

The P&O Jetty

The Peninsula and Orient Steamship company was awarded a contract in 1852 to bring mail to Australia from England. They built many facilities in Albany including a new jetty which was built in 1857. The jetty was then 300 feet long, but was extended to 500 feet in 1863 and again to 650 feet between 1869–70.

Point King Lighthouse

In 1857 the British Government offered to erect two lighthouses in Albany, one on Breaksea Island and the other on Point King if the local government agreed to meet the running costs. The P&O Steamship company and other passenger ships greatly appreciated the idea of these new lighthouses and so the construction went ahead. The prefabricated lights arrived on 9 June and the building started later that year. The lights shone for the first time on 1 January, 1858, with William Hill as the light keeper. These positions changed hands quickly, and with inexperienced light keepers, fell into disrepair. This was soon remedied when Samuel Mitchell was appointed to the position in 1867 and held it until 1903 when he was replaced by John Reddin. Reddin was the last resident light keeper because from July 1911 the Port Pilot Crew went and trimmed the light each night. In 1913 power was installed so it became automatic. It deteriorated rapidly until finally it ceased to work.



A view of Albany harbour

Quarantine Station

The government built a Quarantine Station in Albany in 1874 due to the number of foreign ships entering her port. The station built consisted of only two small huts that had very poor facilities.

Due to the increasing number of ships, the two cottages became obviously inadequate and between 1897–8 a much larger Quarantine Station was established on the site opposite the town where it stands much the same today as the Quaranup Youth Camp.

Point Possession

On 29 September, 1791, George Vancouver (1757–98) arrived and named King George Sound. Vancouver spent over two weeks in Frenchman Bay, exploring and charting the coast. On the day of his arrival a small party, which included Vancouver, made its way to a small headland at the western end of the Sound and opened a small harbour which Vancouver named Princess Royal Harbour. He named the headland Point Possession, the British flag was flown, toasts were drunk and formal possession was taken.

For further information on historic shipwrecks contact the WA Museum Shipwreck Galleries or the WA Heritage Council:
<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/collections/maritime/march/march.asp>
<http://tourism.heritage.wa.gov.au/>

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Diving notes

Wrecks are often hazardous. Access to the wrecks requires a boat. Divers need to be fit and qualified. A diver's flag must be displayed. Never dive alone or leave a boat unattended. Persons diving on these wrecks do so at their own risk. These wrecks are part of Western Australia's heritage. They are protected under legislation. Please enjoy them but do not disturb them.

THE ALBANY MARITIME HERITAGE TRAIL

Introduction

In September 1791, George Vancouver was the first known European to reach King George Sound and its two harbours. Vancouver described it as the best natural harbour in the world. Vancouver found that despite the sheltered waters and bountiful marine life the Indigenous people of the Albany region relied more on the rich ecosystem of the region's woodland for their food than on the bountiful marine life of the Albany region.



Cheynes IV in Albany

In 1818 Phillip Parker King chartered the Albany coast-line and collected specimens. About this time, whalers and sealers were exploiting Albany's rich and plentiful coast-line. Due to Albany's unique natural harbour it was used by many, including sealers, whalers and passenger steamers, as a refuelling and mail port, throughout the 1800s. Coal hulks were an important part of Albany's maritime history from 1851 on, when

a coal depot and a steamer port was established, firstly by the Australian Royal Steam Navigation Company and then the P&O company in 1852, making Albany the state's most important port for mail and passengers. During the two world wars, Albany was used as a naval port and fortifications were installed on Mt Adelaide in the 1890s. The shipwrecks, jetties, lighthouse and Quarantine Station described below reflect the history and growth of the Port of Albany from its first European beginnings in 1826.



An artist's depiction of Albany foreshore

The sites

Fairy (also *Fairey*)

The 70-ton schooner *Fairy* was built on the Kalgan River during the 1840s by Capt. Thomas Symers and his partners. When nearly finished it was brought into Princess Royal Harbour in 1850. Unfortunately, a row broke out between the partners over the rigging of the ship resulting in it being tied up off York St. Its

mooring line was cut sometime in 1850 and it drifted onto a bank and broke its back, where it is now being allowed to rot in its present position in shallow water at the eastern end of the harbour.

Kingfisher

The barque *Kingfisher* was an iron sailing ship built in Renfrew, Scotland in 1854. After trading between Hobart and the main land it was sold to the P&O in April 1859, arriving in Albany in June of that year to become a coal hulk. On 7 April, 1883 it was blown

ashore on the western side of the Town Jetty. It was refloated and towed to the western end of the harbour near its present position, 850 metres south east of the Wool Stores. Clearly visible, it has always been one of Albany's most prominent maritime landmarks and one of the oldest iron shipwrecks in WA.

Sarah Burnyeat

The brig *Sarah Burnyeat* was originally built as a

barque at Southwick, Durham in England 1862. *Sarah Burnyeat* sailed to Australia in 1879 only to be driven ashore at Lockeville (WA) during a heavy gale. Refitted in Fremantle in 1880 as a brig, it sprung a leak sailing to Port Adelaide. It was then purchased as a coal hulk by the Adelaide Steamship Company in 1882. Whilst coaling a ship it caught fire and was abandoned at its present position off Residency Point. It is also the only coal hulk with its cargo intact and is a reminder of Albany's heyday as a major coaling port.

Deepwater Jetty

In June 1884, Mr A. Horden was awarded the contract to build both the jetty and a railway line connecting Albany to Perth, which went out onto the jetty. On 29 March, 1888, construction on the jetty began. The jetty was officially opened on 15 December, 1888. Its length was 1800 feet and its width 22 feet for the first 1100 feet and 42 feet for the remaining 700 feet. In Albany's heyday the jetty was of great importance as ships bringing goods into WA had to stop here and off load as Fremantle's port had not yet been developed. During World War I an extra 1004 feet was added to the jetty in 1915. Over the next several years the the jetty began to deteriorate and several restoration projects were undertaken.

Town Jetty

In 1835 James Stirling selected a site for a town jetty at the foot of Bridges Street, which was half a mile from the town centre. It was planned to be 130 yards long, however the cost was so great that only 75 yards was built. In 1849 the government wanted to extend the jetty but the town's people wanted a new jetty at the foot of York Street. The work started in 1850 and some piles were driven. Later that year a storm buried the piles in sand and work on it was abandoned and the town's people had to put up with the old jetty. In 1862, a new jetty was built at the foot of Spencer Street, but was not completed until 1864 and even then it was too short. It was, after much fuss, extended in 1868 and again to its present length in the 1870s.