

HERITAGE
TRAIL



— CUE —



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HOW TO GET THERE

Cue is situated 640km north-east of Perth on the Great Northern Highway (National Highway 95).

The Cue Heritage Trail retraces the early development of Cue and its role in the gold-mining era.

The trail has two sections:

1. A 2.7km town walk highlighting 13 sites of historical significance.
2. A 15.1km drive featuring the abandoned townsite of Day Dawn, the old brewery and the old hospital

Please note:

Persons using this Heritage Trail do so at their own risk.

Front cover:

The first well in Cue, 1892. The Rotunda was built over it in 1904.

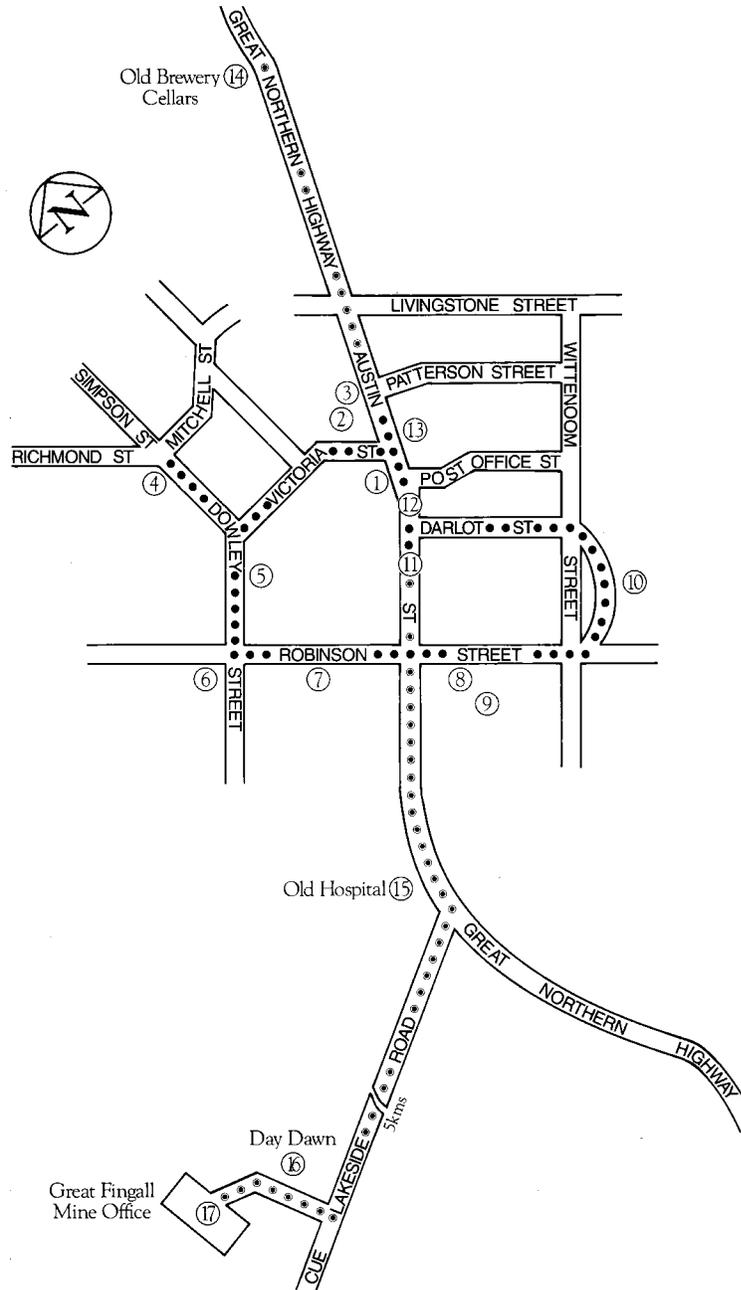
Key

Town Walk ●●●

- ① Gentleman's Club (Shire of Cue)
- ② Old Goal
- ③ Pensioners' Huts
- ④ Cue Primary School
- ⑤ Cue Shire Hall
- ⑥ Masonic Lodge
- ⑦ Old Municipal Chambers
- ⑧ Fire Station
- ⑨ Kintore Blow
- ⑩ Cue Railway Station
- ⑪ Rotunda
- ⑫ Austin Street Precinct
- ⑬ Government Buildings

