



# LEONORA

## 3 Day Itinerary

### ABOUT US

Leonora is the service centre for the mining, exploration and well established pastoral industry. Boasting a well-equipped business hub, we welcome travellers as we are a one-stop-shop for your needs.

### FACILITES

- Hospital & Doctors Surgery
- Pharmacy
- Police Station
- Post Office
- Accommodation
- Mechanics
- Trade Services
- Supermarket
- Service Stations
- Pubs & Cafe's
- Airport
- Recreation Centre & Gym
- Community Resource Centre

Gwalia Historical Precinct



Leonora Loop Trails



Leonora Heritage Trail



### CONTACT US

[www.leonora.wa.gov.au](http://www.leonora.wa.gov.au)  
[admin@leonora.wa.gov.au](mailto:admin@leonora.wa.gov.au)

(08) 9037 6044  
16 Tower Street, Leonora, WA, 6438

# Stay Awhile!



Our beautiful country is a remote country, we want you to remember that. Most of our roads are in good condition but travel conditions can be challenging at times. We have put together some good tips to remember when you come visit.

## Before You Set Out

1

- Mobile phone coverage can be limited - Telstra is the only provider that works this remote - do not rely on this always being available.
- Let someone know where you are going and when to expect you back.
- Be sure to pack water, fuel, spare tyre(s), tools, a tow rope and a shovel... at least!
- Consider carrying a satellite phone or an EPIRB in case of emergencies.

## Road Conditions

2

- The Goldfields Highway to Leonora is sealed if travelling via Kalgoorlie, and you will find if coming from Geraldton across to Leonora via Sandstone it is also sealed.
- Large parts of our tourist trails are unsealed.
- Most of our roads are in good condition but can suffer after rain or prolonged dry spells.
- Watch for bog holes when wet and corrugation when dry. (tip-Pick the smoothest line and anticipate badly corrugated sections by the changes in the road. By anticipating the changing conditions you will slow down naturally where required, without braking, and create a smoother ride).
- Creek crossings can be washed out - always slow down as damage can be hard to see.
- If possible, check with the Shire of Leonora before setting out for road closures.
- While travel in a 2WD vehicle is very possible, with care, a 4WD is preferable.

## Driving Safely

3

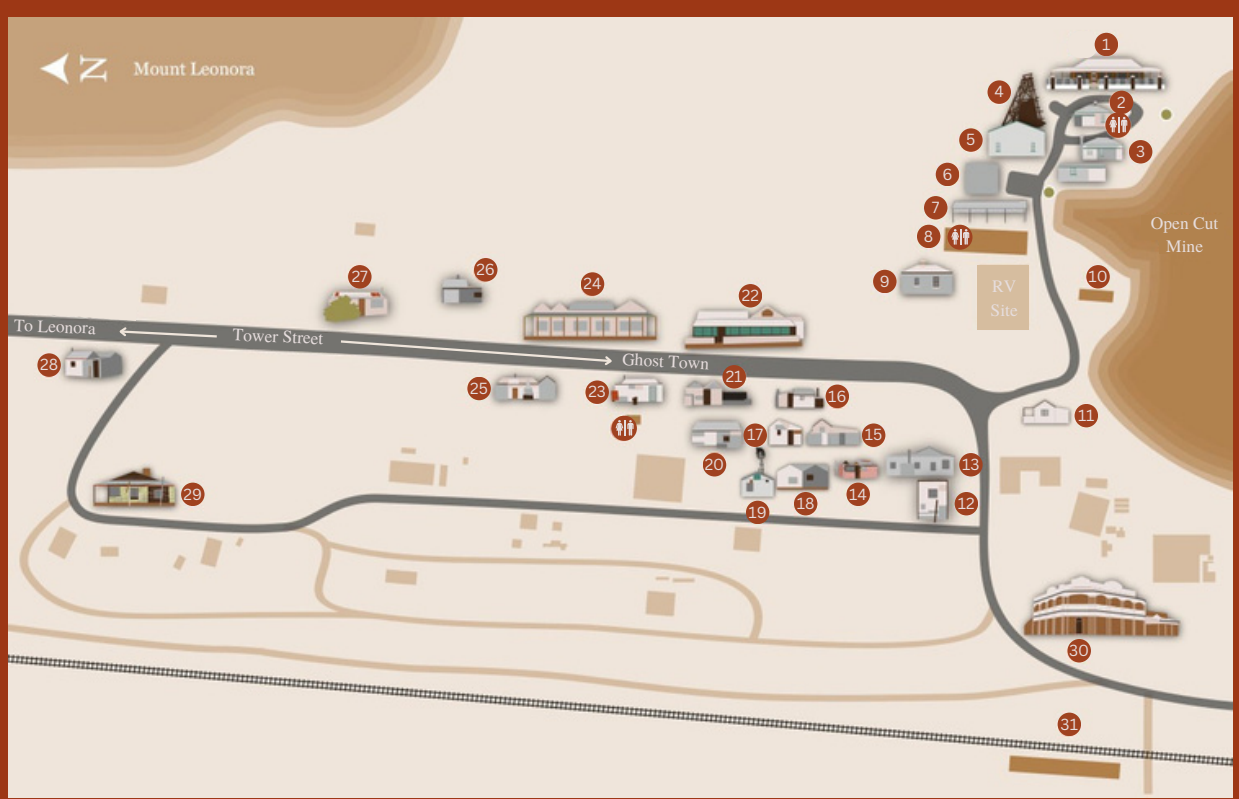
- Maximum speeds of 80kph is recommended on all unsealed roads.
- Watch carefully for livestock and wildlife, especially near dawn or dusk.
- Avoid driving at night, unless absolutely necessary.
- Dust will often indicate oncoming traffic - slow down, and move to the side of the road.
- If you break down or have an accident - stay with your vehicle!

