



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November, 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.4.2. Fishing and whaling
- 5.1 Working in harsh conditions

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 106 Workers (incl. Aboriginal, convict)
- 305 Fishing & other maritime industry

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Whaling Cove (Ruins) has landmark value because of its location around a promontory in a naturally scenic environment. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Whaling Cove (Ruins) marks the site of one of the earliest bay whaling operations in Western Australia, being used almost continuously for that purpose from 1835 to at least 1872. (Criterion 2.1)

The whaling industry provided an international point of contact at Albany, where whaling vessels from various countries, including America and Norway, called in for water and provisions. (Criterion 2.1)

Whaling Cove (Ruins) represents part of an extensive industry that predated settlement in Western Australia, was the State's first revenue-earning industry, and contributed significantly to the economic growth and development of Albany and Western Australia in the nineteenth century. (Criterion 2.2)

Whaling Cove (Ruins) was a venue for the employment of Aboriginal men who worked with Europeans as part of the whaleboat crew. (Criterion 2.2)

Whaling Cove (Ruins) is associated with James Daniells, who operated from the site from 1849 to at least 1852 and most probably had the station buildings and tryworks constructed, and with the Sherratt family, in particular Thomas Brooker Sherratt who carried out the first bay whaling operation at the site in

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, R., Irving, R. and Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and terms from 1788 to the present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

1835, and his son Thomas, who operated from the site from 1857 to 1872. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Whaling Cove (Ruins) has potential to yield information about the construction and operation of an early bay whaling station in Western Australia. (Criterion 3.1)

Further research at *Whaling Cove (Ruins)* may reveal more about the human occupation of the locality and the level of technology of the whaling industry in King George Sound in the nineteenth century. (Criterion 3.2)

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

Whaling Cove (Ruins) is valued by the local and wider community for its associations with the early whaling history of the region, and for its role in the early development of Albany. (Criterion 4.1)

Whaling Cove (Ruins) contributes to the local community's sense of place as the site of early whaling activity in an area that continues to be used for maritime activity such as recreational fishing. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

The whaling industry in general is a much reduced and highly contested activity in the international community. In addition, *Whaling Cove (Ruins)* provides evidence of shore based whaling, a specific type of whaling activity that is no longer practised. The remaining fabric is at risk of being lost. (Criterion 5.2)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Whaling Cove (Ruins) demonstrates the processing and habitation functions of nineteenth century shore based whaling activity. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Whaling Cove (Ruins) has suffered natural and human erosion. Attempts to research, conserve and interpret the site have been made but the fragility of the environment demands an immediate management program to retain the values of the place, which are in sound condition.

12.4 INTEGRITY

The original intention of the place is discernible but requires substantial interpretation and careful management to ensure its long-term viability. *Whaling Cove (Ruins)* has moderate integrity.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Whaling Cove (Ruins) has moderate authenticity. Human and natural destruction of elements at the site such as the chimney and tryworks detract from an understanding of the occupation of the place.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Katrina Chisholm, Architect.

Attached is a key section of the supporting evidence prepared by Martin Gibbs, *An Archaeological Conservation and Management Study of the 19th Century Shore-Based Whaling Stations in Western Australia*, Perth, Report to the National Trust of Australia for the Heritage Commission, 1994, pp. 63-66.

It is suggested that curtilage for *Whaling Cove (Ruins)* should include the land between the carpark and shore, bordered by the eastern and western most walking tracks. This will encompass the most substantial features at the site including the tryworks, flensing deck and chimney remains. It is possible other archaeological features such as the quarry and water soaks may fall outside these boundaries, but these could not be located at the time of inspection.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Whaling Cove (Ruins) comprises the rubble of a double chimney and fireplace that were part of a whalers hut, and the site of a tryworks where the whale blubber was boiled down for oil. These are situated one each side of a granite shelf where the whales were pulled up for processing. The site was used for bay whaling as early as 1835, but the chimney and tryworks most likely date from 1849, when James Daniells established a bay whaling station on the site.

