

## PERTH AND THE SOUTHWEST

---



**T**HE SOUTHWESTERN CORNER of Australia, inhabited by hunters and gatherers for at least 30 000 years, was known to Europeans from early in the seventeenth century when Dutch traders first made contact with its shallow, sandy shoreline. It attracted little attention until 1826 when the British, in an attempt to secure control over the whole continent, ordered the New South Wales administration to occupy King George Sound (see Albany). This, in turn, led James Stirling to promote actively the colonisation of the Swan River area which he examined in March 1827 and decided had great potential for agriculture, trade and defence. Here, Australia's first non-convict colony was established in June 1829. Stirling's promotion attracted the support of a number of investors, of whom Thomas Peel is the best known, and produced a flood of emigrants anxious to claim large tracts of very cheap land.

By November 1829, the best lands along the Swan and Canning rivers had been allocated to 32 of the largest of these investors. Peel arrived too late to claim his 110 000 ha grant on the Canning and was forced to settle on the Murray (see Mandurah and Pinjarra). Later arrivals were directed to settle around Leschenault Inlet (see Bunbury) and the mouth of the Blackwood but they refused to move from **Fremantle**, the port hurriedly laid out at the mouth of the Swan River where most settlers congregated.

All these settlers had been led to believe that the Perth–Albany region consisted of alternate bands of loam and alluvium, blessed with a twelve-month growing season. Nothing was further from the truth. The triangle of alluvium on the Swan between the **Darling Range** escarpment and the Canning River, the focus of Stirling's examination in March 1827, is rare; the coastal plains typically consist of a series of elongated dune systems separated by a broken chain of swamps and lakes. The plateau behind the scarp is dominated by severely leached laterites that, paradoxically, support luxuriant forests of jarrah in the north and karri in the wetter south. Only in the drier inland where major rivers such as the Avon have cut down to the underlying rock is there anything approaching fertile soil, but the valleys of such rivers are hemmed in to the east and north by extensive sand plains clothed, like the plateau, in shrubs highly poisonous to stock. Certainly the area is well watered, but rainfall is distinctly seasonal.

Thus disappointment was general. Adverse reports reaching London as early as January 1830 cut off the flow of emigration. Disgruntled settlers left in large numbers and, less than a year after its foundation, the colony teetered on the edge of collapse.

In desperation, Robert Dale was sent to explore the country to the east in July 1830 where he discovered the grassy Avon River (upper Swan) valley. Here, Stirling quickly established the townships of **Northam**, **York** and **Beverley** and approved claims to 174 000 ha of the best land, but the valley remained largely unoccupied until a severe drought in 1834–35 forced the few settlers with sheep to move inland. Thereafter, they spread northwards in a narrow band towards the Moore River and southwards along the Dale, Hotham and Williams rivers to link up with a later movement northwards from the Hay River near **Mount Barker**. Changes to land regulations in 1837 enabled these pastoralists to purchase the few sources of permanent water that gave them control of the best of the inland pastures.

Most settlers preferred to huddle on the coast, where a disastrous start was made on agriculture in 1830. Results improved slowly as settlers experimented with crops and soil





*Albion House, Augusta, near Cape Leeuwin. Pen and ink and watercolour  
by Thomas Turner, 1836.*

ART GALLERY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

types and **Guildford** emerged as the major agricultural centre on the Swan River. The poorer soils along the Canning were only suitable for stock, and Kelmscott, Guildford's counterpart there, remained unoccupied. The remnants of Peel's abortive scheme clustered around **Pinjarra** where they practised mixed farming on a limited scale. It was here that Stirling mounted an armed campaign late in 1834 against seventy members of the Murray River Aborigines as the final solution to their 'depredations on property'. By then, coastal Aborigines had been displaced from their hunting grounds. Careful management by fire had made these lands ideal locations for stock and crops. The few settlers at Augusta suffered extreme hardship in clearing the hardwood forests for cultivation. After repeated failures, the Bussells moved north in 1834 to occupy the fertile flats along the Vasse. Their success, particularly with dairying, encouraged others to join them and the small port of **Busselton** slowly took form.

Despite this apparent progress, when Stirling left the colony at the end of 1838 it had only 2000 people, the same number as in 1831, and 60 per cent of these lived in **Perth** and **Fremantle**. Basic necessities were still imported.

The **Australind** settlement, formed in 1840 astride the Collie and Preston rivers by systematic colonisers, revived hopes of possible progress, but it proved to be an even greater failure. With obvious reluctance, colonists sought the introduction of convicts in 1850. The population had now grown to slightly more than 5000, more than one-third still living in urban areas. This was less than the Aboriginal population it had replaced.

The presence of convicts after 1850 ensured a growing market for agriculture and provided much needed public works, including the upgrading of the road between **Perth** and **Albany**. The latter became the colony's major port following the establishment of a coaling station there in 1852. But the main flow of settlement was directed towards Champion Bay (**Geraldton**) and the northwest, and rural areas, with the exception of the Avon Valley, received little direct benefit.

There was a gradual probing of the plateau, initially in search of summer pasture for cattle, but the planting of an orchard near Bridgetown in 1862 heralded the beginnings of an apple and pear industry that in time extended in a broken crescent from Donnybrook to **Mount Barker**. This was complemented, particularly after World War I, by a scattering stone and citrus fruit orchards along the scarp south from Chittering.

Major interest, stimulated by railway and telegraph construction elsewhere in Australia, centred on the jarrah and karri forests that supported a major export industry by 1876. Cutting



was confined at first to the near coastal locations of Lockeville near **Busselton**, Karridale, **Denmark**, Jarrahdale and **Collie**, but the completion of the Perth–Bunbury–Bridgetown railway at the turn of the century facilitated the exploitation of forests along the length of the scarp, while its later extension inland opened up major forest areas around Nannup and particularly around **Manjimup** and **Pemberton**.