## Other Important Information

4

- Leonora's Loop Trails pass through a number of active pastoral properties, please do not travel off-road without permission from the owner or manager.
- Enjoy trying to 'strike it rich' but do keep off active mining leases.
- Old mine workings can be dangerous. Be very careful, as many shafts are unmarked and unstable.
- If travelling with a dog, never let it roam free. 1080 baits are scattered through the region to control wild dogs and foxes and it is toxic. Baits come in all different shapes and sizes.

# Gwalia Historical Precinct



- Hoover House 1
- Assay Office 3
- Winder Shed 5
- Ken - Midland Train 7
- Engineers House (Private Residence) 9
- Art's House 11
- Sly Grog Shop 13
- Unnamed Camp 15
- De Rubeis 17
- Garage 19
- Martinzolli's 21
- Major's Boarding House 23
- T. William's 25
- Jack Longa's 27
- School Masters House 29
- Railway Station Platform 31
- Mine Office 2
- Headframe 4
- Pastoral Shed 6
- Reception/ Gift Shop/ Vehicle Shed 8
- Swimming Pool 10
- Lock-Up 12
- Pink House 14
- T. Baletiche's 16
- Function House 18
- Shift Boss' House 20
- Patroni's Guest Home 22
- VB & MM Mazza Store 24
- Burglar Bill's 26
- Edna Wilcox's 28
- Gwalia State Hotel (Private Property) 30



# Leonora Heritage Trail



- The National Bank of Australasia 1
- Central Hotel 2
- Lamont Brothers 3
- Willey Brothers Bakery 4
- Mrs Russell's Buildings 5
- Butcher Shops 6
- Commercial Hotel 7
- Exchange Hotel 8
- Cobb & Co 9
- Andresen's Residence 10
- Barnes Federal Theatre 11
- Barnes Leonora Hotel 12
- WA Snell & Co 13
- Court's Cycle Agency 14
- Semken's Undertakers & Stables 15
- Birchley & Coates Store 16
- Andresen's General Store 17
- Challenge Hotel 18
- Police Precinct 19
- Fire Station & Mechanics Institute 20
- Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church 21
- Masonic Lodge 22
- Warden's Court & Mining Registrar's Office 23
- Leonora State School 24
- Presbyterian Church 25
- Grand Hotel & Picture Gardens 26
- White House Hotel 27
- Mount Leonora Miner Newspaper 28
- Leonora Post Office 29
- Leonora Shire Office 30



Walk amongst the living ghost town of Gwalia and the trail of historical buildings in Leonora and immerse yourself in the history of the miners and the families who built this town.

# Day 1

### Accommodation for 2 night

Hoover House Bed & Breakfast

Price: \$380 - Continental breakfast included

Location: Gwalia Historical Precinct, 24/7 secure self-check-in

Queen room with ensuite and views of the historic Sons of Gwalia mine and the gardens of Hoover House.



Photo Ops

### Cafes

Hoover House Cafe

The Food Van

### Restaurants

Central Hotel

White House Hotel

Leo's Country Kitchen



9:00 am

### Gwalia Museum

Free, donations welcome

16a Tower Street, Leonora, WA, 6438

Be sure to look for the red Eyejack logo and QR codes to make your augmented reality tour at the museum immersive and unforgettable.

11:30 am

### Gwalia Ghost Town

Free, donations welcome

15 Manning St, Leonora, WA, 6438

Step inside the quaint cottages built of corrugated iron, timber and whitewashed hessian and imagine a miner's wife cooking dinner on the cast iron range, while her husband toils far underground to support his family and their children recite their lessons in the State school. Look through the windows of Mazza's Store, where the shopper could buy everything from two pounds of flour for the day's baking to a length of fabric to make a frock for a dance at the State Hotel.

