



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)

- 3.8.3 Developing harbour facilities
- 4.4.4 Living with slums, outcasts & homelessness
- 5.7 Surviving as Indigenous people in a white-dominated economy
- 7.7.3 Going to war
- 8.1.1 Playing and watching organised sports
- 8.1.2 Betting
- 8.2 Going to the beach

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 102 Aboriginal occupation
- 103 Racial contact & integration
- 201 River & sea transport
- 405 Sport, recreation & entertainment
- 501 World Wars & other wars
- 601 Aboriginal people
- 603 Early settlers
- 604 Local heroes & battlers
- 606 Famous & infamous people

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

South Beach Horse Exercise Area is a managed coastal landscape of tracks, parks, beach facilities, groynes, public art, fenced and unfenced tracks, dune vegetation, and a beach with archaeological remains and ocean outlooks to Garden, Carnac and Rottnest Islands, together with vistas to Woodman Point and Fremantle. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

South Beach Horse Exercise Area includes sites of Aboriginal heritage significance, including mythological sites pre-dating European settlement, and the site of the Aboriginal stockmen's camp at Robb Jetty. (Criterion 2.1)

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

South Beach Horse Exercise Area has been used for exercise and training of horses for recreation, sport and World War I service since the early 1830s to the present, albeit on a reduced scale since the late 20th century. Horse exercising extended from Woodman Point to Fremantle prior to encroaching development. (Criterion 2.1)

South Beach Horse Exercise Area, the site of the first official horse race in Western Australia in October 1833, along with the adjoining dune area, including the bridle path, the former rubbish tip site, Hollis Park, the cycle way and Ocean Road, has played an integral part in the history of the horse racing industry in Western Australia, in particular in the 1830s, and in the period from c. 1900 to the mid-1970s, when the industry thrived in Fremantle, with various winners of every major State and national event other than the Melbourne Cup having trained at the place and numerous trainers and jockeys of State, national and international repute having worked horses there. The North Coogee Landscape Project endeavoured to recognise and maintain long-standing tracks for beach access. (Criterion 2.2)

South Beach Horse Exercise Area has been an integral part of the industrial history of the State, particularly the development of Robb Jetty, the abattoir and associated industries from the mid-1850s through to the early 1990s, and the Fremantle Smelting Works. (Criterion 2.3)

South Beach Horse Exercise Area was used regularly for horse training by C.Y. O'Connor, Engineer-in-Chief, who died there in 1902, his outstanding work for the State and contribution to the horse racing industry being commemorated in the adjoining C.Y. O'Connor Reserve and the statue off-shore near Robb Jetty. (Criterion 2.3)

The 10th Light Horse Regiment used *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* during World War I in preparation for service overseas. (Criterion 2.3)

South Beach Horse Exercise Area has associations with numerous champion horses, and outstandingly successful trainers and jockeys, including Billy Dillon, Ted Temby, J.J. Miller and the Miller family, Jack Collinson, Jim Cockell and his son, Jack, the Marks brothers, Arthur Bowden, the Atkinson, Jeffrey, Duggan, Cridland, Johnson, Banks and Patterson families. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

The Aboriginal sites, along with sites associated with the horse industry and the industrial uses of *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* have the potential to reveal archaeological information of significance. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

South Beach Horse Exercise Area is highly valued by the horse racing community for social and cultural reasons, for the integral role it played and continues to play in the lives of many involved in the State's horse racing industry, as commemorated in the public artworks erected at the place in the late 20th century, and by the wider community who value its recreational use as a beach and park, as further evidenced by its inclusion in the South Fremantle Heritage Study and the Draft City of Cockburn Municipal Heritage Inventory. (Criterion 4.1)

South Beach Horse Exercise Area is a lengthy stretch of coastal beach and reserve in the City of Cockburn contributing to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

South Beach Horse Exercise Area is representative of the custom and way of life of horse exercising and training, an activity that has continued from the 1830s to the present, albeit on a reduced scale from the late 20th century. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

South Beach Horse Exercise Area was traditionally used rather than managed in any formal sense. Since the construction of the South Fremantle Power Station and development of South Beach, the area available for the uses has been reduced and in recent times management regimes have been put in place to prevent dune erosion and to rehabilitate the natural environment. The formalisation of the tracks has detracted from and restricted the former manner of use. Overall the place is in fair to good condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

South Beach Horse Exercise Area remains in use for its intended purpose, though it is increasingly under pressure from competing uses and recreational use. All vestiges of industrial development have been removed, including Robb Jetty. As a horse exercise area, the place retains a moderate to high degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The nature of the place involves a process of continual change caused by usage, and surrounding development such as the construction of the South Fremantle Power Station, two groynes and the like. Management of the dunes has meant the introduction of new material and the closure of some longstanding tracks. However, many of the tracks are in original locations and some closed tracks are still discernible. Overall the place retains a moderate degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Robin Chinnery, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Philip Griffiths, Architect with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

South Beach Horse Exercise Area is the portion of South Beach extending south past Catherine Point to McTaggart Cove. It includes the southern portion of South Beach south of Ocean Road and the whole of C.Y. O'Connor Reserve. Since 1833, this portion of the coast has been used for the exercise and training of horses and, before completion of South Fremantle Power Station, the area extended to Woodman Point to the south and to Fremantle in the north.

During pre-European settlement, Aboriginal people are believed to have camped and fished in the area that would become known as South Beach, which also had associations with the Dreamtime.¹ Consequently, there is potential for archaeological sites at the place.

In June 1829, the first European settlers arrived at the Swan River Colony, and, in July that year, held the first horse race at Garden Island. In January 1830, George Robb, master of the *Leda*, sailed into Cockburn Sound to anchor south of Catherine Point, to take up his 2,000 acre Cockburn grant. He left the property under a manager, whose residence, *Hamilton Hill*, gave the district its name. South of Robb's landfall, the brig *James* was wrecked close to shore in 1830, giving its name to James Rocks.² By 1832, the townsite of Fremantle had been laid out, and some building commenced.

