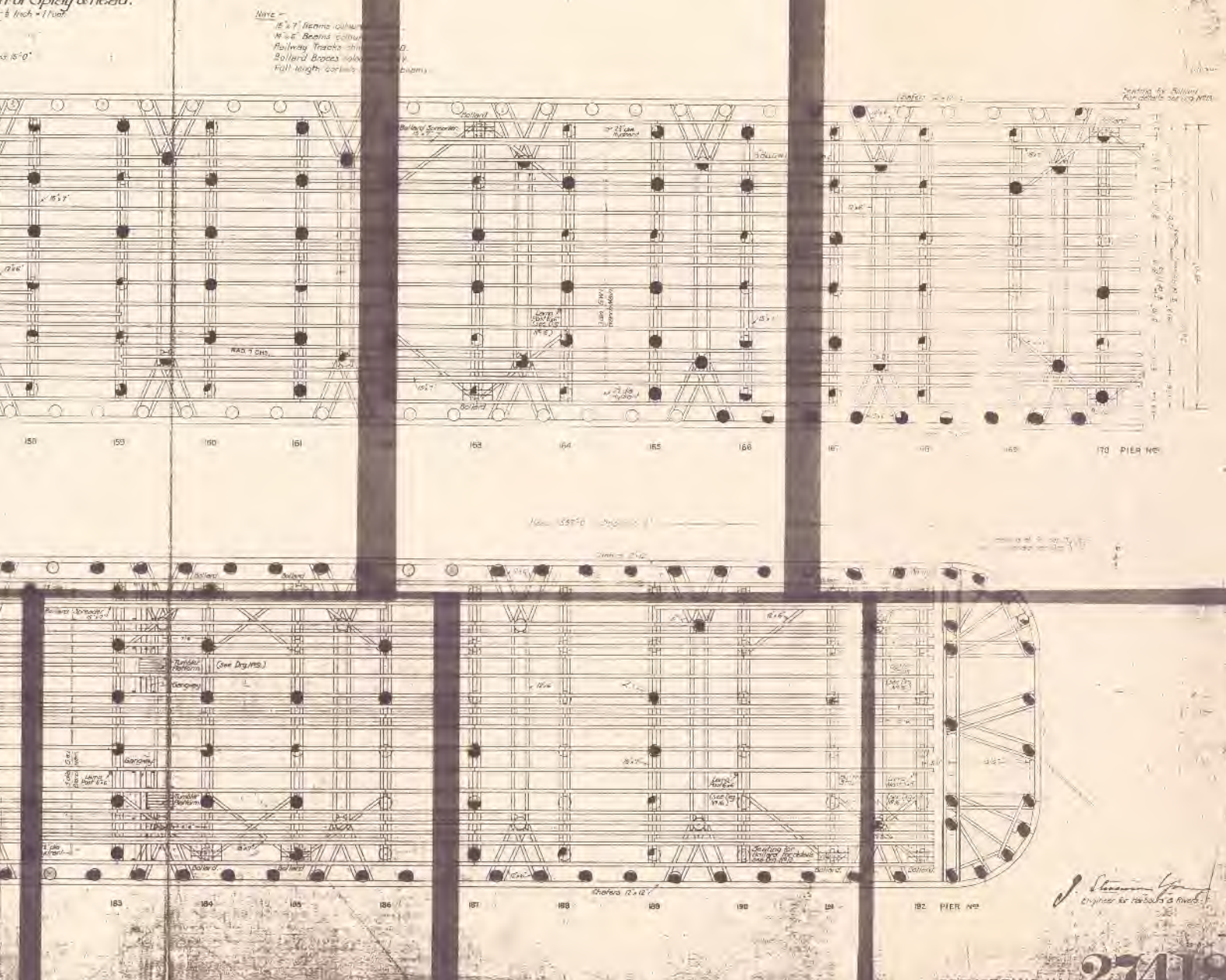


MUNDALLA mooring in 1951

Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

DESIGN, 1933.
 of Splay & Head.

Drawing No.



Created by Engineer in Charge of Harbours & Rivers,
 John Stevenson Young in 1933.



Sammy napping on the beach
Photographer Brian Beresford

KAREN LUKIN

One of the Sammys used to visit when we were doing swimming training at the Jetty in the mornings. I never swam so fast nor exited the water so quickly one morning when he brushed past me. Scared the living daylight out of us all!

MICK

PERTH

We have been visiting [Esperance] since 1986. I remember often seeing Sammy the Sealion and walking to the end of the Jetty before it [the last portion] became an island.

Sammy snoozing
Submitted by Sarah Moroney



Sammy waits for fish
Submitted by Sarah Moroney



SAMMY SEAL SHOWING OFF

ANONYMOUS

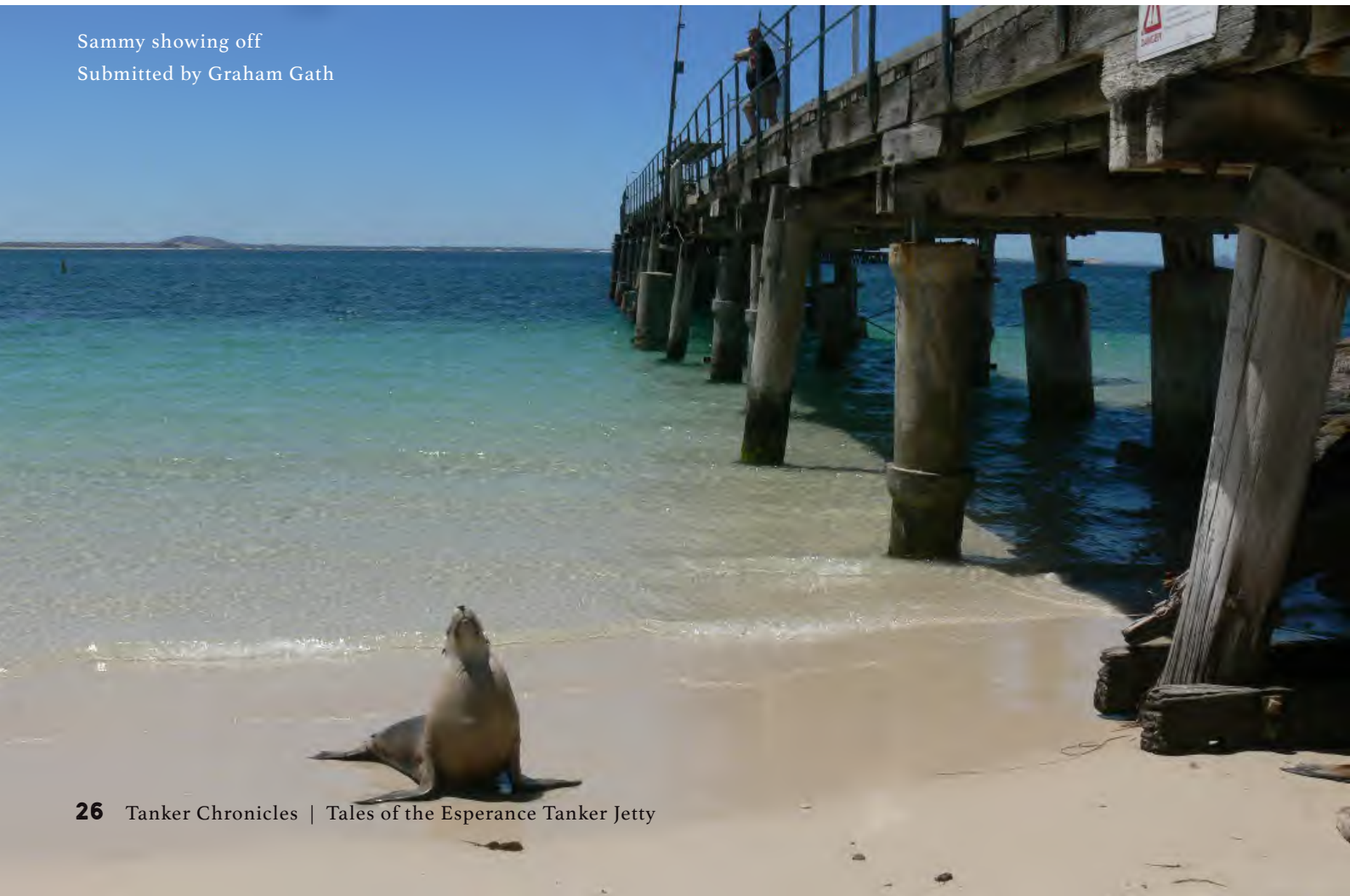
I was squatting on the beach taking a low photo and Sammy popped up right next to me – I took off down the beach!!! When I looked back he was just sitting there, showing off. Good ol' Sammy!

SAMMY SEAL

ANONYMOUS

This one time, I was on the Jetty and Sammy was hanging around and I saw this guy walk down onto the beach and Sammy chased him along the beach!

Sammy showing off
Submitted by Graham Gath



Sammy snoozing
Submitted by Kate Dansey







Merv Andre feeds Sammy
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



JUDY JACKSON

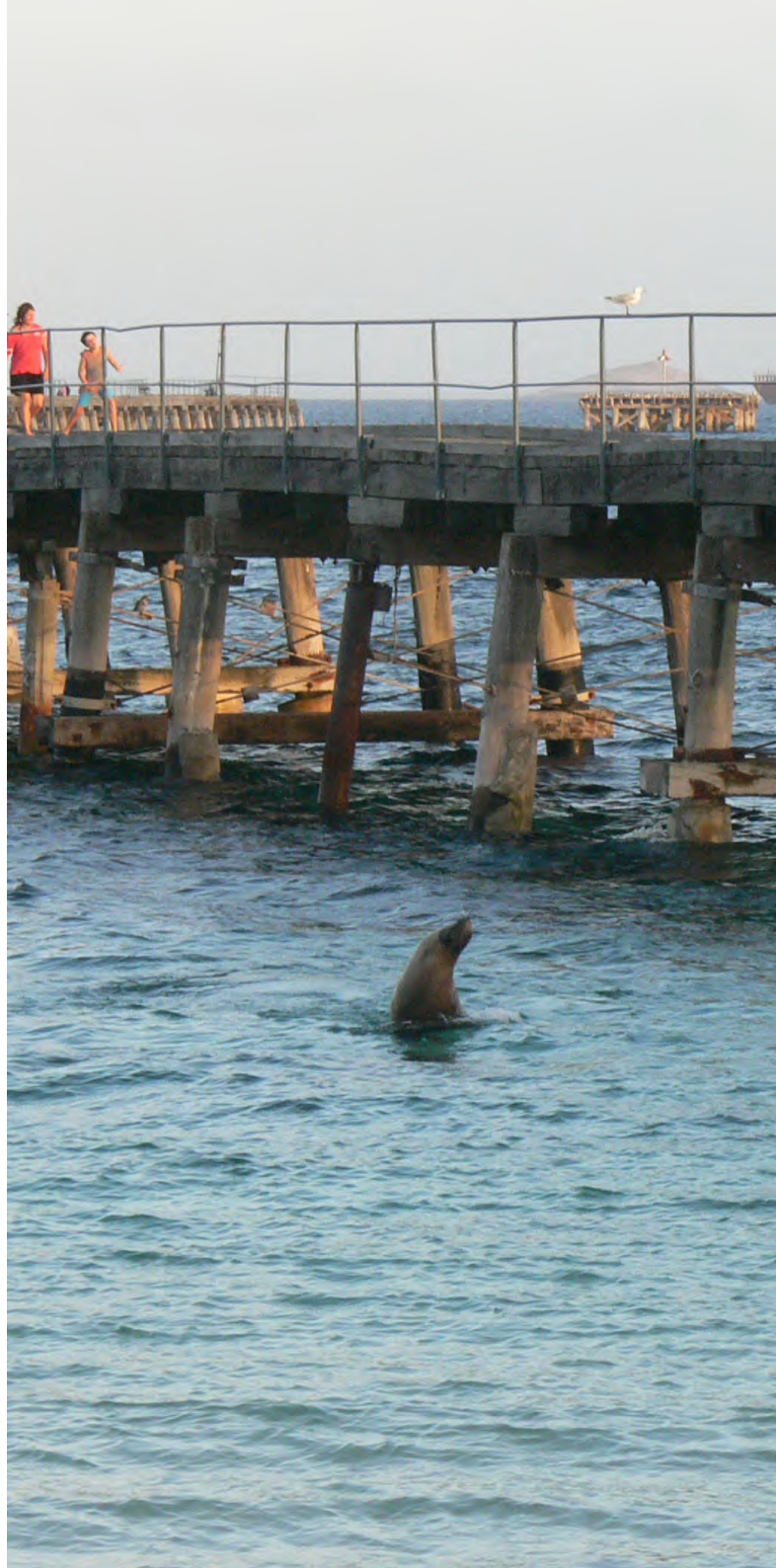
I remember Sammy. I had to swim out to my little son one day to rescue him on his paddle board. Sammy popped up beside me I nearly died of fright, all turned out well.

SHARON FLYNN DOWELL

When I had the jet ski hire business, early 90s, Sammy would come and visit us providing much entertainment for my patrons. He was very big and had a big white collar around his neck and shoulders, very proud he was.