2:30 pm

### Information Centre

Free

69 Tower Street, Leonora, WA, 6438

Stop in and pick up the Leonora Heritage Guidebook and the guidebook for the Leonora Loop Trails.

4:00 pm

### Supermarket Options

Leonora Supermarket

75 Tower St, Leonora, WA, 6438

Coles Express

Lot 121 Tower St, Leonora, WA, 6438

Grab supplies for a picnic lunch for 2 days on the Loop trails and if you're up for cooking, grab some produce for the BBQ at Hoover House.

10:30 am

### Hoover House Cafe

\$10+

16a Tower St, Leonora, WA, 6438

Enjoy a Devonshire tea on the verandah of Hoover House which was commissioned during Herbert Hoover's time as the mine manager. The views of the open-cut mine from the manicured lawn of Hoovers House can't be compared. The café has a delicious menu of cakes and coffee you can purchase.

1:00 pm

### Lunch Options:

\$15-\$40

Central Hotel

70 Tower Street, Leonora, WA, 6438

White House Hotel

120 Tower St, Leonora, WA, 6438

The Food Van Shop

72a Tower St, Leonora WA 6438

Leonora has many available options for meals in town, whether your preference be to dine in or take away. Other options in town also include: Hoover House Cafe, Coles express, Leo's country kitchen, and Liberty service station

3:00 pm

### Heritage Trail

(Leonora Heritage Guidebook)

Free

Information Centre, Tower St, Leonora, WA, 6438

Start: Leonora Information Centre & Library

Finish: Shire of Leonora Office, Tower Street

Time: 1 hour

Length: 1.6km

Sites/Stops: 30

Your confirmation email from Hoover House Bed & Breakfast has the check-in details for getting to the house after hours.



# THE LEONORA LOOP TRAILS

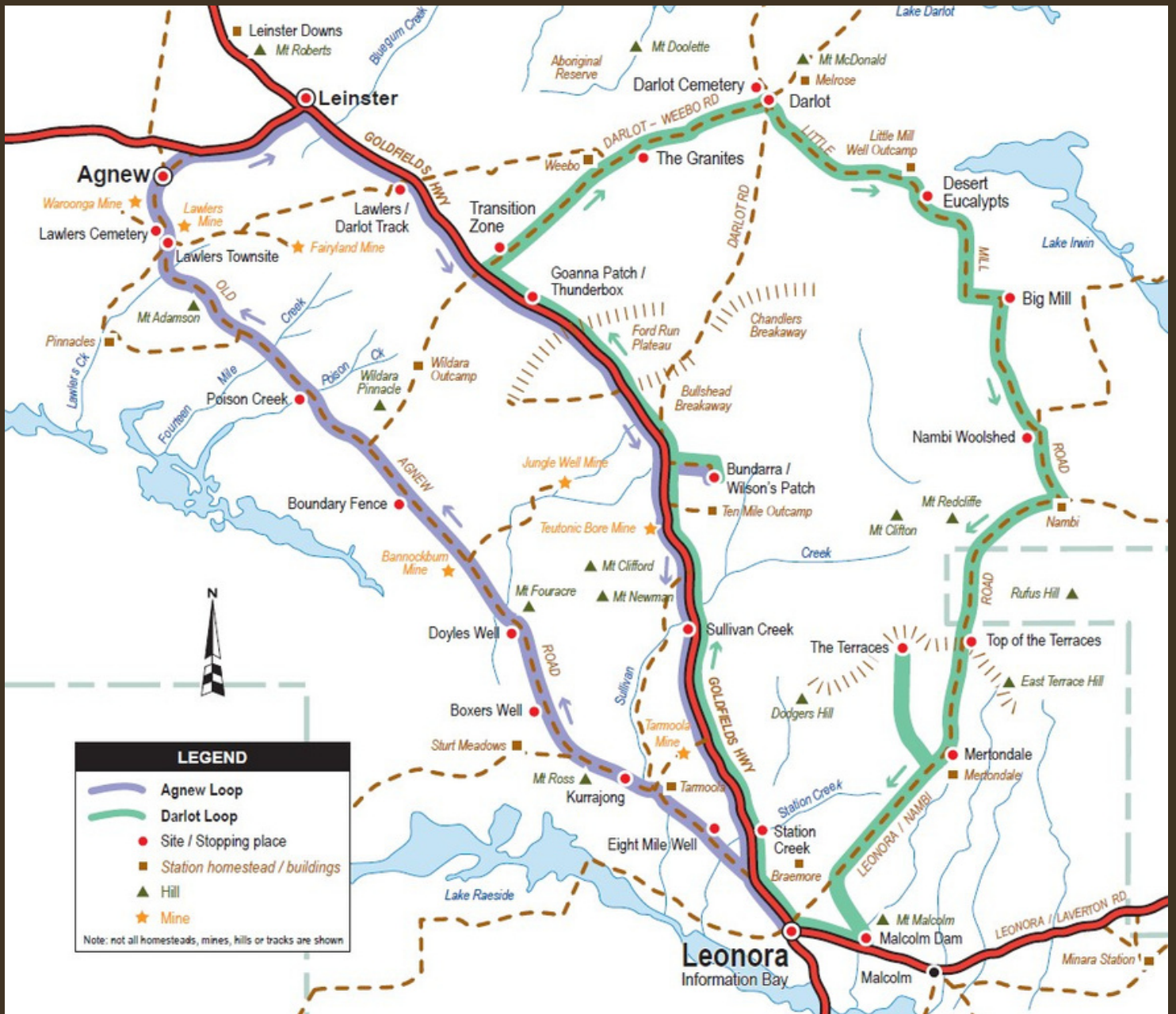
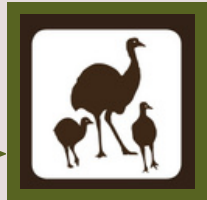
Agnew