On 2 October 1833, the first recorded official horse race in Western Australia was run on 'The Downs' at South Fremantle by seven Timor ponies, imported by Captain Taylor of the *Helen*, assisted by Mr C. Smith and Mr J. Weavell, both merchants at Fremantle. The *Perth Gazette* reported on the 'Fremantle Races':

The spot selected for the race course has long been fixed upon as an appropriate site; it is about a mile and a half from Fremantle, on a slightly undulating plain skirting the sea, the adjoining hills affording a full view of the course; booths which were erected on the brow of the hill, with their variegated flags, - the ginger-bread nut-stall - and the *lame* fiddler, contributed much to the animation of the scene. The groups of fashionably dressed ladies' and gentlemen promenading to and fro ... the jockeys all appropriately dressed ... presented no contemptible display.³

Thus began the association of horse racing with South Beach that has continued through into the 21st century. The beach at this time had no formal name.⁴

Considerable interest was aroused by the first meeting, and the second race meeting was held at Fremantle in April 1834. There were no further race meetings until October 1836, when a Races and Ploughing Match was held at Guildford, with ploughing matches alternated with horse races 'promoted to

¹ The Department of Indigenous Affairs has a place registered as Robb Jetty Camp (Site ID 3707) and the Indian Ocean as a mythological site (Site ID 3776)

² *North Coogee Landscape Project* City of Cockburn and Dept. of Commerce and Trade, n.d.; and Erickson, Rica (Ed.) *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians pre-1829-1888* UWA Press, Nedlands, 1988, p. 2635.

³ *Perth Gazette* 5 October 1833, p. 2.

⁴ None of the early maps in Battye Library collection showed a name for the beach adjacent to South Bay until 'South Beach Reclamation' and 'Fremantle South Beach Reclamation from Small Jetty to Norfolk Street, Scheme No. 2', South Beach Reclamation, SROWA, Acc. 1781, CCE 6055, 1902.

encourage the raising of thoroughbreds'.⁵ Races were also held at the limekilns, between the present suburbs of Wembley and City Beach, and, on 1 June 1838, the Western Australian Stud Club held its first meeting within the townsite of Perth. It is believed that the course selected was on some flat land near to where Queens Gardens are now located. Over the next decade, horse racing became a popular recreational activity.⁶ Race meetings were held periodically in Perth and York (from 1844), and 'now and then a gathering on the Fremantle course'.⁷ The shift followed increasing numbers of colonists moving inland to take up agricultural grants distant from Fremantle. No further formal race meetings were held at South Fremantle until 1851.⁸

Through the 1830s and 1840s, the towns of Perth and Fremantle were gradually developed. Four tracks were established leading from Fremantle to Perth, to Hell's Gate, the future site of Canning Bridge, to the Canning district and Kelmscott, and to Mandurah. Residential development was concentrated in the towns, and the district to the south of Fremantle was undeveloped. In 1848, the first race meeting was held at the site of the future Ascot Race Course, at J.W. Hardey's *Grove Farm*, 'four miles from Perth'.⁹

On 22 October 1852, a meeting was held to consider the formation of a Western Australian Turf Club, with the objectives of improving horse breeding in the colony and the establishment of regular race meetings. In this early period, most of those involved in the Turf Club were 'members of the local gentry or the social elite', 'respected, prosperous, influential men, who were regarded as the leaders and innovators in the colony'.¹⁰ Since its inception, the Turf Club has been 'the most socially prestigious sporting institution in Perth'.¹¹

Through the 19th century, horse racing continued to prove popular, and became a recognised part of life in the colony. From the late 1850s, horse racing took place at Bunbury and Vasse (present day Busselton). In the early to mid-1860s, race meetings were held at Geraldton, Irwin, and Newcastle (present day Toodyay), and racing commenced at Roebourne in the late 1860s.¹² In 1877, the racecourse at Ascot was leased to S. H. Parker and two other trustees for the Western Australian Turf Club for 99 years, and subsequently, by 1900, the Club secured a 999-year lease at what was then known as Perth Racecourse.¹³

Through most of the period 1850-90, Fremantle played a lesser role than Perth in horseracing, as most of the influential figures associated with the sport were more closely associated with the city or the country rather than the port town. Horse stables were a characteristic part of urban life, with horses stabled in residential areas for both recreational and commercial use. Stables were also

⁵ Colebatch, Sir Hal (Ed.) *A Story of A Hundred Years: Western Australia 1829-1929* Government Printer, Perth, 1929, p. 328.

⁶ Tomlinson, Jenny *Born Winners Born Losers: A History of thoroughbred breeding and racing in Western Australia since 1833* Reeve Books, Perth, 1990, pp. 18-27.

⁷ Colebatch, Sir Hal (Ed.) op. cit., p. 329.

⁸ Tomlinson, Jenny op. cit., p. 18.

⁹ Tomlinson, Jenny op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁰ *ibid*, pp. 29-31.

¹¹ Stoddart, Brian 'Sport and Society 1890-1940 a Foray' in Stannage, C. T. (Ed.) *A New History of Western Australia* University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1981, pp. 655-656.

¹² Colebatch, Sir Hal op. cit., pp. 330-331.

¹³ *ibid*, pp. 39-41; and *Twentieth Century Impressions of Western Australia* P. W. H. Thiel & Co., Perth, 1901, fasc. edition Hesperian Press, Victoria Park, 2000, pp. 155-157.

built in areas close to the racecourses, and horses were frequently trained at local recreation grounds and in the local streets.¹⁴

In 1854, John Wellard of Fremantle purchased land adjoining George Robb's Cockburn grant, and began the meat industry in the area.¹⁵ In 1878, the schooner *Diana* was wrecked near the *James*.¹⁶

During the Western Australian gold boom, horse racing increased greatly, rising to its zenith in the pre-WWI period. In August 1896, 'when Coolgardie was booming and money was plentiful', a race club was formed there, and the success of its first meeting assured the future of racing on the goldfields. Subsequently, clubs were also formed at Menzies, Boulder and Kalgoorlie. In the metropolitan area, Belmont, Canning Park and Helena Vale, the latter proprietary clubs, became affiliated with the Western Australian Turf Club, and consequently subject to its regulations. There were also a number of unregistered courses in operation, including those at Coogee, Bicton, Kensington, Jandakot, Rockingham, and Woodman's Point.¹⁷ As noted, the Turf Club was socially exclusive, and whilst the continued operation of unregistered courses was unwelcome, nonetheless it continued. The initiation of courses south and east of Fremantle led to the development of stables and training tracks in the area of South Fremantle and Hamilton Hill, utilising *South Beach Horse Exercise Beach* for training purposes.¹⁸

Many of those who came to Western Australia during the gold boom simply passed through Fremantle on their way to the goldfields, but others stayed to settle in the port town and also some returned from the fields after having tried their luck. There was work to be had at the port and also in industry, as factories and foundries were being established, and also a number of industrial enterprises in the outlying areas of the town. As Fremantle's population increased, residential development extended to the east, the north and the south of the original townsite.¹⁹

In the late 19th century, cattle shipped from the Kimberley to Cockburn were forced off the ship and swum ashore. In the late 1890s, the railway was extended south from Fremantle and Robb Jetty was built, enabling the cattle to be off-loaded from the ships. Aboriginal stockmen who had accompanied the cattle from the North-West camped near the jetty.²⁰ The sites at which they camped, and the sites associated with industrial uses, including Robb's Jetty and the smelters, may have archaeological potential.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 18-40; and Cusack, S.F. 'Horse Racing in Western Australia' in *Early Days RWAHS* Vol. II Pt. XIX, p. 47.