Following the granting of self-government in 1890, which coincided with major gold discoveries resulting in a sixfold population increase by 1910, strenuous efforts were made through the Homestead Act of 1893 to create a 'bold yeomanry' that would dilute the presence of miners and ensure agricultural self sufficiency. Small farms were established on the coastal plain south of **Perth** and at **Bridgetown** and Torbay (west of **Albany**). Swamps along the Harvey River and around Jandakot were drained and the piedmont alluvial fan at **Harvey** was irrigated to promote dairying and intensive mixed farming. Results were sufficiently encouraging for an ambitious expansion of drainage in various resettlement schemes after the war to include the original Peel Estate. The irrigated area was enlarged to encompass the better drained plains from Waroona to Dardanup and a chain of dams from Mundaring Weir in the north, completed in 1902 to supply water to the Eastern Goldfields, to Wellington Dam in the south was constructed along the edge of the scarp.

The group settlement scheme, introduced in 1921, was undoubtedly the most ambitious and costly of the post-war resettlement programs. Centred on the cooler, wetter and heavily forested triangle bounded by **Bunbury**, Augusta and **Albany**, it was designed to enhance the state's dairy industry, but the scheme was poorly managed and the settlers poorly selected. Like their predecessors at Augusta one hundred years before, they found the land difficult to clear and, when cleared, infertile. By 1929, when 4500 families had passed through the scheme, only 1686 farms had been prepared and only 35 of their occupants had more than fifteen cows.

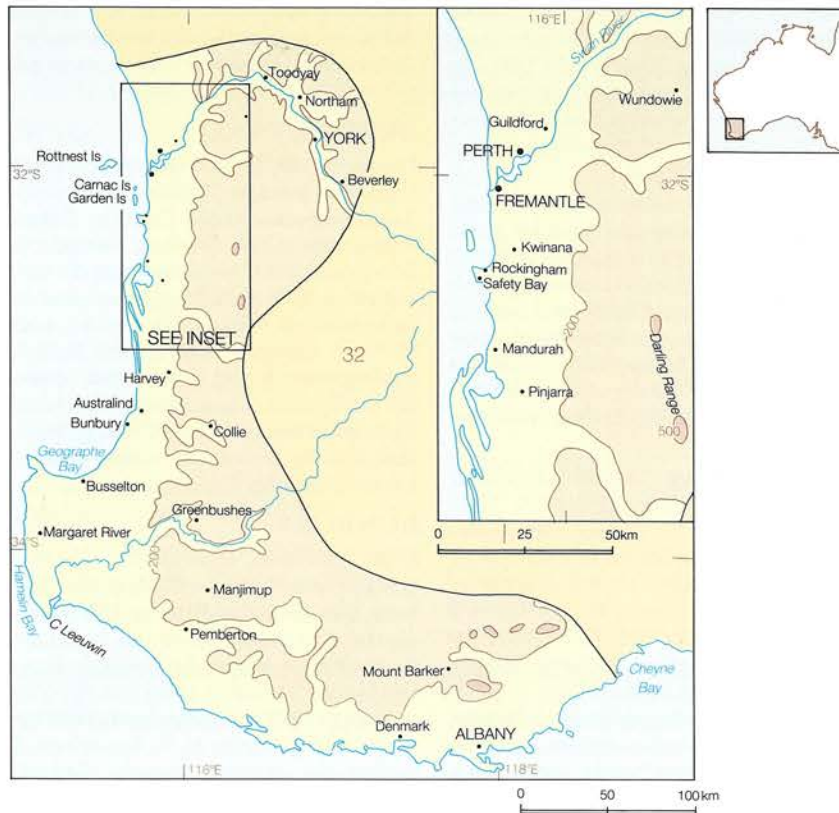
A program of light land development, was implemented after World War II with equally mixed success. Although concentrated outside the region, it resulted in the more intensive occupation of areas to the east and west of **Albany** and **Mount Barker** previously only extensively grazed. Mineral development dominated, however, ironically enough, on lands that previously had been a barrier to settlement. Mineral sands were first extracted from Cheyne Bay in 1949, but extraction is now centred on Geographe Bay from Capel to **Busselton**. Bauxite, recognised early in the century, was not developed until the 1950s: Jarrahdale, Del Park, Wagerup and Worsley are now major areas of exploitation.

Economic growth since the war, fuelled by developments outside the region, has seen the development of a major industrial centre at **Kwinana** near where Thomas Peel landed in 1829, and the continued growth of **Perth**, now with over one million people and home for 80 per cent of the state's population. But this progress has been at some cost. The best lands that Stirling saw in 1827 have been engulfed by urban growth; the dams along the scarp are threatened with increasing salinity from the clearing of forests for agriculture; jarrah dieback continues to spread; and many of the open grassy plains over which Aborigines hunted have reverted to thick scrub.

J.M.R. Cameron

#### SUGGESTED READING

- J.M.R. Cameron, *Ambition's fire: the colonization of pre-convict Western Australia*, Nedlands 1981.  
 D.S. Garden, *Albany: a panorama of the Sound from 1827*, Melbourne 1977.  
 D.S. Garden, *Northam, an Avon Valley history*, Melbourne 1979.  
 R.H.W. Reece and R. Pascoe, 'Place of consequence': pictorial history of Fremantle, Fremantle 1982.  
 C.T. Stannage, *The people of Perth*, Perth 1979.



**ALBANY** [35°00'S 117°53'E]

Popn: 173 (1848), 3680 (1901), 10526 (1961), 15222 (1981). Named by Gov Stirling after Duke of York and Albany: used officially from 1832. Formerly known as Fredericks Town and King George Sound.

**Exploration** First recorded European sighting of area by Francois Thyssen and Peter Nuyts in 1627: coastline outlined on Dutch East India Co chart of 1628. In 1791 George Vancouver explored area. Bruny d'Entrecasteaux in area in 1792 looking for La Pérouse. Matthew Flinders replenished ships here in 1801 on basis of Vancouver's reports, also found grave of whaler buried in 1800. Louis de Freycinet explored area in 1803, Phillip Parker King in 1818 and 1821. By this stage many ships, including sealers and whalers, called at King George Sound.