Darlot



Full day outing - 298.4kms

Full day outing - 345.8kms



# Day 2

The discovery of gold in the 1890's sparked a rush to this region - but the country the settlers came to was hot, harsh and horribly unforgiving. This trail tells many of the

stories of what was often a struggle for survival as Europeans set out to make their way in a land that was both foreign and pitiless.

## Agnew Loop Trail

298.4kms, 50% gravel road



Photo Ops

15 sites

1

### Eight Mile Well

#### Information Bay to Eight Mile Well (14.7km)

The trail commences at the information bay and passes through Leonora, heading north out of town on the Goldfields Highway. You may wish to stop at the Visitor Information Centre on your way past. The gold mines that spawned the town are clearly visible on the left, including Edward "Doodah" Sullivan's original "Johannesburg Lease", which is now the Trump Mine. Sullivan is buried nearby, on a short track leading east off the highway. The landscape visible from the road is clearly degraded, as is often the case close to a townsite. Buffel grass and over-grazing have combined to produce a heavily disturbed environment. Mulga becomes the dominant species after you turn onto the Old Agnew Road.



2

### Kurrajong

#### Eight Mile Well to Kurrajong (18km, 32.7 cumulative)

From Eight Mile Well the trail continues north-west on the Old Agnew Road. Evidence of the historic stock route that followed the road in this area is still visible in the degraded nature of much of the vegetation on these mulga flats. Explore the remnants of the old Chaffers Mine site if you wish, but please do not salvage any "artefacts" you may find. Crossing Sullivan Creek is a highlight - its fringe of river gums is visible from quite a distance, and they make a cool and lovely border to the actual watercourse. Stop awhile, and take a stroll up or down the creek - you may spot bird nests in the branches.



# Agnew Loop Trail

## Continued.....

3

### Boxers Well

#### Kurrajong to Boxers Well (11.3km, 44km cumulative)

A few kilometres after leaving Kurrajong the trail passes through the low stony hills that attracted early prospectors, including Cutmore, Sullivan and Doyle.

Several significant mines sprang up here, including the Diorite King, the Little Wonder and the King of the Hills. You can see many old shafts south of the road as you pass through the hills - but if you stop to explore, take care!

Old maps show two historic stock routes heading broadly north/north-west from

Leonora. One is Reserve 9699, usually shown as the "Leonora-Peak Hill Stock Route"

and the other is Reserve 17398, most commonly referred to as the "Leonora-Wiluna Stock Route". This latter route is thought to have connected with the Canning Stock Route, but information is now somewhat sketchy.

What is clear is that early movement of large numbers of stock along a relatively narrow corridor has left a lasting impact on this landscape. Understorey vegetation is almost non-existent, the result of sustained heavy grazing and the trampling impact of thousands of hard hooves. This impact is particularly noticeable around water points like Boxers Well, where stock would have often gathered for an overnight stop. Naturally, ongoing pressure from pastoral stock coming in to drink would have only exacerbated this situation.

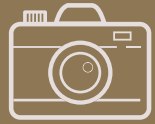


Photo Ops

4

### Doyles Well

#### Boxers Well to Doyles Well (14.8km, 58.8km cumulative)

Over-grazed gibber (stony) flats dominate the first part of this section. Then, some 5km into the drive, there is evidence of a major research project that took place on Sturt Meadows Station between 1998 and 2004-look for the fenced earth bund and unlikely rivergums.

As you approach Doyles Well you will encounter a series of tree-lined watercourses - these make up the combined drainage systems of Victory and Turkey Creeks, which flow southward into Lake Raeside. You may want to stop and walk around Cutmore's Well, sunk by the first prospecting party to come to this area in 1894. The remnants of the original long drinking trough are still evident, but the well is open, so please take care!