Whaling Cove (Ruins) is situated on Reserve 25295, which covers much of Vancouver Peninsula, a strip of land that separates King George Sound from the sheltered Albany anchorage known as Princess Royal Harbour. The cove is situated on the King George Sound side of the Peninsula, on Barkers Bay. The Reserve, with an area of approximately 345 hectares, was gazetted for recreation in 1959, and made an A Class reserve in 1970. In 1976, it was vested in the Shire of Albany.¹

In 1827, in order to lay claim to the western half of Australia for Britain and prevent French claims on the area, a penal outpost of NSW, known as Frederick Town, was established at King George Sound. In 1831, the convicts and troops were evacuated, and land in the area made available to free settlers. The townsite was named Albany in January 1832. Albany developed as a trading and servicing post for whaling vessels, ships travelling from England via the Cape, and other vessels, while the hinterland was taken up in large pastoral holdings.²

The relative narrowness of the continental shelf near Albany allows migrating whales to come closer inshore than in other parts of the State's coast. Captain George Vancouver reported whales and seals in the area when he took possession of the south west of the state for Britain in 1791. His journals, published in 1796, did much to encourage whaling vessels to visit the area. The first English whalers to the area, *Elligood* and *Kingston*, entered the Sound and caught a number of whales in 1800, but American and Norwegian whalers were reported in West Australian waters before Vancouver's

¹ DOLA Reserves Index Enquiry, Reserve 25295.

² Garden, Donald S. *Albany: A Panorama of the Sound from 1827*, Thomas Nelson, Melbourne, 1977, pp. 36-70.

exploration.³ It is unlikely that any of them used the Whaling Cove site, as their processing and storage facilities were on board their ship.

The two basic methods of whaling are pelagic (open sea) and bay, also called shore-based. In pelagic whaling, a large whaling vessel with two or three whaleboats spent considerable time out at sea, and the whales caught were processed on board. In bay whaling, a shore station replaced the whaling vessel.⁴ A variation in the operation of bay whaling in Western Australia involved the use of a small vessel such as a schooner or cutter from which the whaleboats were launched. The vessel also assisted in processing the whale. This extended the station beyond the visibility from the lookout and allowed excursions into neighbouring bays.⁵

The migratory season for whales occurred during the winter months, when the whaling station would be manned and a lookout maintained on a nearby headland for passing whales. Until the 1880s, when the Norwegians developed the explosive harpoon, hand harpoons were in use, and the slower moving southern right and humpback whales were targeted. Once a whale was sighted, a six to eight man whaleboat was rowed out, and the whale harpooned. When the whale tired, it would be killed and towed back to the station where the blubber was 'cut-in' or 'flensed' from the body. The blubber was then winched or carried up to the tryworks and thrown into a large iron cauldron, called a trypot. The oil was rendered out, skimmed off and placed in barrels. The whaling crew would live at the station for the four or five month season. The word 'tryworks' comes from the term 'trying-out', which refers to the process of boiling down the blubber.⁶

The humpback whale was hunted for its oil, and the southern right whale for the flexible whalebone in its mouth, which was used in corsets, umbrellas and hoop skirts. The sperm whale, targeted by pelagic whalers, was also hunted for oil, which was used in oil lamps, and for the spermaceti, a waxy substance in the whale's head, used in candlemaking.⁷

Local tradition has credited the first shore-based whaling at Albany to Thomas Brooker Sherratt, who is claimed to have made his first catch off Middleton Beach in 1833. In 1835, Sherratt and two others, William Lovett and 'Mr Dring', possibly David Dring, established a bay whaling operation at Barkers Bay, in an area now known as Whaling Cove.⁸

Thomas Sherratt arrived in Albany from England on 19 June 1834, on the *James Pattison*, with his wife Amelia and six children. They had another four children in the following years.⁹ Sherratt operated a merchandising business in rented premises until the end of 1835, and acquired a number of allotments

3 McIlroy, Jack, *Nineteenth Century Bay Whaling Stations in Western Australia*, Perth, J. McIlroy, 1987, p. 9.

4 Gibbs, Martin, *An Archaeological Conservation and Management Study of 19th Century Shore-Based Whaling Stations in Western Australia*, Perth, National Trust for the Australian Heritage Commission, 1994, p. 5.

