6. Soap Factory

W.H. Burford and Sons Ltd, c. 1920s (courtesy Fremantle City Library).

Built arund 1905, Burford's Soap and Candle Works was a manufacturer of candles for the State's mining industry and produced soap and washing powder until 1959. Effluent was pumped through the tunnel in the cliff face into Rocky Bay, with such effect that the Bay became known as 'Soapy Bay'. After soap production ceased the premises became in turn, a margarine factory, warehouse and sail loft, before conversion to multiple residences in 1981.

7. Former Quarry Platform

After the Seven Sisters had been quarried the remaining platform became a site for industry. The two industries located here were a superphosphate factory and the State Engineering Works.
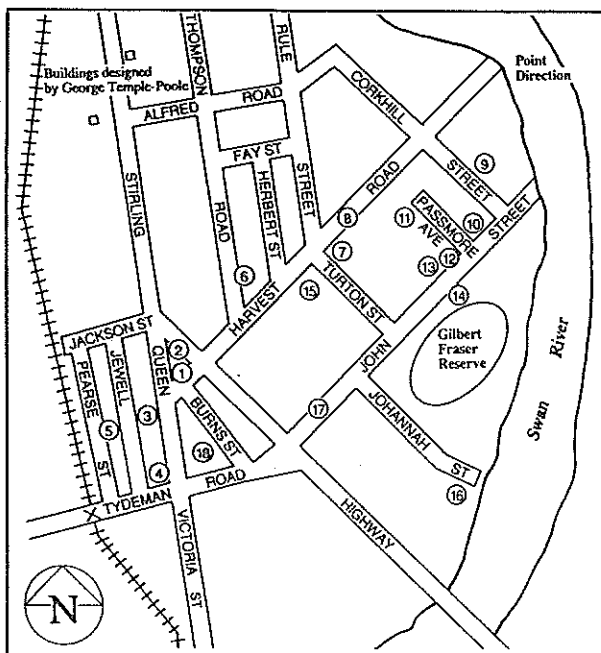
8. Buckland Hill

The highest of the original Seven Sisters, the top 15 metres of the peak was removed in 1925 and a reservoir built to serve surrounding suburbs. According to Aboriginal mythology this is where the Waugal (rainbow serpent) does his Dreaming.

9. Minim Cove

Archaeological discoveries in the 1960s indicate that this cove was an Aboriginal tool-making site dating back 10,000 years. There was a spring here which has been buried by tip activities.
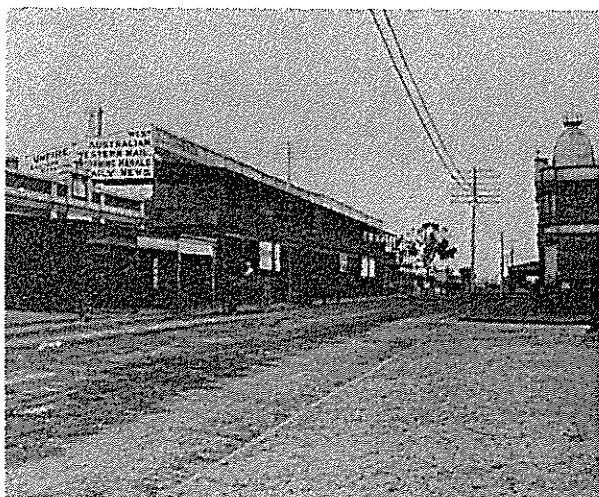
North Fremantle Historic Town Walk

1. World War I Memorial

Classified by the National Trust, this memorial commemorates the 94 North Fremantle volunteers who lost their lives in the First World War (1914-18).

2. North Fremantle Town Hall

Built in 1902, this building housed the North Fremantle Council until 1961. The main hall was the focus of a busy community and was used for Mason Lodge meetings, church, school, football club and kindergarten balls, ratepayers meetings and from 1936 until after the Second World War (1939-45) it was a cinema known as 'Arcadia Pictures'. In recent years it has been the headquarters of the Western Australian Ballet Company, Fremantle Community School, and since 1983 an antique shop. Originally the roofline was graced by two elegant cupolas.

Queen Victoria Street, early 1900s. The Town Hall is on the right and the 'Stoned Crow' is in the left foreground (courtesy Battye Library, 9117B).

3. Queen Victoria Street

This street used to be the hub of the town with shops, hotels, bakeries, barbers, chemist, tailors, milliners, churches, library and banks situated along its length. Most of the buildings are from the gold boom period with Italian influences.

The 'Stoned Crow' (233-237) was built in 1900 and originally had a verandah as did other shops in this area. D'Sillery's antique shop (231) is a 1900s worker's cottage. The Old Bridge Cellars building (221) is part of Aristula Chambers, orginally a draper's shop. This building was a three-gabled collection of five shops with ornate decoration and verandah.