One very memorable afternoon my dog “Kyros”, a Rottweiler, was happily swimming in the shallows as he did every day. Suddenly Sammy decided Kyros needed to get out of the water, he butted Kyros on his back legs. Kyros yelped in pain, I thought he had done serious damage as Kyros couldn’t walk, after some panic eventually he got up and walked again.

Sammy thought he was very clever watching the commotion from the shallows. Needless to say Kyros did not come to the beach with me again after that.





Dorothy Hayes (nee Allsopp) aged 14, 1949

Submitted by Kim Hayes



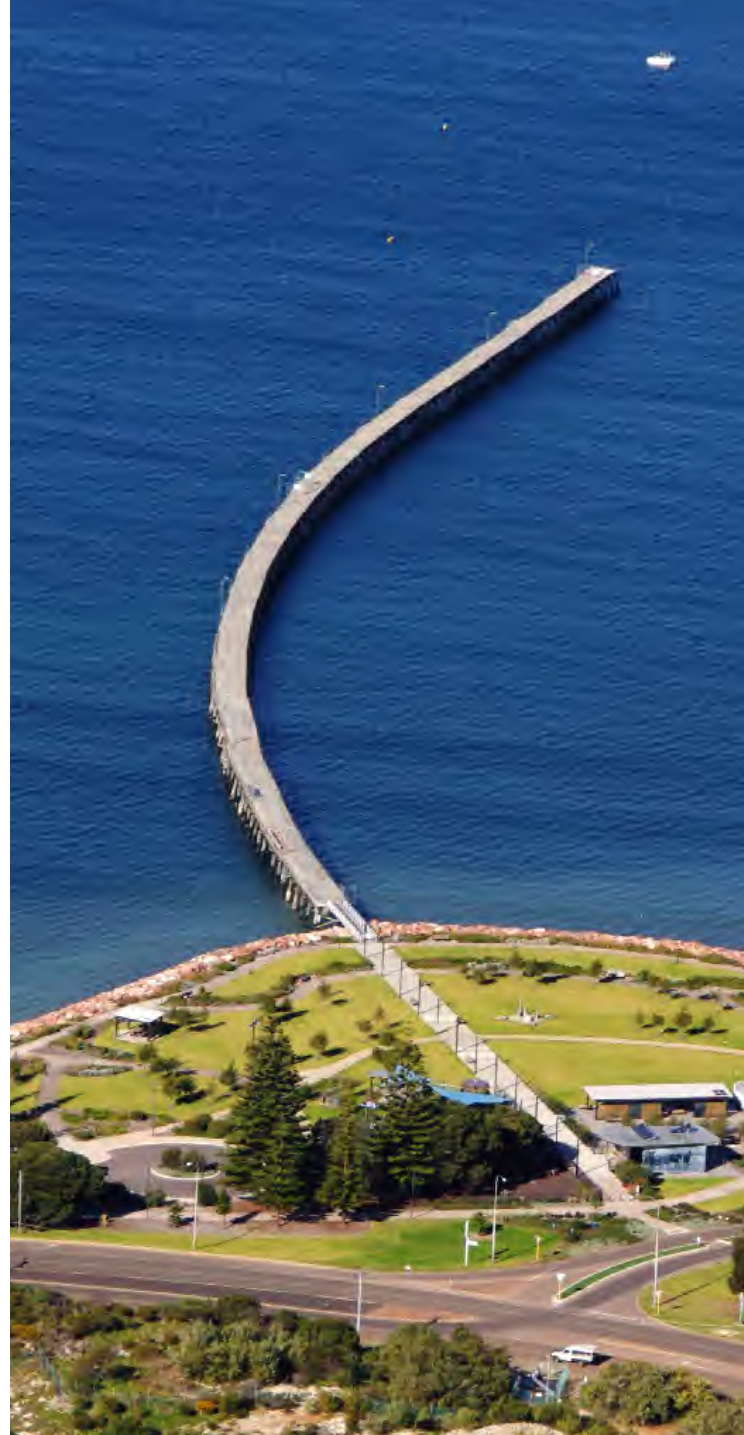
WALKING ON THE OLD TANKER JETTY

CORAL BAUER | FROM THE JETTY AND OTHERS

“No! No! I’ll fall through”, she wailed
And flung both arms round her mother’s knees.
“I’ll go down into that black water”, she sobbed,
Screwing her eyes shut against the dark swirling
water.
Closing her ears to the sound,
Of crashing waves against the protesting piles,
In the shadows beneath the long Tanker Jetty.
Explanations and logic never did overcome her fear,
We never did convince her she was just too big to slip
right through.

Nearly half a century has passed,
She walks along there now,
On a hot night,
To catch a cool breeze,
Careful to stay near the middle,
She has never sat on the edge,
Feet dangling over the side,
Or cast a fishing line.
Mystery still hovers,
The little girl remembers,
Never quite at ease,
Walking on the old “Tanker Jetty”.

Tanker Jetty stretches seaward from the Headland
submitted by Graham Gath



FISHATHON ROARING SUCCESS

Although none of the 300 plus anglers in the first fish for fun event managed to land the \$1000 tagged herring it was a big success according to Lions club spokesman Allen Gledhill.

The event was organised by Lions and Radio 747 and raised over \$600. Anglers aged between five and "well into the pensioner stakes" fished from the Tanker Jetty for a tagged herring released in the area about noon Thursday.

Although the fish escaped Mr Gledhill said Lions would be interested to hear from anyone who catches it.

"Although they can't win the prize now we would like to know if anyone catches it because we are interested to know if it hung around the same spot."

It was tagged by local fisheries officer Ian Cooke and oceanarium proprietor George Greaves before its release under local JP Dorothy Hayes' scrutiny.

CHANGES

Mr Gledhill said the event's organisers learned much from their first effort and were sure to make big changes next year.

These would possibly include doubling the \$1000 first prize and releasing five or six tagged fish to improve the chance of a winner.

The heaviest scale fish landed during the event was a 470gm flat-head caught by local woman Lex Heron. She picked up a new fishing rod from

new rod from Almarc Outdoor Village and Bullitt Freight.

A special ticket prize for a weekend at Duke of Orleans Bay was won by Ian Thobald.

Mr Gledhill said the event would have boosted local Miss Personality Quest entrant Fiona

Timms' chance of equalling a \$17,000 fund-raising record set in 1981 by Bernie Jones.

She was well on target and had several functions left including a Wool Week fashion parade.

All funds raised go to Lions Save Sight, Help to Hear and Kidney Foundations. A small percentage is donated to a local charity.

STATE GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS CALLS FOR AIRPORT FUNDING

State Government has backed Esperance Shire Council in its \$200,000 gamble on the new airport extensions with a call on Federal Government to pay up.

The one year viability trial ended last week but by Monday an answer was still being awaited from Federal Aviation Minister Kim Beazley.

Under last year's deal between council and the department, Federal Government will meet half the \$400,000 extension cost if the air service meets certain growth and usage criteria.

COMMITMENT

State Transport Minister Julian Grill this week said the State believed Canberra should meet the commitment.

new service, and offer reimbursement accordingly.

The growth rate was above that expected by the department, probably a result of the new fares introduced with the larger aircraft.

Operational reasons had not allowed Skywest to use the Gulfstream as frequently as it would have liked.

SUPPORT

"However it seems obvious to me that with the support people are giving the service the airline will be wanting to use larger aircraft just as often as it can."

"From that point of view, the newly lengthened runway represents a wise investment in the future."

He was confident his representations to Mr Beazley would not go unheeded and that funding approval would soon be given.

JUSTIFIED

"The Department of Aviation however did not want to contribute to the cost of that work until it was certain that the larger aircraft was justified."

"Consequently, the airline had to bear the full cost of \$400,000. This it did in good faith, confident that the department would see the merit in the

ABOVE: Over 300 anglers made their bid for the \$1000 herring during Saturday's fishing competition including (from front) James Dean, Brian Reeves, Mark Reeves and Lindsay Smith. BELOW: Pictured helping out for the Lions Club are (from left) Brian Deliaize, Tony Leach and Heather Timms.



SKYWEST TESTING TURBO TWIN PROP

SKYWEST Airlines yesterday was due to test a new turbo prop aircraft on its Perth to Esperance route.

The aircraft is a British

SES Quiet For Easter

BESIDES one or two false alarms Esperance's State Emergency Service had a quiet Easter at least until Monday afternoon.

Local SES co-ordinator Phil Arlidge said the service was not needed all weekend.

Aerospace Jetstream 31, capable of carrying 19 passengers and making the flight in one hour.

According to a Skywest spokesman yesterday's passenger list included Transport Minister Julian Grill, Skywest chairman Ric Stowe, managing director Bill Meekie, Aviation Department and British Aerospace representatives and several Transport Department executives.

UPGRADING

"Skywest is committed to upgrading its fleet of aircraft on commuter routes and is rationalising the type of aircraft it operates."

Steam Carpet Cleaning with Stream Brush

"Brings life back into all carpets at a price you can afford"



Going Fishing

Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Fishing Club Day at the Jetty

Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

JOHN KAVANAGH

BOULDER

In 1965 – 1970 [I remember] coming down from Boulder to fish off the Tanker Jetty, [it was] something we looked forward to. Being a Goldfields kid and coming down to see the ocean, it was good to walk out over the sea and enjoying the breeze. [I] was not good at fishing; caught too many Blow Fish and not enough Herring.

I was visiting with my son in the 1980's and discovered there was more Herring than ever! [my] Son was heading off to Africa so we spent a few days in Esperance and caught over 100 fish! (Certain there was no bag limits then).

KERRY REID

[I have] childhood memories of fishing on the jetty with Aunty Joy, Nanna and Grandad.



Placing modules for an artificial reef in late 1980s
Submitted by Lesley Hudson

LESLEY HUDSON

MEMORY #1

In the early days of the business (Esperance Diving Academy), diving was the main thrust of our business. We have taught hundreds of people to scuba dive over the years. One of these qualifying dives was under the iconic Tanker Jetty. We had a famous blue trolley that was built especially to carry the scuba units, which are heavy, out to end of the jetty. We always started the dive at the end of the jetty instead of from the shore, as Sammy the seal was sometimes a little aggressive and very territorial. On one occasion he pulled the diving hood off a diver.

This dive site had a maximum depth of around 12 metres and nearly always great visibility. Where we entered the water at the jetty end, the depth was 6 metres. This made for the perfect dive for experienced or new divers.

After the end of the jetty was dismantled (not the extreme end section that housed the navigation lights) the Esperance Dive Club decided to build an artificial reef in the gap that was now present. Divers volunteered their time in the evenings in a local dive club member's shed. It was here we put together several modules to act as an artificial reef. These modules each consisted of about 28 tyres. These were strapped together with a special strapping. The bottom tyres in each module were filled with concrete to act as an anchor to hold the modules in place.

The first modules were placed at the end of the jetty in about 1993. This was all completed by people volunteering their boats and time.

The Government funded a project to teach unemployed people to dive (here in Esperance with Esperance Diving and Fishing) and build more modules to complete the artificial reef. This project took quite a few months. It was very successful and most modules were put in place by 1995.

After the artificial reef was completed it upset me to see divers enter the water with spear guns and gidgees. The hard work we had put in to develop

this reef as a safe home/haven for marine life was being threatened by these spear fishermen. I decided to write to the Minister for Fisheries and request that the area be gazetted a 'No Fish Zone'. After much consultation with the local community this was finally granted. The area around the Jetty was marked out by bright yellow buoys and this became an area where there was to be no spearing and/or fishing from a boat.



Soft corals make their homes on pylons beneath the surface
Submitted by Lesley Hudson

A school of Old Wives swirl around pylons
Submitted by Lesley Hudson





A shy Leafy Sea Dragon, found beneath the Tanker Jetty
Submitted by Lesley Hudson

LESLEY HUDSON

MEMORY #2

The pylons were covered in soft corals, an array of sponges and fans. This area was teeming with fish life. It was common to see schools of Old Wives, Nannygai, Herring, Yellow tail, Skipper and Whiting. It was not uncommon for Queen Snapper, Seals, Sea Lions and Sampson fish to cruise through the area. On one particular dive I spied a Southern Rock lobster enjoying its new home.

The jetty was also home to cuttlefish and squid of all sizes. They loved the healthy sea grass bed on the bottom of the ocean. It was a popular dive site to view the elusive Common and Leafy Sea Dragon. These creatures are only seen in the waters between Dunsborough, in our South West and Kangaroo Island in South Australia. Many locals and tourists enjoyed spotting these beautiful creatures on this iconic dive site.



KEVIN YOUNG

MEMORY #1

Born and raised in Kalgoorlie. A 1931 model.

Remembers first coming to Esperance in 1938 on the back of a 1927 Chev Truck. Kevin was 7 and his brother was 6. It took 14 hours!

They would camp at the grounds at the bottom of Wireless Hill (where the Port is now). Mum and Dad in the back of the truck and the boys on the ground under the truck (slept in sleeping bags made of wheat bags).