¹⁵ *North Coogee Landscape Project* op. cit.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ Cusack, S. F. *ibid.*, pp. 55-56; and *Twentieth Century Impressions of Western Australia* op. cit., pp.158-159.

¹⁸ Cusack, S. F. *ibid.*, pp. 48-58; Taylor, John 'Heritage Study of South Fremantle' prepared for City of Fremantle, June 1993; and Patterson, T. 'Proposal for a re-enactment of the first horse race that took place in South Fremantle on 3/10/1833', 1987, n.p. [pp. 2-3], in City of Fremantle Local History Collection, Pamphlet File No. 798.

¹⁹ Lee, Jack *This is East Fremantle* Publication Printers, Perth, 1979, p. 2; Rubinich, T. *Plympton to East Fremantle: A Century of Schooling 1898-1998* East Fremantle Primary School, 1998, pp. 1-2.

²⁰ Berson, M. *Cockburn: The Making of a Community Town* of Cockburn, 1978, pp. 94-95.

In 1899, George Robb's original land grant, extending from North Lake to present day Hamilton Hill, was sub-divided into 42 allotments, which were in turn sub-divided into yet smaller lots.²¹

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, South Fremantle, and the area to the south again, namely the northern areas of Cockburn, including Hamilton Hill and Spearwood, were developed for rural uses such as market gardens, and, to a lesser degree, horse racing stables. Concurrently, there was industrial development along the coastal strip, including the Fremantle Smelting Works, Robb Jetty, slaughterhouses, and associated industries.²²

In the late 1890s and early 1900s, another horse sport, trotting (also known as pacing), emerged directly as a result of the social monopoly of turf racing. On the whole, trotting was fostered by small to medium businessmen, such as drapers, butchers, hotel proprietors, and people in similar occupations, many of whom established their businesses in the wake of the gold boom. The earliest contests were match races held at agricultural shows and unregistered courses between horses which were otherwise used to pull carts for business. The sport gained in popularity, in part because the horses used were standard bred and thus more affordable than the thoroughbreds employed in racing. In 1910, the WA Trotting Association was established. Afternoon meetings were held through to early 1914, when night racing under electric lights commenced at the WACA Ground, an innovation in the British Empire.²³

Prior to 1902, the name South Beach had most commonly referred to the area adjacent to what is now Fishing Boat Harbour. It was in this area that boat builders began operating from the 1850 onwards, and were allowed access down to the water at what is variously referred to as the beach at South Bay, or south beach or South Beach to launch their boats.²⁴

In the early 1900s, South Beach continued to be utilised for exercising and training horses by Fremantle residents, including Charles Yelverton O'Connor (b. Ireland, 1843), whose hunter, *Moonlight*, won the Fremantle Hunt Club Cup in September 1901. O'Connor's 'almost invariable custom' was to ride along South Beach, usually with his daughter, before he went to work each day.²⁵ As the State's Engineer-in-Chief, his most notable achievements would be the Fremantle Harbour Works and the Coolgardie Water Scheme.²⁶ In March 1902, in the midst of a period of sustained controversy over the latter, O'Connor rode along 'South Beach',²⁷ dismounted in the vicinity of Robb Jetty, and shot himself.²⁸ He would be commemorated many years later in the naming of the portion of beach to the south of Catherine Point and the reserve fronting this section of South Beach, and also by a statue which was erected in 1999 in the water off the beach.²⁹

21 Berson, M. *Cockburn: The Making of a Community Town* of Cockburn, 1978, pp. 94-95.

22 *ibid*, pp. 97-101.

23 Stoddart, Brian *op. cit.*, pp. 657-658; and Colebatch, Sir Hal *op. cit.*, p. 334.

24 Dickson, Rod *They Kept This State Afloat: The Boat And Ship Builders of Western Australia 1829-1929* Hesperian Press, Carlisle, 1998, p. 303

25 *West Australian* 11 March 1902, p. 5

26 *Twentieth Century Impressions of Western Australia* P. W. H. Thiel & Co., Perth, 1901, fasc. edition Hesperian Press, Victoria Park, 2000, pp. 91-92.

27 *West Australian* 11 March 1902, p. 5

28 'Big Weekend' in *West Australian* 25 February 1989, p. 5.

29 *West Australian* 18 June 1999.

In 1905, a tram service commenced along South Terrace to Douro Road, which paved the way for the development of a new area of South Beach, south of the area previously known by this name used by boat builders in the previous century.³⁰ Under the direction of the South Beach Committee, the reserve was developed with various facilities including 'a Luna Park style fair ground' and a concert hall, which was transferred there from the Long Jetty.³¹ Proposed to be 'one of the finest seaside beaches in the Commonwealth', the official opening of South Beach by the Governor, Sir Gerald Strickland, on 15 November 1909, was attended by 35,000 people. The crowd extended from the northern end of the beach as far as the Smelters Jetty.³²

In January 1910, Fremantle Suburban Lot 1586 was gazetted Reserve 12477 (South Beach, Fremantle) for the purpose of Recreation and vested in the Mayor and Councillors of Fremantle, who were empowered to lease any portion of it for up to 21 years.³³ This area lies to the north of *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*. Dubbed the 'Brighton of the West', each night through the summer season South Beach was brightly illuminated by electric lighting for a distance of three quarters of a mile along the coast.³⁴ It became 'the mecca of thousands of day trippers from Perth and more distant parts'.³⁵ Trains ran to South Beach, providing ready transport to the popular resort,³⁶ where a jetty was built in 1916.³⁷

