



# Significant Events

## Community

### Some important events in the history of the Gosford LGA.

**Before 1788:** What later became known as Brisbane Water was the home of the coastal Guringai (Ku-ring-gai) people. The Guringai occupied an area which extended from the northern side of Sydney Harbour, then along the coast to the lower reaches of Lake Macquarie. The Darkingung people occupied a huge area, reaching west of Mangrove Creek to Rylstone, north to Cessnock and the Wollombi areas.

**March 1788:** Governor Arthur Phillip and a small group of officers and marines made a brief exploration of Broken Bay and a tributary called the "north-east arm". Phillip made a further exploration in 1789. In time this came to be called "Brisbane Water".

**October 1823:** James Webb, a former soldier who arrived in NSW in 1790, received permission to temporarily occupy 300 acres in Brisbane Water for a cattle run. He later received a land grant of 100 acres on the western side of The Rip. James is known today as the first white settler of Brisbane Water, and its first shipbuilder.

**1826:** Work commences on the Great North Road, linking Sydney with Newcastle and the newly settled agricultural lands of the Hunter Valley. At that time, the road represented the greatest public works project undertaken in the colony. Engineering practice, using mainly the labour of convict iron gangs, was equal to the best in England.

**1827:** The original Gosford watch-house was built in Donnison Street, near the Workcover building site. It was a three-roomed shingle-roofed slab timber structure that quickly became inadequate. Around 1833 the first Gosford courthouse was added. The first Police Magistrate, Willoughby Bean was appointed in 1826.

**1828:** Brisbane Water population 100 persons. Aboriginal population believed to have numbered several hundred.

**July 1835:** First post office established in the charge of Jonathan Warner.

**1839:** Governor Gipps names the town of Gosford. Gosford is believed to have been named after Archibald Acheson, the 2nd Earl of Gosford.

**1841:** District population 1,090 persons.

**1843:** Local Government commences with the constitution of The District Council of Brisbane Water. This Council had limited funds, resources and powers, and dissolved in 1859.



**January 1, 1980:** The City of Gosford was proclaimed.. the first Mayor of the City was Don Leggett A.M.





**1858:** Church of England erected at East Gosford. In 1906 Christ Church was moved stone-by-stone to Mann Street south, Gosford, where it stands today as St. Mary's.

**February 1865:** Gosford Public School was first established in a building used for church purposes. In 1877 a purpose-built sandstone school opened on a site at the top of Georgiana Terrace, overlooking the town.

**1882:** First purpose-built Gosford Post and Telegraph Office opened.

**1885:** Gosford became a "town". Gosford's newspaper, the Gosford Times, was published for the first time.

**1887:** John Bennett Whiteway was elected the first Mayor of the Gosford Borough Council. Gosford Railway station opened, issuing in an era of prosperity for the district.

**May 1889:** The original Hawkesbury River Railway Bridge was opened.

**1891:** District population 5,154 persons.

**May 1898:** The paddle steamer Maitland was wrecked at Cape Three Points, near Killcare. On her way from Sydney to Newcastle, in what was reported as the worst gale experienced to that date, the Maitland lost power and was caught in the Bombora off Cape Three Points. The Maitland was thrown onto a rock shelf. 26 lives were lost.

**1902:** A system of street lighting comes to Gosford for the first time, when seven kerosene lamps are commissioned.

**1905:** The Pioneer Ferry Service, operated by the Sisters of Saint Joseph, commenced operations for Kincumber Orphanage patrons and visitors. This was the beginning of regular ferry services on Brisbane Water.

**October 1906:** George Margin, manufacturer of cordials "and all kinds of summer drinks" commences business on the site of today's Mitre 10 hardware store.

**January 1907:** Erina Shire Council formed.

**November 1913:** First race meeting held at Gosford Racecourse.

**January 1929:** Gosford High School opened, the first High School in the district.

**1930:** Construction work on the Pacific Highway was completed to Gosford.

**September 1937:** The Regal Cinema opens on corner of Mann and Donnison Streets.

**March 1938:** Town water comes to Gosford, when the Mayor turns on the new water supply direct from Mooney Dam.

**January 1939:** Fire Station completed on the corner of Gertrude Street (Henry Parry Drive) and William Street. Mayor accepts people's decision to allow Sunday sport.

**1942:** Brisbane Water County Council came into existence.

**1945:** Gosford District Hospital was opened, as well as the Pacific Highway road bridge over the Hawkesbury River at Mooney Mooney.

**January 1, 1947:** The Shires of Gosford and Wyong are constituted.

**August 1948:** Gosford Shire Library Service commences operation.

**December 1955:** Gosford Olympic Pool was officially opened on the waterfront.

**1958:** The Australian Reptile Park was first established by Eric Worrell.

**January 1960:** Railway electrification from Sydney to Gosford completed.

**June 1963:** Alfred Ingram Chapman, Gosford businessman, dies. He became the town's largest benefactor when he left over £200,000 (approx. \$400,000) to ten district charities.

**December 1965:** Hawkesbury-Calga section of Sydney-Newcastle Expressway completed.

**1968:** The Sydney Region outline Plan was published, which identified the Gosford-Wyong Region as a possible growth centre for up to half a million people.

**November 19, 1971:** Radio station 2GO first goes to air.

**May 1974:** Huge storms hit the Central Coast, causing the deaths of several people and millions of dollars of damage to homes and property.

**June 1974:** The Rip Bridge is opened by the Acting Premier of NSW, Sir Charles Cutler.

**1975:** Old Sydney Town was officially opened.



**1976:** District population 73,410 persons.

**January 1, 1980:** The City of Gosford was proclaimed. The first Mayor of the City of Gosford was Don Leggett A.M.

**December 1986:** A 15 kilometre section of the Sydney-Newcastle Freeway was opened between Calga and Somersby.

**1987:** Central Coast Fair, the largest single level shopping centre in the Southern hemisphere, opens at Erina. The name of the complex was later changed to Erina Fair.

**1988:** Gosford's major Bicentennial project, the Laycock Street Theatre opens.

**1994:** Severe bushfires ring the Central Coast. The F3 freeway was blocked by smoke, and many locals take shelter in the Central Coast Leagues Club.

**December 1995:** The Brian McGowan Bridge was opened by the Hon. Michael Knight.

**1996:** District population 144,840 persons.

**April 1999:** Poultry farms in the Mangrove Mountain district were quarantined after the discovery of Newcastle Disease.

**April 2000:** Gosford Regional Art Gallery opens at Caroline Bay, East Gosford.

**August 28, 2000:** Gosford City hosts a huge community celebration marking the arrival of the Olympic Torch Relay.

**2001:** The district population reaches 154,654 persons.

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**1885: Gosford becomes a town... Gosford's newspaper, The Gosford Times, was published for the first time.**

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