They would purchase mince meat for bait and make their way down to the Jetty. Walk all the way down to the end and fish. After an hour, they caught a kerosene bucket full of fish! Herring, Skippy, Whiting, Mackerel, Leather Jackets & Snook.

Tied up at the Tanker Jetty
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



KEVIN YOUNG

MEMORY #2

In January 1959 we came down to Esperance on holidays, just newly married. This oil tanker came into the Tanker Jetty called the Stanvac Shell, operated by the Shell oil company. So, I said to my wife “Oh, I’d like to go up and have a look around”. So, we head out along the jetty and start chatting to the young guy at the bottom of the gangway, “could we go on board and have a look?” “Oh yeah that’s ok”.

Anyway, I’m going up the gangplank and the wife, she’s ahead of me, she got 3 paths up and she looked down and she came frozen! She couldn’t move! So, I had to sing out to the guy on the decks and he had to come pull my wife while I’m pushing to get her up on deck!

Eventually she got up on deck and it took a hell of convincing to get her down again. I used to say she got seasick when walking on wet grass!

After they emptied out the oil, it, the Stanvac Shell, went over to Indonesia, it was called Surabaya back then, and the rebels were fighting there, and they attacked and blew up the tanker and it sank.



View of New Jetty Esperance from new Bulk Oil Depot 1960

Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Last Tanker to use the Tanker Jetty in 1977
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

LEIGHTON DANSEY

I used to go fishing here all day with my brother when we were still in school. It was home to herring, squid and we even saw a Sunfish once.

DAKOTA WILSON

9 YEARS OLD

I went on the Jetty and saw the Port and big waves. There was lots of people fishing with buckets of fish – black ones and blue ones. I also remember going to Coffee Cat.

LUCY PUNA

When I was a little girl, I went fishing off it with my whole family. We used to also walk up the full length of it, it was such a nice place to go to really...

LEILA

I went for a walk along the Jetty and when I got to the end I reached inside my pocket for my phone to take a photo... only for \$40 to fly out & head out to sea towards Antarctica!





EMMA NEEDHAM

I have fond memories of doing my morning runs along the foreshore and out to the end of the Jetty with my dog.

It was a beautiful way to start the day, with the occasional dolphin cruising under the Jetty as we jogged along it.

Tanker Jetty stretching through the Bay
Submitted by Graham Gath



RICHARD

I came to Esperance in 1955 and still haven't left yet.

We caught a Gummy Shark off the Jetty in [approx.] 1971, it was a very sad time for me. My mates took all the meat and didn't give me any!! Along the Jetty at Easter time you would see people sitting bum-to-bum, all fishing.



JOHN MAY

c. 1950s

In the mid fifties, Esperance land was being opened up for farming. It meant developing virgin scrub – and that required money. Many farmers came from other places in Australia to take up this land. When boats came in, a call would go out for Stevedore Workers to help unload them. This was paid work. Many of the farmers would unload the boats because it gave them financial help to establish their farms.

This of course, was long before the Port was built, at least 10 years [before]. Our local old farmers have had a lot of input into this town. [For them, work on] the Tanker Jetty was a means to an end – enabling commerce and regional development.



Visiting ships

Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

Long Walk

Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre







Loading wheat, c. 1960
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Loading at the end of the New Jetty, c. 1960
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

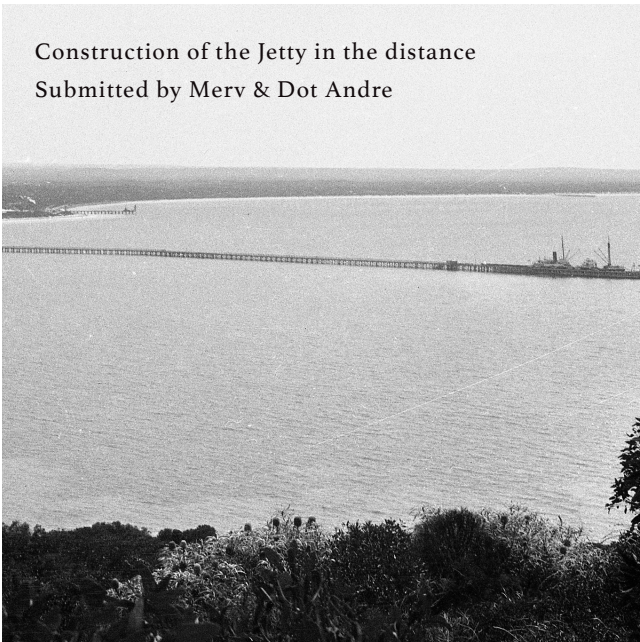


A ship approaches the New Jetty, circa 1960
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

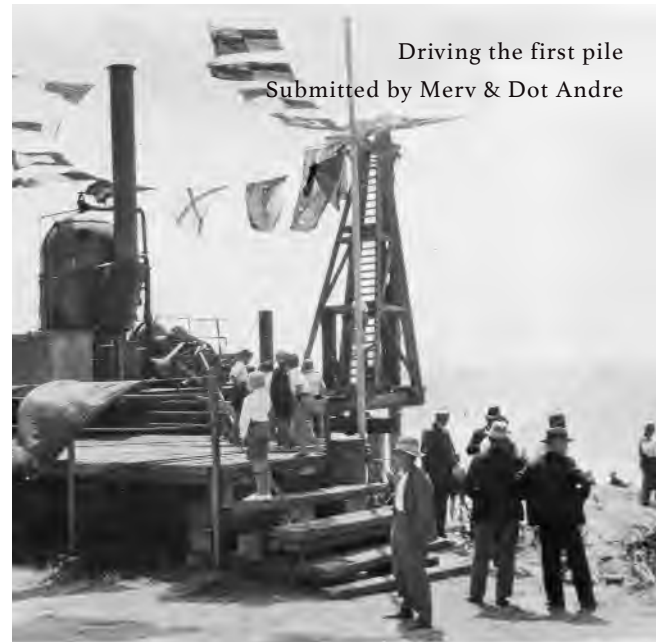
Driving the first pile
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Construction of the Jetty in the distance
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Driving the first pile
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre





LIZ SEYMOUR

The jetty has been an integral part of the Esperance scene since I can remember. I have vague memories of it as a functioning jetty, but my strongest memories are the fisher folk. The local fishers, and then of course the Goldfields fishers.

It was a fabulous walk to the end in those blustery Esperance days, inhaling all that fresh salty air, chatting to neighbours, friends and other people that had nothing in common with you except the jetty.

When I look at this photo, I see a young me dangling my legs over the edge waiting for that elusive herring, I see masses of other people all cheek by jowl enjoying the experience of the jetty.

I see each person and know they purchased bait or lines and other tackle, they made other purchases on the way down, be it drink or a snack, they may not have caught fish, but stopped in to the local fish & chip shops on the way home.





Fish Cleaning Station
Submitted by Sarah Moroney

CHRISTIANE SMITH

I remember endless Friday nights walking along the jetty while we waited for our Beryls Eats burger ‘n’ chips. It was always windy, so whenever you sprayed Sammy the Seal, the water would always spray back in your face.

Simple times but always so fun!

NATHAN SCHRALER

MONBULK, VICTORIA, c.1990s

The fish cleaning station at the Jetty was great! We would clean our fish here that we had caught around the islands on the boat or caught along the beaches there. You would always end up with a crowd with lots of laughs and different reactions from locals and tourists alike. Our daughter, aged 6, carried a large fish eye around from everyone to touch and feel – great fun!

ANNIE SMITH

c.1980s

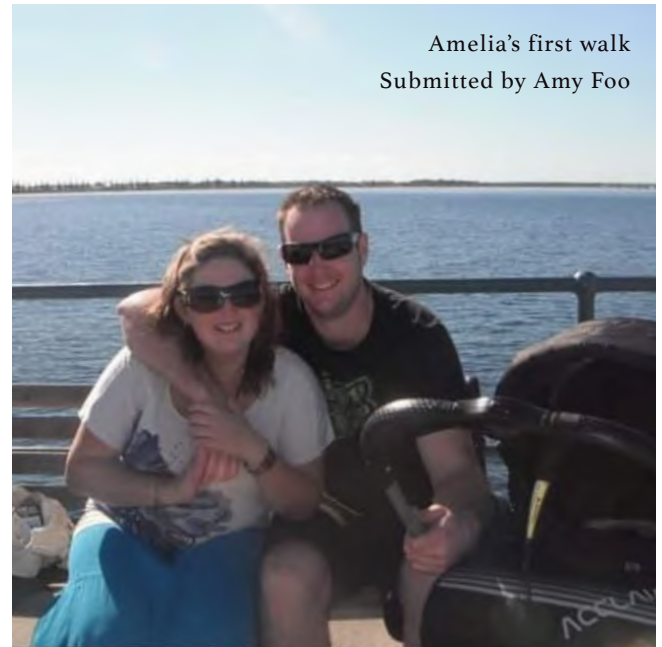
When we were kids, we’d hide under the Jetty and climb around the pylons and yank on people’s fishing lines so they thought they had a bite!

AMY FOO

My fondest memory of the Tanker Jetty was when we took our first daughter, Amelia for her first walk along it. She was almost a week old and only a few hours free from the hospital. My mum and sister were over from Tasmania visiting so they came for a walk along the Jetty too. I was so nervous that my husband was going to let the pram blow over the edge!

AMELIA FOO

When I was one week old, my Mum took me for a walk along the Tanker Jetty in the pram. I was with my Mum, Dad, Nana and Aunty.



Amelia's first walk
Submitted by Amy Foo



Walking the Jetty
Submitted by Graham Gath

ANOTHER OLD JETTY

HELEN TAYLOR | FROM THE JETTY AND OTHERS

Delightfully dilapidated
rising and falling just perceptibly
with each passing wave,
her existence dependent
on rusting bolts.

She has braved so many feet
been solace
promenade
lovers lane.

She worked for her living too
with ships tied beside her
shunting trains upon her
Ladies nervously alighting
in long dresses and big hats.
Smelted ore swung from wagons
to boats,
bagged wheat,
likewise.

Fish landed on her decking
oily, scaly, smelly
from small boys, old men
and in bulk from professionals.

Gulls and cormorants
roosted upon her
leaving their white droppings
among the fish scales;
and sheltering on her lee side
during gales.

Many voices she has heard.
Children's excited cries,
housewives bargaining for fish,
lovers murmurs,
working men's shouts
tears of parting and joys of greeting.
Once, a suicide's despair.
A venerable old lady
of character,
inspiration of artists
and photographers,
eighty years she has stood here.

Old and dying
all our love
cannot save her.



WILLIAM FREEBAIRN

One of the Adelaide Steam Ship Co's boats, unloading building materials and Black Jack fuel, from the Esperance Jetty, in 1960.

The heavy grade fuel, was being pumped through a 6" pipe, under the Jetty, to the bulk fuel tanks, behind the coastal sand dunes. [The fuel] would then be bulk tanker railed to the Kalgoorlie Goldfields mining industries, over 450kms inland.

Admiring the ships activities, from the Esplanade Beach, are George & Ida Freebairn, from Adelaide, with their son William, and baby son Warren. Margaret took the photo of family day in Esperance Town from Gibson.

Freebairn Family admire the ships
Submitted by William Freebairn





View looking back towards James Street Jetty
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Observing the ships from shore
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

SARAH MORONEY

I have many fond memories wandering along the Tanker Jetty. One humorous one was when a group of us went to try our hand at fishing. We headed down with some fishing supplies, bait and one bag of shiny new hooks. We found a nice spot near the end and got comfortable. But, before we even got the chance to bait up, the bag of hooks blew away! We watched the little red hooks float away and didn't get to fish that day.

We lived behind the Seafront Caravan Park and would often walk down to the Jetty in school holidays to pass the time. Our favourite treat was to order iced chocolates from Coffee Cat on a hot day and walk along the Jetty while we waited. Our aim was to walk the length and back before our drinks were ready!

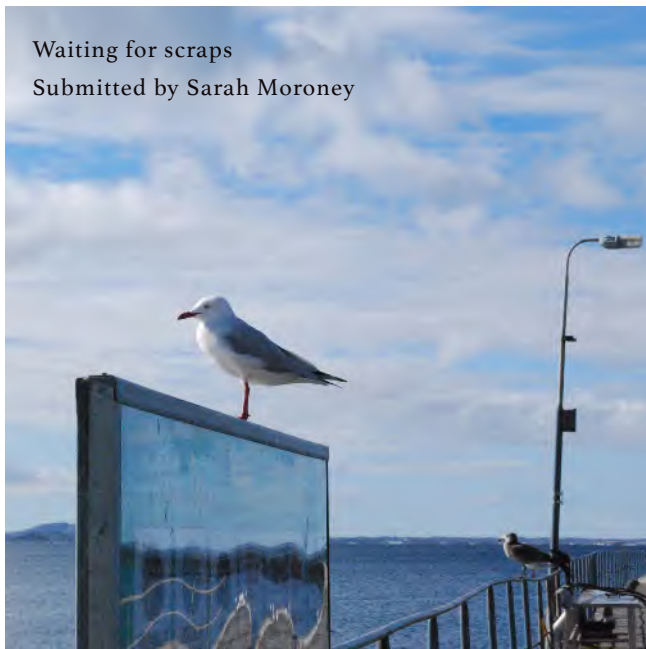
In summer, my two cousins and I would walk down to the Jetty after school and order a jumbo bag of chips to share from Beryl's, unbeatable value! Other days we'd enjoy watching Sammy or walking along the Jetty to see if anyone had caught anything. We loved climbing down to the dive platform, it felt like you were standing on the sea as we gazed back towards town.

