

BARRACK POINT JETTIES

Maritime Heritage Inspection Report

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December 1993

Report - Dept. of Maritime Archaeology
WA Maritime Museum, No. 76.



Background

Site Name: 'Barrack Point Jetties; (1) Also known as Flinders Bay Jetty
(2) name unknown.

File No: 2.93
File No: 381.77
File No: 13.93

File Name: Jetties & Port Related Structures
File Name: Augusta Wrecks Area
File Name: Heritage Council of WA

Figure 1.
Location of Old Flinders Bay boat ramp.

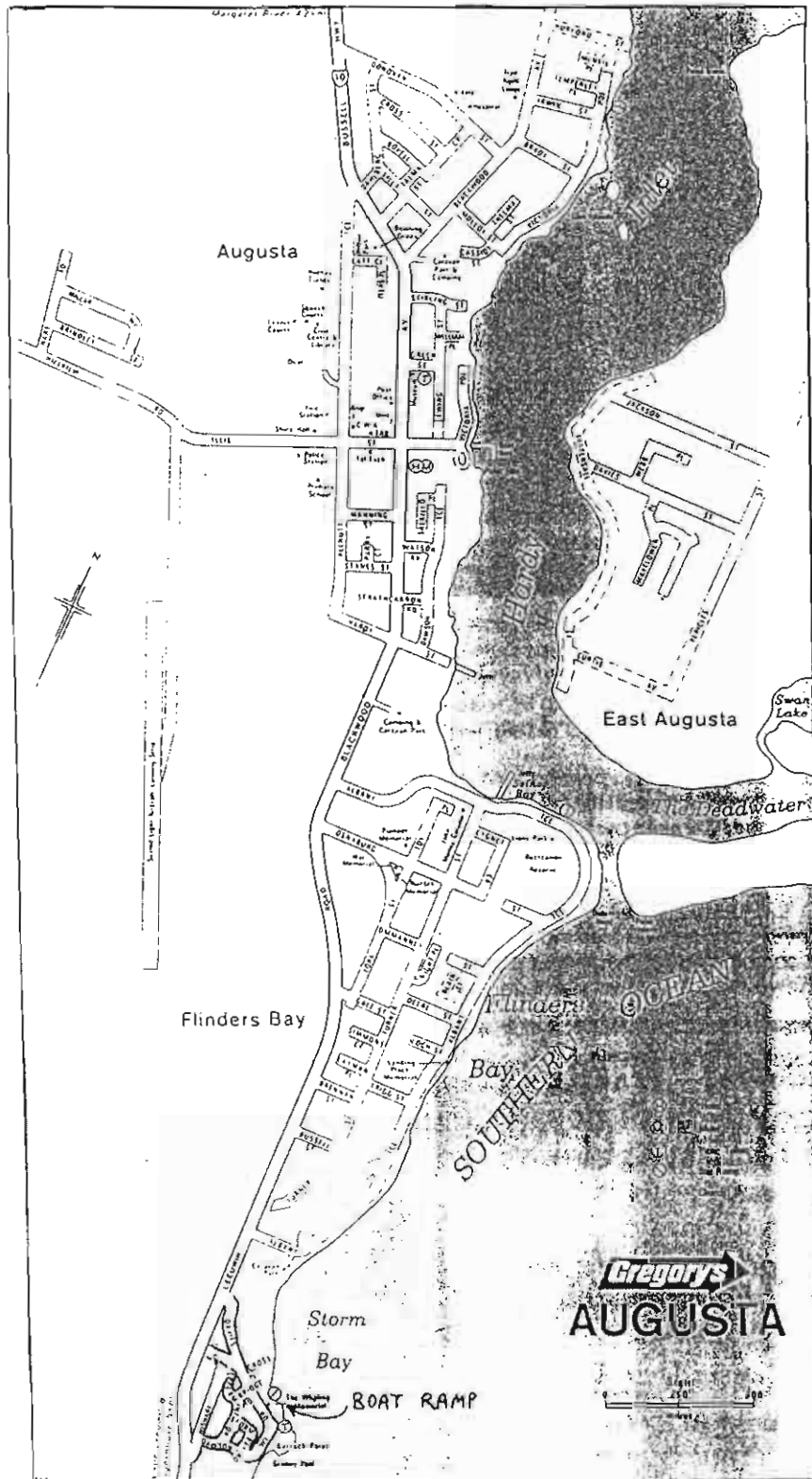


Figure 2:
Chart Excerpt:
 BA 1037, Flinders Bay, Barrack Point Anchorage 1898