**Establishment of settlement** Visit of Frenchman Dumont d'Urville in 1826 caused Britain to take formal possession of area. Major Edmund Lockyer arrived in late 1826 with troops and convicts from Sydney to estab penal colony; officially proclaimed 21 February 1827. Old Farm (RNE) dates from 1827 (present home built 1889). Difficulties of sea approach in winter prevented this from becoming chief WA settlement: penal colony evacuated in 1831 and King George Sound made part of Swan River Colony.

**Town and district expansion** Town site surveyed in 1831 and officially named Albany from 1832, though King George Sound remained popular name for about 40 yrs. Patrick Taylor Cottage (RNE) built

in 1832, now restored. Capt Richard Spencer, first govt resident, set up Strawberry Hill (Govt) Farm (RNE) in 1833. Much of early development due to wool boom and favourable reports of district. First jetty built in the 1830s and harbour became stopping place for emigrant ships. Some people settled in district, but farming difficult and not particularly successful. First export sealskins; replaced by whale products as sealing declined. At first large numbers of whalers from USA, France and eastern states, but local involvement increased from the mid-1840s. Busiest port in



*Albany from Mount Melville. Albany grew from a penal colony established in 1827 to an important port and later an important regional and resort centre. Photograph by Bartletto, c1905.*

NATIONAL LIBRARY



WA in the early 1840s. Export of sandalwood to China important in the late 1840s until market saturated. School opened in 1848; Anglican church built 1841–48. Previously good European–Aborig relations deteriorated in the 1840s and alcohol and venereal disease became problems for the latter group. Albany remained isolated and largely neglected by **Perth**.

**Convict era** Gaol built in 1851. Convict hiring depot (now the Old Gaol Museum) built in 1851, operated until 1872. Surviving gaol buildings (RNE) built in 1875. Residency (RNE, now a museum) built in 1852–53 for superintendent. Albany was coaling port and P & O mail station in the early 1850s: latter led to completion of **Perth** to Albany road by convict labour in 1853. P & O closed Albany station in 1857. Two lighthouses built in 1857. Roman Catholic church built in 1861.

**Growth of town and services** Municipal council estab in 1871: mayor and town council in 1885. Telegraph to **Perth** opened in 1872. *Albany Mail* newspaper estab in 1883. Typhoid epidemic in 1887. Town hall opened in 1888. At this time moves to separate from rest of WA because of neglect by govt. Rlwy opened in 1889. Gas pipes laid in 1891. Fort Scratchley built 1891–99 after fears of Russian invasion. Supply centre and port for goldfields in the 1890s. In 1895 steamer service to **Esperance** begun to serve **Norseman** goldfields. Large quarantine station estab in 1897–98. In the 1890s, freezing works, large rlwy workshop and engineering works estab, while town grew as health resort. Despite harbour improvements, lost shipping to newly estab port of **Fremantle**.

**Twentieth century** Town in decline in the early 20th cent: became more important as a resort, less so as a port. Convoy of vessels carrying first ANZACs assembled in King George Sound. Albany Zone Development Committee estab 1947; led to new farming methods, soldier settlement in district. In 1947 canning plant estab to process King George Sound salmon and herrings as well as peas and beans since 1964. Second fish processing plant estab in 1972. Harbour Trust estab in 1950: new berths built 1955–57 and 1971, first bulk grain terminals in 1956. Albany whaling station only one in Aust in the 1950s–60s: closed in 1978 after federal govt commitment to cessation of whaling.

#### AUSTRALIND [33°15'S 115°44'E]

Popn: 76 (1911), 68 (1947), 1681 (1981). Name derived from 'Australia' and 'India' as reminder of proximity and trade potential between them. Formerly known as Port Leschenault. Lautour granted 40 470 ha in district in 1829: he sent out agent and settlers, but never used land granted. Purchased by Western Australian Co in 1840 to estab settlement on basis of principles of Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Nearly 500 settlers arrived under Marshall Clifton in 1841 (when renamed Australind), but scheme failed because soil was a fine sand unsuitable for agric. Settlement failed by 1843 though many settlers moved elsewhere in district. Planned like English country town and to be dependent on intensive farming.

Upton House (RNE) built in 1847 for president of WA Co. Project officially terminated in 1875. During 20th cent developed as coastal resort and later as dormitory suburb of **Bunbury**.

#### BEVERLEY [32°06'S 116°55'E]

Popn: 56 (1881), 1453 (1911), 756 (1981). Named in 1830 after town in Yorkshire, England: name means 'beaver stream' in old English. Robert Dale's 1830 expedition across **Darling Range** opened area to European settlement. Town site declared in 1830, one of first in WA. In 1883 various syndicates offered to build rlwy to **Albany**, then to SA border. Anthony Hordern obtained contract for Beverley to Albany section: work began in 1886, line opened in 1889, but did not lead to large-scale smallholding as expected. Situated in the rich Avon valley, Beverley survived the 1930s depression to remain a prominent centre for a mixed farming district.

#### BUNBURY [33°20'S 115°39'E]

Popn: 66 (1848), 2587 (1901), 13 186 (1961), 21 749 (1981). Named by Gov Stirling after Lieut H. W. Bunbury who arrived at **Perth** in 1836, then explored this district. Originally known as Port Leschenault: Leschenault Inlet named by Louis de Freycinet in 1803. Dr Alexander Collie and Lieut W. Preston reported on area in 1829 and some land taken up as result. US whalers who sheltered in Koombana Bay provided market for pioneer farmers. Temporary military camp estab in 1830. Township laid out and named in 1836, became municipality in 1871. St Mark's Church at nearby Picton built in 1842, oldest in WA. Leschenault homestead (RNE) built by William Clifton as wattle and daub cottage c1843, extended as weatherboard home c1854–70. Morgan's Inn (RNE) at Picton built c1851 as small slab hut; one of few remaining old coaching inns in area. Newton James Moore, premier of WA 1906–10, born here in 1870. Rlwy from Boyanup opened in 1891 to bring timber to port here; line to **Perth** opened in 1893. Breakwater built in 1903. Ilmenite, titanium and other heavy metals mined from mineral sands since 1956, processing plant operational since 1963. In the 1960s, woollen textile, timber, butter and cheese industries estab. In



*Lockville homestead, Busselton, Western Australia, was built in the late 1850s. Busselton, with its temperate climate and safe beaches, is a popular tourist spot. Photograph by Douglass Baglin, 1977.*

WELDON TRANNIES



1982 initial studies for construction of ALCOA aluminium smelter in conjunction with new power station; decision to proceed deferred in 1985 because of downturn in world market.