In 1907, there were only two registered racehorse trainers in the Fremantle area, V.G. Egan, at 113 Hampton Road, Beaconsfield, and J. McIntyre, at 33 Commercial Road, Fremantle.³⁸ However, it is likely that there were a greater number of unregistered trainers working in the area, some probably on a part-time basis, who raced at the unregistered courses.³⁹ From 1907, through the World War I period, and into the 1920s and 1930s, there was a gradual increase in the number of registered trainers in the Fremantle area.⁴⁰ They regularly trained and exercised their horses at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, to the south of the main recreational areas at South Beach, where there was a straight of about six and a half to seven furlongs between James Rocks to Robb Jetty. When the tide was out, there was sufficient area for the horses to gallop four or five or more abreast over a distance of seven furlongs. Beach training and ocean swimming proved an excellent medium for improving and enhancing horses' fitness.⁴¹ During the war, the 10th Light Horse used South Beach for exercising and preparing horses in readiness for service overseas. A photograph shows a large contingent mounted on the beach in this period.⁴²

30 Reece, R. and Pascoe, R. *A Place of Consequence: A Pictorial History of Fremantle* Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, 1983, p. 70.

31 *Western Review* May 1996, p. 5; and Ewers, John K. *The Western Gateway: A History of Fremantle* Fremantle City Council, First Pub. 1948, Second revised ed. for Fremantle City Council, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1971, p. 111.

32 *West Australian* 6 and 16 November 1909, p. 11 and p. 5 respectively.

33 *Government Gazette* 21 January 1910, p. 48 and p. 67.

34 *West Australian* 20 February 1910, pp. 4-5.

35 Reece, R. and Pascoe, R. op. cit.

36 *Western Review* op. cit.

37 Ewers, John K. op. cit., p. 121.

38 *Western Australian Racing Calendar* 1907-1908, August 1907, p. 19.

39 Chris Tidy, Western Australian Turf Club, conversation with Robin Chinnery, 22 April 2002.

40 *Western Australian Racing Calendar* 1907-24.

41 Bill Durkin, who lived with his family at the nearby *Davilak Hotel*, Mandurah Road, in the 1920s, conversation with Robin Chinnery, 21 April 2002.

42 Photograph *West Australian* no details, copy held by Terry Patterson.

In 1919, the Perth Cup was declared a dead heat between Ernest Lee Steere's horse, the legendary *Eurythmic*, and Fremantle merchant Samuel Bateman's *Rivose*, trained by well known trainer, James Jeffery, who trained horses at Fremantle for more than 30 years, including *Sir Coral*, winner of the Queen's Cup in Adelaide in 1951. His brother, John 'Jacki' Jeffery, trained *Lilypond* to win the Perth Cup (1923) at Fremantle. Both trainers used South Beach.⁴³

From the early interwar period, among the well-known racehorse trainers making use of *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* were the Marks brothers. Initially, Bill Marks began training some horses at South Fremantle on his own account, leasing a couple in his own name, and training a couple for other owners at a fee. His venture proved successful, and he established *Glenelg Stables* in Douro Road, from which he raced horses at Ascot. He trained *Easingwold* to win the Western Australian Derby (1921) and, in 1922, the Western Australian St. Leger in a record time that would stand for 48 years. *Easingwold* was 'possibly one of the best horses outside *Eurythmic*' to race in Western Australia.⁴⁴ In c. 1919, Bill Marks' brother Percy established his stables nearby in Mandurah Road, opposite the *Davilak Hotel*, from which he raced horses at Bicton, an unregistered course. Another brother, Sol, took up horse training from his residence and stables at Commercial Road. In 1921, their brother, Jack Marks, who had previously trained horses on the goldfields, was registered as a trainer in Perth, residing with Sol, before establishing his own stables at *Randwick Stables*, Hamilton Hill, in 1922.⁴⁵

From the 1920s, the facilities at Robb Jetty abattoir were expanded, under West Australian Meat Exports Pty Ltd, to become in time the largest in the State, providing for both home and export markets. Robb Jetty itself was eventually extended to 265 m, and was a notable landmark at Cockburn Sound until it was burnt and dismantled in 1975.⁴⁶ Horse trainers would tie their horses to the jetty, and also fished from it.⁴⁷

Through the 1920s and 1930s there was an increase in the number of Western Australian Turf Club registered horse trainers in South Fremantle to 'about twenty-five to thirty-five'.⁴⁸ Each morning, horses were walked to South Beach, which became a hive of activity as Fremantle trainers exercised, galloped and swam their horses.⁴⁹ Delivery horses, which were still used by many businesses, were often taken to South Beach on Sundays for a swim and exercise.⁵⁰ Although motor vehicle transport was becoming more common, many horses remained in use for private transport and recreational use. *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* was also put to use by many of these horses.⁵¹ A number of makeshift shacks, mostly built from materials salvaged from the nearby rubbish tip, were built at the southern end of the beach where lead had been smelted for use in World War I; hence the area was known as the Smelters Camp.⁵²

43 Tomlinson, Jenny op. cit., p. 130 and p. 198; and *West Australian* 3 November 1951.

44 Tomlinson, Jenny ibid, p. 205; Marks, Bill *The Fall of the Dice* Fremantle Arts Centre Press, South Fremantle, 1991, pp. 1-5; and *Western Australian Racing Calendar* 1916-21.

45 Marks, Bill ibid; and *Western Australian Racing Calendar* 1919-1922. 345.

46 *North Coogee Landscape Project* op. cit.

47 Stan Cridland, Tommy Little and Peggy Prowse, conversations with Robin Chinnery, July 2004.

48 Marks, Bill op. cit., p. 11.

49 ibid; and George Dillon, in *Fremantle Gazette* 3 February 1987.

50 'Historical Notes' South Beach, City of Cockburn Municipal Heritage Inventory, p. 2.

51 Bill Durkin op. cit.

52 'Historical Notes' South Beach, City of Cockburn Municipal Heritage Inventory, p. 2.