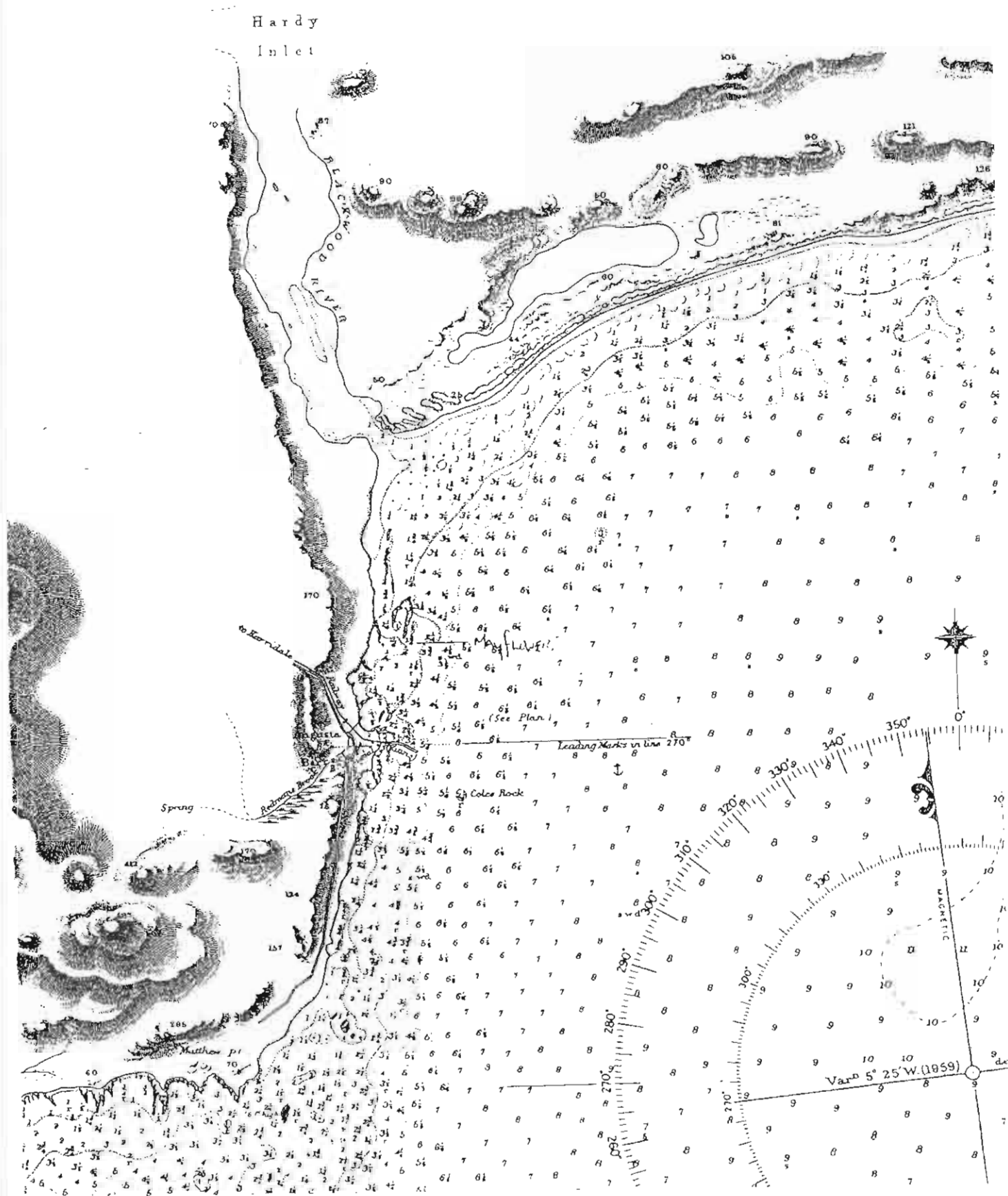
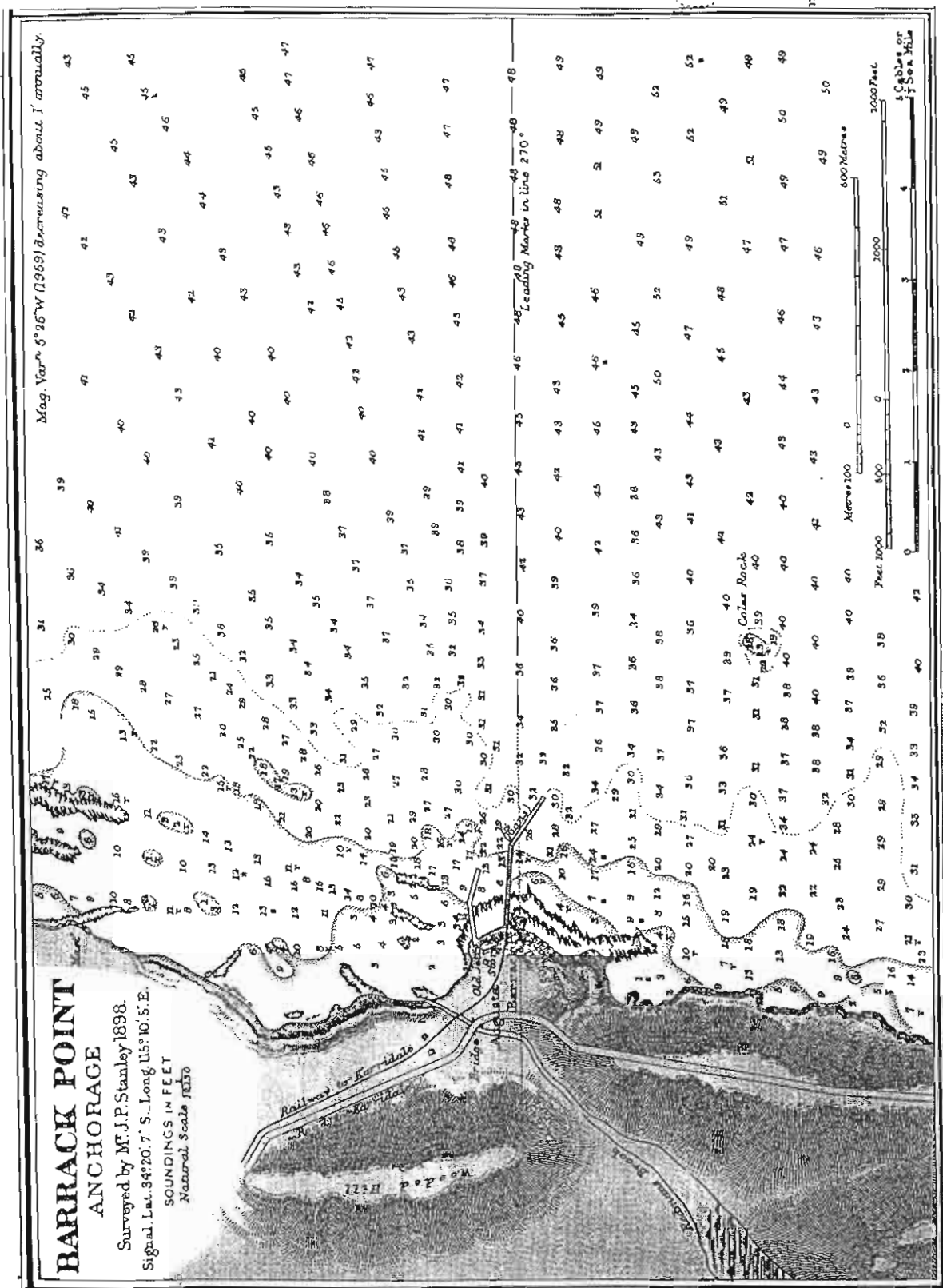


Figure 3.
Chart Excerpt:
 BA 1037 Flinders Bay
 Detail of Barrack Point Anchorage 1898



Technical Data

Date of Inspection: 28 November 1993

Personnel: Dena Garratt, Volunteers - Denis Cumming, Ray Shaw.