4. Post Office

Built in 1897 as a police station, the Post Office's Georgian influenced design is a classic piece of restrained public architecture. Inside, the lock-up cells are still intact.

North Fremantle's original Post Office, built in 1892 and designed by Government Architect George Temple-Poole, was a delightful 'Domestic Revival' style building. Located south of the present Post Office, it was demolished in 1966 to make way for new roadworks and container terminal extensions.

Fremantle Post Office, c.1900. Sadly, it was demolished in 1966 (courtesy Battye Library, 9115B).

Two fine examples of Temple-Poole's work are the former North Fremantle Primary School (now Stirling House) built in 1886 and the former Girls and Infants School (now Fremantle Industrial Rehabilitation Centre) built about 1890, at 101 and 98 Stirling Highway respectively.

Turn right along Tydeman Road and then right again at Pearse Street.

5. Pearse Street (formerly Mason Street)

Thought to have been occupied mainly by artisans, this street is made up of limestone houses and jarrah weatherboard homes, some with sophisticated fencing (see number 24). Number 15 is an 1860s style cottage with a lovely fanlight and Gothic front gable. It also has an unusual front door, with flush panels at the bottom, characteristic of earlier doors, and raised moulding on top. Number 17 is a similar 1860s design.

Turn right into Jackson Street, cross Stirling Highway and walk up Harvest Road. Turn left at Thompson Street.

6. Thompson Road

Numbers 5 and 15 were both built around 1860. Number 5 is a classic Australian Georgian cottage and still retained some of its original shingle roof until recently renovated. It still has its 12 pane mullion windows and has an interesting verandah line, broken at the sides.

Number 15, formerly two terrace houses, has windows double-hung with multiple glass panes and flush panel front doors like number 5. A Georgian influenced design, it also has an unusually wide verandah.

Return to Harvest Road and turn left.

7. Turton House (25 Harvest Road)

A typical rambling Victorian bungalow, this house was designed by Sir J. Talbot Hobbs, who also designed the Victoria Hall in Fremantle. Arthur Turton was mayor of North Fremantle from 1932 to 1935.

8. Harvest Road

Numbers 27 and 29 were built prior to the gold boom and have cement rendered quoins around the windows. Number 27 has an American shingle roof - the original was iron.

Numbers 36 to 50 are all of a similar period and style of architecture. The weatherboard at number 50, built around 1897, has a simulated stone American pine front wall, and was lined with pine boards.

9. Corkhill Street (formerly Elizabeth Street)

The river-side here was used for boatbuilding and at A.E. Brown's boatyard were built large boats like the ferry 'Perth'. Brown had a house at the end of John Street and his garden was used as a children's summer holiday camp.

Another boatbuilder was the Greek, Manolias, who built magnificently crafted boats on the foreshore at the end of John Street (near Pier 21 restaurant) until after the Second World War.

10. 2-4 John Street

Number 2, designed by Norman Hitchcock, has decorative icicles and garlands under the eaves, and wooden decoration of the gable and verandah frieze. The limestone cottage with brick quoins at number 4 is also thought to have been designed by Hitchcock.

11. Passmore Avenue

Note these workers' cottages which were purchased in kit form and erected on site. Numbers 4 and 6 are semi-detached, which is unusual for weatherboard buildings.

12. Corkhill House

(Gingerbread House, 12 John Street)
Affectionately known as 'the Gingerbread House', this design is typical of architect Norman Hitchcock. Note the chimneys, verandah barge boards with icicles and scroll pattern. The large gable at the front would have been decorated like the smaller gables, and extra wooden decoration was orginally attached to the verandah posts below the wooden frieze.

13. Gresham Hotel

(formerly Brucetown Hotel, 22 John Street)
Private property: please view from the road
The Brucetown was the first licensed premises in North Fremantle when granted a licence in 1897. It was delicensed in 1934 and from 1940-45 was used by army officers while troops camped on the oval.

Cross the road and onto Gilbert Fraser Reserve, opposite the hotel.

14. Gilbert Fraser Oval

The grandstand, built about 1900, is a fine example of Victorian architecture and is classified by the National Trust of Australia (W.A.).

North Fremantle Grandstand, Gilbert Fraser Oval, with the Gresham Hotel in the background, early 1900s (courtesy Battye Library, 9123B).

Rocky Bay Heritage Trail

How To Get There

Rocky Bay in North Fremantle is approximately 13km south-west of the Perth city centre.

The **Rocky Bay Heritage Trail** explores the settlement, development and natural environment of the North Fremantle/Rocky Bay area. It is divided into two sections:

1. A 1km scenic nature walk along the cliff tops of Rocky Bay linking with the foreshore bicycle path to Point Roe. The trail commences at the end of Harvest Road on the banks of the Swan River.