Drive Trail ●●●●

- ⑭ Old Brewery Cellars
- ⑮ Old Hospital
- ⑯ Day Dawn
- ⑰ Great Fingall Mine Office



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE TRAILS NETWORK

History

The Cue Heritage Trail is part of the Heritage Trails Network, a project for community participation originally devised by the Western Australian Heritage Committee (now known as the Heritage Council of Western Australia) in commemoration of the 1988 Bicentenary.

The Heritage Trails Network which was jointly funded by the Commonwealth and Western Australian governments under the Commonwealth/State Bicentennial Commemorative Program was established to provide the Community with a Statewide network of "Heritage Trails" routes designed to enhance awareness and enjoyment of Western Australia's natural and cultural heritage.

The map below indicates Heritage Trails in the Midwest and Goldfields regions of Western Australia.

Heritage Trails in the Midwest and Goldfields

1. Monsignor Hawes H.T.	7. Cue H.T.
2. De Grey-Mullewa Stock Route	8. Sandstone H.T.
3. Perenjori-Rothsay H.T.	9. Chapman Valley H.T.
4. Greenough/Walkaway H.T.	10. Dongara H.T.
5. Geraldton H.T.	11. Cattlin Creek H.T.
6. Yaloo H.T.	12. Historic Gwalia H.T.
	13. Eastern Goldfields H.T.

Although it is not certain who first discovered gold at Cue, it seems likely that the initial find was made by prospector Michael John Fitzgerald on New Year's Day, 1892 while travelling with two Aborigines over what is now called Kintore Blow. Fitzgerald had been encouraged to try his luck here after an Aborigine named Governor found a ten ounce (284 gram) nugget at nearby Cuddingwarra. On picking up the nugget, Governor pointed towards the table-tops where Cue now stands and said: "This fellow slug no good, plenty bit fellow slug over there".



Michael Fitzgerald, the first person to discover gold at Cue, with Pompey, an Aboriginal tracker, in 1896.

Having discovered the gold, Fitzgerald then contacted his friend Edward Heffernan and together they pegged out an area around Kintore Reef. A week later they found about 260 ounces of gold near present day Austin Street. That night,

back at Cuddingwarra, they located Tom Cue (after whom the town was later named) and told him of their find. After digging up more nuggets the following day, Cue agreed to register their claim at Nannine, over 50 miles (80km) away, where the nearest mining warden was located. The following morning the warden posted the notice outside his door and within days 400 hopeful prospectors had flocked to the area.

Although the Cue area proved to be a rich source of alluvial gold, within a few years, as the alluvial finds became more scarce, bigger cleft mining operations were established, including 'Cue One' (the first mine to be registered in the district), 'Light of Asia', 'Golden Stream', 'Hidden Treasure' and a number of other smaller mines.



Cue One Gold Mine in 1896, the first goldmining lease taken up at Cue.

Within a short time a town was established, proclaimed Cue in 1893 and declared a municipality only a year later. The newly-elected councillors quickly set about the task of building and improving the township. Cue grew rapidly and in a very short time boasted a newspaper, masonic hall, gentleman's club, miners' institute, brewery and a workers' hall and soon became the administrative centre of the Murchison region.

The development of Cue coincided with the great goldmining boom of the 1890s and early 1900s, when new gold discoveries were opening up Western Australia and attracting thousands of young men. Many of these men later brought their families and when gold production declined they helped to populate Perth and some of the more remote farming districts in the State.

Western Australia's population of 48,502 in 1890 increased dramatically to 211,973 by 1902, largely as a result of the goldmining boom. Economic activity in the public and private sectors expanded on a similar scale and export income alone increased tenfold. In the peak year of 1903 gold production made up 83.5% of the State's total exports.