5 *ibid.*

6 *ibid.*

7 *The Australian Encyclopedia*, 4th ed, Sydney, Grolier, 1983, Vol. 11, pp. 7-10.

8 Wolfe, Adam, *The Albany Maritime Heritage Survey 1627-1994*, prepared for the Heritage Council of WA, Albany Port Authority & Albany Maritime Heritage Association, December 1994, p. 77; McIlroy, Jack, *op cit*, p. 12; Johnson, Les *Albany, Port with a past and future: A history of the Port of Albany, King George Sound, Western Australia*, Albany Port Authority, 1997, p. 43.

9 *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, UWA Press, 1988.

in the townsite. He built a two-storey house and business premises on York Street, which he occupied in 1836. Sherratt's interests were wide-ranging. He was official Postmaster and Government Auctioneer at Albany in the early years, first chairman of the Albany Town Trust, and builder of the Octagon Church in 1835, where he was lay reader until 1846.¹⁰

The expansion into whaling was an extension of his merchandising business. Local merchants exchanged goods for whale oil and bone and in turn exchanged the whale products for goods brought in by visiting American whalers. Sherratt supplemented the amount of whale product he acquired in trade by establishing his own whaling venture.¹¹

In February 1835, Sherratt's partner, William Lovett, arrived at Albany.

During February 1835, William Lovett reached Albany from Hobart Town in the barque *Jess*, to join Mr T. B. Sherratt in bay whaling and sealing in the vicinity of King George Sound and eastward... The venture was on a small scale but, during 1835 fifteen whales were struck of which seven were beached. Although only 15 tons of oil and 2 tons of whalebone were obtained this evidences sufficient encouragement to its extension in the next season of a certain return.¹²

Nothing else is known of William Lovett. He may have returned east after a short period in Albany. The identity of 'Mr Dring' has also proved elusive. He may have been David Dring, who arrived in the Colony in 1831 with his wife and daughter, and took up land in the Avon district in 1832. He is recorded as having travelled to New South Wales in 1835, returning to Western Australia in December that year. He was later part owner and master of the schooner *Elizabeth*, which made several merchant voyages.¹³ It is possible that he was involved with Sherratt and Lovett in their first whaling season during his trip to the east, as he clearly had seagoing experience.

It is not clear how long Thomas Sherratt carried out bay whaling from Whaling Cove, or what structures he may have built, if any. He is also recorded as operating from a site on Doubtful Island Bay.¹⁴ Sherratt is reported to have ceased bay whaling in 1838, following a disagreement with the Colonial Secretary over local whaling rights, but if indeed he did stop, it was probably only temporarily.¹⁵ In 1842, Sherratt had the schooner, *Chance*, constructed for bay whaling. The *Chance* was built by Solomon Cook, a shipwright who had deserted from an American whaler.¹⁶ *Chance* was lost the following year, and Sherratt was involved with the construction of another vessel, the schooner *Emma Sherratt*, named after his third daughter, but he fell ill and the boat was completed by others. The *Emma Sherratt* was used for whaling in 1844, and carried three whaleboats, but was not operated by Thomas Brooker Sherratt. Sherratt's wife, Amelia had died in July 1842, and her death was the cause of his illness. When he recovered, he was involved in a lengthy legal process regarding the ownership of the *Emma*

10 Stephens, Robert, 'Thomas Brooker Sherratt: Albany merchant, bay-whaler, ship-owner and self-appointed builder and lay reader of Albany's Octagon Church', *Early Days*, Vol. 6 Part 2, pp. 49-67.

11 Stephens, Robert, op cit.

12 *Perth Gazette*, 24 December 1836, quoted in Stephens, Robert, op cit, p. 50.

13 *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, UWA Press, 1988.