### BUSSELTON [33°39'S 115°21'E]

Popn: 289 (1881), 916 (1933), 6463 (1981). Named after the Bussells, a local family of settlers (see Vasse). Township founded in 1832, allotments purchased from c1835. St Mary's Church built in 1844, oldest stone church in WA. Prospect Villa, Lockeville homestead, and Sandilands (all RNE) were built in the 1850s. First timber mill in WA estab at Quindalup to southwest in 1854. Private rlwy opened by WA Timber Co in 1871. State's first butter factory estab here in 1893. Rlwy to Perth opened in 1894. Port for local timber, dairying and beach sand mining industries. Jetty was the longest timber jetty in Aust at 2 km: begun in 1865, completed in 1961 and partially destroyed by cyclone and high seas in 1978.

### COLLIE [33°20'S 116°10'E]

Popn: 1458 (1901), 4507 (1947), 7667 (1981). Named after Dr Alexander Collie, surgeon on the *Sulphur*, Albany's first resident magistrate in 1831, and then Perth's colonial-surgeon: he reached the Collie R in 1829. John Roe explored river in 1830. Wellington Dam built on river for irrigation in 1933; now has salinity problems because of clearing for agric upstream. Perrin discov coal c1882. Became major coal town from 1883. Mining leases taken out through the 1880s. District proclaimed in 1896: govt opened 41 300 ha for selection, but little enthusiasm. Influx of migrant miners in 1897: town proclaimed as Collie that yr. Rlwy opened in 1898: station known as Coalville, then Colliefields and finally Collie from 1899. Rlwy to Narrogin opened in 1906. Municipality from 1901. West Collie and Collie Cardiff began as mining villages with mines and rail spurs, now incorporated in Collie. Amalgamated Collieries rose to importance 1920–30. In the late 1930s Collie Power Station was estab: taken over by Electricity Commission in 1944. In World War II high demand for coal could not be met from existing mines and open-cut operations begun followed by a boom in the 1950s. Amalgamated Collieries closed in 1960, but new Muja power station estab in 1961, expanded 1985. Mechanisation and changes in coal industry following oil crisis led to recovery in the 1970s: in the early 1980s about 700 people were employed and 2.1m tonnes produced per yr.

### DARLING RANGE [31°02'S 115°46'E]

Named after Gov Darling of NSW: originally named General Darling's Range by Capt James Stirling in 1827. Robert Dale was first European explorer to cross range in 1830. Bauxite deposits evaluated in 1957: ALCOA and Western Aluminium began mining in 1959, especially near Jarrahdale. Great concern about environmental effects followed removal of jarrah forest and reforestation with introduced species. Spread of dieback disease and changes to ground water hydrology also of concern.

### DENMARK [34°56'S 117°22'E]

Popn: 784 (1901), 495 (1911), 985 (1981). Named by explorer T.B. Wilson after surgeon colleague in 1839. Town grew after sawmill estab in 1895 to mill and export karri, and rlwy opened. Mill and school closed, trains ceased running in 1904. Fishing industry declined at same time due to marketing problems. In 1907 WA govt purchased land and opened it to settlement, but little response. Small butter factory opened c1910. Plans to connect Albany to Manjimup by rlwy through here mooted in 1922: line opened to Denmark in 1929 but failed due to lack of freight. Struggling group-settlers marched to Albany as protest against their ill-nourished condition. Further settlement in district in the 1950s. Has developed as a holiday resort since World War II.

### FREMANTLE [32°03'S 115°46'E]

Popn: 426 (1848), 5607 (1891), 20 467 (1901), 27 934 (1947), now included in metropolitan Perth. Named by Capt James Stirling after Capt Fremantle of the *Challenger*, one of three ships that brought first European settlers to WA in 1829: Fremantle formally took possession of WA for Britain in May 1829.

**Municipal history** Town site proclaimed, surveys made by John Roe and first blocks sold in 1829. Town of well-ordered streets by 1832: became port for colony. Administered by govt resident until first town trust estab in 1848. Town council estab in 1871: chairman took title of mayor in 1883. North Fremantle made separate municipality in 1895; East Fremantle council estab in 1897. Fremantle became a city in 1929.

**Buildings and services** *Fremantle Journal and General Advertiser* estab in 1830. Round House (RNE), small 12-sided gaol, built in 1830–31: probably oldest building in WA. School estab in 1831. Road to Perth built in the 1830s. Foundation stone of Wesleyan Chapel laid by Gov Hutt in 1840. St John's Anglican church opened in 1843. Imperial convict depot estab in 1850. Present gaol built 1851–59. Literary Inst estab in 1851. Fremantle Boys' School (RNE) built in 1852. Streets paved in 1858. Lunatic asylum (RNE, now maritime museum) built 1861–65. First bridge over Swan River here opened in 1866. Telegraph to Perth opened in 1869; rlwy in 1881. Town hall opened in 1887. First town in WA to organise its own water supply: began operation in 1890. Tramways opened in 1905–06. General Aust Hospital estab for returning World War I soldiers. Rlwy bridge over Swan R collapsed in 1926.