As teenagers we'd sometimes go to the Jetty at night, especially calm nights, and stroll along listening to the ocean. One evening a new friend and I walked to the end of the Jetty to star gaze while swapping stories.

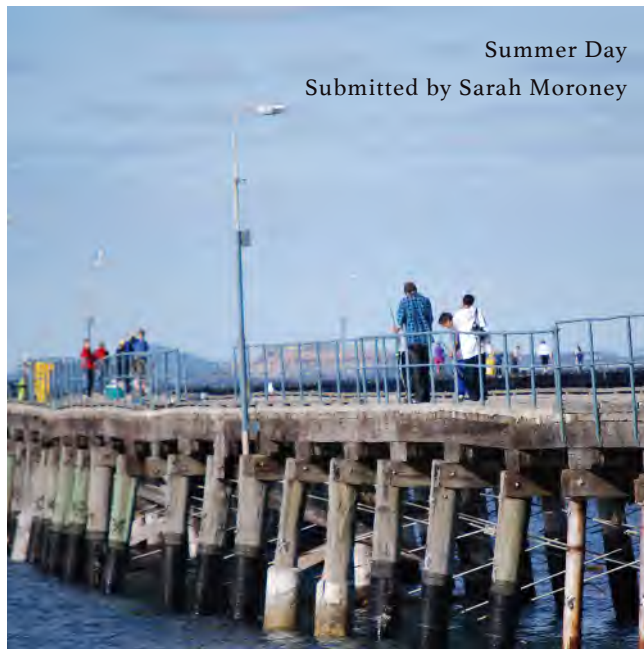
Pre Year 12 Ball in 2012
Submitted by Sarah Moroney



Waiting for scraps
Submitted by Sarah Moroney



Summer Day
Submitted by Sarah Moroney



Jetty Island in 2012
Submitted by Graham Gath





FISHING

DOREEN CAMPBELL | FROM THE JETTY AND OTHERS

Sit on the jetty,
toss the line in.
Wait for a bite.
Nothing there yet -
try a new bait.
Where is the burley?
Gaze out to sea,
sun on one's back.
Was that a bite?
Give jerk at the line.
Must have been weed.
Try a new bait
and throw in some burley.

Wind has sprung up,
surface now ripples.
That was a bite!
Missed him that time.
He got the bait.
Keep with the burley.
Look at them dart!
The sea's a bit clear.
There's one near the bait
Come on - at least nibble.
That was a good bite.
Give a quick tug.

Got one! Oh, great!
Gently now does it,
keep the line taut.
Don't let him flip.
Need some more bait,
Give 'em some burley.
Wind has eased off,
sun is till warm.
Sit on the jetty,
toss a line in.
Wait for a bite.

EDWARD POPHAM

MEMORY #1: c.1957

I was fishing from the shore on a very dark night somewhere between what is now Ocean Blue and the Tanker Jetty, when out of the dark came a ute with a dinghy on the back.

It backed down to the water's edge, two guys alighted and two others appeared from the shadows. The dinghy was unloaded and two guys rowed out to a Norwegian Boat docked at the Jetty, suddenly there was a light on the side of the boat and a crane swung

out with a Grand Piano (obviously a baby Grand) and as I watched, it was lowered onto the dinghy and with practically no free water it was rowed back to the shore. The other two guys re-appeared and they all lifted it on to the ute, which then departed. The ones remaining picked up the dinghy and took it somewhere into the shadows.

I've often wondered where this Grand Piano went...



First bulk wheat ship at New Jetty in 1962
Submitted by Merv and Dot Andre



EDWARD POPHAM

MEMORY #2: c.1957

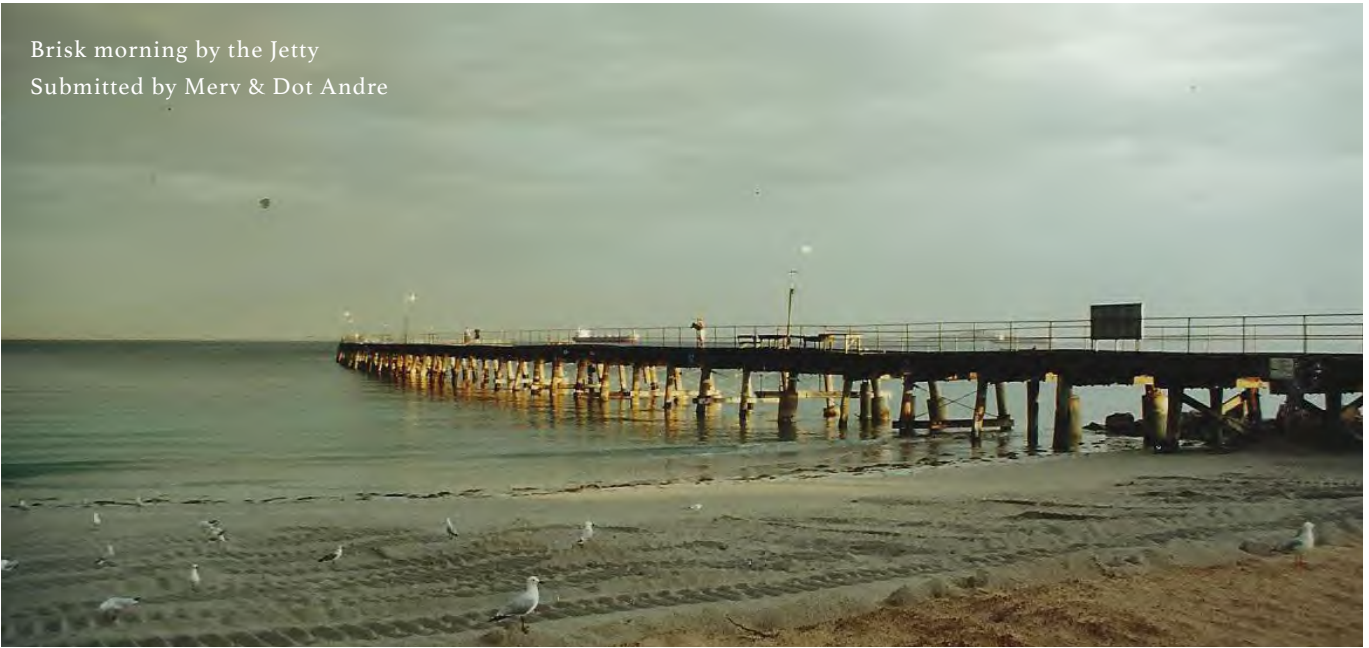
When Phyll and I first worked in Esperance we would work six days a week and on Sunday do our laundry in the morning and then in the afternoon we would walk to the Jetty armed with two fishing lines and a hammer. We would walk to the end on the Jetty and go down to the lower deck at the water's edge, knock a few barnacles from a pile for bait, catch two sweep, take them home to cook a meal of fish and chips.

The trick was to get the baited hook down to the sweep before the millions of little leather jackets stripped it. The question is, what's happened to the little leather jackets today? Perhaps it used to be a breeding ground before the land backed harbour.





Brisk morning by the Jetty
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



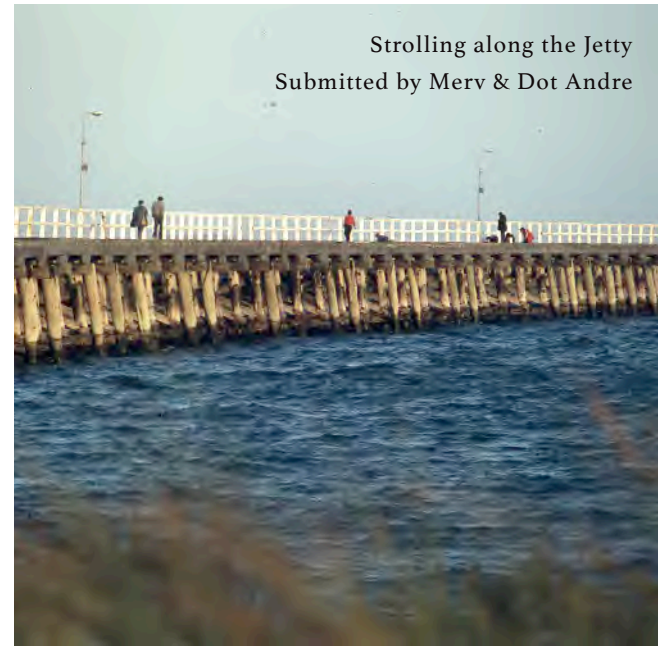
ANGELA JEITZ

Jack fell off and Andy jumped in to save him, leaving Harry with an older fisherman on the Jetty! [This was] the Burns Family, circa 2010.

NEW YEARS MISCHIEF

ANONYMOUS

A hazy, crazy New Years Eve in the “snakepit” at the Pier turned into the beautiful dawn of a new year at the very end of the jetty looking East to the sunrise... We’d left the Pier Hotel in the very early hours and ended up pushing a Dunc’s shopping trolley out to the very end of the tanker jetty, no small feat for a dedicated band of drunken local gals.



Bob McPhee fishing off the Jetty
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Dog Rescued From Water

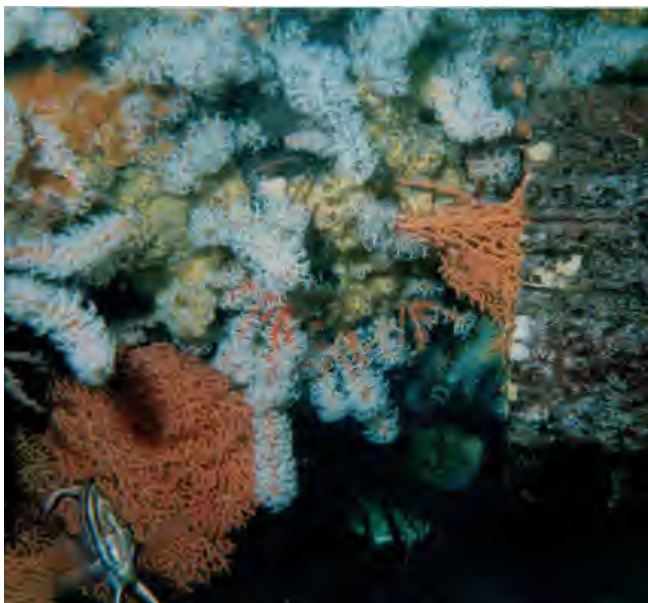
DOG RESCUED FROM WATER

ESPERANCE, MARCH 3 1954

A pedigree spaniel dog belonging to Mr. R. Reeves, of Dempster Street, Esperance, was seen swimming about 500 yards out from the shore near the new jetty about 9 o'clock one night last week.

An angler who saw a white object in the water called to a friend who was fishing nearby to shine his torch on it. They then saw that it was a black and white dog, which they recognised as belonging to Mr. Reeves. They called to the dog, which appeared to flounder as though it was exhausted.

Mr. Bert Bloxham threw off his clothes and dived into the water, swam across to the dog and brought it back to the jetty. It was hauled up on a shark line and taken back to town by Mr. Bloxham in his utility.



Sea life beneath the Tanker Jetty
Submitted by Stephen-Lyn Smith







STEPHEN-LYN SMITH

MEMORY #2: c. 1980s

The ocean life under the protective umbrella of the Jetty was unique here in Southern waters, the theory was that being in the shelter of the Bay and being influenced by the Leeuwin Current that flows past then finishes up along the Great Australian Bight, the Jetty underworld was a haven for soft corals, Nudibranchia Seasnails and some other tropical type organisms that were not so prevalent in the Bay itself. I have no idea if this is fact or not but sounded good to me.

One memorable dive was with Hugh Knight when after a great dip during the day, we reloaded the cameras and video with new film and went back after dark. The difference was amazing, the fish that had been asleep during the day were out, and the day fish were asleep nestled up to the piles. I dislodged a small fish that was asleep, it floated down and landed on the ocean floor, shook itself then finned back to its spot and promptly went back to sleep.

During the day, a bit out in the weed banks, there was a fishing bucket mostly embedded in the sand, we took no notice of it. Then on the night dive we saw that the sand and rocks at the front had been disturbed, inside was an octopus that had made this its home. When it was inside it flicked up stones and sand to cover the opening.