Cue's sister town of Day Dawn, also developed rapidly. Day Dawn is said to have acquired its name when Edward Heffernan saw gold gleaming in a big blue reef early one morning in January 1892. The Great Fingall Company began mining successfully in the area in 1898, and the Great Fingall Gold Mine was for a time the premier gold-mine in Western Australia. The Great Fingall also supplied light and power to Day Dawn and the surrounding streets, so when it closed down in 1918 the town was severely affected. The population, about 1,500 before the closure of the mine, declined rapidly and today little remains of this once proud town.



The original Day Dawn Reef in 1901. This was found by Edward Heffernan in January 1892 and later mined by the Great Fingall Company.

The fortunes of Cue ran a similar course. While it once supported a population in the region of 2,000 people and contained 11 pubs, the town began to decline from about the start of World War One. This was due to rising production costs, a static gold price and the lack of young men to work the mines. The last local mine to remain open was the Light of Asia which finally closed in 1933. By 1944 Cue's population had dropped to only 742 and by 1980 it was only 350.

Since the opening of the Golden Crown Gold Mine in 1986, the town has experienced a resurgence in its fortunes. Today Cue stands as a proud reminder of the State's goldmining era, when pioneers travelled vast distances, often through an inhospitable climate and terrain, in the search for gold and by doing so colonised areas previously unexplored by Europeans.



Austin Street, Cue, c.1910. The large building on the right is the Gentleman's Club.

1. Gentleman's Club

*Austin Street
Offices of the Cue Shire Council
Open daily during office hours*

The London and Western Australian Investment Company showed its confidence in Cue's future when they built this handsome two-storey stone business block, 'Murchison Chambers', in 1895. It had 18 offices, and two shops. Upstairs were the offices of Messrs Fox, Weekes and May, licensed and authorised Surveyors of Western Australia, Victoria and South Australia. Also in the building were the offices of Bewick Moreing and Co., an international mining consultancy based in London, which managed the operations of many British mining companies in Western Australia.

Among the company's employees was a young American mining engineer, Herbert Hoover, who arrived in Kalgoorlie in 1895 and was later to become President of the United States of America (1929 to 1932). He was engaged as a mining consultant to report on a number of Western Australian gold prospects and was appointed General Manager of the 'Sons of Gwalia' mine near Leonora in May 1898. Work commitments occasionally brought Hoover to Cue, and while there he usually stayed at the Murchison Chambers.



The Gentleman's Club in 1981, before restoration.

For those who are interested in Western Australia's goldmining history, the **Historic Gwalia Heritage Trail** explores the growth and development of this town where gold was first discovered in 1896. For further information, please contact the Shire of Leonora (08) 9037 6044.

The Murchison Club ranked high among the social institutions of Cue and included the leading business, mining, pastoral and professional men of the town. Numbering over 80 in 1895, they had their own Club rooms in Darlot Street. On January 5th, 1901 the Club moved into the upper storey of the Murchison Chambers where it stayed for many years. As a result the building eventually became known as the Gentleman's Club.

The building was restored and refurbished in 1985-86 and is now occupied by the Cue Shire Council. Apart from a few minor alterations the structure is much the same as when built in 1895.

2. Old Gaol

Inside the Cue Caravan Park Open daily

Built between 1896 and 1897, the Cue lock-up was not gazetted as a gaol until May 3, 1902. It was built by James Dawson from a design supplied by the Architectural Department (at a time when the Department had no Architect-in-Charge to supervise and exercise control over architectural designs), and has a central open yard

surrounded by cells. It is considered unusual because it is not attached to the police station and is not a particularly competent design.



The Old Gaol, 1981.

At the time of building, the police force in Cue consisted of a Sub-Inspector and 24 men, including several Aboriginal trackers. A strong police force was necessary in a goldmining town because the transient, overcrowded and overwhelmingly male population of hopeful prospectors eager to claim their fortunes helped create an atmosphere of tension and unruliness.

