

# River Heritage & Wetlands Trail

Soon you reach McArdell's Gap, a cut in the bank of the Canal, opposite where the Thomson River breaks into the artificial waterway. At McArdell's you will see the site of shipyards where two of Gippsland's most important steamboats were built – the *Enterprise* and the paddle steamer *Tanjil*.

Crossing the South Gippsland Highway, you enter the incredible wonderland of the Sale Game Refuge, in earlier times known as the Sale Common. This portion of the trail, much of it over a boardwalk of generous size, spanning extensive, Ramsar-listed wetlands, is full of surprises: a tree-lined natural lagoon, haven to so much bird life; ancient gum trees, twisted and gnarled; a blazed tree evocative of the earliest explorers of Gippsland; an old rifle butt re-incarnated as a bird hide; a large brick water trough, now incongruous in its wilderness setting, and so much more.



Photo courtesy of Dr. David Hollands



From there, you emerge onto a part of the Punt Lane flanking the Thomson River, so called because it led to a punt, the first river crossing linking the upper districts with Port Albert to the south.

Soon you are in view of the nationally important Swing Bridge. This was completed in 1883 to the design of notable Australian engineer and bridge builder, John Grainger. The Bridge still swings open to allow vessels to enter the Port of Sale. It is a 'must see', not only for its historic importance but also for the extraordinary symmetry of its design, best viewed from the Longford side.

On your return you have the choice of passing by the site of Gippsland's first licensed airfield, the superb environs of Sale's lakes and the fortress-like Sale Powder Magazine, now fully restored.

In 2009, the Institution of Engineers, Australia, recognised the Port of Sale with a Heritage Marker, and the Swing Bridge with its highest honour, a Heritage Landmark.

## River Heritage & Wetlands Trail Map



DESIGN: TMOOTH/SUNSETS/SPACE/NET/PAU

For further Information call: 1800 677 520



Trail Map & Guide Notes

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Photo: Tim von Emmert



## Enjoy Natural History and Discover Sale's Rich Maritime Past

This heritage trail is Sale's newest. It offers a kaleidoscope of riverine and wetlands scenery in addition to heritage places, all marked with interpretive plaques. The trail begins at the Wellington Visitor Information Centre and extends as far south as the celebrated Swing Bridge at the junction of the Thomson and Latrobe rivers. The return journey, if you so choose, takes in Sale's beautiful lakes – Guyatt and Guthridge, as well as the historic Powder Magazine.

On leaving the Information Centre you soon arrive at the Port of Sale. This was formerly the shipping terminal for so much cargo and so many passengers, either coming into Gippsland or leaving Gippsland by rail for Melbourne. It is at the head of the Sale Canal, dug by horse and scoop in the late 1880s, as the essential transport link between rail and road and the rivers and lakes. Today this historic port is a picturesque marina in a serene, landscaped setting.

From the Port you walk through an avenue of trees alongside the Canal, sensing not only the riverboat traffic of yesteryear, but also the festivities of rowing regattas still held today.



Photo: Chris Holmes