**Port and maritime activities** Boat building industry began in 1836; Fremantle Whaling Co in 1837. In the 1830s Aborigs used to assemble to feed on whales brought in by US whalers. First convicts arrived in *Scindian* in 1850: last convict ship brought 38 Fenians in 1868. Old Customs House (RNE) built in 1853. Harbour Board created under John Roe to improve port in 1865. New jetty completed in 1873, extended in 1881 as Long Jetty. Fenians escaped on US whaler *Catalpa* in 1875. Port and town boomed with goldrush trade 1890–1914. Harbour improved and moles built in 1892 after reports of 1870s–80s. Royal Mail steamers





*Port of Fremantle at the mouth of the Swan River. In 1892 moles were constructed to improve the entrance to the harbour. Photograph by Kevin Diletti.*

first called here rather than Albany in 1900. Harbour Trust estab in 1903. Hostility between union and non-union labour on wharves in 1919 and Riot Act read: further trouble in the early 1920s. Facilities for fishing fleet reconstructed in 1928. Victualling port in World War II. Harbour further updated in the 1950s. New passenger terminal opened in 1960 for overseas liners.

**Miscellaneous** Fifty typhoid cases in 1898: 223 of pneumonic influenza in 1919. Genuine alerts but no enemy attacks in 1942 and 1944: evacuation plans drawn up. Home Defence Corps set up in 1940, first in WA. During World War II US forces stationed in Women's Home, now Maritime Museum. HMAS Leeuwin training establishment of RAN opened in 1960. Large number of RNE buildings from 1850 to 1900 preserved. Base for US navy shore leave from late 1970s; US navy visits controversial 1983–85. Venue for America's Cup yachting race in 1987; much private and public money devoted to local projects in preparation for the event.

**GARDEN ISLAND** [32°11'S 115°41'E]

Named Buache by Louis de Freycinet, renamed by Gov James Stirling. First recorded landing was by members of Nicholas Baudin's scientific expedition in 1801. In 1827 Stirling and Charles Fraser, NSW colonial botanist, planted banana and culinary seeds and released some domestic animals on island. Capt Fremantle explored island in 1829. In 1829 Stirling disembarked settlers from HMS *Parmelia* on island before transferring to mainland and proclaiming colony:

temporary shelters erected, colonists remained 2 months. Remained crown land: sold to commonwealth in 1915, but mainly untouched until mid-20th cent, although Careening Cove had been repair base for ships during 19th cent. Services Reconnaissance Dept's Z-Force trained on island 1939–45. Causeway to mainland begun in 1971 and naval support facility developed. Major Aust naval base, HMAS Stirling, estab here in the 1970s. Announced in late 1985 that submarine base to be established here by 1987.

**GREENBUSHES** [33°50'S 116°03'E]

Popn: 1389 (1911), 355 (1933), 321 (1981). Tin, tantalite and columbite discov in 1888. Busy tin mining area c1900 with about 2000 men working fields, shortage of housing, 30 stores, 3 hotels, warden's court. Mining operations contracted in 1958 but continued on smaller scale into the 1970s. Alluvial tin treatment plant built on newly discov deposit and production started in 1982. Largest tantalum deposit in world also mined.

**GUILDFORD** [31°55'S 115°58'E]

Popn: 95 (1848), 1698 (1901), 3224 (1911), 2217 (1947), now an outer northeastern suburb of Perth. Town site determined in 1829, planned in 1830, to serve agric district of Swan River valley where many officer-farmers had properties. Gov Stirling took up 1620 ha adjacent to site in 1829 and built original Woodbridge House: school opened in later house on site (Nat T) in 1896 and eventually became Guildford



Grammar in new premises. Olive Farm vineyard at South Guildford has cellar from 1830. WA Agric Soc formed here in 1831. First St Matthew's Church built of mud in 1836, rebuilt of brick in 1860 (RNE). Garden Hill (RNE) built in 1895 on grant of 1837; acquired by Roman Catholic Church as St Charles' Seminary in 1942. Earlier mission school reopened by Anglicans in 1841. Militia dispersed about 250 Aborigs assembling for corroboree in 1849: prisoners escaped from Perth and Rottnest Island in attempt to attend. Commissariat store built as convict hiring depot in 1853, closed in 1873: became Garrick Theatre (RNE). Govt school for Europeans built in 1855. Courthouse (RNE) built in 1866. Rlwy opened in 1881. In 1941 Aborig reserve at Allawah Grove, South Guildford, resumed for defence uses, leading to Aborigs being left homeless. Land reverted to Aborig housing use under New Coolbaroo League in 1957.

**HARVEY** [33°04'S 115°54'E]

Popn: 256 (1911), 1062 (1947), 2479 (1981). Surveyor John Roe visited district on expedition to Russell Ranges and Esperance Bay in 1848. Town developed in the 1890s when anticipated that rural popn would support station every 5 km on southwestern rlwy: Harvey one of few towns to develop to any extent. First business premises built in 1890, now museum. Irrigation and drainage projects commenced under James Mitchell to provide employment during the 1930s depression. Now dairying and citrus on irrigated farms: oranges had been grown in the late 19th cent on Korijekup Estate with 12 homesteads on land originally granted to Gov James Stirling.

**KWINANA** [32°13'S 115°47'E]

Popn: 163 (1947), 3269 (1961), 12 355 (1981). Named after *Kwinana* ('pretty maiden'), ship anchored at Careening Cove, Garden Island, after involvement in fire at Carnarvon in 1920. Industrial complex begun in 1951. BHP began development of steel bar plant in 1954 in exchange for mining leases on Koolan Is (see Yampi Sound) under agreement with WA govt. BP petroleum refinery opened in 1955; steel rolling mill of Aust Iron & Steel 1956-60; lubricating oil refinery in 1963. High grade iron ore from **Koolyanobbing** brought here via new rlwy: first exports in 1957, blast furnace began operation in 1968, shut down in April 1982, now on care and maintenance. Alcoa aluminium refinery built from 1961, first exports in 1964: bauxite from **Darling Range** by rlwy from Jarrahdale. Western Mining nickel refinery opened in 1970. Industrial pollution in and around Cockburn Sound has caused concern since industrial development began.

