

MARITIME MUSEUM



Explore our nautical heritage at the Maritime Museum of Tasmania

Our rich seafaring heritage is reflected in the collection of the Maritime Museum of Tasmania, where historic items, paintings and model ships combine with interesting display panels to tell a series of fascinating stories.

These include the exploits of early explorers, the whaling industry, stories of trading barges and ferries in the everyday life of days now gone, and the central role of

sailing ships and steam ships in the export of apples, minerals and timber. Shipbuilding, navigational instruments, shipwrecks, historic dinghies and the proud story of Tasmania's role in naval warfare are prominent.

Operated almost entirely on a voluntary basis, the museum is keen to attract new members and donors. Preserving and presenting Tasmania's maritime heritage is a rewarding way to contribute to the community. Visits by school groups are welcome.



Photo: Peta Knott, Maritime Museum of Tasmania

ferry *Kangaroo* in 1855. Services were eventually dominated by the O'May family. Starting in 1870 with the screw launch *Enterprise*, by 1914 they had a fleet of six steam ferries, including the *Kangaroo*, and a loyal clientele. In 1939 the government purchased the fleet in compensation for a program to build a floating bridge across the Derwent. Harry and George O'May retired, and George's son Dave was appointed manager of the new Hobart Bridge Company's ferry service, which operated until the completion of the Tasman Bridge.

Things to explore

- Research the many ferries that used to cross the Derwent, such as the *Silver Crown*, above.
- Visit the historic ferries still in use today that are moored at Franklin Wharf, Hobart.

<http://www.view.com.au/cartela/2-0.htm>



Photo: Maritime Museum of Tasmania

Shipbuilding

Tasmania's earliest major shipbuilding yards were developed at the penal settlements of Sarah Island and Port Arthur. Shipyards in Hobart and the D'Entrecasteaux Channel excelled in the production of small trading craft. During the period 1825-1872, 313 vessels were built in the region and over 500 craft were completed by 1912. Tasmanian builders specialised in ketch rigged (two masts) shallow-drafted vessels known as "barges". Ketches (such as the model *Leillateah*, above) and schooners were commissioned by interstate buyers, or sold to them by local owners. These were highly regarded and became an export, particularly to Victoria and South Australia. The increase of regular inter-colonial voyages led to the building of what were known as the "blue gum clippers" – ships capable of fast passages to overseas ports. In the early 1900s the number of shipyards declined as road transport gradually replaced the local trading fleets and iron steamships and motor vessels took over on the overseas runs. By the 1920s many of these yards had gone out of business and only a few of the smaller operations continue to the present day. Tasmania's shipbuilding industry continues with the construction of advanced aluminium vessels such as international catamarans at Incat at Prince of Wales Bay.

Activities

- Research the types of boats and ships built during early settlement at Hobart.
- Compare these to the massive vessels built by Incat today.

<http://www.incat.com.au>

Maritime Museum of Tasmania

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Corner Davey & Argyle Streets
Hobart, Tasmania
Phone 6234 1427, Fax 6234 1419

email: info@maritimetas.org
website: www.maritimetas.org/

Open daily 9am to 5pm (closed Good Friday and Christmas Day)

The museum has a research service that can answer questions about vessels, maritime events or family history. A small fee helps the volunteers who operate the museum to maintain the artefacts and collections.

Guided tours of the museum, the port or the floating exhibit *May Queen*, are available. Contact the museum for prices and availability.

