

SAIL THE SOUND

1 Cheynes II - This whalechaser operated from 1963 to 1978. In 1985 work on converting her into a floating restaurant with the intention of capturing the market during the America's Cup off Fremantle was started, but due to a lack of funds it was never completed. She was anchored south west of town and later moved to the south east corner of the harbour, but during the winter of 1992 she dragged anchor and ended up on the sand bank where she still sits.

2 Quaranup - This Quarantine Station was established in 1875 as a consequence of Government officials being quarantined on Mistaken Island and having to live in tents with basic ration and ablutions. The ensuing outcry and increasing migration to W.A. forced the government to build a quarantine station on the isolated Vancouver Peninsula. It closed in the 1950s and fell into serious disrepair. The Wheeler Family leased it in 1956 and changed it to "Camp Quaranup".

Camp Quaranup has undergone extensive restoration in the last 18 years and is now one of the few intact ex-quarantine stations in the world, offering camps and functions.

Of particular interest is the powder magazine built on Geake Island. This windowless stone building with an iron door was used to store ammunition for Albany's defence. It was completed in 1878. The magazine was located on the island for security reasons and the causeway to the mainland was built at a later stage changing Geake Island into Geake Point. This area is the home of Wargyl (water snake), the sacred icon of the Menang Noongar people.

12 Cheynes IV - This whalechaser operated from 1970 to 1978 and is now housed at the historic Whaling Station, (previously known as "Whale World").

13 HMAS Perth - A Perth class guided missile destroyer which was sunk as a dive wreck in 2001.

14 Seal Island - This is the first known site of sealing on the WA south coast. Vancouver's Midshipman wrote; "We often killed them of very large size. An island in the middle of the sound was their principal haunt."

15 Breaksea Island - Sealers are known to have camped on the island in 1826. The first lighthouse was built in 1858. It was manned by two Lighthouse Keepers with their families, all living on the island in two houses. Initially donkeys were used to transport stores from the jetty to the residence. Later a jeep was used.

In 1902 the new and existing lighthouse was built. Then in 1926 it was converted to acetylene gas and automated which meant the end of the resident keepers.

Major restoration work of the residences began in 2010 and helicopter tours to the island are now operating from Discovery Bay.

3 Ataturk Channel - Named thus in 1985 as part of a reciprocal agreement to name Anzac Cove in Turkey. Ataturk was the first President of the Turkish Republic and the Commander of the Turkish forces which drove the Australians from Gallipoli. He named himself Kamal Ataturk which roughly translates to Perfect Father of Turks. There is a large statue of him overlooking the channel on the walk path.

4 Point Possession - On this point in 1791 Captain Vancouver claimed the region for the British Crown. This act ensured that Australia remained the only continent governed by one people.

5 Point King Lighthouse - It was built at the same time as Breaksea Lighthouse. Originally the lighthouse was part of the house you can see today. The first Keeper had a family of four children, the second Keeper had eight children and the third Keeper had nine children. There was no fencing to stop children accidentally falling into the ocean but no fatalities are recorded. However, on a stormy night a king wave hit the side of the house and washed away two iron water tanks and on another occasion the residents awoke to find the prow of a ship towering over the house. The last resident left in 1911 and the light was then lit and maintained by the Pilot Crew until it was electrified and automated in 1913. During WW2 the house was used as an observation bunker. In 1950 the light was moved up the hill to the present site.

6 Whaling Cove - There was a whaling station operating here from 1835 to 1870. There are still remnants of the settlement ashore. Nowadays it is a popular fishing spot.

16 Michaelmas Island - This steep and rocky island was, for a few weeks, a prison for several Aborigines who had been put there by Breaksea Island Sealers who had stolen their women. According to local Menang Noongar legend the islands were formed by two wargyls who lived on the edge of the coast near the existing continental shelf. They began to fight over who had the most birds eggs and as they fought, their giant bodies gouged out the earth and allowed the ocean to follow their paths inland away from the sea. Their fighting dislodged boulders and rocks and these became hills and gullies and as the water flowed in the highest ones became Breaksea and Michaelmas islands. Eventually exhausted and mortally wounded both wargyls broke off and headed further inland. One headed north creating the Kalgan river as he moved and the other curled up and died close to the new shore, just beyond Mt Melville

17 Cheynes - This was the first whalechaser and operated from 1952 to 1961. She was scuttled north of Michaelmas Island. She was originally the Toern, a Norwegian minesweeper and was converted to a whale chaser in Norway before steaming to Albany at 10 knots for six weeks.