5

### Boundary Fence

#### Doyles Well to Boundary Fence (21.9km, 80.7 cumulative)

Mulga flats dominate this section of the trail. However, the Bannockburn gold operations - that have been in a care and maintenance phase since 1998 - are a significant feature, with the operating plant immediately to the left of the road and two massive dams to the right. Interestingly, one of these dams has been revegetated while the other has not.





# Agnew Loop Trail

Continued.....



Photo Ops

6

## Poison Creek

### Boundary Fence to Poison Creek (18.3km, 99km cumulative)

Topographical maps show significant north-to-south drainage patterns over much of this section. Rocky outcrops (including Wildara Pinnacle, 494m) send water spilling onto the road - where it is frequently trapped, or at least diverted into artificial drains, resulting in substantial areas of "road drought" on the southern (left-hand) side. Poison Creek is a classic rangelands watercourse, lined with gnarled yet graceful river gums. It is well worth walking the 500 metres downstream from the parking area to the main pool in the creek bed. Because of its depth this pool retains water for longer than most, making it highly attractive to travellers, past and present. The old well, some 200 metres beyond the site, is also worth investigating.

Sometime in the late 1890s James Nicolas (of Cobb & Co fame) registered "Business Area 23" adjacent to the pool here. This quickly became a change-station on the Lawlers-Leonora coach route, and by 1902 the premises had become a licensed inn. It is not known how long the inn here was in operation, though it would have continued to serve as a staging post at least until vehicles replaced coaches in 1910. It is thought the inn may have been situated near the old well, some 200 metres north of the parking area.



7

## Lawlers Townsite

### Poison Creek to Lawlers Townsite (27.2km, 126.2km cumulative)

Once again creeks and watercourses dominate this section, especially in the second half. All of this water drains off the low hills and breakaways that parallel the road on the northern side. Take care at these crossing, as they can erode after storm events. Look at a map of this part of Western Australia, and try to imagine just how remote Lawlers was in the early days. The nearest points of "civilisation" were Mt Magnet and Coolgardie. One was more than 320km to the west, while the other some 360km south. In both cases the land between was hot, dry and brutally inhospitable. Getting to and from Lawlers was a major challenge.

In 1896 the town was linked to Coolgardie by bicycle courier, and to Mt Magnet by a weekly coach trip taking three days. The Leonora-Lawlers coach run was well establish with a fortnightly mail run using camels, and the following year the Coolgardie-Lawlers telegraph line was completed. Transport and communication services sprang up remarkably quickly, especially given the harsh conditions. Now we can drive here in little more than an hour from Leonora, and all in air conditioned comfort!





# Agnew Loop Trail Continued.....

8

## Lawlers Cemetery

### Lawlers to Lawlers Cemetery (2.2km, 128.4km cumulative)

The turn off for the cemetery is only 2.1km away from Lawlers townsite, so keep an eye out for the signage!

9

## Agnew

### Lawlers Cemetery to Agnew (6.8km, 135.2km cumulative)

By 1900 the many small leases were being consolidated into a number of larger holdings. Primary amongst these was the East Murchison United Limited (or EMU as it was known). To facilitate the efficient transport of ore from the scattered mine sites, EMU set about building a light tramway.

By 1901 6km of light steam tramway had been built, to bring ore from the Donegal leases to the main crushing plant. The tramway doubled as a woodline, bringing in firewood to keep the steam boilers working. The following year the line was extended northward, to the Waroonga lease. In total almost 20km of line was laid, at the narrow gauge of just 2 foot, on a raised embankment which can still be found in places, some distance west of the road.

10

## Leinster

### Agnew to Leinster (24.1km, 159.3km cumulative)

Modern Leinster is an excellent example of a purpose-built outback mining town. But the European history of this place extends well before its construction in 1976.

In 1895 Julius Anderson discovered a quartz reef "bristling with gold" about 30km north-east of Lawlers. Ironically, it was at a spot bypassed by hundreds of others who'd rushed past here to the new strike at Darlot a few months earlier. He and his prospecting mates registered Lease GML 15 here, and named it Leinster, most likely after the Irish province of the same name. Anticipating the need for a future townsite, the Government set aside a large reserve nearby and called it Leinster Common.

A few years later the mine had given up the best of its gold, and the mine manager's house, a substantial brick residence, became the Leinster Downs Station homestead. It was gutted by fire in 1936, but was soon rebuilt. For several decades the property was in the White family, who suffered through a crushing series of family tragedies. In the late 1970s it became the Agnew Pastoral Company, and not long after was sold to Western Mining, who were in the throes of developing the Leinster Nickel Operations - and the modern mining town you see here today. At that time it covered 361,544 hectares. In the late 1990s the station was still running some 5000 sheep, but in recent years it has been de-stocked.