14 McIlroy, Jack, op cit, p. 15.

15 Albany Senior High School's Year 10 Academic Extension Unit Maritime Archaeology Students, *Whaling Cove Bay Whaling Station, Vancouver Peninsular, King George's Sound, Albany*, 1994, np, not referenced.

16 CSO records, 112/13 &15, 5 July 1842, referenced in Wolfe, Adam, op cit, p. 21.

Sherratt but lost the case and was mentally and financially devastated. His affairs were managed by his family until his death in 1857.¹⁷

In 1849, Albany publican James Daniells applied for a lease of twenty chains (400 metres) of water frontage in King George Sound at Barker Bay for the erection of sheds and tryworks for a whaling station, the water frontage 'having a shelving rock above the centre running into the sea'. Daniells also applied for the lease of Mistaken Island, about a kilometre southeast of Barker Bay, on which to run a few sheep for the use of his whaling party. His application was supported by the Resident Magistrate, who suggested that if either purchase or a long lease were given this would allow Daniells to erect tryworks and buildings for his men in a substantial manner suitable for a permanent station. The government responded by allowing a seven-year lease, renewable on an annual basis provided Daniells occupied the site each year during the whaling season.¹⁸

James Daniells arrived in the Colony in 1833, on the *Sterling*, with his wife Mary. They came out as servants to H. Townsend of Albany and appear to have prospered. By 1842, Daniells was the publican of the Freemasons' Hotel and in 1843 is recorded as an auctioneer and a member of the Albany Town Trust. He farmed at Candyup in 1845. In 1860, he sold the Freemasons Hotel to the Government for use as offices and is believed to have returned to England.¹⁹

Whaling is recorded at Barker Bay from 1849 to 1852, and then there is a break until 1856, when the station is recorded as being again in use.²⁰ In 1857, Thomas Sherratt Jr, son of Thomas Brooker Sherratt, was operating the whaling station at Barker Bay.²¹ Both Thomas Sherratt Jr and his brother William were involved in whaling. William was working for John Thomas at Cheyne Beach in 1865.²² As well as his whaling activities, Thomas Sherratt Jr ran the family merchant business and captained his own trading schooners along the west coast. He was also a member of the Albany Municipal Council, and warden of St John's Anglican Church, Albany.²³

In October 1857, members of the American whaler *Pioneer* visited the station while their vessel was taking on water in Frenchman's Bay. A member of the party, William Whitecar, recorded the following entry in his diary:

Proceeding along the beach, over an uneven ridge of boulders, after a walk of about eight miles we came to the whale fishery. Here we found a dozen men, who were engaged in a warfare against the Humpback and Right whales that resort to the bay. They had taken, during the season, two of the former and one of the latter species, yielding 170 barrels of oil... Amongst the men at the fishery there were several Americans who had been in this section of the coast for years...²⁴

17 CSO records, 119/159, May-July 1843 & 139/35, 1844, referenced in Wolfe, Adam, op cit, p. 21; Johnson, Les, op cit, p. 46.

18 CSO records, 189/249, 16 August 1849, 189/250, 26 August 1849 & 189/247, 12 September 1849, referenced in Gibbs, Martin, op cit, p. 63; Wolfe, Adam, op cit, p. 24, with map of the site drawn by Daniells; McIlroy, Jack, op cit, p. 12.

19 [*Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, UWA Press, 1988.](#) |

20 Gibbs, Martin, op cit, p. 63.

21 *Inquirer*, 15 July 1857, reference in Gibbs, Martin, op cit, p. 63.

22 Albany Public Library Local Studies Collection, IRS/40N, 1865; McIlroy, Jack, op cit, pp. 9-12.

23 *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, UWA Press, 1988; Stephens, Robert, op cit.

24 From the diary of William Whitecar, quoted in Gibbs, Martin, op cit, p. 63.

In 1863, the Government Resident at Albany, Alexander Campbell-Burt, sent the following notice to be published in the *West Australian Government Gazette* on 13 July:

Thomas Sherratt has engaged the following men to work at the whale fishery at King George Sound during the season of 1863.