The gaol closed in 1914, but was used as a lock-up until the early 1930s. Later it was used as an ablution block for the caravan park, which opened in April 1964. It has been unused since 1977, when new extensions to the park were completed.

3. Pensioners' Huts

*Austin Street boundary of the Caravan Park
Not open to the public*

In 1955 the Cue Shire Council resolved to apply for a vacant lot north of the Water Supply in Austin Street on which to provide accommodation for pensioners. In August 1958 the first of the smaller buildings removed from the former hospital at Big Bell were relocated to the block and by December all six buildings had been moved. A recreation hut was built at a later date. These buildings are still used today for housing pensioners.

Gold had been discovered at Big Bell, 29km west of Cue, in 1904, although the finds were never as rich as those at Cue and Day Dawn. It was not until the 1930s that it developed as a townsite due to extensive exploration by Big Bell Mine. When the mine closed in 1955, however, the town became deserted and many of the buildings were removed to Cue, Mt Magnet and Meekatharra. Today all that remains of this once bustling town is the shell of the majestic Big Bell Hotel, the Catholic Church and the foundations of houses and other buildings.

4. Cue Primary School

Corner of Richmond and Dowley Streets



Cue Primary School, 1982.

The first school, built in 1896, was a single classroom with a 14 foot (4.3m) high iron roof to allow good ventilation. A second classroom to cater for 40 more children was added in 1898 and another was built in 1904 of brick and stone. These three buildings are still in use today.

A plaque at the school gate is dedicated to the memory of a former pupil Helen Helga Wilson (nee Mayne), an Australian author and first historian of the Murchison goldfields who began her schooling at Cue in 1905. She was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in 1980 for her contribution to literature.

5. Cue Shire Hall

Dowley Street towards Robinson Street

Not open to the public



Cue Shire Hall, 1982.

The present Shire Hall started its life as the change rooms at the Big Bell Gold Mine. The original hall was burnt to the ground on the morning of March 4th, 1955, after it was struck by lightning. Although the Cue Volunteer Fire Brigade arrived 10 minutes later and there was a heavy downpour of rain, they could not save the building. The rain, however, prevented the fire spreading to the fences, screens and trees surrounding the building.

The present building was dismantled at Big Bell and brought to Cue. It was officially opened during the Cue Race Club's October meeting in 1957.

6. Masonic Lodge

Corner of Robinson and Dowley Streets

Not open to the public

The Lodge was built in 1899 of timber and galvanised iron, with pressed iron interior. Corrugated iron was used extensively in goldfield areas during this time because it was easily transported by camels.

There are very few buildings of this type remaining in Australia although they are quite common in parts of the United States of America. Murchison Lodge 22 was consecrated on 21 April 1897. They held regular meetings in the building from 1899 to 1979, when they were cancelled due to insufficient numbers. The Masonic Lodge was sold privately in 1985.



The Masonic Lodge, 1981.

7. Old Municipal Chambers

Robinson Street

This handsome white stone building was officially opened on 23 September, 1896 by the Mayor of Cue, Mr O.K. Jaques. Prior to 1896 the Municipality of Cue Council held meetings at the Warden's Court tent. The first meeting of councillors in the new building was conducted without furniture. By the time the next meeting came around, however, the councillors were able to enjoy the luxury of ten Austrian bentwood chairs and two office chairs. These chairs still survive today and are kept at the present Council Chambers in the Gentleman's Club.

The building was originally only one room deep, but was extended and had a verandah added to the side. In October 1980, Council moved to the Cue Post Office and on 1 December 1986 to the Gentleman's Club, following its restoration and refurbishment. This building has since been used by the Cue Crafts Association, the Infant Health Centre, and now the Cue Tourist Centre.



Old Municipal Chambers, 1982.

8. Fire Station

*Corner of Austin and Robinson Streets
Not open to the public*

In 1897 application was made for a reserve for the Fire Station — two and a half acres near the Kintore Blow facing Austin Street. The Volunteer Fire Brigade asked Council for a loan of ten 400 gallon tanks to be placed at the top well near the Police Station. The Town Clerk asked that they be kept filled and checked before pumping ceased each day. Fortunately the present water supply is far more reliable.

