

MEDIA RELEASE

27 May 2024

To: Local Media

New life for the Swinging Bridge.

The Shire of Collie is pleased to announce that the documentation and costing phase for the repair and refurbishment of the much-loved Collie heritage swinging bridge is now drawing to a close.

The Shire will soon be entering into construction procurement, the extent of which will be informed by external funding and budgeting for the 2024/25 financial year.

The bridge has now regrettably been closed off to the public until the necessary repair works have been completed. Public safety is paramount to the Shire of Collie, and it has now been recognised that the primary timber structure of the bridge, which is now approaching 27 years of age, has reached the end of its useful life.

The bridge holds many memories for many people and has a unique place in the Collie community's heritage. It is one of only a few long-standing suspension footbridges in Western Australia.

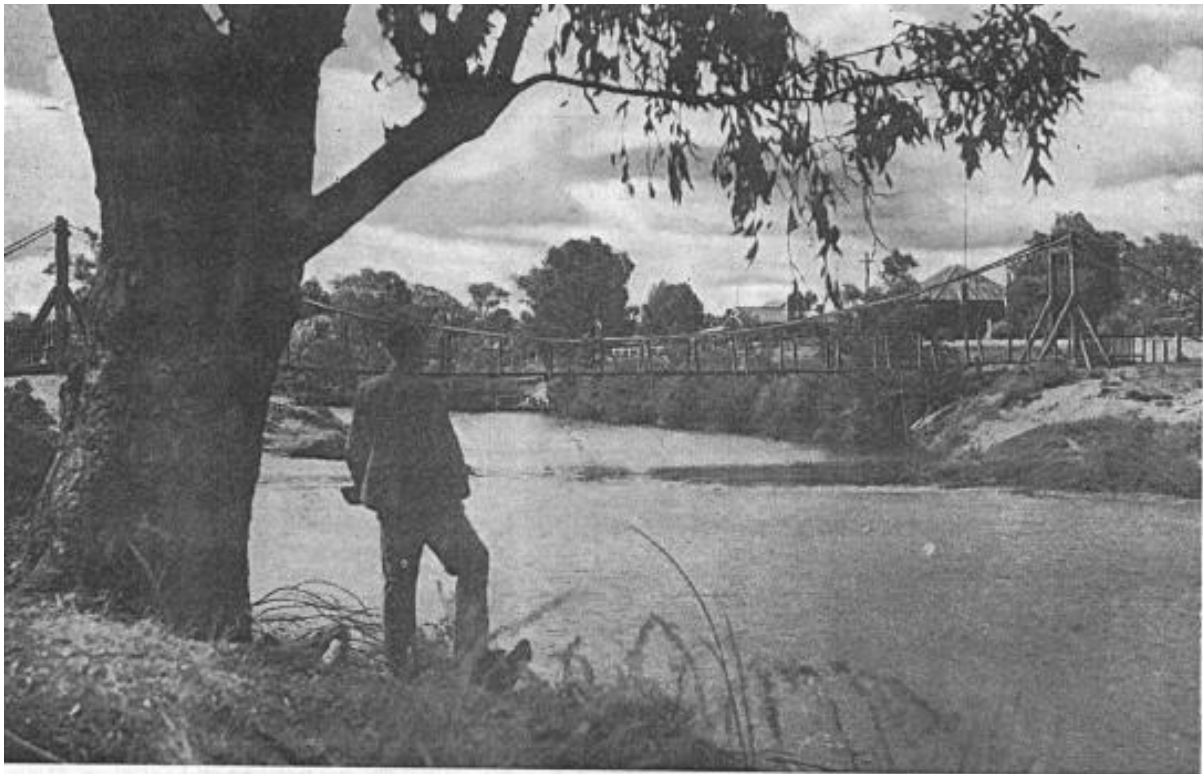


Remedial works 1998- Collie Local History Collection

Residents of the Colliefields Estate on the north side of the river originally petitioned the Collie Roads Board in 1904 for permission to construct a footbridge over the river to provide pedestrian access to the recreation reserve and the commercial centre of Collie.

This timber and steel suspension footbridge has gone through many subsequent periods of closure and restoration. The last instance of restoration took place in 1998, and was achieved by funding from the Western Australian Tourism Commission, and from further donations and materials. The timber pylons were donated by Saunders Mill.

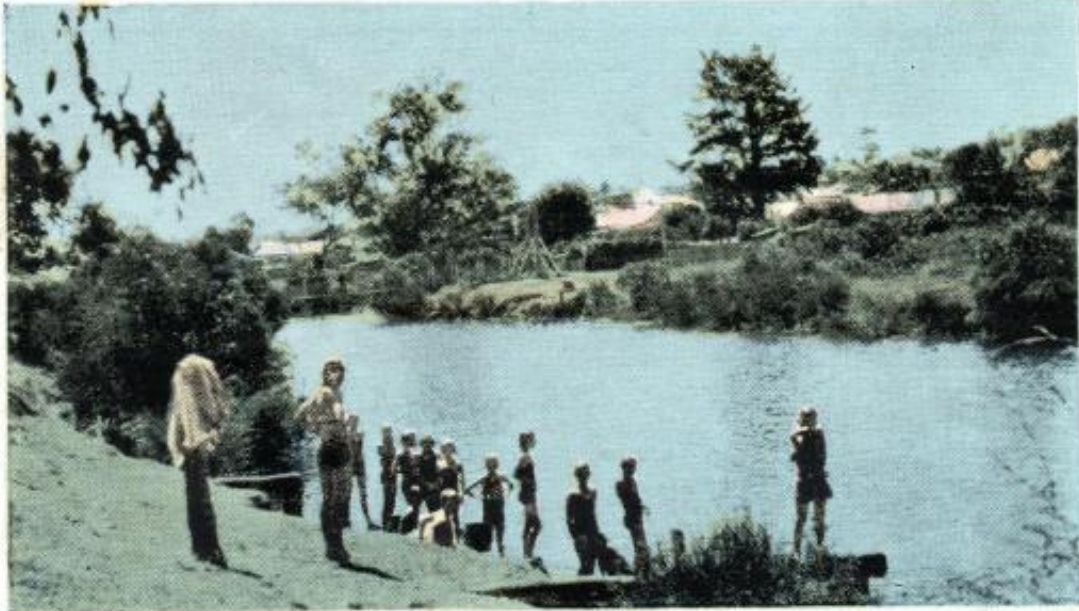
Whilst the fabric may have changed over time, the location and key design elements of this suspension bridge have remained the same for the last 119 years.



Still Waters

Suspension Bridge spanning the Collie River at the River Avenue Swimming Pool, a popular town bathing place

The above picture, taken for the Collie Mail in 1940, show the suspension bridge.



Swing Bridge and Swimming Pool, Collie, W.A.

This picture shows young friends at the Collie River Pool in 1945, with the suspension bridge in the background.

The Shire of Collie is committed to ensure that the bridge will be re-opened to the public as soon as possible in a fully refurbished state, and to see that it will continue to be fit for purpose as a pedestrian link as originally intended 1904, well into the foreseeable future.

“While we regret the inconvenience caused by closing the bridge to the public, a quick fix was never going to be a viable option,” in a joint statement sent to *Collie Bulletin*

“The bridge needs to undergo substantial repair and refurbishment.

“Our foremost concern is people’s safety.”

The Shire of Collie and the Collie Council would like to thank the community for their cooperation and patience, as our heritage Swinging Bridge gets the much-needed care for a new life.

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