Soft corals blanket a pylon

Submitted by Stephen-Lyn Smith



STEPHEN-LYN SMITH

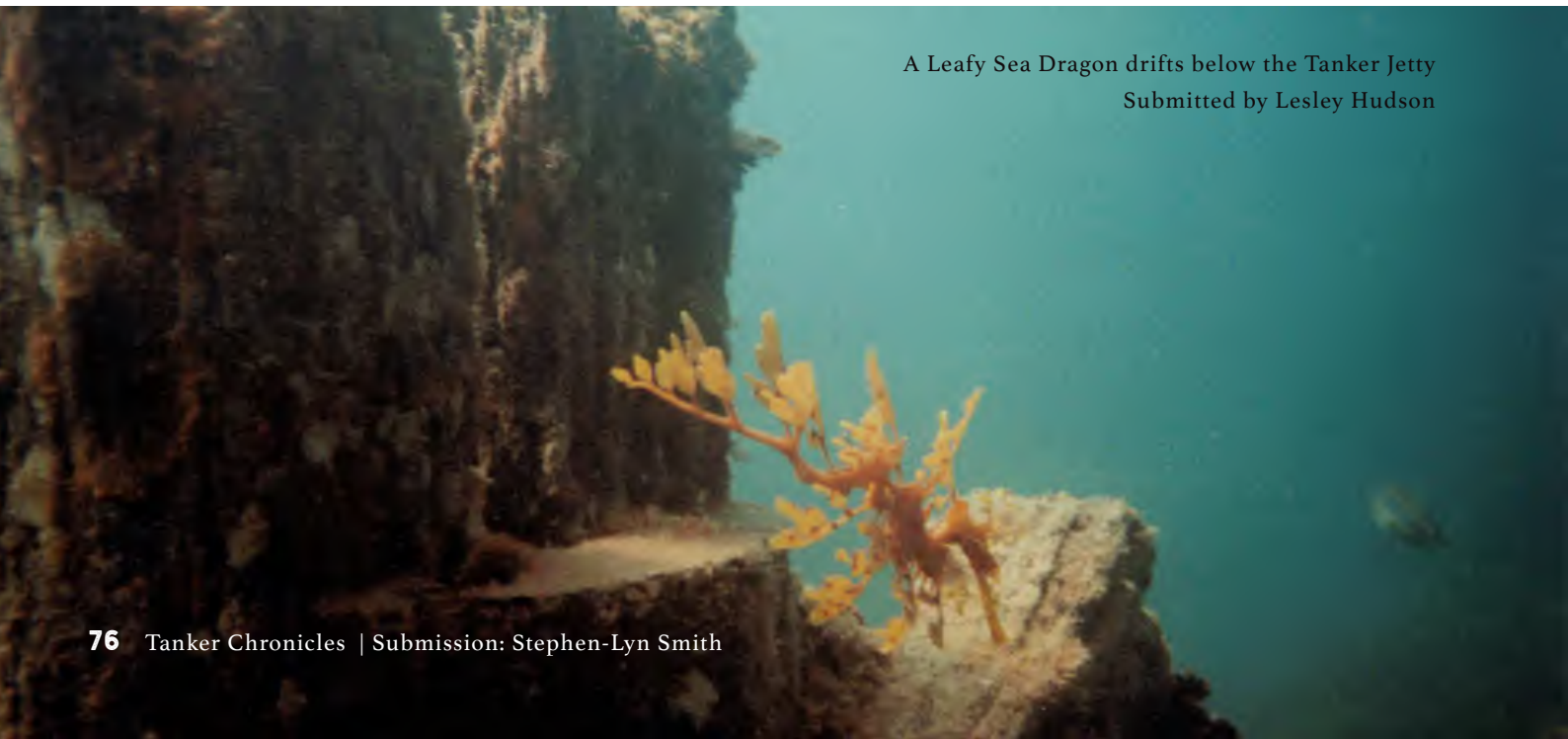
MEMORY #3

Between the Jetty with the single railway, and the Head where the ships moored, what was called 'the neck', the railway line had the rail points on this section where the rails went each side of the head. This section was dropped onto the seafloor and made a fabulous area of sunken beams and pipes for the sealife to hide and live.

Large schools of Swallowtail, Skippy, Angelfish and many other species swam around, on the seafloor, Cowrie shells and Seasnails abounded. In the pipes lived Cuttlefish, if one went to the bottom of the pipes and sent a blast of air up the pipe the Cuttlies would burst out, fin about, and after giving you angry looks would scuttle back into their lodgings.

In the weed beds one would sometimes see the Leafy and Common Sea Dragons. These fabulous creatures were almost impossible to photograph, if you took your eye off them, they disappeared.

Most of the frequent divers in this area respected the sealife, and the collecting of fish, shells and artifacts was frowned upon. As a result, the fish were friendly. It was possible to stir up a large octopus that lived in a tyre on the seafloor, if you stuck your hand in the tyre it would come out, ink up, and circle you like a mongrel dog waiting for a chance to charge in and give you a well-deserved nip! It never did, it waited until you had gotten bored and went back into its tyre.



A Leafy Sea Dragon drifts below the Tanker Jetty
Submitted by Lesley Hudson



Large Cowries - we would scratch the shells to discourage anyone souveniring them.

Any tins, bottles, tyres or buckets on the bottom were left there for fish homes, there was even an old enamel kettle there, I have a photo of this.

We would cart our gear to the Jetty end in a wheelbarrow, suit up and jump in.

One night dive, we swam out and back from the shore, the biggest problem was dodging the fishing lines and hooks. On the upside, we would find fishing rods, knives and fishing gear to supplement the gear we lost when fishing.



NOW HOW MANY WAS THAT?

JOAN COLLIVER | FROM THE JETTY AND OTHERS

I've been told I'm a numbers person. Numbers mean counting. Counting the number of stairs between floors, counting how many doors in a house, the number of people at a gathering, how many wear glasses, how many ladies, how many men.

And when there is time, the number of birds on overhead wires between two poles, or the number of cars which pass while I am walking between two points.

I do not rely on counting sheep to cure insomnia. Rather I will recall the number of pairs of shoes I have owned in say the last ten years or sets of crockery that somehow have broken in my memory of ownership.

How many cousins do I have? How many whose names start with "J"? And I am reminded of how many flowering plants grow in my front garden whose names start with a "P" --five or is it six? The insomnia passes and the short night brings an early tinge of light chinking between the bedroom curtains.

How many curtains have I looked at in how many bedrooms and how many blue flowers are between the top and bottom of the present bedroom's curtains.

And what of our Tanker Jetty? No, I am not interested in how long it is, how many piles are missing where a length has been removed, how many years it has existed or how many sightseers have walked on it during the last week.

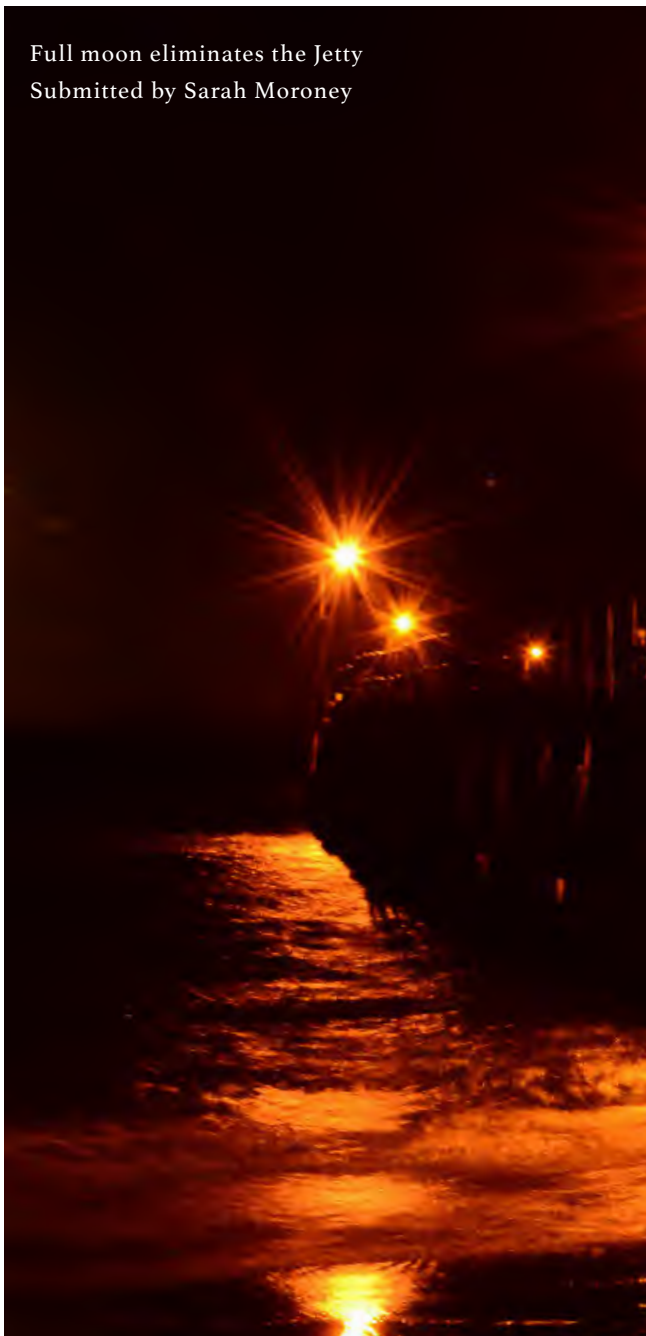
I could probably count the number of times I've walked out to view the town from afar but when I recall these times I remember not the number of other pedestrians, the number of planks between my steps nor the total steps I take as the transforming magic of walking above, of leaning on the rail to talk to the seals or sitting with feet dangling over the side erases the practicalities of numbers and a quiet peace invades my mind releasing me from everyday cares while transporting my thoughts to romance, to improbabilities of what might have been, of what yet might be.

A voice breaks my reverie, "How many have you caught today? Oh, sorry I thought you were fishing," it says.

I leave my spot and amble back to the beach. From there I see a gull land on one of the light poles erected at intervals along the Jetty. I note there is one on each and by the way, not counting at the land end nor beyond the main section, there are eight light poles. Check them if you like.



Full moon eliminates the Jetty
Submitted by Sarah Moroney



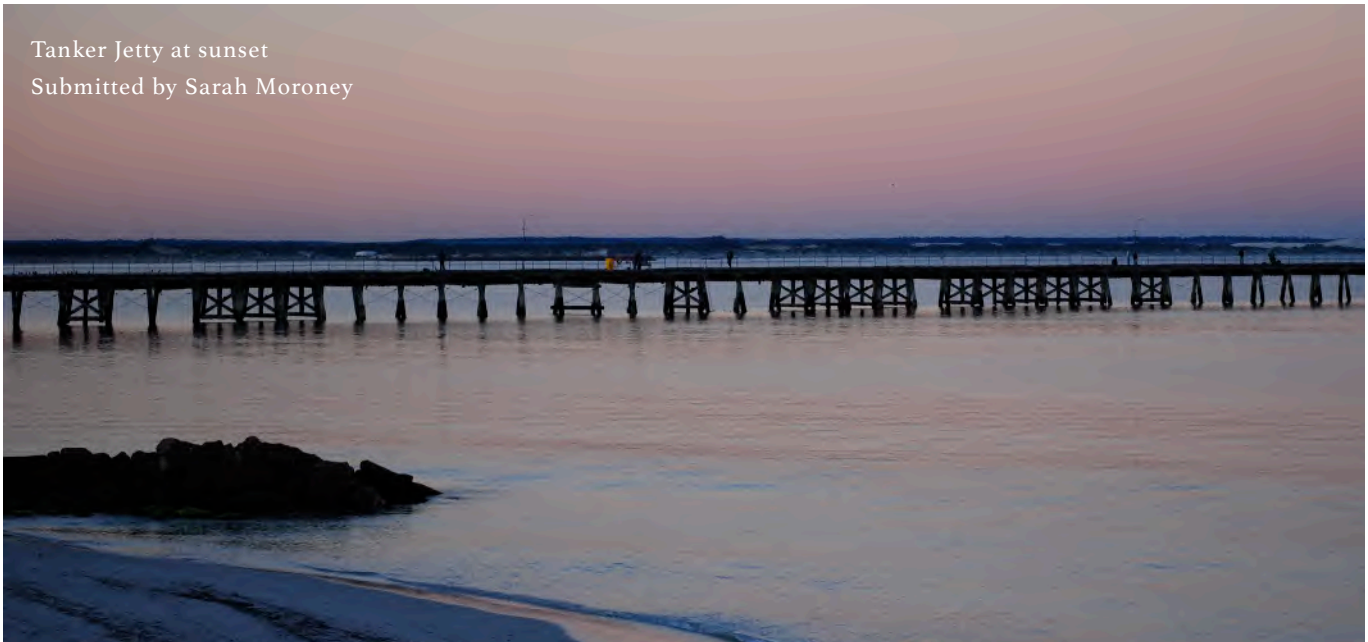
ON THE JETTY

DOREEN CAMPBELL | FROM THE JETTY AND OTHERS

Calm seas, warm night,
fish are biting well.
Lights across the bay,
gleaming in the dusk.
People moving back and forth.
Water lapping at the piles.
Peaceful hours many spend,
tossing in a baited hook
from on the Jetty's length.



Tanker Jetty at sunset
Submitted by Sarah Moroney



Tanker Jetty at sunset
Submitted by Sarah Moroney









CATE BURSEY

I only had the pleasure of walking on the Tanker Jetty once before it was closed to the public. My husband and I had come to Esperance to visit friends and were considering moving here.