Name	Station
George Ferris	Pullinghand
Charles Redford	Pullinghand
John Richardson	Pullinghand
John Morley	Pullinghand
George Castle	Pullinghand
Joseph Cayzer	Pullinghand
Charles Lie	Pullinghand
Bobby Nonerau (native)	Pullinghand
Cockellet (native)	Pullinghand
Edward McDonnell	Cook ²⁵

The inclusion of Aboriginals in the whaling party is of interest. Aboriginals also formed part of the crew of the Albany Harbour pilot boat at various times, and the men involved in these activities were well regarded as accomplished seamen. The success and safety of a whaleboat crew depended on their ability to work together.²⁶

Thomas Sherratt Jr is believed to have operated the bay whaling station at Whaling Cove until at least 1872, using Barker Bay early in the season before moving east to Barrier Anchorage on the west side of Cape Arid. In 1872, he sought to renew his lease on both Barker Bay and Barrier Anchorage. The area at Barker Bay was described as having 25 chain (500 metres) of shoreline and an area of 22 acres (9ha).²⁷

It is not known if Sherratt Jr was successful in his application for a licence renewal, or if he used the station in ensuing years. The last recorded export of whale oil from Albany was made in 1879.²⁸ The demand for whale oil had been declining since the 1850s as gas took over for lighting and cooking, and mineral oil was discovered. The hunt for baleen whales continued, however, as they were an important source of protein and oil used in the manufacture of soap and margarine. When the numbers of baleen whales declined, sperm whales were again hunted as their oil had become valuable in the developing chemical and engineering industries.²⁹

Bay whaling was revived in Western Australia with the operation of the Norwegian Whaling Company in Frenchman Bay between 1912 and 1916. In 1949, large numbers of humpbacks were seen off the east and west coasts. The Nor'West Whaling Company set up a station at Point Cloates, and the Commonwealth Government passed the Whaling Industries Act authorising the Government to undertake coastal whaling. The government's Australian Whaling Commission set up a shore station at Babbage Island, near Carnarvon, which it operated until 1956, when it sold the station to the Nor'West Whaling Company. Also operating from about 1949 was the

25 *West Australian Government Gazette*, 13 July 1863; CSO Records, 526/127, 29 June 1863.

26 Wolfe, Adam, op cit, p. 71.

27 Plantagenet Licence 928, ACC 346, 14/73, 8 May 1872, referenced in Martin, Gibb, op cit, p. 64.

28 Heppingstone, I. D. 'American Whalers in Western Australian Waters', *Early Days*, Vol, 7 Part 1, 1969, p. 41.

29 *The Australian Encyclopedia*, op cit.

Cheyne's Beach Whaling Company at Frenchman Bay. There were two other bay whaling stations operating in Australia at this time, at Moreton Island, Queensland and Byron Bay in New South Wales. All these stations had a quota on humpback whales. Depletion of humpback numbers led to a ban on taking humpbacks in 1963, and four of the stations closed. Cheynes Beach continued to take sperm whales until it closed in 1978.³⁰

Whaling is no longer practised in Australia due to technological advances and international pressure to conserve a dwindling global whale population. The whaling industry in general is a much reduced and highly contested activity in the international community.

Whaling Cove (Ruins) has been documented on a number of occasions, but the extent of the station and its buildings has not been fully ascertained. The site is overgrown and the remains badly affected by weathering, erosion, and the activities of people picnicking and fishing in the area. The chimney was still a substantial structure as late as 1977, but deteriorated greatly during the following decade.³¹ The area of the tryworks contains scattered small fragments of charred material and pieces of corroded iron. The charred material may be burnt blubber and the iron could be the remains of the iron hoops used to make the wooden barrels in which the whale oil was stored. The tryworks are situated at the end of a flat granite rock, where the whales were pulled up for processing. The 'shelving rock' is specifically mentioned in Daniells' 1849 licence application. Grooves in the rock surface are believed to have been made by the winching chain. Two water holes are located to the south east of the beach site near an extensive sheet of bare rock littered with worked granite, which may have been the source of the rock used in the various constructions. The lookout site would have been on a high point somewhere above the beach, but its exact location can only be conjectured.³²