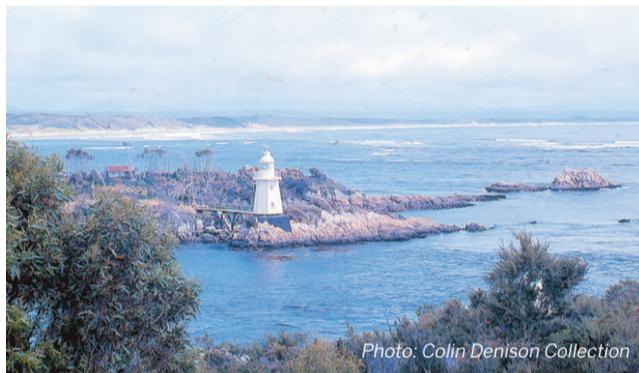


Photo: Colin Denison Collection

Lighthouses

Tasmania's rugged coastline and its location in the middle of the winds called the Roaring Forties pose a navigation hazard, resulting in many shipwrecks. Lighthouses were built to improve safety at sea, becoming refuges for the survivors of shipwrecks and often the final resting place of victims. The first lighthouse in Tasmania was the Iron Pot built in 1833 and it stands today as the oldest in Australia. Since then many more have been erected around the coastline. The lives of lighthouse-keeper families were harsh and isolated. After 1858 all Tasmanian lighthouses were supervised by the Hobart Marine Board until they became a Federal responsibility in 1901. Many lighthouses were de-manned in the 1920s and automation of these life-saving constructions took place in 1990s. Those still in use (such as Hells Gate, Macquarie Harbour, above) are now operated by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

Things to explore

- Research the life of a lighthouse keeper's family.
- Send semaphore signals or Morse code messages across the classroom.

www.maritimetas.org/codes_CB.html
www.lighthouse.net.au/lights/index.asp
www.maritimetas.org/LLK_KH.html



Image: Crowther Collection, State Library of Tasmania

Whaling

When the first European settlement was established on the shores of the Derwent River in 1803 the colonists soon discovered local waters abounded with whales during winter months. The taking of whales for their oil and bone became a vital part of the economy, peaking in the late 1830s. The first shore-based whaling station was in operation just two years after settlement and the first deep-sea whaling vessel set out in 1829. Hundreds were employed in provisioning, repairing and outfitting the ships. As well as being the base

for a large whaling fleet, Hobart became a major port of call for foreign whale ships working in the South Seas. By the late 1840s the shore based industry had collapsed due to the decimation of the population of Southern Right Whales. During the remainder of the 19th century whalers concentrated almost entirely on the Great Sperm Whales that were hunted throughout the Pacific Ocean, such as in the William Duke painting (above). The last Tasmanian whaling vessel returned to Hobart in 1900.

Things to explore

- Draw a cartoon strip comparing the process of whaling in the 1800s and today. Send to the Pirate Club at the Maritime Museum of Tasmania and the winner will be published in the Maritime Times.

www.parks.tas.gov.au/historic/swhaling/index.html
www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/listwhalingst.html



Photo: Peta Knott, Maritime Museum of Tasmania

Shipwrecks

The waters around Tasmania have proved treacherous to mariners. Since the wreck of the *Sydney Cove* in 1797, more than 1000 vessels of all sizes have been lost in Tasmanian waters. Although the locations of less than 10 per cent of these shipwrecks are known, these sites are an important part of our national maritime heritage, a unique gift from our past. Under Federal and State legislation all shipwreck and their associated artefacts lost over 75 years ago are automatically protected. A well known wreck in Hobart is the abandoned vessel *Otago* (above) which gave its name to the suburb of Otago Bay.

Things to explore

- Make paper origami boats and try to sink them in a tub of water. Submerged rocks, blowing storms and mid-water collisions are all ways of wrecking ships.

www.mathematische-basteleien.de/paper_ship.htm
www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/heritage/nsd/nsd_list.pl
www.parks.tas.gov.au/historic/shipw/index.html

Ferries

Hobart's earliest ferry route was between the town and Kangaroo Point, the terminus for land connections with East Coast, Tasman Peninsula and Richmond. By about 1816 licensed ferries, operated by watermen, provided regular services. In 1832 the first paddle-steamer ferries, the Sydney-built *Surprise* and locally built *Governor Arthur*, began regular services for passengers and goods. The Colonial Government introduced the twin-hulled vehicular