He was well versed on the Jetty as he'd been to Esperance before so was excited to show me the sights and share his general knowledge and experiences.

We pulled up in the car park on a beautiful Esperance day, he took my hand, looked at me with a smile as we walked over the manicured grass of the newly developed foreshore to the huge granite rocks that fortified the waves and was the entrance to the long standing Jetty.

As we stepped out onto the jetty a gentle wind blew our cares away, the ocean was a brilliant blue, and the seagulls squawked flying down to catch a morsel of bait or better still, the fisherman's catch.

After a while, and about halfway along I just slowed down, and stopped. I'd been smiling at the people fishing, checking out their buckets of catch, looking at the black squid ink stains and then I just began to become a little uncomfortable, I stopped and started, looked around with a sense of expectation, and was generally uneasy.

My hubby, being alerted to my resistance dropped my hand, and with a puzzled yet concerned look asked me what was wrong. I said "I'm tired, do we have to walk all the way to the end?" He picked up my hand and dragged me the rest of the way.





JULIE WYLLIE

MEMORY #1

My earliest memories of the Tanker Jetty was in 1974 when I first visited Esperance from Victoria. I was very impressed with the ships off-loading the fuel at the Tanker Jetty. Going up to Wireless Hill and viewing the great heart-shaped Bay having the Jetty in the centre really made Esperance unique.

Later on in 1977 I married a local farmer and called (Condingup) Esperance home. As the town grew so did the size of ships berthing, making the Jetty redundant. Fuel lines were relocated along the foreshore to the current wharf.





Save The Tanker Jetty ~ Certificate ~

Esperance W.A.

0056

This certificate verifies that the holder

G & J Wylie

has adopted Jetty Plank/Pile No. 56 and has accepted responsibility for the due care, maintenance, attention and regard for the needs and requirements of said Plank/Pile in perpetuity.

Recorded in the Official Registrar of Save the Tanker Jetty
Supporters and

Protectors this 5. day of March 19 87

Signed



Signed



Chairman S.T.T.J.



Julie & Graeme Wyllie standing on plank 56
Submitted by Julie Wyllie

JULIE WYLLIE

MEMORY #2

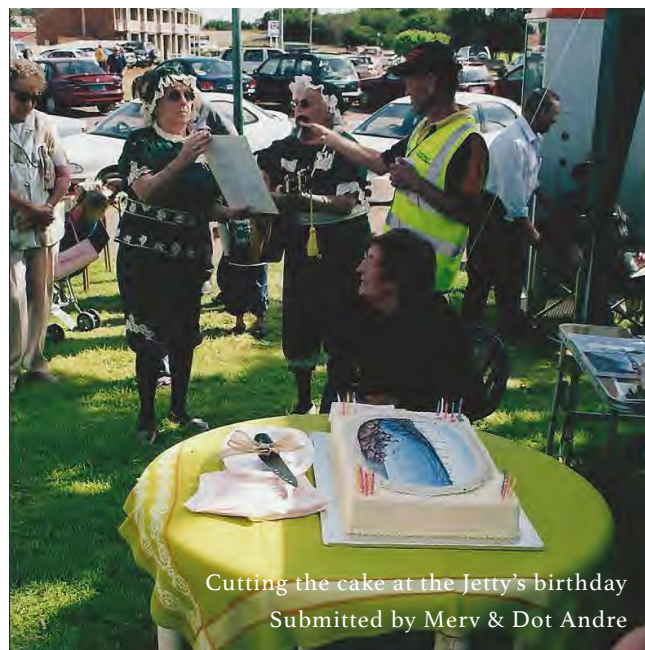
My husband and I helped with fundraising for the upkeep of the Jetty by purchasing a Jetty slab in 1987.

Being a keen photographer I really enjoyed being able to walk the Jetty to get different views of the town and also have a fish with our children. One summer school holidays, all our family went to the end of the Jetty to be shown what lay beneath the Jetty: some bicycles, lots of fishing gear including knives, along with some really brightly coloured corals, and a very delicate Leafy Sea Dragon (which was returned to the water). The Esperance Photographers Club helped celebrate the Jetty's birthday in 2007 and the Jetty looked really grand with balloons tied to the railings. Don Voight had a display of black and white images of the Tanker Jetty in early Esperance days.

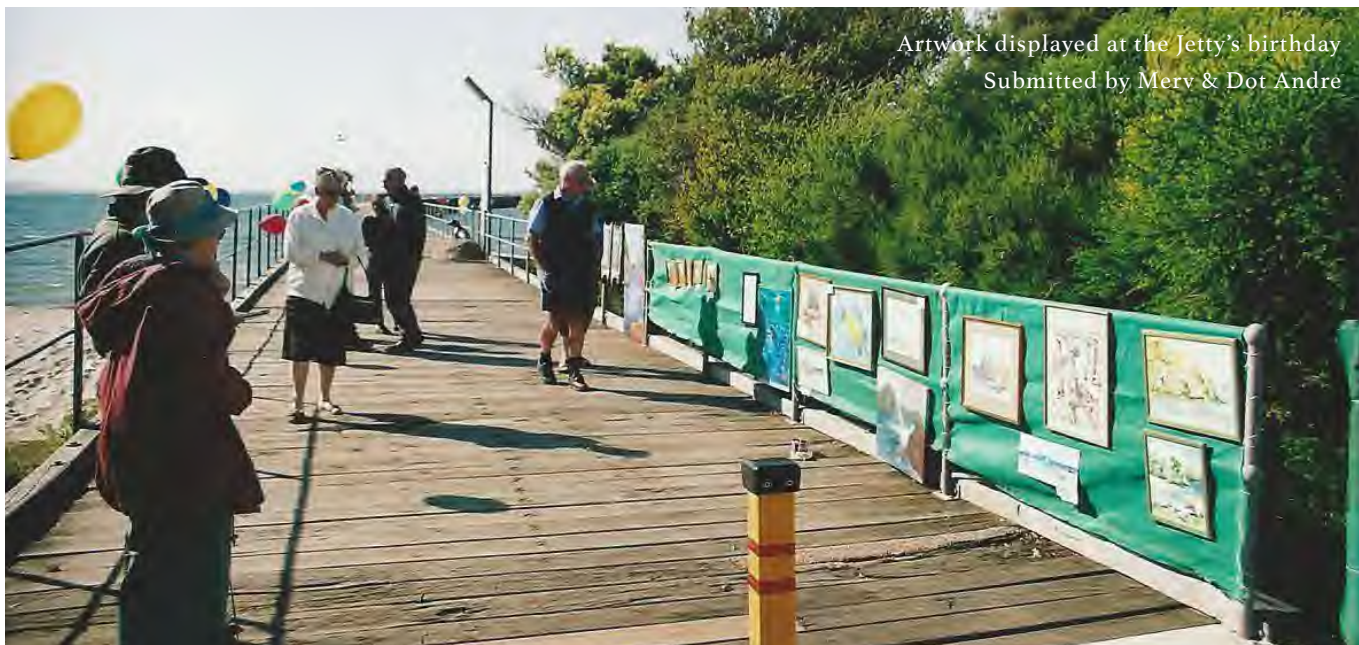
The image of the balloons on the Jetty featured in the Esperance Shire Community Calendar in 2008. The images were chosen by a public vote. We found our Jetty plank and helped celebrate with festive stalls. I will truly miss the Jetty as when I would drive home from work past the Jetty, the setting sun would make it come alive as it shone on the pylons. We both have loved the Tanker Jetty over the past 40 years, so we created some thank you cards with the Tanker Jetty on them.



Interviews at the Tanker Jetty's Birthday
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Cutting the cake at the Jetty's birthday
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre



Artwork displayed at the Jetty's birthday
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

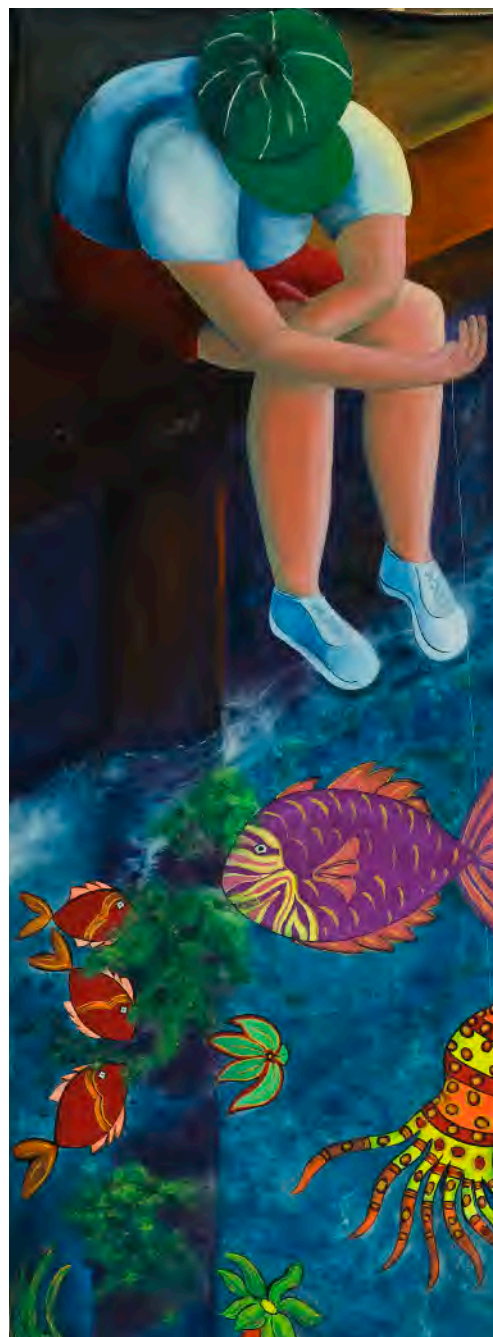
A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

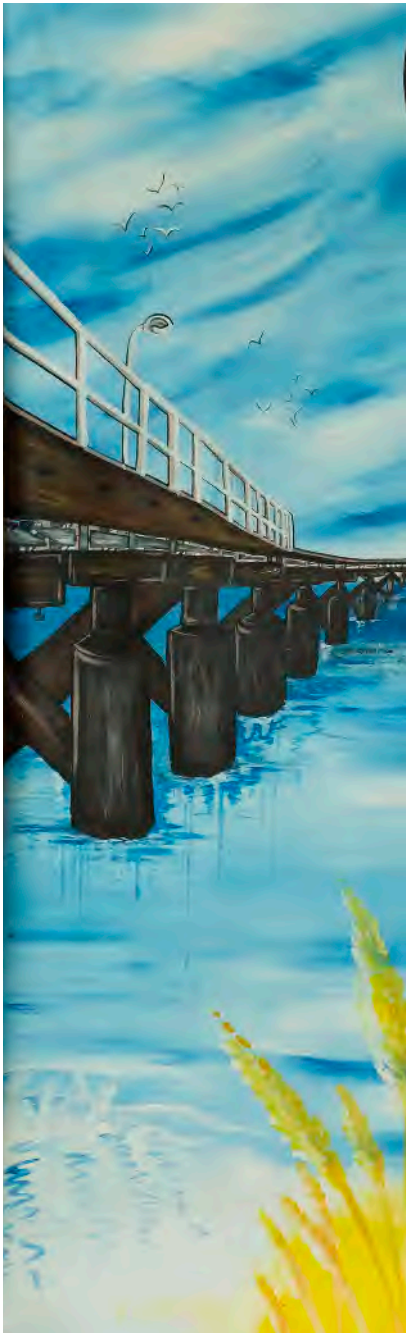
Over the years, the Jetty's iconic curved structure and recreational activities have inspired an array of artworks including paintings, sculptors and even street banners.

These banners were entered in the Local Government Week contest “Banners in the Terrace”, proudly representing Esperance, and were displayed along St George’s Terrace, Perth WA. (Entries pictured right)



Above: Paintings showing life along the Tanker Jetty
Paintings by Moya Tamblyn









Sea and Land, Sunset - Winner of Shire Art Prize 2009
Submitted by Carol King

MEGAN DAVIES

My earliest memory of the Jetty is in the late 70's, fishing with my Pop (Dick Martin), my feet dangling over the edge when my Ugg Boots fell off, never to be seen again. In the 90's I conquered my dislike for running under the guidance of Dave Eltringham – running from the Cannery to the end of the Jetty and back. Then in the 2000's, taking my 4 year old son fishing with my husband & watching the joy of landing his first Herring.

JED DAVIES

Being tied to the handrail by my mum so that I didn't fall in while we were fishing for herring and squid! We even got our photo in the paper [while fishing on the Jetty].



