



Fremantle Fishing Boat Harbour

About the harbour

Introduction

The Fishing Boat Harbour development started with a single jetty at the end of which was located the original fish markets. This jetty was located near the existing Cicerellos site. Fishermen would discharge their catch at the markets and then proceed to the inner harbour for anchorage.

History

In 1919 a 300-metre breakwater was constructed to provide an anchorage for all fishing boats operating from Fremantle. The fish market was removed from the end of the timber jetty in 1929 and reconstructed where the Sails Restaurant now stands.

As the name indicates, the harbour has its origins based in the fishing industry. Many families of the original fishermen still fish out of Fremantle today.

In 1962 the southern breakwater was constructed to provide for a larger sheltered mooring area, increased wharf space, an additional service jetty and a dinghy mooring area. Waterfront land was also provided for fishing companies and service industries. The Department of Harbour and Light (now Department of Transport) provided and maintained all roads, electricity & water services.

Between 1969 and 1972 the first pens were constructed to house 120 fishing boats. In 1982 land was reclaimed and the first stage of the boat lifting facility was constructed. This facility was the major fishing and marine industry refit site in the state, with boats from as far a field as Darwin and Esperance using the facility for their annual refits and surveys.

Fremantle was, to a certain extent, a small fishing industry facility that was the subject of a worldwide focus following Australia II winning the Americas Cup. What followed was major redevelopment over a very short period of time that generated enormous interest in the facility, and changed its predominantly fishing industry focus. Major changes occurred in 1984/85 as a result of the Americas Cup defence. These changes included the construction of Challenger Harbour, sheet piled wharves, car parking, buildings including fish receival depots and fueling/receival wharves for the fishing industry and numerous retail/food outlets including Kailis' Seafood Cafe, Cicerello's, the Mussel Bar, Joe's Fish Shack and Char Char Bull.

Fremantle Fishing Boat Harbour today

Today, the harbour incorporates a tourism precinct as well as an ever-increasing demand from recreational users. Since the Americas Cup there has been a growing demand from developers for land historically used by the fishing industry and support based operations for tourism/retail development. For example:

- There are 56 serviced executive apartments constructed at Challenger Harbour. 54 of the 56 apartments are under management as Quest Serviced Apartments with a further 42 being constructed for commencement in 2014.
- Royal Perth Yacht Club Inc. as host club for the America's Cup challenge/defence built an annex at Challenger Harbour.

- There are over 250 pens for recreational craft (excluding the Royal Perth Yacht Club annex) in Challenger and Fishing Boat Harbours.
- Approximately 10 restaurants including a boutique brewery.

Add to this the harbours central location to the Fremantle CBD, its influence on planning issues and the economy of the City of Fremantle is clearly evident. Subsequently Fremantle, like other facilities, has an advisory group to provide participation and direction of its ongoing management and development to meet government, industry and tenants needs.

Fremantle fisherman's monument

The contribution of Western Australian's pioneering and modern-day professional fishermen has been officially recognised at a memorial jetty at Fremantle Fishing Boat Harbour.

The jetty acknowledges and pays homage to the perseverance and hard work of the fishermen who began what is now a billion dollar industry of which Fremantle and Western Australia are justly proud. The project was led by fishermen and the sons of fishermen who wished to honour their forefathers and ensure their names were remembered.

Situated near the site of the original south jetty, it features two life-size bronze sculptures of fishermen, a map of the coastline showing traditional fishing grounds and a short history on the industry's colourful past.

Western Australia's early fishermen worked hard and in often dangerous conditions. They helped create an internationally respected modern industry and gave Fremantle much of its character and charm. Twelve timber columns on the jetty carry the names of the 608 fishermen who pioneered the industry at Fremantle.

The project was made possible through the energy of Claude Basile, Ross Merlino and Guido Micalizzi, the sons of three pioneering fishermen at Fremantle.

The Department played a significant role in this project - chairing the organising committee of the Fremantle Fishermen's Memorial and providing design and technical assistance during construction. The project represents an achievement for the whole community, and was made possible by donations of cash, labour, materials and professional expertise by the State Government, fishermen and their families, the private sector and the Fremantle City Council.

The Department, which manages the Fremantle Fishing Boat Harbour in close consultation with the local fishing industry, provided \$110,000 to the memorial jetty from the Small Craft Facilities Trust Fund. The monument was designed by local artists Jon Tarry and Greg James.