In the interwar period, South Beach, to the north of *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, was a popular ocean beach for families with young children. Various improvements were made to South Beach during this period including construction of the Hydrodome – a new concert hall – reconstruction of the jetty, landscaping – including planting grass and Norfolk Island pines – building a sea-wall, enclosure of the swimming pool area with shark proof netting, new fencing and construction of an 18'-wide road between the reserve and the railway.⁵³ South Beach continued to be a popular resort until the early 1940s, when it began to decline. In the 1950s, a fierce storm lashed the beach and reserve, destroying many of the earlier plantings of Norfolk Island pines, hastening its end.⁵⁴

In 1928, the former polo ground at Fremantle was converted and re-opened as Richmond Raceway trotting ground.⁵⁵ In the late 1920s, there were 52 trotting meetings a year held at Fremantle and Perth.⁵⁶ From the 1930s through to 1991, when the Raceway was closed, the trots at Richmond Raceway were a popular social activity.⁵⁷ Horses engaged in trotting were trained at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* through into the mid-1970s, when horse trainers such as Bill Horn were forced to shift from the beach near the South Fremantle Power Station to areas farther south, at Naval Base and Kwinana.⁵⁸ Numerous businesses associated with trotting and racing were established in Fremantle and South Fremantle, including blacksmiths, farriers, and saddlers.⁵⁹ As in the earlier periods, the horse industry continued to play a considerable part in the economy of Fremantle and South Fremantle and environs, which would continue through into the post-war period. The horse industry was also an important part of the social fabric of the lives of those who were engaged in it and their families, and also the lives of the many people who took a keen interest in it.

In the 1930s, former pearl diver James David Cockell, recognised as 'one of the State's best horsemen' and 'the father of WA country racing', trained up race horses from the stables he built in Daly Street, South Fremantle, which accommodated around 30 to 40 horses at their peak.⁶⁰ Ned Browder, who commenced under Cockell as a 14-year-old apprentice in 1934, recollected that they began work at 3 am at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, and that Cockell 'bought mostly ol' broken down horses, blistered 'em, turned 'em out, got 'em going and nearly every one won'.⁶¹ In 1930, photographs show a portion of the yard Cockell built at the tip site and *St Peter* on a sand-hill.⁶² Part of the open area south of Daly Street where he turned the horses out to run free, consequently known as 'Cockell's paddock', is present day Hollis Park.⁶³ Returning from Saturday afternoon races, the horses were off-loaded from the

53 Ewers, John K. op. cit., p. 121 and *Building and Construction* 25 August 1927, p. 6.

54 *Western Review* May 1996, p. 5.

55 Charlesworth, Helene *Small But Strong: A Pictorial History of the Town of East Fremantle 1897-1997* Town of East Fremantle, 1997, pp. 42-43.

56 Colebatch, Sir Hal op. cit.

57 Charlesworth, Helene op. cit.

58 *West Australian* 12 March and 27 August 2001, p. 56 and p. 48 respectively.

59 *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1925 to 1945.

60 Tomlinson, Jenny op. cit., p. 155; and 'Big Weekend' in *West Australian* 25 February 1989, p. 5.

61 Ned Browder quoted in *ibid*.

62 Photographs Cockell's Paddock, tip site, Hollis Park, and *St. Peter* on sandhill, courtesy Terry Patterson.

63 Jim Macbeth to Jill Gaynor, City of Fremantle, per e-mail, 8 October 2001.

train at South Beach station, and Ned herded them down to the paddock to run free for a day or two before going back to the stables to recommence work.⁶⁴

During the interwar period, a special return train service was scheduled from South Beach on race Saturdays, taking up to 60 horses and members of the racing fraternity to the meetings at Ascot or Belmont Park.⁶⁵ Many major winners and place-getters in national races were Fremantle trained horses whose training had included work at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*. These included winners of the Caulfield Cup and many of the top Western Australian racing events, including the Perth Cup, the Western Australian Derby, the Railway Stakes and the Kalgoorlie Cup, and Fremantle was justly regarded as 'one of the State's top training centres' into the 1960s.⁶⁶ An undated photograph showing a group of eight horsemen at South Beach includes Aboriginal stockmen who continued to work at Robb Jetty in this period. Some Aboriginal men also rode gallopers working on South Beach and obtained work as jockeys in the area.⁶⁷

In 1938, a photograph shows *Dark David*, third in the Perth Cup that year, and winner of the Australian Hurdle Race, at Atkinson's stables at South Fremantle, near the rubbish tip site, with the sand hills leading to *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* in the rear ground. These are believed to have been 'the biggest training stables in Western Australia' in this period, and Atkinson was 'one of the State's leading owners'.⁶⁸

Many famous racing families in WA had their origins in Fremantle and trained horses at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, including the Foleys, Tembys and Millers, along with racing identities Jimmy Banks, Jack Ingram, Jimmy Zinnecker, and Clarrie Rule. Other turf racing trainers whose careers included periods of work at South Fremantle, training at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* playing an integral part, include Wally Mitchell (b. Fremantle), Jack Kirkpatrick and Tommy Unkovich. Among well-known jockeys from Fremantle who worked horses at the beach were Billy Dillon (b. 1906, d. 1955), ranked as 'one of the world's best' jockeys, Roy and Neville Percival, Eric Cameron, Tony Outram, Stan Lee, Jackie Edwards, Merv Posner, Bernie Duggan, Ernie Hodgson, M. Lea and Arthur Wagner, J.J. Miller, Danny Miller, Johnny Wilson and Graham Webster.⁶⁹

In the 1930s and 1940s, Fremantle Council leased land in the area to the south of Daly, Thomas, Hulbert, Walker and Hickory streets, in the vicinity of the rubbish tip site, to a number of horse trainers, including Arthur Bowden, Jack Collinson and the Cridlands. Photographs taken in this period in the area show Collinson constructing yards and the Cridlands stables and yards at their lease areas.⁷⁰ The nearby sand dunes were the venue for 'two-up' games, and itinerants also used the area.⁷¹ The Council agreed to a proposal from some

64 Stan Cridland, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, July 2004.

65 Tomlinson, Jenny op. cit., p. 154; Terry Patterson, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 17 April 2002; Bill Durkin, conversation with Robin Chinnery, 21 April 2002.

66 Tomlinson, Jenny op. cit., p. 154; and 'Genial Ted Temby' in *Sunspeed* Winter 1983, p. 32.

67 Photograph and information courtesy Terry Patterson.

68 Photograph *Dark David*, 1938, HCWA Place No. 16120 South Beach Horse Exercise Area; Tomlinson, Jenny op. cit., p. 185; *West Australian* 3 January 1961, p. 23; and typewritten information, HCWA File 16120, 17 February 1993.