**MANDURAH** [32°31'S 115°44'E]

Popn: 223 (1911), 5062 (1971), 10 978 (1981). Name: Aborig = 'watering place' or 'meeting place of tribes'. Peel Inlet named after Thomas Peel, pioneer settler, 1830. Peel planned settlement on his 101 000 ha grant in form of town and estates on English feudal basis, but scheme failed when indentured labourers claimed discharge, illness struck and his partner withdrew

capital. Settlers and Aborigs clashed: small garrison of troops estab in 1831. Reference to town site of Peeltown in 1832. Hall's Cottage built in 1835, now museum. Peel proposed town of Liverpool in 1838, then decided to form settlement on Serpentine R in 1840. Cooper's Mill erected here on Mill Is 1843-46: Cooper's Cottage, once a wayside inn, built in 1845. Peel died disillusioned and in squalor at Mandurah in 1865. Rlwy opened in the 1880s. Town founded in 1895. Large area of Peel's grant bought by govt and much drained for soldier settlement scheme. Developed as a resort area in the 1970s, but has suffered major pollution problems and algal build-up in Peel Inlet.

**MANJIMUP** [34°13'S 116°09'E]

Popn: 149 (1911), 2978 (1961), 4150 (1981). Name: Aborig = 'edible root of bulrush at watering place'. Area settled by Europeans in 1856 as camp for timbercutters. Valuable karri forests in district. Manjimup House built in 1862. Town proclaimed in 1910. Rlwy opened in 1911. Jarrah leafminer (moth) spread from outbreak further east in the late 1950s: by 1974, very large areas of forest damaged. Woodchip industry estab in the late 1960s despite strong opposition from environmentalists.

**MARGARET RIVER** [33°56'S 115°04'E]

Popn: 123 (1911), 798 (1981). Named after Margaret Wicher, friend of Bussell family. Wallcliffe built by Alfred Bussell in 1865 in attempt to reproduce English country house. Mammoth Cave to south explored in 1894: over 10 000 marsupial bones found there, including koala and Tasmanian wolf, both extinct in WA. Town developed between 1910 and 1920. Group settlements in the 1920s. Rlwy opened in 1927, closed in 1956. Wine growing began successfully in the early 1970s. Ellensbrook is nearby: from here 16-yr-old Grace Bussell and Aborig companion rescued survivors from *Georgette* in 1876.

**MOUNT BARKER** [34°36'S 117°41'E]

Popn: 456 (1911), 1594 (1966), 1519 (1981). Named after Capt Collet Barker, commandant of King George Sound penal colony (see Albany). District explored in the 1830s. Hay R was first region to be opened up by Richard Spencer 1835-37. Sisters of Mercy sent here in 1845 to convert Aborigs. Police station and gaol built in 1868. Town founded in 1893. Apple growing in district began in the 1890s: co-operative coolstores opened in 1918. Rlwy from **Beverley** to **Albany** via Mount Barker opened in 1889, led to more land being opened for selection and increased prosperity. In 1914 European parents refused to send children to school unless Aborig children withdrawn, a demand the government met. Trial vine plantings in 1964: Houghton Wines moved into district in the 1970s.

**NORTHAM** [31°38'S 116°41'E]

Popn: 252 (1881), 2096 (1901), 7400 (1966), 6791 (1981). Named by Gov Stirling after village in Devon, England. Robert Dale led party of colonists over **Darling**



**Range** to Avon valley in 1830 and James Henty led a group of them to the north, probably first Europeans in Northam district. Mentioned in land grants of 1830–31. Town gazetted 1833–35. More intense settlement of district began in 1836. Steam flour mill estab in 1867. Telegraph to Perth from 1871. Rlwy opened in 1886, extended to goldfields in the mid-1890s. Establishment of rlwy yards and gold rushes led to prosperity. Dam built on Avon R in 1900; destroyed by floods in 1903, new dam built in 1907. Butter factory operated 1919–33. Rabbit plague in the 1930s: rabbit processing plant built in 1934. In 1946, 4000 Italian prisoners of war were gathered here for repatriation. Migrant reception centre after World War II.

**PEMBERTON** [34°26'S 116°02'E]

Popn: 1018 (1933), 871 (1981). Named in 1862 after Pemberton Walcott, son of early European settler at Warren R. Convicts built road to Vasse in 1866. Village founded in 1911, town proclaimed in 1912. One of Aust's largest timber mills: won contract for 500 000 sleepers for Trans-Australian Rlwy in 1913. Group settlement in district in 1921. World Forestry Commission visited district in 1928 and judged karri second only to Californian redwood as timber tree. Pemberton to Northcliffe rlwy built in the early 1930s. Pemberton Nat Pks Board formed c1930 to administer Pemberton, Warren and Beedelup nat pks in district. Parks transferred to WA Nat Pks Authority in 1977.

**PERTH** [31°57'S 115°51'E]

Popn: 1148 (1848), 8447 (1891), 31 300 (1911), 272 528 (1947), 809 035 (1981). Named after birthplace in Scotland of George Murray, secretary of state.

**Founding of colony** Capt James Stirling's report on Swan River advocated colonisation, but British govt rejected idea until Stirling aroused interest while in England in 1828. Stirling and first colonists arrived in *Parmelia* in 1829 and Swan River Colony proclaimed 12 August 1829 as Aust's third colony and first of free settlers. First official chaplain, Rev J.B. Wittenoom arrived in 1830 and set up first colonial school. Swan R remained main line of communication for many decades. Early clashes with Aboriges often arose because their movement along it was blocked by Perth and their fishing grounds disrupted: one Aborig leader shot by firing squad and second also killed in 1833; George Shenton's mill at South Perth attacked in 1834 (present mill (RNE) built c1835).