Approximate Location: (1) Flinders Bay Jetty - Barrack Point, 300 metres south of the Old Flinders Jetty boat ramp (Site marked with a cairn and plaque).
(2) Smaller jetty (name unknown) - Between the boat ramp and the remains of the Flinders Bay Jetty.

Charts : BA 31 Flinders Bay, 1879, 1898.
BA 413 Cape Mentelle to White Point , 1896, 1911, 1973.
BA 1037 Flinders Bay.
AUS 116 Flinders Bay, 1981 1: 25 000.
AUS 757 Aus-South Coast, Cape Mentelle to Point D'Entrecasteau, 1981
1: 150 000

Latitude : C.34° 20'S

Longitude : C.115° 10'E

Sailing Directions: The piles of the M.C. Davies jetty (jetty No.1), can be seen from the Flinders Bay boat ramp. From there, access to the remains of both jetties can be had by wading at low water over the reef or they can be approached from the launching ramp by boat. Care needs to be taken in both instances due to the possibility of 'foul ground' inshore of the piles themselves.

Site Photographs :

B/W: None Taken

Colour: Slides (Jon Carpenter; D. Cumming)

Video: Not used

Historic: PLA 2555 NO. 9 - Flinders Bay Jetty;
(Battye Library) Flinders Bay Jetty; Reg. No. 4555B/1&2
(Mr Athol Ipsen) Flinders Bay Jetty c1898; 1902; 1920.
(Mr Ryall) Flinders Bay Jetty (no date)

Site Conditions on inspection:

Swell:

Visibility: .

Current:

Chemical Measurements :

Temperature : No measurements were deemed necessary in this instance.

Salinity : Ditto

Ph : Ditto

Dissolved O₂ : Ditto

Corrosion Potentials : Ditto

Site Condition and Integrity: Unable to assess the site due to unsuitable diving conditions. The general area is open to prevailing south-westerly winds, with frequent storms in winter. These conditions have resulted in a marked erosion of the timbers from both jetties, and the sand dunes that once supported the land-based sections of the jetties. Very little evidence of the smaller, unnamed jetty remains. Some quite degraded timbers lay in among the rocks at the point where the jetty would (probably) have met the shoreline.

Management considerations:

(i) Natural Forces: The piles are slowly disintegrating naturally and will eventually collapse down to the sea bed

(ii) Present and future Human forces: Although some piles were removed by blasting in the 1960s, there is little immediate threat from human forces at this time.

Description of Site

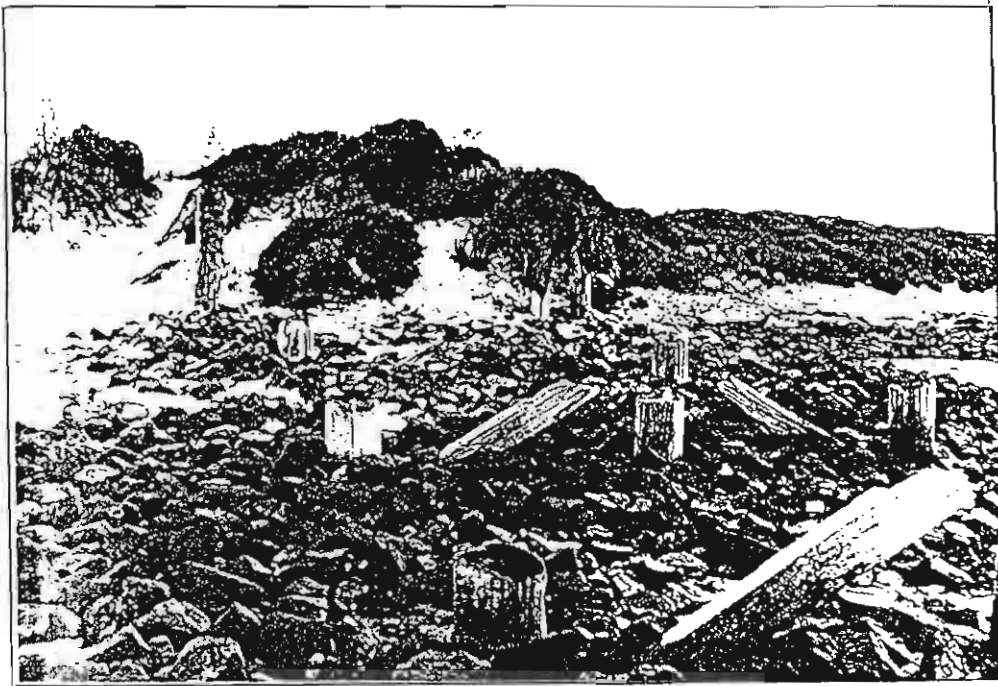
(1) Flinders Bay Jetty (M.C. Davies Jetty).