69 Tomlinson, Jenny op. cit., p. 154.

70 Photos Collinson stables, 1940s, Cridland Stables, 1940, and building stables at tip site next to Walker St., Pud. Cridland, 1930s, courtesy Terry Patterson.

71 Stan Cridland op. cit.; Bill Durkin op. cit.; and Peggy Prowse (nee Johnson), telephone conversations with Robin Chinnery, July 2004.

trainers' to establish a race track 'at the old tip site', to be named *Sandown Park*, but a proposal from a different group for a track at White Gum Valley resulted in an impasse and neither was implemented.⁷² White Gum Valley and Hilton Park were 'big racing centres' in this period, and horses from there were walked to South Beach in the early morning 'for an important part of their training which included swimming and having a run on the beach' as Alf Dunn (b. 1915) recollected.⁷³ Retired after long service as a sports reporter specialising in horse racing, he considers South Beach 'has been a great asset for the Racing Industry' and endorsed nomination of the place for Entry in the Register of Heritage Places.⁷⁴

Numerous paths were established through the sand hills leading down to *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, and also 'up to a dozen informal tracks for distance work'.⁷⁵ Beach training depended upon the weather and the tides and, when possible, the horses might be worked at the beach both morning and afternoon, and sometimes even by moonlight. Some trainers would utilise the entire length of the beach from South Beach jetty to Woodman Point, others worked between South Beach jetty and Robb Jetty, and others including W.F. 'Pop' Johnson, who trained horses at the place for more than 55 years, including 'some of the greatest pacers ever to race in WA'.⁷⁶ In this period, most gallopers were trained between South Beach jetty and Robb Jetty, with the fast run from Robb Jetty towards Fremantle, and pacers were often worked south of Robb Jetty. A fisherman whose camp was near Robb Jetty hired out small boats not only for fishing but also for those trainers who chose to swim their horses from a boat, though other trainers disregarded fears about sharks attracted to the works at Robb Jetty and swam with their horses. Whilst the majority of horses came from Fremantle and Hamilton Hill, others were brought from farther afield, including Cottesloe and Cannington as beach work was highly regarded. When the beach was unsuitable, numerous local trainers worked their horses in the dunes area, which was also used for slow work and for horse-breaking.⁷⁷

In 1940, a photograph shows N. Hodgson with *Cannonier* at South Beach with the Smelters' camp in the rear ground. A later photograph (1949) shows N. Watson swimming a horse from a dinghy off the beach in this area.⁷⁸

Well-known trainer Jack Collinson trained many winners at his stables in Daly Street (later owned by the Patterson family), one of the largest racing stables in South Fremantle, including *Gold Patois* (Railway Stakes, 1948), *Aptofine* (Railway Stakes, 1952), *Yabaroo* (Perth Cup, 1955).⁷⁹ Collinson and other trainers had established routes to *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* from the southern end of the various streets to the vacant ground, including present day

72 Typescript information from Terry Patterson, 17 February 1993, HCWA Place No. 16120 *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, no details.

73 Alf Dunn, to Dr. Edwards, Minister for Heritage, 20 April 2002.

74 *ibid.*

75 *Sunday Times* 28 March 1993.

76 News cutting no details, courtesy Terry Patterson. Note: 'Pop' Johnson's successful pacers included *Royal Shadow* (Christmas Handicap and Sires Produce Stakes, both 1949, WA Trotting Cup and Easter Cup, both 1951), *Sultana* (Easter Handicap, 1957, and New Year Handicap, 1960) and *Kodak* (State Sprint Championship, 1960).

77 Stan Cridland *op. cit.*;

78 Photographs N. Watson (Horse Cannonier) Smelter Camp, 1940, and N. Watson, Smelter Camp, 1949, courtesy Terry Patterson.

79 Tomlinson, Jenny *op. cit.*, p. 154.

Hollis Park and the rubbish tip site, thence to the coast at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*. This route has continued to be used into the 21st century.⁸⁰

In 1951, the South Fremantle Power Station was completed. Further dredging of the Parmelia and Success banks in Cockburn Sound to deepen the channels for port facilities at the new oil refinery at Kwinana, impacted on South Beach, with anecdotal evidence indicating a narrowing of the width of flat firm beach at low tide. The number of horses that could race abreast from Robb Jetty to South Beach jetty was reduced accordingly.⁸¹

In the post-WWII period, a number of successful horses were stabled at *Randwick Stables* in Hamilton Hill and trained at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* under Jimmy Banks, including *Beau Vasse*, winner of the Perth Cup in 1949, *Tinder Parney*, which started as favourite for the Perth Cup in 1960, and Western Australian Derby winner *Gojon* (1963).⁸² In the 1950s and 1960s, after training on Sunday mornings at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* it was customary for many trainers to go back to *Randwick Stables* to socialise with fellow trainers and riders before returning to their own stables.⁸³

By the early 1950s, the Western Australian Turf Club listed 31 registered horse trainers in proximity to *South Beach Horse Exercise Beach*. At the height of the Fremantle racehorse training industry, there were around 400 racehorses stabled in the Fremantle area, which were trained and exercised at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*.⁸⁴ In 1952, celebrations of the Western Australian Turf Club's centenary included photographs of 'Scenes on the beach at Fremantle, where many horses are trained', which show horses and riders making their way through the sand hills to *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* and galloping along the beach.⁸⁵ Considerable numbers of pacers also continued to be trained at the place in the 1950s, and through into the 1970s.⁸⁶

On 6 September 1957, Fremantle Suburban Lots 1856 and 1818, about six acres in area, adjoining Reserve 12477, were gazetted as Reserve 24787, and vested in the Cockburn Road Board for the purpose of Recreation.⁸⁷

In the 1950s and 1960s, there was further residential development in South Fremantle and Hamilton Hill. The introduction of by-laws to regulate the proximity of horse stables to a minimum of 50 ft from dwellings 'began to force the racing industry out of the area'.⁸⁸ Among stables that continued to operate were Collinson's in Daly Street, which were taken over by the Patterson family in the late 1950s.⁸⁹ Like their predecessor, they used *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* for exercising and training horses, and also the dunes and rubbish tip area,

80 Terry Patterson telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 24 June 2004.

81 Stan Cridland op. cit.; and Mike Lefroy, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, July 2004.

82 Western Australian Turf Club File Results Group 1, II, and III, Perth Cup 1949; and Mrs. F. M. Banks' 'Randwick Stables: A brief History' [c. 2001], n.p.