11

## Lawlers-Darlot Track

### Leinster to Lawlers-Darlot Track (20.6km, 179.9km cumulative)

As you leave this shady spot in Leinster, it is worth noting that over a million trees have been planted since the town was established in the late 1970s. No wonder it feels so like an oasis. Having said that, nature does a mighty good job too, with several lovely stands of marble gum in this section of the trail. In particular, the area around the 15km mark is worth watching for - it is a classic marble gum spinifex landscape.

Indeed the drive down the highway brings tremendous variation in ecosystems, and an excellent opportunity to observe how strongly the dominant vegetation type is driven by the soil.

Note the stunted mulga on the top of the rocky plateau, around the 18km mark.



# Agnew Loop Trail

Continued.....



Photo Ops

12

## Goanna Patch/Thunderbox

### Lawlers-Darlot Track to Goanna Patch/Thunderbox (21.4km, 201.3km cumulative)

So much of the history of the goldfields seems to be tied up with the first 10 dramatic years, from 1895 to 1905. It is easy to forget that miners and prospectors have been out here, still doing it tough in their search for the yellow metal, for the hundred years since.

Goanna Patch is a classic example - discovered in 1958, it never produced a substantial mine but threw up just enough gold to keep a number of hardy men at work on various leases for ten years or more.

13

## Sullivan Creek

### Goanna Patch/Thunderbox to Sullivan Creek (54.8km, 256.1km cumulative)

\*\*Please note: Wilson's Patch stop (located between Goanna Patch and Sullivan Creek) is now closed and not accessible due to a mine site in the area, but may still show on some maps.

Please do not enter this area as the mine is active and blasting occurs regularly.

Some lovely breakaways are a highlight of the drive down the highway-in particular, the Ford Run Plateau is notable to the west of the road, between 15 and 17km into the section. As with all breakaways, the colours are at their best in the early morning or late afternoon.

Perhaps the healthiest stand of mulga on the whole trail is to be found to the east of the highway around 8km north of Sullivan Creek. It is likely that by some quirk of history this area has been little grazed over the years, and has escaped being cut down for wood for mines or steam boilers.

14

## Station Creek

### Sullivan Creek to Station Creek (29.9km, 286km cumulative)

After passing through some 10km of mulga flats the trail enters a quite different landscape, with low stony ridges dominating the next 15km. They are not the only "bump" on the horizon - the vast Tarmoola Mine is worth stopping to view, just to get a clearer picture of the sheer scale of some of the mining operations. Though it is some distance to the north-west, it is still an impressive spectacle. The rivergums lining Station Creek are a welcome sight, rising up beyond the mulga at the end of the section.

15

## Leonora

### Station Creek to Leonora (12.4km, 298.4km cumulative)

As you travel the final section of the Agnew Loop you can see other components of the Station Creek Water Supply Scheme - the access road to the main pump station, and then the water tanks, on the summit of Mt George, from where they gravity-feed into Leonora. Mines too are very evident, as is the increasing degradation of the natural landscape on the approach to town. At the end of your day's journey, spare a thought for those who travelled this country a hundred years ago...



Take a trip through the many and varied landscapes of the north-east goldfields - from dramatic breakaways to samphire flats and salt lakes, and from vast mulga plains to magnificent marble gum on spinifex sands. This loop is your introduction to a fascinating natural environment, and to the human influences that have shaped it over the last hundred years.

# Day 3

## Darlot Loop Trail

345.8kms, 70% gravel road

14 sites



Photo Ops

### 1 Station Creek

#### Information Bay to Station Creek (14.6km)

Commence at the information bay, then follow the Goldfields Highway north out of town, passing the Sullivan grave on the right and a series of major mines on the left. Beyond Old Agnew Road you will be able to see the town water tanks on Mt George (on your right) quite clearly, before passing the Water Corporation's access track to the main pumping station. Continue north to the tree-lined creek.

### 2 Sullivan Creek

#### Station Creek to Sullivan Creek (29.9km, 44.5km cumulative)

Hills, both natural and man-made, are a prominent feature of this section. Stony ridges run parallel to the road, giving quite a different feel to the more common mulga flats. The dramatic rift in the landscape that is The Terraces is visible on the north-eastern horizon, while the vast pits and dumps of the Tarmoola Mine underline the sheer scale of some modern gold operations. As a general note "road kill" is common on this highway, so please take care to avoid the scavengers it attracts.

### 3 Goanna Patch/Thunderbox

#### Sullivan Creek to Goanna Patch/Thunderbox (54.9km, 99.4km cumulative)

*\*\*Please note: Wilson's Patch stop (located between Sullivan Creek and Goanna Patch) is now closed and not accessible due to a mine site in the area, but may still show on some maps. Please do not enter this area as the mine is active and blasting occurs regularly.*

The Ford Run Plateau and its associated breakaways are the dominant feature of this section. While not of the same magnitude as The Terraces, these ragged and colourful cliffs are nonetheless a highlight of the drive to the Goanna Patch/Thunderbox site. You may catch a glimpse of the Thunderbox mine or accommodation village on your left, but a good - if somewhat distant - view can be had from the site itself.