The following is a description of a tentative archaeological exploration of *Whaling Cove (Ruins)*, carried out in 1987 by Jack McIlroy:

The tryworks is a mortared structure of irregularly cut granite rock about 300cm long NS by 200cm EW. The hearth or fireplace is about 80cm wide and probably 180cm in length. Because of the fragile condition of the structure the vegetation matting on its surface, which seemed to be holding much of the tryworks together, was not removed. The charcoal deposit in the tryworks was no more than 3-4 cms deep... The tryworks lies about 25 metres from the waters edge and according to local fishermen is in danger of being rapidly eroded during heavy winter storms.

On a small hill some 20 metres west of the tryworks a small granite block structure was found about 100cms on edge which may originally have been part of a larger building and was almost certainly part of the whaling station. Several worked stones lay across this hill and other structures may lie buried in the undergrowth.

...about two metres above the beach lay the ruins of a chimney with a double fireplace... Worked granite slabs have been used in its construction. Its west wall is solid mortared 170cms long, up to 40cms wide and standing to a height of 125cm. A dividing wall now very fragile, running east from the west wall

30 *ibid.*

31 McIlroy, Jack, *op cit*, p. 13, refers to a 1977 photograph of the chimney sighted by him; 1948 photograph from Wolfe, Adam, attached.

32 Various descriptions and physical evidence.

separates two fireplaces each about 130cms wide. A smaller and fragile east wall standing to 50cms high completes the structure.³³

A later archaeological study of *Whaling Cove (Ruins)* was made in 1994, by Martin Gibbs and is reported in *An Archaeological Conservation and Management Study of 19th Century Shore-Based Whaling Stations in Western Australia*. The relevant pages of this study have been appended to this assessment. Gibbs uncovered a section of stone floor adjoining the chimney remains, but was unable to ascertain its extent.³⁴

The Albany Maritime Heritage Association intends to rebuild the chimney and fireplace, using the 1948 photograph as a guide. In 1997, the Association erected a stone plaque to recognise the site. The plaque reads:

These remnants of a building foundation and
fireplace, provide the earliest visible evidence of the
whaling ventures which were carried out in the King
George Sound area in the early 19th century.
The ruins are of a building which provided shelter for
the men who landed whales on the rocks and shores
of this bay from 1835 to 1865.
Station first operated by:
William Lovett, Thomas Brooker Sherratt & Mr Dring (1835).
Later operators:
James Daniells (1849-1857)
Thomas Sherratt, Jnr (1862-1865)
Albany Maritime Heritage Association (Inc) 1997

In 2001, *Whaling Cove (Ruins)* continues to be subjected to natural degradation, while the extent of the place remains unclear.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of archaeological evidence refer to Martin Gibbs, 'An Archaeological Conservation and Management Study of the 19th Century Shore-Based Whaling Stations in Western Australia', Report to the National Trust of Australia for the Heritage Commission, 1994.

Whaling Cove (Ruins) comprises remnant fabric of a bay whaling station, providing evidence of whale processing and habitation at the place. The ruins include a chimney and the site of a tryworks, as well as natural features that would have contributed to the choice of location for the station.

The site of *Whaling Cove (Ruins)* on the Vancouver Peninsular is approximately thirty kilometres from Albany via the Frenchman Bay and Quararup roads and is within five kilometres of other known centres of whaling activity in the Albany vicinity including the Norwegian station at Frenchman's Bay and *Whaling Station (fmr), Cheyne Beach* (1846). The cove is located at the southern end of Barker Bay and is accessible from the carpark, which marks the start of the Point Possession Heritage Trail, a four-kilometre walk to the northern tip of the Vancouver Peninsula signed with interpretive plaques and path markers. The 'Whalers Cove Snorkel Trail', complete with underwater interpretive plaques has also been constructed at the place.