2. A 2km walk around the old town of North Fremantle, commencing at the war memorial in Queen Victoria Street.

Please note: *Persons using this Heritage Trail do so at their own risk.*

Introduction

Dutch explorer Willem de Vlamingh named the Swan River when he led an expedition upriver as far as Heirisson Island in January 1697. He was unimpressed by what he saw and it was not until the favourable reports of Captain James Stirling in April 1827 that permanent settlement was considered seriously for the first time.

With the founding of the Swan River Colony in 1829 settlers established themselves along the banks of the Swan River at Perth, Fremantle and Guildford. The first to settle in North Fremantle was William Pearse, who established the Colony's first dairy near the mouth of the Swan River in 1830.

However, it was not until after the completion of the bridge linking Fremantle and North Fremantle in 1866 that a community began to develop. Its proximity to the Fremantle Port resulted in considerable growth during the gold boom years of the 1890s and North Fremantle was declared an independent municipality in 1895. At this time it had shops, homes, churches, schools and halls. It was also a popular site for industry, including tanneries, boot works, a timber mill, wool scourers, abattoirs, engineering works and many other local industries.

The development of industry occurred to a significant degree at the expense of residential areas, which declined to the extent that in 1961 North Fremantle merged with the City of Fremantle and today no longer enjoys municipal status.

Industry also had an adverse affect on the environment. Rocky Bay was originally dominated by seven majestic peaks known as the 'Seven Sisters'. These were quarried for limestone, however, and today only Buckland Hill and the small peak next to Minim Cove remain. Until the 1890s kangaroos, wallabies, wild turkeys and wild ducks were a common sight in the area but by the early 1900s these and other species such as the rabbit-eared bandicoot were disappearing rapidly.

Aborigines also suffered. Competition from European settlers for resources and the loss of their traditional game and native vegetation resulted in their retreat and disappearance from Perth. Their traditional ties with the land shattered, they were unable to prevent the dominance of the new and uncompromising culture of the white settlers.

Today the industrial emphasis of North Fremantle and Rocky Bay is being scaled down and a return to a more residential community is taking place.

Rocky Bay Cliff Walk

1. Harvey Beach

Looking down to the end of Harvest Road can be seen the Water Police headquarters adjacent to the traditional local swimming place, affectionately known as 'Harvey'. The Water Police jetty used to be a public jetty and each year the North Fremantle Council would treat the schoolchildren to a ferry trip to the South Perth Zoo. Just downstream from the jetty there was a Government slipyard where large cargo barges were maintained.

2. Cypress Hill

This area and the site of Rocky Bay was once known as Cypress Hill. With its attractive stands of Cypress and excellent views, Cypress Hill was a popular picnic spot in the early days of the suburb. Older residents recall picking beautiful wildflowers on the hill.

3. Proposed Harbour Entrance

Looking towards the soap factory (site 6) can be seen the narrow neck of the North Fremantle peninsula. In the 1870s it was proposed to cut a channel through the 500 metres of limestone and dunes between Rocky Bay and the sea as a harbour entrance. This was rejected in favour of C.Y. O'Connor's plan for Fremantle Harbour, completed in 1897.

4. The Tunnel

Below the cave at the water's edge is the entrance to the tunnel which extends underground as far as Thompson Road. It was originally used to carry effluent from the soap factory to Rocky Bay.

5. The Cave

According to Aboriginal mythology the Waugal (rainbow serpent) rested here, curling itself around the central pillar of the cave, before continuing its journey upriver.

Around 1900 the cave was used to burn lime by T.H. Briggs and Co. Note how the natural hole to the surface has been enlarged, probably to allow materials to be hoisted up and down by a headgear on top.

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15. Hillcrest Hospital

Dominating the hill above the primary school is Hillcrest Hospital. An Italian influenced design it was built in 1890 for Francis Pearse, grandson of William Pearse and a wealthy commercial and pastoral magnate. Bequeathed to the Salvation Army in 1922, it became a maternity hospital and is now a hostel and nursing home for the aged. Much of the original structure is obscured by later additions.

16. Winter House (Johannah Street)

The Swan River once flowed just 20 metres from the verandah of this typical early Fremantle worker's cottage and in winter a boat was tied to a verandah post. A clump of five palms in the grounds date back to the gold boom.

Exit through the Laurie Tetley gates and continue down John Street. The houses opposite were once the site of a Chinese garden. There were at one time 12 or 13 Chinese market gardens in North Fremantle.

17. John Street

Number 37 was built in 1903 for Lavis Bateman, while numbers 44 and 46 are substantial gracious homes, also dating from the gold boom era. These homes indicate that this must have been a fashionable housing area in North Fremantle during the early years. Number 46 once had iron lace verandah decoration and is probably a Hitchcock design.

Cross Stirling Highway and turn right at Burns Street. Before construction of Stirling Bridge in 1972 the Stirling Highway, then Bruce Street, included many modest Georgian cottages stretching down to the river.

