



Murtoa's Historical Industry

W C Thomas Flour Mill Murtoa – 1881 to 1977

From 1870, W C Thomas and his family expanded their milling interests over the next 107 years, establishing mills in Murtoa, Beaufort, Newport, Warracknabeal, Minyip, Rainbow, Beulah, Ballarat, Nathalia & Lubeck, although not at the same time. Murtoa Mill was the last to close in 1977.

The first flour mill in Murtoa – 1876, was near Marma Lake and the second Flour Mill in Murtoa – 1881, was in Comyn Street, Murtoa. This was purchased by Thomas in 1885.

By 1892 the Comyn Street Mill was moved to Thomas Street, closer and adjacent to the railway line, with a spur line for loading of trucks. This Mill operated for 80 years until 1977.

By 1924 the Mill was completely rebuilt, replacing steam driven engines with diesel engines and improvements to plant and wheat silo storage.

Flour exports were critical, however when grain was exported instead of bags of flour, 90% of these markets were lost. From 1960 onward, this spelled the end for W C Thomas & Sons, as it did for other rural Flour Mills.



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