The present building was not constructed until 1936 and its unremarkable design is typical of the period. It is important however, because it houses the Cue Volunteer Fire Brigade originally founded by James Paterson Campbell in 1894 and which still serves the town today. Unlike its sister town Day Dawn, which had a Municipal Brigade, the Cue brigade was wholly volunteer and administered its own affairs assisted with finance from the local Council and citizens of the district.

The Cue Volunteer Fire Brigade competed at the first official fire brigade demonstration held under the auspices of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Association, at Fremantle in 1898. Cue was one of the State's most successful fire brigades in competition and won the State Demonstration eight times between 1902 and 1915. John Barkell Holman was Cue Brigade's hydrant man for many years and entered Parliament in 1902. He had a distinguished parliamentary career and

was one of the men responsible for introducing the fire brigade movement in Western Australia. He was elected an honorary member of the Cue Brigade and was the first life member of the W.A. Fire Brigades Association.

9. Kintore Blow

The quartz outcrop near the fire station

It is believed that gold was first discovered in Cue on New Year's Day, 1892 by Michael John Fitzgerald only 30 or 40 metres from the Kintore Blow.



Austin Street, Cue, early 1900s. The water tanks on Kintore Blow can be seen (top left).

The Kintore Blow was the site for the water tanks that provided the first reticulated water scheme. This only serviced Austin Street, and was not particularly successful, but it was many years before a better scheme was provided. On 29 September 1900 an editorial in *The Murchison Advocate* commented that:

It is beyond question a notable achievement that little Cue should have been the first goldfields in Western Australia to provide itself with an efficient water supply, and one that will always be remembered of the Mayor and his colleagues.

The foundation stone was laid by the Lady Mayoress, Mrs B.C. O'Brien, on August 1st, 1900 and pipes were laid to the Murchison Club Hotel on July 15th, 1901.

The site of the old water tanks provides an excellent view of the township. There is a concrete path to the top.

10. Cue Railway Station

Wittenoom Street



Cue Railway Station, 1947.

A railway to Cue had been promised in 1894 by Sir John Forrest, Western Australia's first Premier, and in 1897 the promise was fulfilled. On April 19th, 1897 a special train left Perth carrying 100 guests including Sir John and Lady Forrest and the Hon. Edward Horne Wittenoom, the local member for Central Province and Minister for Mines, Education, and Post and Telegraphs.

At 2.30pm on Tuesday April 20th, 1897 the train arrived in Cue drawn by two powerful engines, the 'Murchison' and 'Day Dawn'. There was a large welcoming crowd of 1,500 waiting for the train and among the passengers was reputed to be Herbert Hoover, the future President of the United States. The guests were welcomed by Mayor Hepburn Gale and Mr Felix Cowle, representing the demonstration committee. Among the welcoming dignitaries was Tom Cue. The visitors were impressed with the elaborate decorations which included a sturdy triumphal arch, festooned with evergreens and bunting and guarded by a group of Aborigines wearing traditional clothing and ceremonial body paints.

A procession led by the Murchison Brass Band moved off to the Cue Council Chambers in Robinson Street, where the guests were officially received by the Mayor, former Mayor O.K. Jaques, and other members of the Cue

Council. There were exhibitions and other gatherings, and the next day the Cue Races were held. On the Thursday morning the Parliamentary train returned to Perth via Geraldton.

The Cue Railway Station was built in 1898, the year after the railway line was opened. The railway line closed in 1978 and the railway station was restored in 1986.



Arrival of the Premier and Party for the opening of the Mullewa - Cue Railway, 20 April 1897.

11. Rotunda

Austin Street

In front of the old bank building in Austin Street is the charming Victorian-style rotunda. Here, for many years, the town band played on Saturday evenings during late-night shopping hours. It was built in 1904 on the site of an old well (reputed to have started a typhoid epidemic!) and is an octagonal timber construction with cast iron decoration and a corrugated iron roof. It is of considerable architectural worth and value as there are few structures of this type remaining in Western Australia. The drinking fountain in the centre was added in 1934.