People watching the sunset
Submitted by Graham Gath



FISHING AT THE JETTY

ANONYMOUS, c.2000's

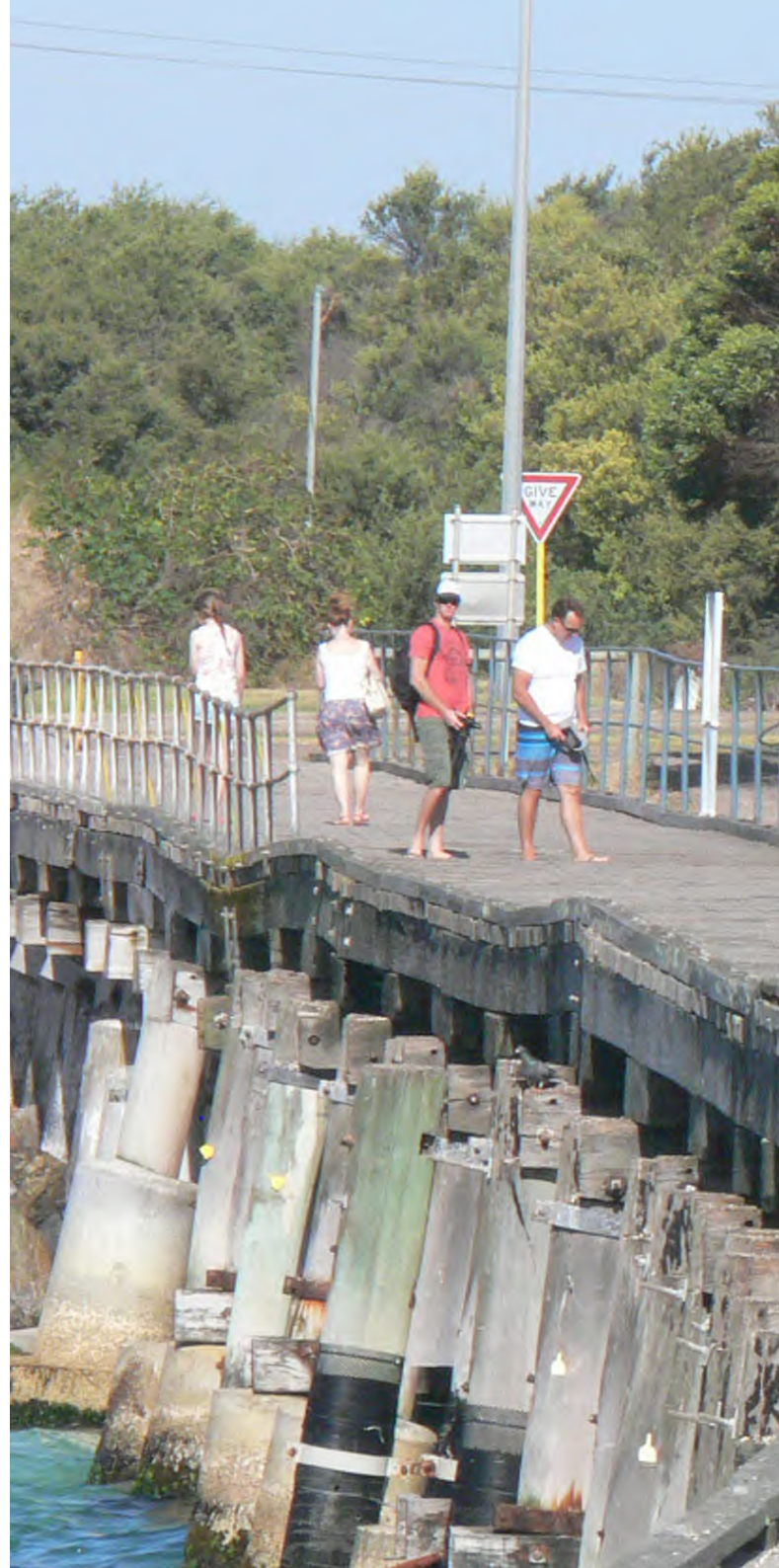
I loved passing old uncle Peter Campbell on his scooter, with his rod holders and tacklebox, driving along the Quays or foreshore, towards the Jetty.

FISHING THE PAST ...

ANONYMOUS

I have caught many Herring and Squid off the Jetty over the years. If you came down during the holidays about 10 years ago, it was always full of people walking and fishing.

We used to go fishing on the Jetty via a net for Mulies – there were no bag limits at the time. Over the years, bag limits were introduced on Herring; 40 limit to start with approx 10 years ago, then dropped to 30, and only 12 now! [When the bag limit was first introduced] fishermen used to come down at 11pm to get their first bag limit of Herring, then at the turn of midnight they'd catch their bag limit all over again, taking home double the catch... 80 Herring!





LARRY MARTIN

c.1958-1964

My earliest memories of the Tanker Jetty are of living on the corner of Dempster Street and The Esplanade near our service station. During school holidays and weekends I would get up early and put out my squid lines and then go home to bed. This was 1958 – 1964. We sold the squid to tourists for bait.

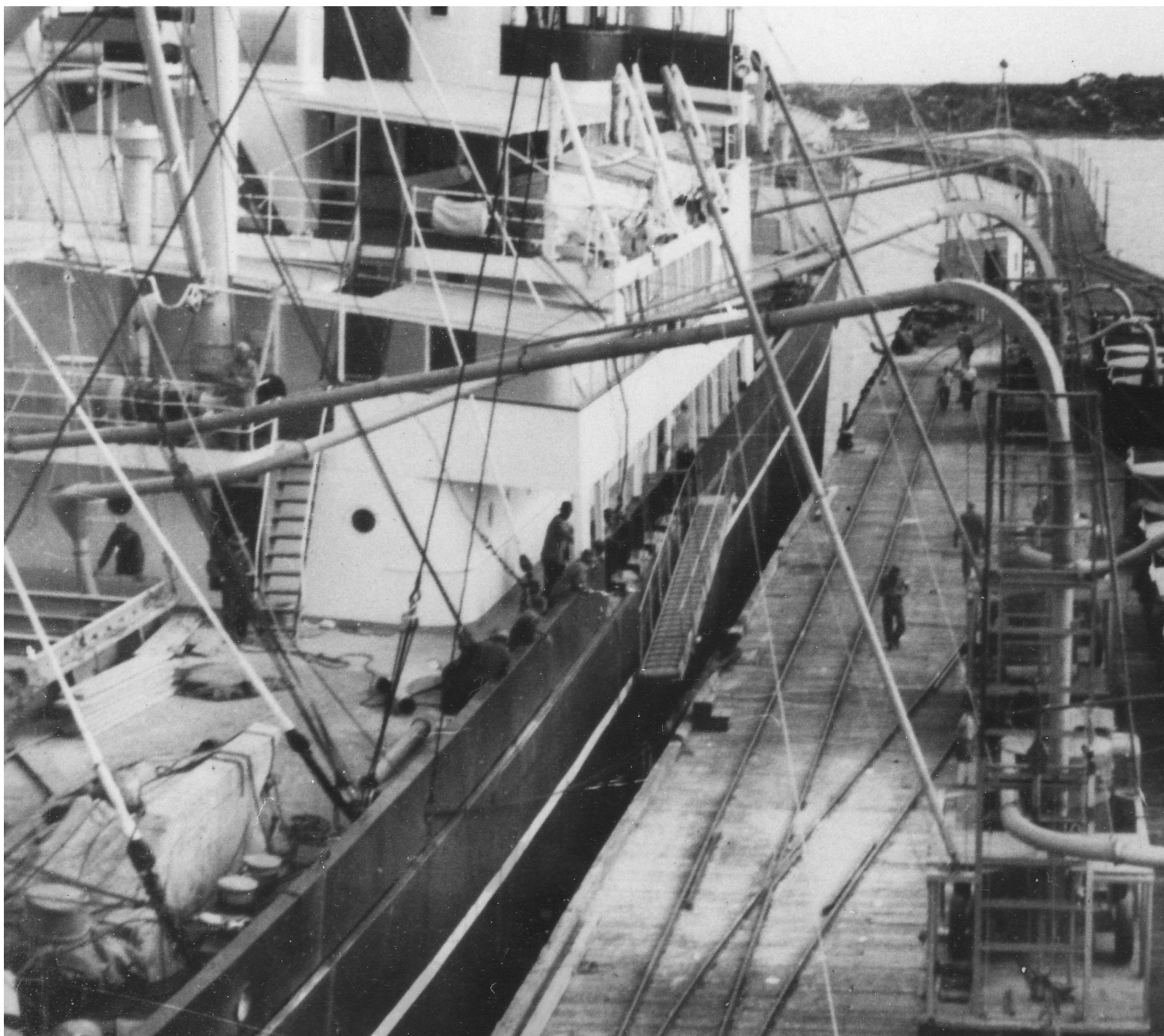
I can also remember the train going out to the State Ships to get groceries for Daws & Dixon Shops. Then later, the trains with wagons taking out the wheat, and bringing in super. When the fuel tankers started, the Jetty would be closed but I got a job as a Fuel Line Inspector so was still able to put out my squid lines. When the gas ships came it was also the same things, by this time I was 18-20.

When I returned to Esperance in 1977 I had the same job. When my children grew up in the early 80s they came squidding with me, and then by themselves.

In closing, I spent many years fishing & squidding on the Jetty. I hope that the new one will be just as good for this generation of kids.









PHILIP REID

I have fond memories of the Tanker Jetty as a child. We emigrated from the UK to Boulder in 1956 and our first holiday to the seaside was to Esperance in the summer of 1956/7. I think we stayed at the Essington Guest House in town.

I was quite a handful at the age of 2 and for peace of mind, my father Dr Dick Reid always took a length of rope with him when he went to catch a few Herring on the Tanker Jetty.

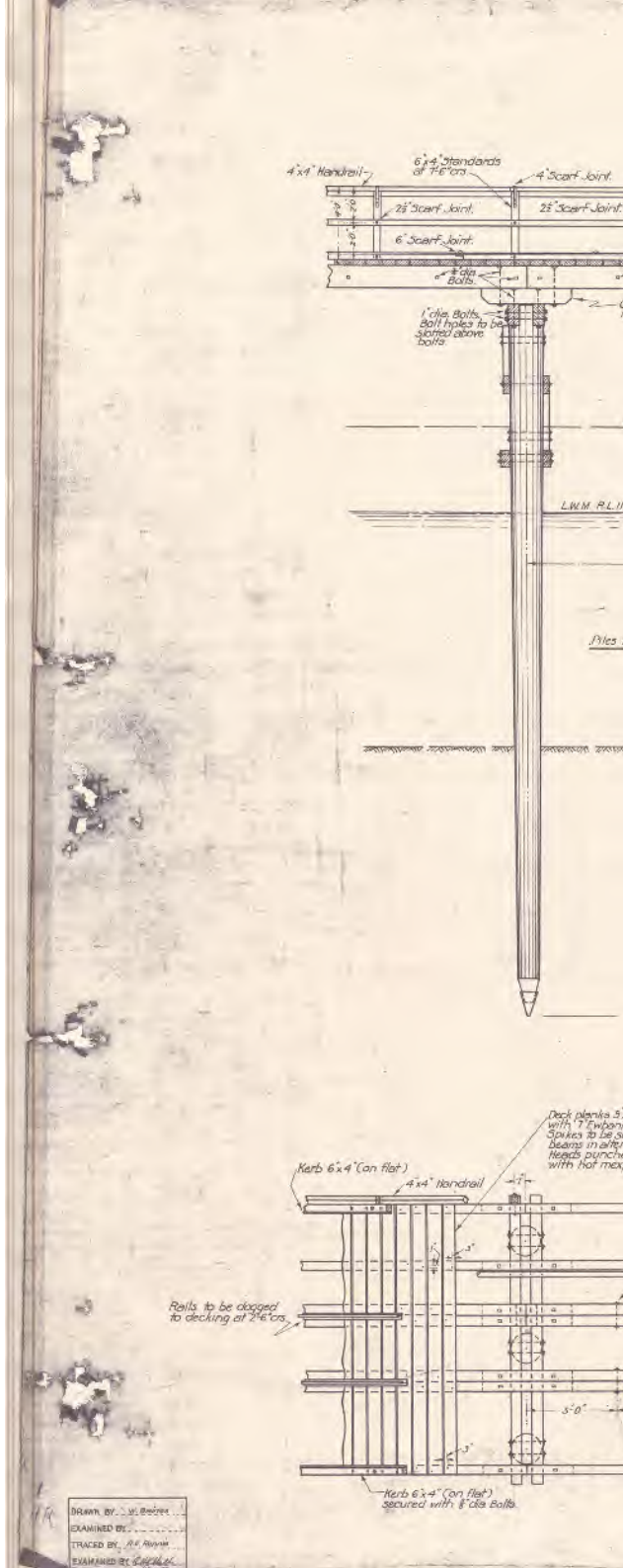
The only way to deal with me was to tie the rope around my chest and waist and then tie off the other end to the railway line running down the middle of the jetty. That way, I was unlikely to launch myself into the sea - his and my mother's worst nightmare!