18. Burns Street

This has remained a pleasant residential street despite the construction of the Stirling Highway and bridge which have left it as an island. Number 21 was originally simulated stone weatherboard with elaborate decoration, similar to 50 Harvest Road.

The staggering of the terrace houses at 16-22 (built around 1900) is quite unusual. Note the bold verandah columns, their apparent bulk being reduced by heavy chamfering.

W.A. Heritage Trails Network
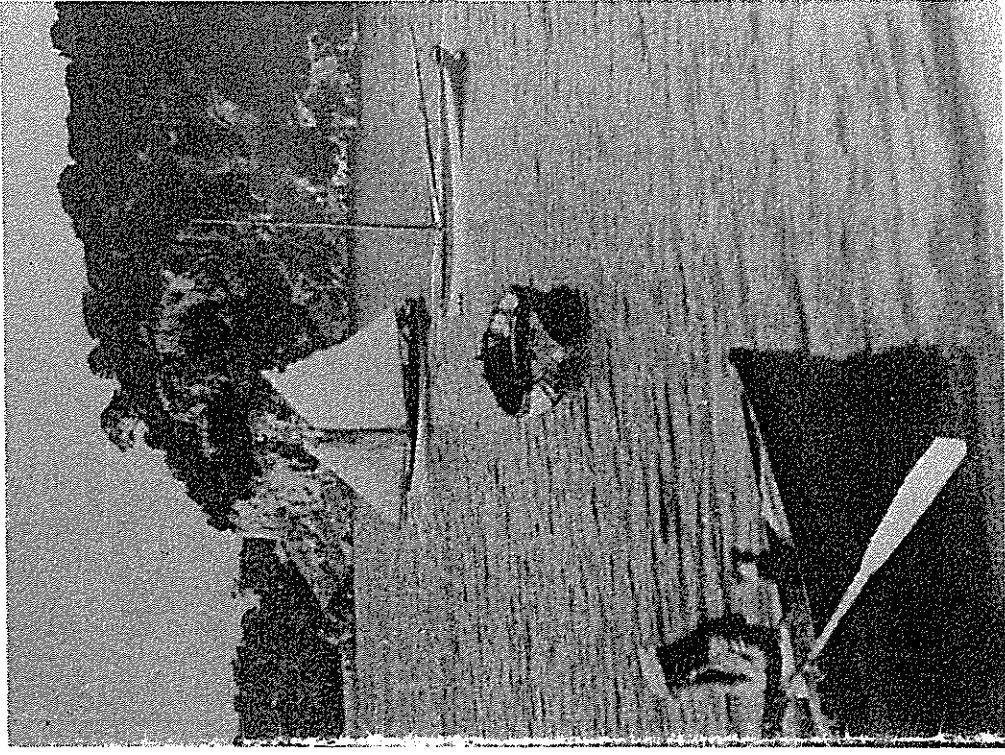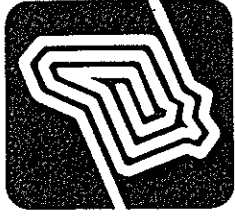
A Bicentennial Project for Community Participation

The **Rocky Bay Heritage Trail** is part of the Heritage Trails Network, a project for community participation devised by the Western Australian Heritage Committee. To commemorate the 1988 Bicentenary, the project established a statewide network of 'Heritage Trails' - routes designed to enhance awareness and enjoyment of Western Australia's natural and cultural heritage.

The Heritage Trails Network was jointly funded by the Commonwealth and Western Australian governments under the Commonwealth/State Bicentennial Commemorative Program.
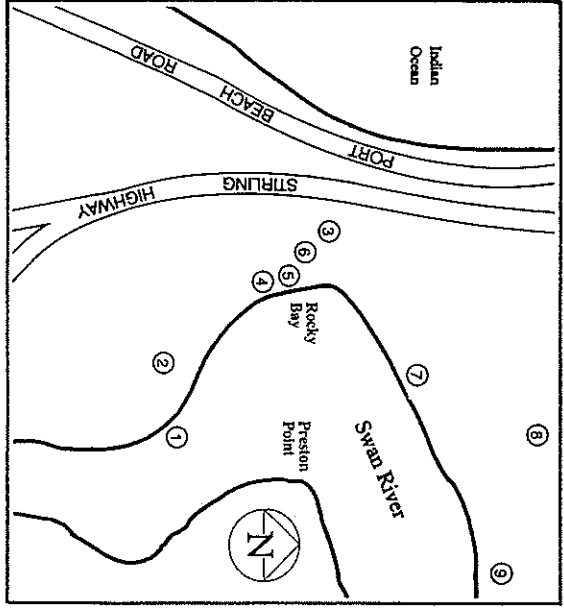
A Commonwealth/State Bicentennial Project