**Government** Legislative Council of WA formed in 1832; Old Legislative Building built in 1836, used until 1870, then 1890–94. Commissariat store and gaol built in 1834, courthouse in 1836 (RNE, oldest surviving public building). Road trust estab in 1838. Perth Town Trust formed in 1842. New courthouse and gaol built in 1856, used until the 1880s, now a museum. Proclaimed a city in 1856, city council estab in 1858, town hall (RNE) built 1867–70. Government House (RNE) built 1859–63. City divided into wards in 1864. Treasury buildings (RNE) built 1874–77, new supreme court (RNE) in 1903. W.E. Bold, town

clerk from 1901 to 1945, largely responsible for Greater Perth Movement of 1906–12 that saw amalgamation of Perth, North Perth, Leederville and Victoria Park. Parliament House built in 1904, enlarged in 1964. WA parliament passed Aust's first town planning act (for Perth) in 1928. Plan for metropolitan region, including Fremantle, produced in 1955; second major plan in 1970.

**General development** Perth had only 360 people in 1832, developing less rapidly than Fremantle. Market gardens around Perth by the 1830s. Minor wool boom in the 1830s–40s. By 1838, 8 flour mills in district. Grave labour shortages in the 1840s, especially as many servants had saved enough to move on to eastern colonies, led to moves to have convicts transported to WA: first convict ship *Scindian* arrived in 1850 and transportation continued until 1868, convict labour ceasing in 1886. Convict depot built at foot of Mt Eliza. Lake Kingsford drained for market gardens in 1854; further drainage near town for this purpose and for residential developments in the 1870s. Growth remained slow until gold rushes in Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie areas in the 1890s: still only 1083 houses in Perth in 1881. Period of rapid growth with rushes: much investment in Perth by monied men such as W.G. Brookman (mayor, MP and large mine owner) and Alfred Morgans. Crawley Park, Dalkeith, Nedlands and Peppermint Grove estates developed in this period. In addition, Claremont, Leederville, North Perth, Subiaco and Victoria Park were developed and gazetted 1897–1901. Growth rate dropped again after 1901. First theatre, St George's, opened in 1879. The People's Store founded by Harry Boan in 1896; city markets opened in 1897. First Trades and Labour Congress held in 1899. His (Her) Majesty's Theatre opened in 1904, Aust's first steel and concrete building. Forrest Place and GPO built in 1923, London Court in the 1930s. Increase in factory employment and building boom in the 1920s. During depression unemployed given relief work improving King's Park and river foreshores; unemployed march in Perth in 1929; by 1933 one in four unemployed. Annual Festival of Perth began in 1953. Hosted British Commonwealth Games in 1962. New industrial areas at Bassendean, Hilton Park, Innaloo, Osborne Park and Welshpool developed in the 1950s, as well as motor works at Mosman Park and North Fremantle, closed in 1970s. Major boom in both commercial and residential property markets in the late 1960s and early 1970s, partly financed on proceeds of iron and nickel boom. Perth Concert Hall and Entertainment Centre built in the early 1970s.

**Transport and services** First newspaper, the *Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal*, appeared in 1833. Causeway bridge built 1840–43, replaced in 1866. Town Trust jetty built in 1841. Hospital estab in 1853–54. First telegraph to Fremantle in 1869, to Adelaide in 1877. Perth Park became a public reserve in 1872; renamed King's Park in 1901. Oil street lighting from 1873 until the mid-1890s. Rlwy construction began in the 1880s with lines to Fremantle and Guildford in 1881. Daily newspaper, the *Daily News*, began





*Subiaco railway station, 1909. Oil by John Campbell.*

ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

in 1882; the *West Australian* from 1885. Perth Gas Co founded in 1883. First telephone installed in 1887. Victoria Reservoir opened in 1891 as initial step towards adequate piped water supply: distribution reservoir on Mt Eliza in use from 1892. First tramlines built in 1898–99: line to Leederville and North Perth opened in 1911. Much work on water supply 1906–20, including tapping of Mundaring Reservoir in 1908. First section of sewerage system built from 1906, opened in 1912, but less than one-third of city and suburbs sewered by 1920. First significant flight in Aust claimed to have been here in 1911 when J.J. Hammond flew a Bristol Boxkite for about 70 km. Electric street lighting from 1912. Automatic telephone exchange opened in 1914. Suburban bus services introduced in the 1920s. Perth to Adelaide air service begun in 1929. International airport opened at Guildford in 1955. Major reclamation of Perth Water in 1955, had become parkland and the Narrows freeway interchange by the early 1960s. Narrows Bridge and Kwinana freeway built in 1959, freeway extended in the 1980s. Metropolitan Transport Trust estab in 1957. Serpentine Dam completed in 1961 to augment water supply. Work began on Southern Outfall Sewerage scheme in 1963.

**Religion and education** First Methodist church built in 1834; St George's Anglican church built 1840–42. Perth became an Anglican see in 1856; Deanery built c1859; St George's Cathedral (designed by Edmund Blakett) built 1879–88. St Mary's Roman Catholic cathedral built 1863–65. First Congregational church in 1865, first Baptist church in 1895, Perth synagogue in 1897 and Moslem mosque in 1905. Perth Boys' School built in 1853–54. Mechanics' Inst estab in 1851; Working Men's Inst in 1864. WA Art Gallery formed with public subscriptions in the 1860s; Art Gallery building (RNE) completed in 1908, replaced by new building in 1979. Perth Library estab in 1887. Observatory built in 1896. Zoological gardens (RNE) opened in 1898. Perth Technical College

opened in 1900; Perth Modern School (RNE), first govt high school in WA, built 1905–10. University of WA opened in 1913. WA Inst of Technology opened 1966–68. Murdoch University opened for students in 1975. (See also Fremantle).

### PINJARRA

[32°37'S 115°52'E]

Popn: 95 (1881), 1336 (1981). Town declared in the 1830s. 'Battle of Pinjarra' in 1834 when Gov James Stirling set up barracks for mounted police here to 'drive a wedge' between Upper Swan and Murray River Aborigs, stop hostilities and attract more European settlers to Thomas Peel's Mandurah and Pinjarra estates: at least 14 Aborigs shot to avenge death of a policeman; known as Pinjarra massacre, Aborigs claimed much higher death toll. St John's Church built in 1845; Blythewood House built in 1848 by McLarty, pioneers in district from 1839; Old Blythewood (Nat T) built as inn c1860. Rlwy opened in 1891. Alumina refinery for Darling Range bauxite completed in 1972.