# Darlot Loop Trail

## Continued.....

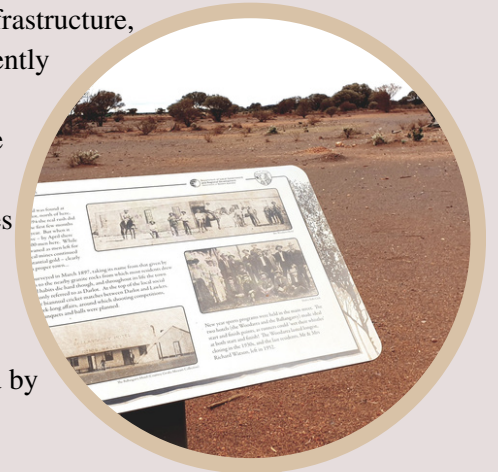
4

### Transition Zone

#### Goanna Patch/Thunderbox to Transition Zone (9.2km, 108.6km cumulative)

Nickel mines sprang up across the Northern Goldfields in the years between 1995 and 2008. However, the volatile price for the metal has meant that many have been stop-start affairs, including the Waterloo Mine, at which production was suspended late in 2008. Prior to that, the mine used some of the Thunderbox infrastructure, and ore was trucked to the BHP Leinster plant for processing. The mine is currently being assessed for future development options.

Turning off the highway onto the Darlot-Weebo Road brings significant change in vegetation types. The north-eastern section of the Darlot Loop (from here around to the vicinity of Big Mill/Nambi) features more "desert-like" landscapes than any other on these trails. Suddenly it is common to see spinifex, and various eucalypts are prominent as well. Mulga is not the dominant species for long stretches, and therefore it pays to slow down and observe the changing environment around you. Note how these changes are driven by soil types - and by the availability of water.



5

### The Granites

#### Transition Zone to The Granites (24.4km, 133km cumulative)

The sudden appearance of a wild clutter of granite boulders and low rock-strewn hills east of Weebo Station homestead is one of the most startling feature of these trails. This is not breakaway country, and nor is it the more typical domed granite outcrop scattered across the Goldfields.

In technical terms this the "Challenge" land system, which is described as being "extensive plains with skeletal soils on granite, stony plains, occasional low tors, and breakaways". This is an uncommon type of landscape in these parts - but Indigenous people have long known that, and have therefore accorded this area special significance. The Wanawalpurr Women's Site is registered in the area, so please show respect and do not stray from the designated trail route.

The relatively regular splitting apparent in many of the boulder piles is largely the result of extreme temperature variations, with both icy winter nights and boiling summer days contributing to the process. Euros (hill kangaroos) and feral goats are drawn to the resultant shady nooks, and to the comparative security of these tangled pile of rocks.



6

### Darlot & Darlot Cemetery

#### The Granites to Darlot (16.4km, 149.4km cumulative)

#### Darlot to Darlot Cemetery (1.9km, 151.3km cumulative)

Watch for the tell-tale clay pans and samphire flats that mark the southern fringe of the Lake Darlot system. The mulga "groves" on the clay plans mark long-term water-gaining sites. Pay careful attention to directional signs in the vicinity of the two sites at the end of this section.

The salt lakes are part of a vast inland drainage system, but one with a difference: it doesn't actually drain anywhere! The whole of the goldfields region actually drains into these lakes, which once formed part of an ancient palaeodrainage system that led to the southern ocean. But with changes in landforms over time these flows ceased, and these flat expanses became the receptacles of all run-off.



# Darlot Loop Trail

Continued.....



Photo Ops

7

## Desert Eucalypts

### Darlot Cemetery to Desert Eucalypts (26.9km, 178.2km cumulative)

Beyond the ruins of the Darlot State Battery you will pass through an area rich in plant diversity-though it is easy to see nothing more than mulga. Look for different coloured trees - the black oak and bright green prickly acacia are particularly obvious. Also note the sought-after wanderrrie grass, beloved by pastoralists for its value as stock feed. and, of course, the "desert eucalypts" are a feature in themselves!



8

## Big Mill

### Desert Eucalypts to Big Mill (20.2km, 198.4km cumulative)

The salt flat that you cross immediately south of Desert Eucalypts is in fact part of a major drainage line feeding into Lake Irwin, to the east - one of the many vast salt lakes in this region. Drainage of an entirely different kind is apparent further south, when you twice cross the massive white pipelines taking water from the Grey Mare Borefields to the Murrin Murrin nickel mine, some 80km south-east. In total over 150km of this pipeline has been laid, with accompanying power transmission lines and all-weather access roads. By contrast, the windmills at Greens and Paul's Wells seem almost archaic - though they retain a satisfying air of functionality, and no small dose of nostalgic romance, either.