Two access paths to the beach have been constructed from the carpark with the western most descending to the west of a granite shelf promontory. This is a notable natural feature of the place with physical qualities suiting the

³³ McIlroy, Jack, op cit, pp. 12-13.

³⁴ Gibbs, Martin, op cit, pp. 63-66.

requirements of a flensing deck. Roughly parallel grooves and ruts in the smooth surface of the shelf are suggestive of hauling action across the rock face. A loose arrangement of large boulders is grouped around the junction of the granite shelf and sand beach to the east.

The tryworks is located on the southern side of the shelf, between hard rock and vegetation. There has been severe erosion and the little fabric remaining merges with vegetation, requiring considerable interpretation.

The remains of the chimney, approximately sixty-five metres southeast of the tryworks, are more obvious and assisted by the placement of an interpretive plaque. Documentary photographs taken over the last half-century plot a constant deterioration of this structure, so that all that now remains is a small wall of mortared random rubble. In July 2001, the wall measures approximately 450 millimetres wide, two metres long and one metre high and is surrounded by loose rubble. The chimney site is near a small, grassed picnic spot, which can be accessed by the eastern-most path from the carpark.

Remains of charred material were observed in a sand dune between the tryworks and the chimney but the site of water soaks and a quarry, noted in previous archaeological surveys, could not be located. The rock dike was submerged at the time of inspection.

The place has suffered severe natural and human erosion and with minimal interpretation and protection is at further risk. Attempts have been made to stem some deterioration with the placement of a light timber post and wire fence across the dune on which the chimney stands. The interpretive plaque on the chimney also heightens public awareness of the location of a significant site but the conservation of the remaining fragile evidence will require careful management. There is potential for development of interpretive tourism linking *Whaling Cove (Ruins)* with other nearby sites of bay whaling activity.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION³⁵

The west and south coast of Western Australia was the site of a number of bay whaling operations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Other small ruins, in this instance the base of a chimney, have been located at Two Peoples Bay, where there is a flat granite shelf running into the water similar to that at Whaling Cove. A more substantial ruin is located at Frenchman's Bay, where the footings and part of the support posts of an extensive deck and slipway are located. This was the site of the Norwegian Whaling Station, which operated from 1913 until about 1916-17, its activities curtailed by the advent of World War One. Much of the machinery and plant from this station were removed at the end of the war, and the timbers salvaged. The latest bay whaling station to operate in Western Australia was the Cheyne Beach Station at Albany, which operated from about 1949 to 1978. Cheyne Beach had previously been used for bay whaling from the 1840s into the 1870s. This later station has survived and is now a tourist attraction called Whaleworld.

Other whaling station sites located along the State's coastline include: Whalers Bay, Malus Islands (1870s, two double tryworks and possible domestic fireplace); Port Gregory (scatter of bricks, artefacts and worked limestone);

³⁵ Gibbs, Martin, op cit; McIlroy, Jack, op cit; Wolfe, Adam, op cit; HCWA assessment documentation 'Whaling Station, Cheyne Beach', database no. 1796; Dept of Maritime Archaeology, WA Maritime Museum, *Norwegian Whaling Station Frenchman Bay: Maritime Heritage Site Inspection Report*, 1994; *The Australian Encyclopedia*, op cit.

and Bathers Beach, Fremantle, in front of the tunnel, where excavations have revealed substantial structural material, being the remains of a permanent and elaborate whaling station, which included a two-storey building used by the convict establishment in the early 1850s. The Fremantle whaling station operated from 1837 to 1850.

Numerous other sites along the coast are known to have been used for whaling, including Safety Bay, Carnac Island, Rottneest and Koombana Bay, but no remains have been located at these places. It is not known what remains of the Babbage Island station.

13.4 REFERENCES

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

A full archaeological study of the site is required to ascertain the extent of the ruins and a better understanding of the operation of the whaling station.

More research could be undertaken regarding the involvement of Aboriginals in whaling activities off Albany.