### ROCKINGHAM–SAFETY BAY

[32°19'S 115°45'E]

Popn: 161 (Rockingham, 1911), 2108 (1961), 12029 (1971), 24 932 (1981). Rockingham named after one of Thomas Peel's ships wrecked here in 1830 when settlement of huts and tents was further north at Clarence. Settlement moved to just east of present town, named Rockingham on English map of 1839. Briefly considered by Capt James Stirling as site for colonial capital. Capt Fremantle found Challenger Passage into safe water of Cockburn Sound in 1829: used by all ships entering port of Rockingham until c1945. Discussion of need for timber port in the 1830s–40s. In 1838 Peel noted success of US whaling from bay and proposed timber port at Safety Bay for wood cut on his property (see Mandurah). Govt laid out township there to be called Liverpool, but scheme failed. Town of Safety Bay declared in the 1930s. Surveyor-General Roe surveyed Rockingham town site in 1846; sale of lots



began in 1847; tramway to bring timber to port from 1848. Only really developed from 1870 when govt incentives given and syndicate applied to build saw-mill, rlwy and port. Cargo of sandalwood to Singapore in 1869; last shipment to Asia in 1897. First major jetty built in 1872, second in 1882. Horses often exported to India from here. Rlwy from Jarrahdale to bring timber completed in 1872: trade picked up, then declined from the late 1880s. Harbour improvements at **Fremantle** had long term adverse effects. Group settlement scheme on Peel Estate in 1920–23 failed. Rapid growth in the 1970s–80s as resort and holiday centre and residential area for **Kwinana**.

#### ROTTNEST ISLAND [31°59'S 115°31'E]

Popn: 150 (1911), 189 (1966). Dutch name, given by Willem de Vlamingh in 1696, referring to nests of quokkas ('rats'). First recorded landing in 1658 by crew of *Waeckende Boeij* while searching for survivors of *Vergulde Draeck*. Nicholas Baudin visited island in 1801, as did Louis de Freycinet in 1803. Phillip Parker King anchored in Thomas Bay in 1822, then Capt James Stirling anchored here on journey in 1827 to assess WA for European settlement. Town of Kingstons proclaimed and planned on island in 1831, but did not develop. Used as Aborig prison in 1838. The few prior grants then resumed: never any private ownership on island afterwards. Rottnest Island Old Settlement (RNE) built 1839–66 under supervision of Henry Vincent to serve as penal colony. Boys' reformatory (RNE, now hostel) built in 1881. One of buildings was used as summer residence by Gov Fitzgerald 1848–55. Island proclaimed public property in 1907. Last prisoners transferred to mainland in 1931. Reserve administered by board since 1917. Internment camp and military base during World War II. Prison buildings have been adapted to holiday uses, island now being important tourist resort.

#### TOODYAY [31°32'S 116°28'E]

Popn: 208 (1881), 1001 (1911), 531 (1933), 710 (1966), 560 (1981). Name: Aborig = 'place of plenty'. Known as Newcastle from 1860 to 1910. District explored by Ensign Robert Dale in 1831. First European settlers arrived in district in the mid-1830s. Village estab in 1839. Series of bad fires in the 1840s led to operation of Aborig fire brigade in the 1850s. Freemasons' Hotel (RNE) built in 1861; Toodyay Tavern in 1863. Gaol built in 1864 to replace convict depot and police stables built in 1870, both by convicts. Connor's Mill (RNE) built in 1870, became power station in the 1920s and used as such until 1955. Became a town in 1871. Rlwy opened c1888. Courthouse (RNE, now shire offices) built in 1896–97. Declared a historic town by Nat T.

#### WUNDOWIE [31°45'S 116°23'E]

Popn: 37 (1933), 1040 (1966), 720 (1981). Timber mill built during World War I and small village grew around rlwy siding. In 1942 feasibility study for iron and steel industry in WA conducted: Wundowie

chosen for rlwy, forest resources, iron ore deposits and proximity to water pipeline. Town built in 1947, plant opened in 1948. Local ore proved to be inferior, so ore from **Koolyanobbing** brought in. In the 1950s plant supplied state demand, but now surpassed by **Kwinana**.



*Public buildings, York, Western Australia. The post office, courthouse and police station were built in the 1890s and are registered with the National Estate. Photograph by Colin Beard.*

WELDON TRANNIES

#### YORK

[31°52'S 116°47'E]

Popn: 618 (1859), 2019 (1911), 1136 (1981). Was to be named Yorkshire after English county, but shortened. Robert Dale crossed **Darling Range** in 1830 and opened Avon valley for European settlement, farmers quickly following: Balladong Farm (1830) is the oldest in inland WA. Town site declared in 1831, first lot sold in 1835, town gazetted in 1836: oldest inland town in WA. Wool became major industry but freight to **Fremantle** more expensive than to London. Friction with Aborigs c1835 because settlers took up land near waterholes and streams: Eliza Cook and baby murdered by Aborigs in 1839 and soldiers assigned to homesteads as a result. Old gaol (RNE) built in c1838; Castle Hotel (RNE) built in 1841–42 and one of oldest still in use in WA; Residency (RNE, now museum) built in 1843. Govt school estab in 1848. Church of Holy Trinity consecrated in 1848, present building (RNE) dates from 1858. Road to Fremantle by 1850. Roman Catholic church built in 1852. Town served as convict depot in the 1850s and third largest town in WA in 1859. Became a municipality in 1871. Rlwy opened in 1885. New prosperity with discovery of gold on Yilgarn field (see Bullfinch, Southern Cross) in 1889 as York the closest town then: prospectors arrived from **Albany** and took rlwy to York, but bypassed town when direct line from **Perth** to **Southern Cross** completed in 1894. Former hospital (Nat T), courthouse, police station and post office (all RNE) were built 1892–96. Linked to Goldfields Water Supply scheme in 1908. By the 1970s popular with Perth people as weekend retreat.