9

## Nambi Woolshed

### Big Mill to Nambi Woolshed (17.2km, 215.6km cumulative)

Nambi Station came into the Fitzgerald family's ownership in 1931. The development that Irwin Fitzgerald undertook in the following years is quite staggering. 700km of fencing was built (including 220km of boundary fences), to divide the property into 46 paddocks; 54 windmills were erected, along with 24km of pipeline; 30 sets of sheep yards were constructed, and the Little Mill shearing shed was built to augment the main shed a few kilometres north of the homestead.

Between 1956 and 1996 the average number of sheep shorn was 12,500. The maximum flock size was reached earlier, in 1950, when Nambi ran 19,000 head; the minimum was 6,500 at the end of the five year drought in 1973. David Fitzgerald took over from his father in 1957, and when the station

finally passed from the family in 1996 it was considered to be "consistently among the top pastoral wool producers in the region". According to David, the great strength of the property was the variety of country it encompassed, which meant that in most seasons there was at least part of the station that was doing well enough to sustain stock in reasonable condition.

Nambi Station now belongs to Minara Resources, and has run cattle in recent years.



10

## Top of The Terraces

### Nambi Woolshed to top of The Terraces (35.3km, 250.9km cumulative)

Though all you will see from the trail is the roof and surrounding trees, the Nambi homestead is nonetheless a feature of this section. The pervading sense of "oasis" that so often surrounds a pastoral home is very evident, even from passing by on the road. As you travel south across the mulga flats try to imagine the delight it must have been to return home after a long hot day someplace out on the back blocks of the property.





# Darlot Loop Trail

## Continued.....

11

### Mertondale

#### Top of The Terraces to Mertondale (14.4km, 265.3km cumulative)

The "gum tree" growing in the creek bed at the 2.8km mark is clearly not a river gum - but it is another eucalypt that enjoys the moisture to be found along these inland creeks, the barlee box (*Eucalyptus lucasii*). This location is close to the southern extremity of its range, but from here it is scattered north to the Pilbara and east all the way to the border and beyond.

Approaching Mertondale one cannot but be aware of the history of the area. Spoil dumps from open cut mining operations loom above the scrub, and then, near to the old townsite, the "smoke stacks" from the old gold treatment plant are visible on the horizon. Mine shafts, like giant ant nests, dot the landscape, and one gets a strong sense of all the activity that has taken place around here since Fred Merton's remarkable find in 1899.



12

### The Terraces

#### Mertondale to The Terraces (18.6km, 283.9km cumulative)

*\*Please note that access to The Terraces is impassable when wet!*

The spur in to the The Terraces is a highlight of the Leonora Loop Trails - providing it has not recently rained! The access road crosses numerous watercourses draining the breakaway to the north, and consequently suffers significantly when wet.

At The Terraces there are many opportunities to explore - 4wd tracks extend some distance either side of the main picnic sites, but please keep to these tracks, as this is an extremely fragile landscape.



13

### Malcolm Dam

#### The Terraces to Malcolm Dam (47.7km, 331.6km cumulative)

This is one of the longest drives between sites on either of the Loop Trails, and you should take care that you're not tempted to speed up - the track beyond the turn off of the Nambi-Leonora Road (33.5km) demands a slower speed, as it twists and turns frequently, and crosses many potentially rough watercourses. If it is late in the day you may wish to go directly to Leonora at this point, and return the next morning to complete the loop out to Malcolm Dam - which is a truly lovely sight when full, and well worth visiting.

14

### Leonora

#### Malcolm Dam to Leonora (14.2km, 345.8km cumulative)

As you leave the dam you will have a clear view of Mt Malcolm to the east, with the communication tower on top. May Vivienne gushed that "a splendid view of the surrounding country for fully 30 miles (45km) is obtained from the Mount", and that her party had a fine lunch on the summit during her 1901 visit. She also reports that road to Leonora passed through "very pleasant country, spread with wildflowers of all colours". While you may not be fortunate enough to travel this section in wildflower season, it is a pleasant enough drive regardless.

As if to typify the whole of the Leonora Loop Trails experience, the view on the approach to town is one that features both natural and man-made features. Mt Leonora rises prominently over the plains - but not far from it are the giant flat-top mine dumps from the Gwalia open-cut. From Ms Vivienne's time (and even earlier) through to today this has been the nature of the Leonora experience - a mighty human effort to extract a living (and to simply stay alive) in a landscape that is both raw and ruggedly beautiful.



Thanks for visiting

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