A stone plinth with an inscription in bronze marks the point where the railway met the jetty embankment. The embankment area has been grassed over and landscaped in recent years. (The iron winch situated 10 metres to the west of the plinth is not related to the jetty. This dates from the 1920's and was used on the slipway of one of the boatsheds on the beach). In the vicinity of the jetty, the rocky shoreline is covered with ballast material, primarily basalt. (Local resident, Mr Athol Ipsen believes the basalt originated in South Africa).

(2) Unnamed jetty.

Very little evidence of the smaller, unnamed jetty remains. Some quite degraded timbers lay in among the rocks at the point where the jetty would (probably) have met the shoreline.

Figure 4.
Flinders Bay Jetty, Augusta, Sept. 1993
Photo: D. Cumming



Site Identification Comments: (From archival notes compiled by D. Cumming)

Barrack Point, Flinders Bay was founded in 1830 when the Molloy, Bussell and Turner families landed. Augusta developed as an agricultural settlement, (although many of its settlers moved north to the Vasse and Busselton in the next three years). It was a port of call for whaling ships and also a base for shore whaling for a period. The site was proclaimed a port in 1855 and was visited by the American whaling ship *Congress* from New Bedford in 1857. Timber was first exported from the area in 1876. In 1882 M.C. Davies built the large jetties at Barrack Point and Hamelin Bay to service his timber mills at Cooldarup (later Kudarup) and Karridale. As a contractor, he built the jetties at Fremantle, and Carnarvon in 1886, the Eucla jetty in 1887 and Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse in 1895.

Govt Gazette 1876 p131; 1880 p13.

Parl. Papers, WA 1879 p 36. "Timber concessions to M.C. Davies."

Parl. Papers, WA 1884 p 8a. "Timber trade in the Sussex District."

Parl. Papers, WA 1885 p23a. "Report on the timber trade in the Sussex District by Inspector of Forests."

Figure 5.

Flinders Bay Jetties, (No date) (Battye Library, Reg. No. 4555B/2)

The remains of the unnamed jetty can be seen to the left, and in front of the M.C. Davies Jetty.



Assessment of Site Significance

- (i) Historical: The jetties represent an important component of the development of the timber industry in the south-west. It is associated with M.C. Davies, his sons, and their Karridale timber company. The jetty is associated with several wrecks.
- (ii) Technological: It was an achievement of considerable significance. The size and complexity of the structure was remarkable considering the inhospitable nature of the environment in which it was built. It is one of a limited number of sites of this type still in existence.
- (iii) Scientific:
- (iv) Educational: Properly interpreted, the site has great educational potential.
- (v) Recreational: Recreational activities on the site are somewhat restricted. The prevailing onshore winds and rocky shoreline can make access to the site for diving and fishing hazardous at times.
- (vi) Cultural: The site demonstrates a way of life that is no longer being practiced. The jetty was a focal point for commerce and transport.
- (vii) Archaeological: The area on both sides of the jetties have archaeological to be included in a comparative study of jetty deposition patterns. (See Long Jetty Report)

Recommendations

The options are:

- (i) Initiate a full archaeological survey of the jetty sites.
- (ii) Leave as is

Further Comments

It is recommended that the Flinders Bay jetty sites be more widely publicised in conjunction with the *Wreck Trail* as a reminder of an important era in the development of WA's south west. Local residents should be encouraged to seek a grant to research, document and present the history of the jetty. Several Augusta residents have expressed an interest in promoting the heritage significance of Flinders Bay.

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