12. Austin Street Precinct

The cultural and architectural significance of the Austin Street precinct has been recognised by the National Trust of Australia (WA), demonstrating "a goldmining townscape at the turn of the century which has changed little over the years".

Significant buildings in the precinct include the Public Buildings, former Bank of NSW, Rotunda, former gaol, Gentleman's Club, Cue Hotel, Murchison Club Hotel and Bells Emporium, all of which remain substantially the same as when they were built late last century.

It was on the site of Austin Street that Michael Fitzgerald is believed to have made the first discovery of gold in Cue, below Kintore Blow.

13. Government Buildings

Austin Street



Town Clock and Post Office, 1981.

These buildings were constructed of limestone slabs, which were quarried locally. They form probably the most impressive feature of the townscape and were designed to house the offices of a number of government departments, including the Warden's Court, Post Office, and Police Station, as well as living quarters for some of the officials.

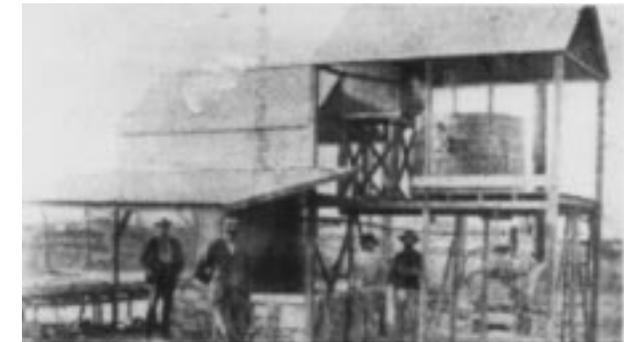
The structure was completed mostly in 1896, but because telegraphic business was increasing at a rapid pace due to frequent new gold finds in the area, substantial new additions were made in 1897 and 1898. The building is still used for government purposes.

At the front of the Post Office is the town clock, which had been promised to the Mayor of Cue by Sir John Forrest in 1897. In February 1898, following alterations to the front of the Post Office to provide for the clock tower, the clock was placed in position. The pendulum weighs nearly one hundredweight (approximately 50kg). Winding the clock involves climbing a steep ladder up into the tower, and winding the pulley that lifts the counter-weight through the hole in the roof and back into the tower. This needs to be done every 24 hours, and over the years has been a job not much relished by Australia Post staff.

The clock's time-keeping is erratic since the cable holding the weight is susceptible to atmospheric conditions.

This completes the town walk. To continue the Heritage Trail, drive north along Austin Street and then Great Northern Highway to the site of the Old Brewery Cellars.

14. Old Brewery Cellars



Approximately 600 metres north of town on Great Northern Highway.

The Cue Brewery, 1896

The Cue Brewery was located on top of a bluff to the north of town. This location was ideal, for the rock was cut away and cellars made in the ground, providing a

cool spot. When a Mr Phillipson started the brewery around 1900 he had one cellar, but when the Cue Brewery Company took over, two more cellars were added. They were all connected at the back by a 'drive' (a type of ventilation shaft) to give a uniform circulation of air. The cellars were capable of storing 60 hogsheads (large casks, usually containing 50 gallons). The company also bottled beer and stout. To ensure prompt delivery two drays and a lorry were employed under the management of Mr George Bone.

15. Old Hospital

Ruins can be seen from Great Northern Highway approximately 600 metres south of town

In the early years prior to the construction of a hospital, many gold-diggers in Cue were affected by enteric fever (typhoid). As a result a Doctor Monteath was sent in July 1892 to provide a much needed medical service to the area. Assisted by his wife, Monteath worked in a canvas and bough shed a few miles out of town and used this as a temporary hospital. In July 1895 a new hospital, built of locally quarried stone, was ready to receive patients. The Matron, Mrs Crothers, was assisted by three nurses and an orderly.



