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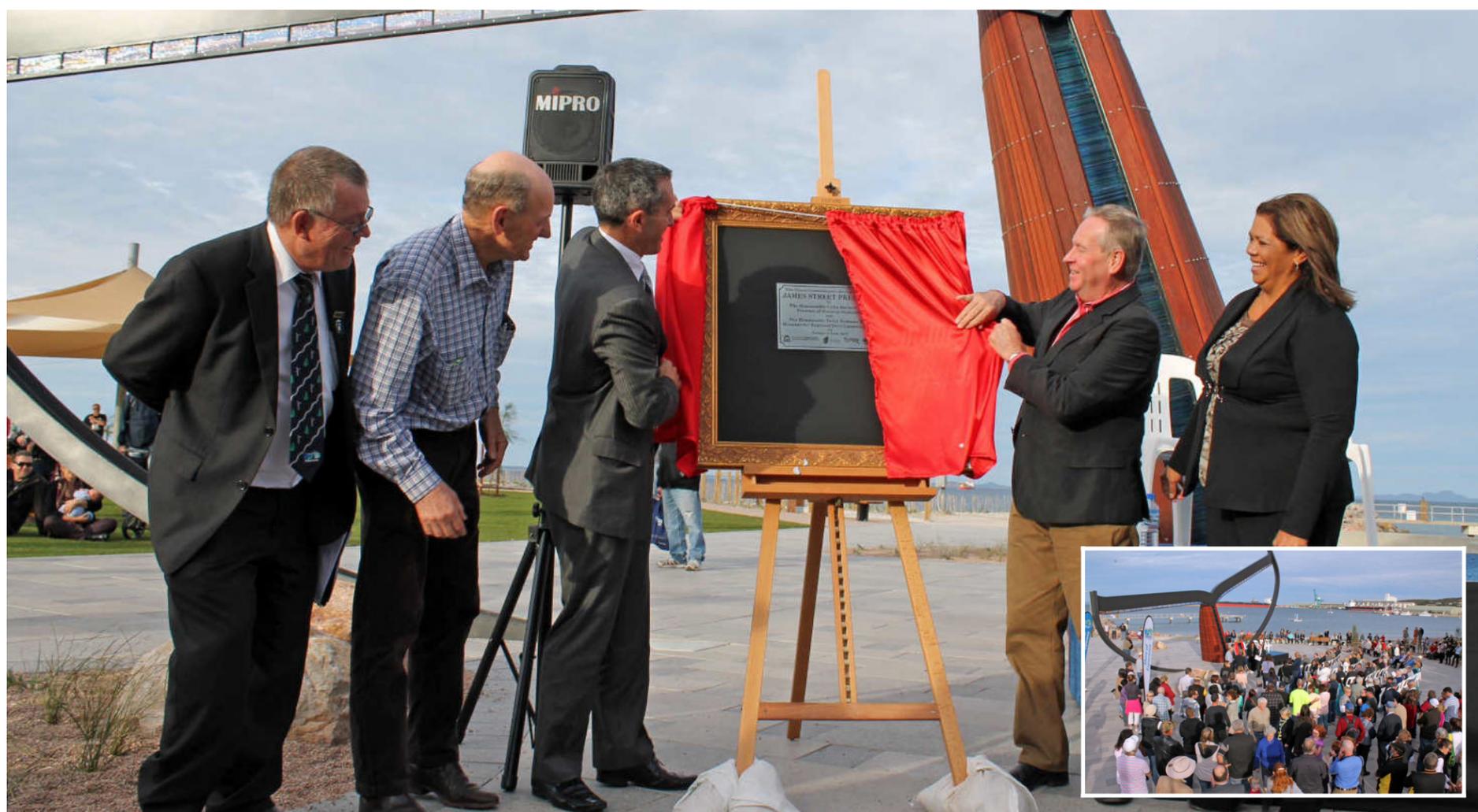


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Shire of Esperance president Malcolm Heasman, Eyre MLA Graham Jacobs, Regional Development Minister Terry Redman, Premier Colin Barnett and Nudju Aboriginal descendant Gail Reynolds-Adamson officially unveil the plaque commemorating the opening of the waterfront project. INSET: The big crowd at the opening of the redevelopment. Picture: Tim Slater

Waterfront wonderland

■ Tim Slater

The first section of the \$24.1 million Esperance waterfront development was officially opened by Colin Barnett and Regional Development Minister Terry Redman yesterday.

Hundreds of residents attended the historic occasion, with the opening of the James Street precinct paving the way for completion of the project by mid-August.

Mr Barnett said the James Street precinct would maximise one of the town's greatest assets — the Esperance foreshore.

The redevelopment includes

beach pathways, a lawn area and gardens, including a landmark sculpture of a whale tail.

"The James Street precinct is a key area of the Esperance Waterfront redevelopment, providing easy beach access and a plaza, at the centre of which is the community's newest piece of public art, this magnificent whale tail sculpture," he said.

"The Esperance waterfront redevelopment is a dynamic project which will link the foreshore with the town centre, providing economic stimulus for businesses and adding to the dynamics of the Esperance town revitalisation project."

Mr Redman said the waterfront project was made possible with \$21 million from Royalties for Regions.

"The foreshore precinct will provide a vibrant community space for residents and tourists to enjoy recreational activities and will be an important part of the social fabric of the Goldfields-Esperance region," he said.

"This landmark project is testament to how Royalties for Regions, in collaboration with key funding partners, delivers its vision to modernise and transform regional communities."

The waterfront redevelopment

project also received funding from Lotterywest, Bike Network, Magellan Fund and round three of the Regional Development Australia's Small Towns funding.

Further work on the foreshore is planned which is expected to take the total cost of the Esperance Waterfront refurbishment, when complete, to more than \$46 million.

Artists, designers and landscapers have been involved in the final design of the project which has been undertaken by Sime Constructions.

Shire of Esperance president Malcolm Heasman said the beachside town was one of hope

where people could write their own stories.

"Today we stand at the site of the magnificent whale tail art piece which I am sure will become very iconic over time and synonymous with Esperance," he said. Cr Heasman said the whole foreshore to the tanker jetty would be transformed when the project was completed by mid-August.

Nudju Aboriginal descendant Gail Reynolds-Adamson gave a welcome to country address at the start of the ceremony.

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