7 Mistaken Island - First named Curlew Island by Vancouver but later changed to Mistaken Island. The local nickname is Rabbit Island because George Cheyne leased it to produce rabbits. There are only Fairy penguins living there today.

8 Elvie - This flat bottomed wooden barge was used to transport whale oil from the Norwegian whaling station to ships in Frenchman's Bay. After the close of the whaling station she was anchored in the bay but in 1921 she dragged her mooring and ended up on Whalers Beach where she sits just below the sand with her ribs still visible.

9 Vancouver Spring - This spring, which runs across Whalers Beach, is the first recorded fresh water supply in King George Sound. It supplied fresh water to whalers, sealers, settlers and ships. In 1890 the P&O Company dam was built a few metres in from the beach and this is still there but very much overgrown hence never accessed. The Norwegian Whaling Station ran a pipe from the dam to the station for its water supply.

10 Whalers Beach, Frenchman Bay - A Norwegian Whaling station operated here from 1914 to 1916. Two years before that they operated with a factory ship in Frenchman's Bay. Stone and concrete foundations are still ashore and the old wooden flensing deck and jetty are under the water.

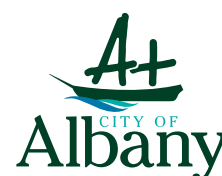
11 Cheynes Beach Whaling Station - This venture was started by local fishermen and businessmen and operated from 1952 to 1978. In its 26 years of operation it processed 14,878 whales. The historic station and surrounding area at Discovery Bay are now one of Albany's biggest tourist attractions.

18 Cheynes III - This Whalechaser operated from 1963 to 1978 and was scuttled in 1982 for a dive wreck at the west end of Michaelmas Island.

19 The Awhina - Built in 1884, this 100ft and 136 ton, screw tug was a very busy vessel during World War I. In addition to performing her usual shipping duties she serviced the Eclipse and Breaksea Island lighthouses. In 1936 she succumbed to a lack of maintenance and partially sank. She was then taken to Gull Rock Beach and blown up. The boiler is easily seen from the shore and it sits on the remains of the hull which is partially covered in sand. Awhina is Maori for friend or helper.

20 Ellen Cove - This was the shore base for bay whaling around 1833. The first jetty for tourists and recreation was built in 1890. It has been rebuilt numerous times. The Menang name for Ellen Cove is 'Binalup' (place of first light).

Information in this document was compiled from research undertaken at the Albany History Collection and the WA Museum Albany by members of Princess Royal Sailing Club in March 2015.





SAIL THE SOUND

A sailing history tour of Princess Royal Harbour and King George Sound

Duration approximately 6 hours

Acknowledgement:
We wish to acknowledge the first Australians upon whose traditional land and waters we meet and live. We pay our respects to the elders of the Noongar Menang people, past and present.

September the 29th 1791 was a very busy day for Captain George Vancouver when he sailed into a bay which he described as “the finest harbour in the southern hemisphere” in the morning. By the end of the day he had named King George The Third’s Sound; Princess Royal Harbour (after Princess Charlotte Augusta Matilda, the eldest daughter of King George III, because it was her birthday); Breaksea Island (because it broke the seas entering the Sound); Michaelmas Island (because it was St. Michael’s Day) and Point Possession (because this is where he took possession of the region).

It was not until the 25th December 1826 that the Amity, with Major Edmund Lockyer aboard, arrived and European settlement began.

The Third was dropped out of King George The Third Sound some years later.

Whaling was the major industry in the Sound from the 1830s to 1978 and there are four old whaling sites and fifteen recorded shipwrecks from those days in and around the Sound.

This ocean area is called ‘Mammang Koort’ (whale heart) by the local Menang, Noongar people.