The Cue Hospital, 1897.

The hospital was situated half a mile below the town, sheltered under the brow of a hill facing the recreation grounds. Spacious wards and shady verandahs were provided and the main building was made of local stone and contained the men's ward with a bathroom attached. South of this was a small private ward, also with an attached bathroom. The female ward adjoined the kitchen at the rear of the main building. The hospital closed in 1942 and today only a few ruins remain to indicate where it once stood.

16. Day Dawn

Turn off Great Northern Highway at the Golden Crown Minesite sign, approximately 800 metres south of town.

Although Cue's sister town of Day Dawn has nearly completely disappeared, for much of its early history the two towns developed side by side. Shortly after the initial discovery of gold in Cue, Edward Heffernan pegged out a reef, some five kilometres south of the original find, which he called the Day Dawn Reef.

Mining on the reef had only limited success until 1898, when the Great Fingall Company took over the operation and developed a rich new shoot. The Great Fingall then became the premier gold mine in Western Australia. Mine workings extended to a vertical depth of 700m and were worked to 450m from a shaft on which now stands the remains of a large wooden ore bin. Below 450m the mine was serviced by an internal shaft, thus necessitating double handling of all ore mined below the 450m level. The Great Fingall closed in 1918, and the town, which supported a population of around 1,500, declined rapidly.



The Great Fingall Gold Mine at Day Dawn, c. 1910.

The large open cut that can be seen at Day Dawn is the result of a cave-in that occurred on October 12th, 1921. Three men were working in the mine at the time and each miraculously escaped when they were washed up the shaft by the mine water displaced by the collapsing of the old stopes (steplike structures built to facilitate the extraction of ore).

Day Dawn once had seven hotels, a soft drink factory, post office, race course, school, railway station and shopping area. Today all that remains is the Mine Office, the ruins of the post office and a few stone remnants.



View of Day Dawn, 1916, from the Great Fingall Sand Dump.

It was at Day Dawn that Alfred Canning assembled equipment and supplies for his two expeditions which pioneered a stock route from the Kimberley to the Goldfields (later known as the Canning Stock Route). Before departing from Day Dawn on the second expedition in March 1908, Canning and his party were honoured by the Mayor of Cue and other dignitaries at a small function held in the Cue Hotel.

The stock route reserve still cuts through the Shire of Cue and the remains of the old wagon body now standing in the town is reputed to have been used on the route.

*For those interested in exploring the 1200km stock route surveyed by Alfred Canning in 1906, the **Canning Stock Route** has been signposted as part of the Heritage Trails Network for use by experienced four-wheel-drive expeditions. Further details are available from the Western Australian Heritage Committee on (08) 9322 4375.*

17. Great Fingall Mine Office

Day Dawn

The mine office was built by Italian stonemasons on the Great Fingall Mining Company's lease at Day Dawn c1900. The mine closed in April 1918. On 23 August 1902 *The Murchison Advocate* commented that the offices:

are built of dressed stone and evidently no expense has been spared in making them not only an architectural beauty to Day Dawn, but

also an object lesson for the Murchison in mason work. The rooms are lofty, windows numerous, and the whole structure is surrounded by a wide and massive verandah.



Great Fingall Mine Office, 1987.

*This completes the Cue Heritage Trail. For those interested in other historic mining towns the **Eastern Goldfields, Cattlin Creek, Perenjori-Rothsay and Sandstone** heritage trails explore the development and fluctuating fortunes of early goldmining centres in Western Australia from the boom years of the 1890s to the present day. Further details on these trails are available from the Heritage Council of Western Australian on (08) 9221 4177.*



Heffernan's Tree at Day Dawn in 1897, named after Edward Heffernan who discovered the Day Dawn Reef in 1892.

The **Cue Heritage Trail** was developed by the Shire of Cue which gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the following:

- Cue Bicentennial Community Committee
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- Anne Young

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Pages 5, 6, 9, 14 Courtesy Shire of Cue

Page 19 Courtesy Mr Michael Betham

Further Reading

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