83 Terry Patterson telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 17 April 2002; and Alison Bolas and Ted Mills, conversation with Robin Chinnery, 24 April 2002.

84 *Western Australian Racing Calendar* 1950-55; Tomlinson, Jenny op. cit., p. 154; Terry Patterson, 17 April 2002; Bill Durkin, conversation with Robin Chinnery, 21 April 2002; Stan Cridland op. cit.; and Tommy Little and Johnny Wilson, telephone conversations with Robin Chinnery, July 2004..

85 Information on file HCWA Place No. 16120*South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, no details.

86 Bill Horn and Alfie Spencer, telephone conversations with Robin Chinnery, July 2004.

87 *Government Gazette* 6 September 1957, p. 2649 and p. 2654.

88 Marks, Bill *South to Sillytown: tales of battlers and larrikins* Fremantle Arts Press, Fremantle, 1997, p. 131.

89 *Sunday Times* 28 March 1993.

where they continued horse-breaking and training horses through the late 20th century, as shown in photographs. After their deaths the respective funeral corteges of Nancy (d. 1998) and Len 'Banjo' Patterson (d. 2000) made a final visit to the place that had played an integral part in their lives over more than 40 years.⁹⁰

In the 1950s and 1960s, Arthur Bowden continued to train horses from his Walker Street stables at the dunes area to the south, where he continued to lease an area from the City of Fremantle, and at South Beach. *England's Dust*, which he owned in partnership with George Atkinson, achieved outstanding success winning the Western Australian Derby (1958) and the Perth Cup (1961), along with the WATCCB Cox Stakes and the WATC Imperial Stakes.⁹¹

On 19 January 1973, Reserve 24787 was vested in the Town of Cockburn.⁹²

In the 1970s, the so-called '50 foot' by-law was rigorously enforced, and the number of horses using *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* decreased as many of the stables in the Fremantle area were closed.⁹³ Some of the older people who had worked in the horse industry remained resident in the area, including Arthur Bowden and Alby Mollett, whose blacksmith shop in Douro Road was well known. They retained vivid recollections of the heyday of the industry in Fremantle when *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* was used regularly by hundreds of horses.⁹⁴

In June 1985, information was provided about the Aboriginal stockmen's camp at Robb Jetty, and the place was included in the Register of Aboriginal Sites.⁹⁵

On 24 December 1986, Fremantle Suburban Lot 85, was gazetted as Reserve 39729 (Ocean Road), as per Diagram 60/155.⁹⁶ This area includes part of the route traditionally followed by some horses being walked to South Beach.

In February 1989, a feature article in the *West Australian* newspaper drew attention to Fremantle's 'long and colourful history as the birthplace of WA horse racing', which was reportedly 'in danger of being lost'.⁹⁷ Only 14 racing stables continued to operate at that time, and the number of horses had fallen to 50, which continued to be worked at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*.⁹⁸ There were also a number of pacers continuing to be worked at the place.⁹⁹

Terry Patterson had proposed a re-enactment of the first horse race meeting at South Beach to be held in the Australian Bi-Centennial Year (1989), but was unsuccessful in his application for funding assistance from the Bicentennial

⁹⁰ *Fremantle Gazette* 16 January 1998; and *West Australian* 21 August 2000; photographs, 1990s, courtesy Terry Patterson, and conversations with Robin Chinnery, June-July 2004.

⁹¹ Tommy Little and Johnny Wilson op. cit.; Tomlinson, Jenny op. cit., pp. 156-157, p. 186 and p. 225. Terry Paterson, conversations with Robin Chinnery, July 2004; and N. J. C. McCombe, Town Clerk, City of Fremantle to A. T. Bowden, 19 April 1962, approving Bowden's application to lease Lots 22, 23 and 24 Alice Avenue for three years from the City, and approval to build the proposed brick stables on the site.

⁹² *Government Gazette* 19 January 1973, p. 86.

⁹³ *Sunday Times* 28 March 1993.

⁹⁴ Mike Lefroy and Terry Patterson, telephone conversations with Robin Chinnery, June-July 2004.

⁹⁵ Information from Dept. of Indigenous Affairs, 7 July 2004.

⁹⁶ *Government Gazette* 24 December 1986, p. 4977.

⁹⁷ 'Big Weekend' *West Australian* 29 February 1989, p. 5.

⁹⁸ Tomlinson, Jenny op. cit., p. 155.

⁹⁹ Bill Horn, Alfie Spencer, op. cit.; and Scott Prowse, telephone conversations with Robin Chinnery, July 2004.

Authority.¹⁰⁰ However, in 1991, a re-enactment was organised and was well attended by 5,000 people.¹⁰¹ Extensive efforts to contact trainers, jockeys, drivers and others associated with the equine history of the place were successful. The opportunity to participate in the re-enactment, to revisit the place that had been an integral part of their careers in the horse industry, and to reminisce with their peers was a strong emotional experience that they remember well.¹⁰²

By 1993, when architect John Taylor was commissioned to undertake a heritage study of South Fremantle, only the Pattersons' stables and David Miller's *Gloman* stables in Douro Road (formerly operated by David Oates) remained of the many stables which had characterised this area of South Fremantle.¹⁰³ The study drew attention to the major role played by the horse industry in the history of the area since the early 1830s, and noted that the 10th Light Horse had prepared horses on South Beach during World War I. The demise of the industry was attributed to the by-laws, closure of Richmond Raceway, 'discouragement of the use by horse-trainers of the main recreational South Beach and adjacent 'dog beach', which meant that horses could only be run farther south in *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, which falls under the jurisdiction of the City of Cockburn, and increased pressure to achieve greater returns on land through residential and commercial uses rather than for stables etc.¹⁰⁴ Taylor's report listed various significant sites including South Beach, Hollis Park, and 'Ocean Road pathway extension (bike path across the south ends of Walker, Hulbert, Thomas and Daly streets)', and the former tip site and quarry site to the south of Island Street.¹⁰⁵

In 1993, the decision was made to close the complex at Robb Jetty, and it was subsequently demolished apart from the 28m high chimneystack.¹⁰⁶ On 1 June 1993, the area of Reserve 24787 was reduced in area to about 15 ha when that portion now comprised in Lot 2064 was excluded.¹⁰⁷ On 10 June 1993, a new Crown Land Record was registered accordingly for Fremantle Lots 1759, 1818 and 1957 as per Land Administration Plans 5558, 5891 and Reserve Plan 203.¹⁰⁸

From 1996, efforts were begun to restore and improve South Beach, to the north of *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*.¹⁰⁹ A cycle path from near the western side of the intersection of Hampden, Cockburn and Rockingham roads followed for the most part along the route of an earlier path leading westward past the southern ends of Daly, Thomas, Hulbert and Walker streets, which had long been used by horse traffic to South Beach.¹¹⁰ Subsequently, the route has continued to be used by horses, along with the bridle path to the south, as shown in photographs.¹¹¹

The North Coogee Landscape Project, part of the Coogee Master Plan, encompassed considerable work to re-contour and re-vegetate the sand dunes.