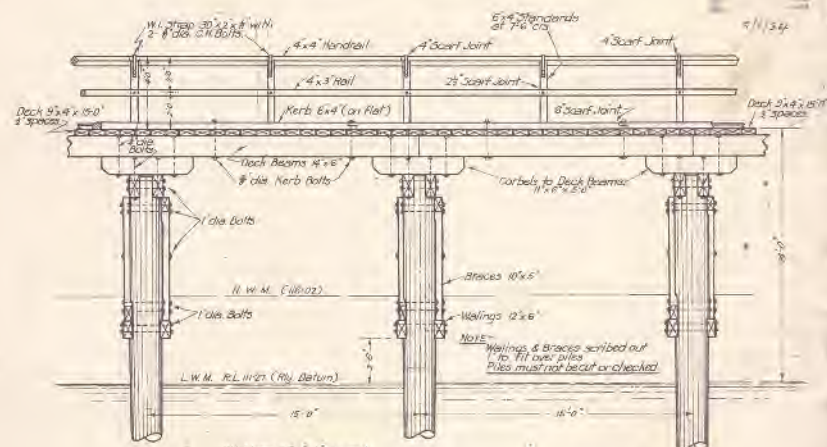
Loading a car at the Tanker Jetty
Submitted by Merv & Dot Andre

Engineering blueprints for the construction of the New Esperance Jetty showing the plans for the Neck of the Jetty.

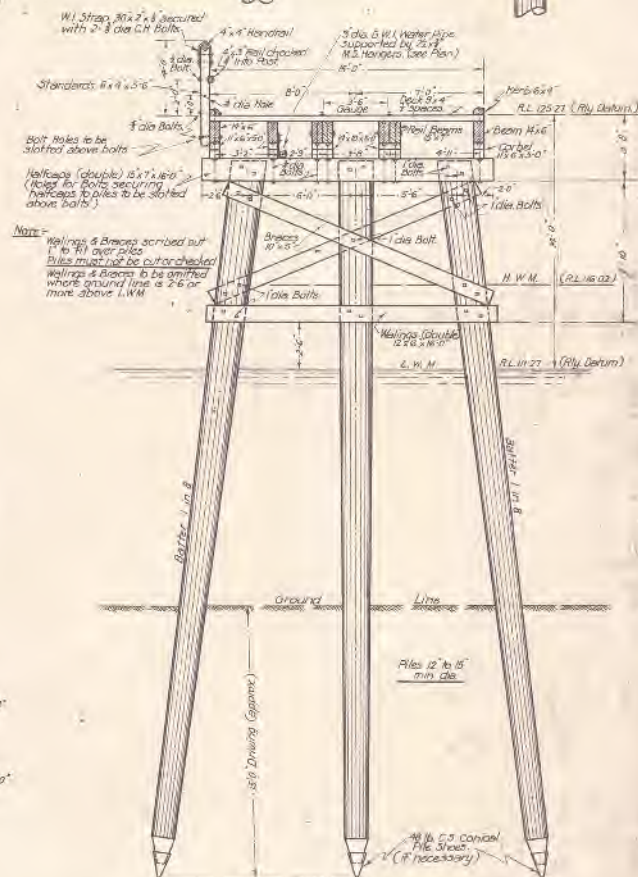
Created by Engineer in Charge of Harbours & Rivers, John Stevenson Young in 1933.



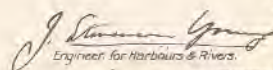
NOTE-
Jetty designed for 'G' Class Loco.



All meeting faces of timbers to be treated with one thick coat of hot mephalth.
All cut ends of timbers to be treated with one coat of hot tar.
Wailings & Braces to be dipped into hot tar.
Piles to be charred and dipped into hot tar.



Type Cross Section. (Looking Seawards)



COPY OF P.W.D..W.A

27418



PIPPA

ESPERANCE

I remember walking on the Jetty with my Nanna.
I saw the Port and we walked to the end of the Jetty.



JENNIFER OBOURNE

On the 8th October 2010, Aunty Jenny (the favourite aunty) took Natalie Coles - her favourite niece - out to treat her.

Natalie had her 1st ever Coffee Cat and then walked the beloved Tanker Jetty. It's been over 5 years since she's been able to walk on it, and both of us eagerly await the chance to walk on our new favourite jetty.



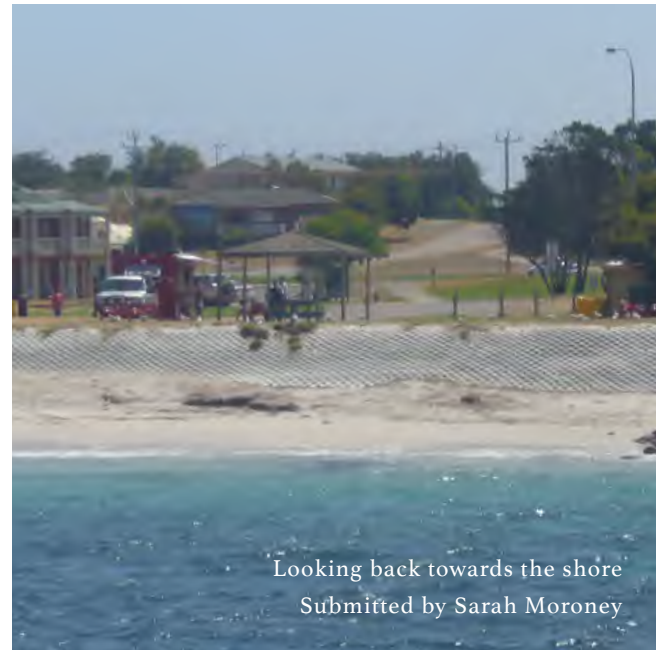
Natalie's first Coffee Cat experience
Submitted by Jennifer Obourne



Enjoying the sunshine
Submitted by Sarah Moroney

SHANA

One time my Dad and I went for a walk all the way to the end of the Jetty, and then once we got to the end it poured down with rain and we were drenched! Anything for Coffee Cat!



Looking back towards the shore
Submitted by Sarah Moroney



Waiting for coffee at the "Cat"
Submitted by Sarah Moroney



Pigeons on the Jetty
Submitted by Sarah Moroney



Cormorants under the Jetty
Submitted by Graham Gath



"Bird-life under the Tanker Jetty"

Submitted by Gareth Gath -



RACHEL WOODS

My first visit to Tanker Jetty was pre-children in the 80's. Loved it.

My best memory is walking it again years later with my children.

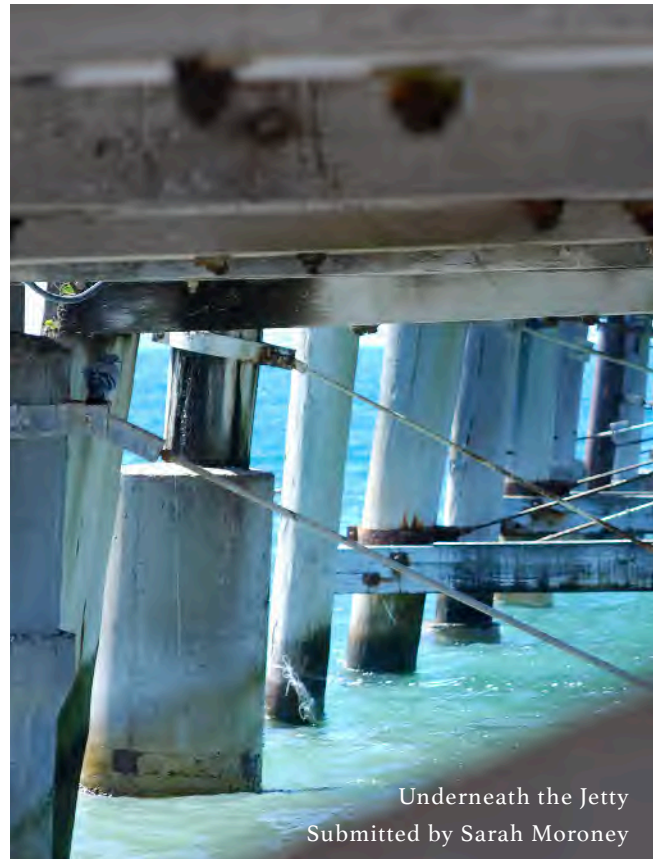
My son had grown up inland and was 4 when he first saw the sea. He took almost 30 minutes of quiet reassuring to get out of the car in the Tanker car park!



View from the shore
Photographer Brian Beresford



Sammy sunbaking
Photographer Brian Beresford



Underneath the Jetty
Submitted by Sarah Moroney

Cleaning Fish
Submitted by Sarah Moroney



VAL GRAY

I have so many happy memories of the times we spent on that Jetty fishing. I grew up in Esperance and from about the age of 10 we were allowed to go unsupervised and we spent the whole day fishing for Herring and Squid in the 60's, and at night time as well. It certainly kept us kids entertained and there was never a thought of going looking to get into mischief or causing trouble, we just enjoyed ourselves

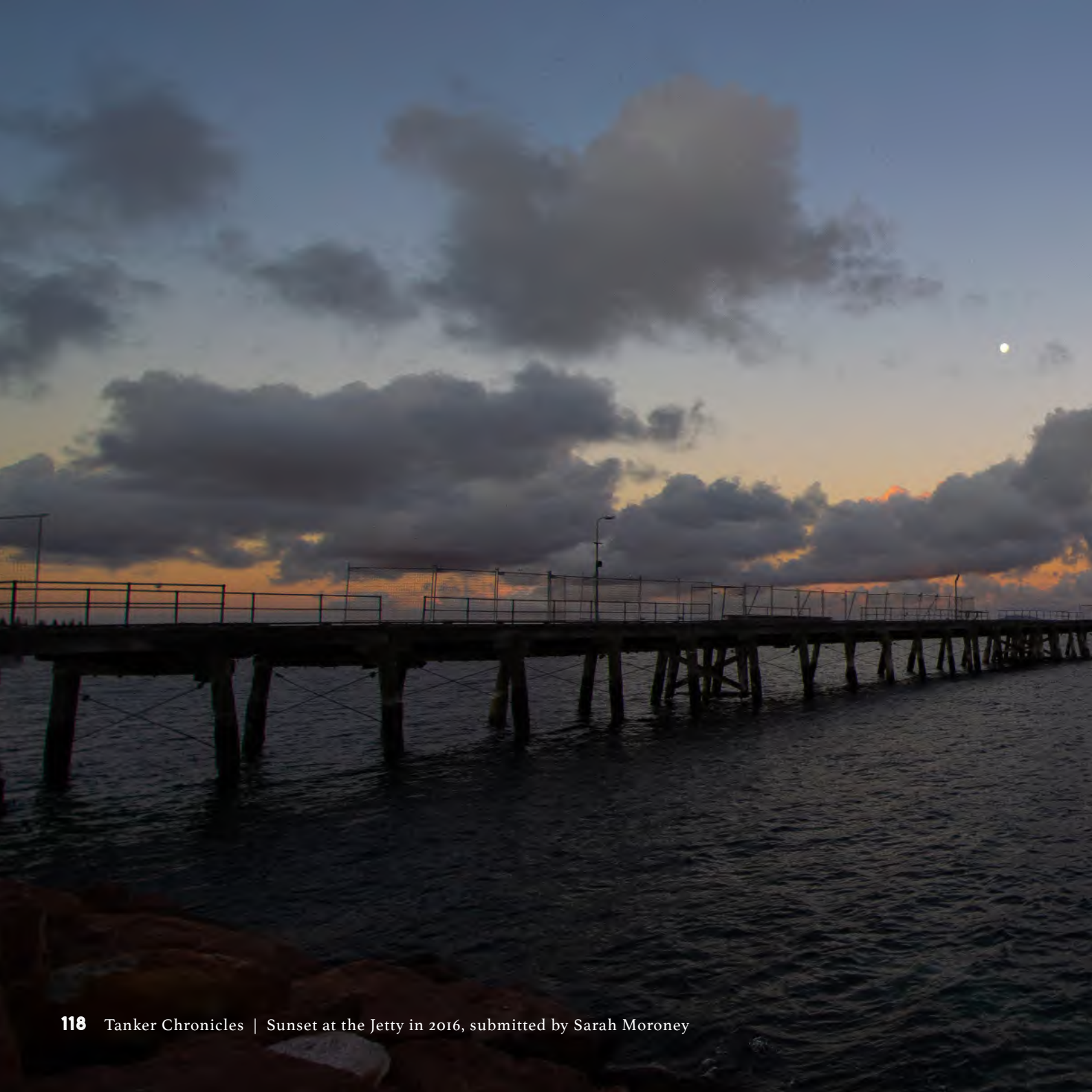
as did all the other kids up there. At that time, we had friends from the Goldfields who used to come to Esperance to sit on that Jetty with us and fish till our hearts content. My grandmother lived in Taylor Street Esperance, she was a renowned fisherwoman and very well known by all in Esperance. Oh such wonderful memories!

Foggy morning on the Tanker Jetty
Submitted by Graham Gath





Tanker Chronicles | “Toss the Boss” fundraiser at the Tanker Jetty in 2010, submitted by Graham Gath **117**





END OF THE LINE

ANONYMOUS

Grandad wanted to drive his scooter off the end, after a bottle of plonk. That's how he always wanted to go out!





CONTRIBUTORS

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TANKER CHRONICLES

Tanker Chronicles pays tribute to 86 years of community connection with the Esperance Tanker Jetty. A collaborative, historical recollection, as told through personal memoirs, written stories, poems, artworks, photographs and submissions from the Esperance community & visitors alike.

