Walk to historic Echuca. We hope you enjoy your stroll around the buildings and reading the plaques using this self guided tour. As you wander let your mind drift back to experience the thriving era of Echuca when steam ruled the river and rail.

Welcome

Feet free to send your feedback to the Shire of Campaspe.

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Complete citations can be purchased from the Echuca Historical Society located at site 35.
1 SITE OF BAPTIST CHURCH, CHINESE SOCIETY, HORNE’S GARAGE 479 High Street
The Chinese Masonic Society building on this site was one of three brick buildings erected in 1878 by Chas. Horsnell and known for years as ‘Horsnell’s buildings’. They were occupied separately by different businesses until 1919 when all three were purchased by the Chinese Masonic Society and became headquarters for the Chinese population, mainly market gardeners. Now the site of McDonald’s Restaurant.

2 SITE OF MOORE’S TIMBER YARD 465 High Street

3 MOORE’S OFFICE AND DWELLING 463 High Street

4 GENERAL STORE, BUTTER FACTORY 433 High Street

5 ECHUCA WATER TOWER Cnr High & Pakenham Streets

6 FIRST NO. 208 STATE SCHOOL, ECHUCA

7 ST. ANDREW’S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Cnr Pakenham & Hare Streets

8 FORMER ECHUCA POST OFFICE 252 Hare Street

9 FORMER ECHUCA TELEPHONE EXCHANGE 254 Hare Street

10 FORMER WESLEY CHURCH

11 DR CROSSEN’S SURGERY 47-49 Heygarth Street

The single-storied addition on the east side of the house was a conservatory when Dr. D. Brown lived here prior to World War II. In later years it became an X-ray room.

During the 1850s only the fledgling business empire created by Henry Hopwood, Echuca’s founder, existed around Little Hopwood Street, the hub of early Echuca. At that time Hopwood’s punts and pontoon bridge were the only means of crossing the Murray and Campaspe Rivers.

The 1870s were the peak years of the steamer trade at Echuca. Wool was the lifeblood of the port, and the wharf became a place of bustle and activity, with the constant arrival and departure of steamers during the ‘season’, when the river was high enough to allow them to travel. Forwarding agents were at their wits’ end trying to find a place to store wool while waiting for rail trucks to take it to Melbourne and this led to several wharf extensions. By 1900 competition from railways had killed the river trade.

From the 1860s the town centre was concentrated in the vicinity of the wharf in High Street and the northern end of Hare Street. By the mid-1870s increasing wharf activity created a ‘spurt of optimism and at that time many single-storey shops erected ten years earlier were replaced by the impressive two-storey brick buildings seen in High Street today.

The opening of the Iron Bridge in 1878 and the decline of the river trade led to consolidation of Echuca’s commercial centre in Hare Street. Shops gradually moved south towards the railway station, which by then was a busy transport terminal. This trend continued until the 1960s when the transfer of major shops to Hare Street led to the near-desertion of High Street.

The area became run-down and neglected and it was not until the re-creation of the old Port of Echuca, opened in 1974, that regeneration began. Echuca was ‘put on the map’ by the filming of ‘All the Rivers Run’ early in the 1980s. Shopowners restored their buildings and increased visitor numbers led to revitalisation. The movement of commerce away to Hare Street and southwards has left old High Street undisturbed, evoking memories of the 19th Century, when Echuca was Australia’s leading inland port.


Looking South along High Street (Circa 1930)

Hopwood's Punt and Bridge Hotel (Circa 1865)

Early photo of Evans Sawmill

Heritage walk

MAP 2

12 493 High Street
13 495 - 497 High Street
14 Commercial Hotel, 499 High Street
15 Former Echuca Town Hall, Library, High Street
16 Site of Echuca Water Towers
17 Former Victorian Railways Engine House
18 Murray Hotel, 9-11 Murray Esplanade
19 Site of Hopwood's Store later Freeman's Foundry, 13-17 Murray Esplanade
20 brothel, Little Hopwood Street
21 Site of Hopwood's New Road Inn, 19 Murray Esplanade
22 Dock & Site of Wharf Extensions
23 Steam Packet Hotel
24 Echuca Wharf, Murray Esplanade
25 Customs House, 2 Leslie Street
26 Shackell's Bond Store, 41 Murray Esplanade
27 Star Hotel, 45 Murray Esplanade
28 51 Murray Esplanade, Victoria Building
29 Salt Works, Murray Esplanade
30 Site of St. George's Hall, Murray Esplanade
31 Site of Evans Bros. Sawmill, Murray Esplanade
32 Site of Echuca Morgue, River Bank, Murray Esplanade
33 Hopwood Gardens, Cnr High Street & Hopwood Place
34 Bridge Hotel, 1 Hopwood Place
35 Former Police Station now Historical Society Museum
Cnr Warren & Dickson Streets

Heritage Walk

This is one of the Echuca's earliest shops, having been built by Hopwood, Echuca's founder. In the 1860's it became a drapery known as 'Melbourne House'. An unusual 'lantern' still survives and accounts for the unusual roofline.

Heritage Walk

62 630 High Street
Wm. Ferguson, who came to Echuca in 1866, was a saddler who first ran a business in Darling Street at Echuca. In 1877 he launched the paddlesteamer 'Saddler' and travelled many river miles servicing his customers.

63 628 High Street

Permeaw Wright Building 626 High Street

Site of Wharfmaster's House, 1 Leslie Street

66 614 High Street

Thomas Mitchell bought this allotment Echuca's first land sale in at the 1855, beating his great rival Henry Hopwood, who was forced to settle for the adjoining block to the south.

67 Murray River Hotel 612 High Street

68 608 High Street

69 Duke of Edinburgh Hotel 599 High Street

70 592 High Street

71 590 High Street

72 586 High Street

73 584 High Street

74 582 High Street

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75 578-580 High Street

76 574-576 High Street

77 570-572 High Street

78 568 High Street

79 564 - 566 High Street

80 554 High Street, Cnr Radcliffe Street

Early photo of Evans Sawmill