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- 100 Patterson, T. 'Proposal for a re-enactment of the first horse race that took place in South Fremantle on 3/10/1833', 1987, n.p. [pp. 2-3], in City of Fremantle Local History Collection, Pamphlet File No. 798; and 'Big Weekend' *West Australian* 29 February 1989, p. 5.
- 101 *Sunday Times* 28 March 2003.
- 102 Tommy Little, Johnny Wilson, Stan Cridland and Terry Patterson, telephone conversations with Robin Chinnery, June-July 2004.
- 103 *ibid*; and John Taylor Architect 'Heritage Study of South Fremantle', p. 7.
- 104 John Taylor Architect *ibid*.
- 105 Jim Macbeth to Jill Gaynor, City of Fremantle, per e-mail, 8 October 2001.
- 106 *North Coogee Landscape Project* op. cit.
- 107 *Government Gazette* 1 June 1993, p. 2703.
- 108 Crown Land Record Vol. 3101 Fol. 675.
- 109 *Western Review* op. cit.
- 110 David Kaeshagen, Ecoscape Pty Ltd, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, July 2004.
- 111 Photographs, Jim Macbeth, 2003-04, courtesy Jim MacBeth and Terry Patterson.

The project included establishing a dual-use path from a car park at the northern end of Robb Road to McTaggart Cove, with 16 beach access paths, including one of sufficient width for a horse and sulky to provide for the needs of pacers being trained at the beach. Some of the paths followed those already established through long use by horses and trainers, respecting the older community uses of the area. Separate horse and dog exercise areas were designated, and car parking near the former area included bays for horse floats. A grassed area with barbecue facilities and two steel and timber shelters, named Hollywood and Smelters in commemoration of the names by which the shanty camps on the beach had been known, was established at a portion of the reserve named C.Y. O'Connor Reserve. Well-known sculptor Tony Jones created in metal a work named 'Human Race', a cattle race with images of cattle leading from the remains of Robb Jetty to the abattoir site, and two wind vanes with imagery associated with the livestock trade.¹¹²

The beautification of the area and changes to the tracks have contributed to changing patterns of use, with increasing use of the area by pedestrians, cyclists and for dog exercise. The implementation of a separate area for horse exercise and restrictions on the hours at which horses may be worked on the beach (4am to 8am according to signage in 2004) has made it more difficult for equine users. Tides can conflict with the permitted hours, and dogs running free in the horse exercise area has posed some problems.¹¹³

In late 1997, City of Cockburn unveiled 'a long-awaited memorial to the racing fraternity', at Coogee Beach, south of South Beach.¹¹⁴ Executed by well-known sculptor Anne Neil, the work depicted seven outlines of horses and riders, which commemorated their use of the length of beach, including *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, since 1833. Vandals destroyed the sculpture in 2002.¹¹⁵

In 1999, a statue of C.Y. O'Connor on horseback was erected 50m from the shore of *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* in commemoration of his life and work, and his association with horse racing and this stretch of beach. The 350kg statue was executed by well-known sculptor Tony Jones at a cost of \$70,000.¹¹⁶ Nearby is the stern section of the tug *Wyola*, which had been used by a scrap salvage business operating in the vicinity, before being driven ashore and wrecked in a storm. To the north, is the wreck of a timber barge.¹¹⁷

In the latter decades of the 20th century, there was increased sub-division in South Fremantle, Hamilton Hill and Cockburn areas. Increasing concerns about health issues relating to the continued presence of stables in residential areas, and changing local by-laws restricting the operation of stables in these areas, resulted in the closure of all but a small number of stables, including racing stables, in the cities of Fremantle and Cockburn. In 2001, *Randwick Stables* was the only remaining licensed stables in the Hamilton Hill area.¹¹⁸ The continued decline in the number of stables also led to reduced use of *South Beach Horse*

¹¹² ibid; Terry Patterson, conversation with Robin Chinnery and Philip Griffiths, 30 June 2004; and *North Coogee Landscape Project* op. cit..

¹¹³ Trainer Keith Frost, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, July 2004.

¹¹⁴ *Fremantle Gazette* 16 January 1998.

¹¹⁵ Ibid; and *West Australian* 4 October 2003, p. 55.

¹¹⁶ *West Australian* 18 June 1999, p. 1.

¹¹⁷ Mike Lefroy, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery July 2004.

¹¹⁸ Alison Bolas conversation with Kris Bizacca, 26 April 2001, and with Robin Chinnery, 24 April 2002.

Exercise Beach for horse exercise and training, but the practice did not cease and continues through into 2004.¹¹⁹

In 2002, South Beach was included in the Draft Municipal Heritage Inventory for the City of Cockburn, which remains under consideration in 2004.¹²⁰

In August 2002, Aboriginal people provided information about the area around and including *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, which was subsequently included in the Register of Aboriginal Sites as a mythological site.¹²¹ In April and October 2003, newspaper articles drew attention to the history of South Beach and its continuing use by the horse industry.¹²² In 2003-04, two licensed stables have continued in operation in the City of Fremantle, in Daly and Forrest streets, and two in the Hamilton Hill area in the City of Cockburn.¹²³ These include *Randwick Stables*, which has been Entered in the Register of Heritage Places, the Pattersons' stables in Daly Street, and 'Pop' Johnson's grandson, Scott Prowse, whose family have been training horses at South Beach since before World War I. Horses from these stables and elsewhere, including gallopers from Bryn Edward Regan's stables in Rockingham Road, Hamilton Hill, and a number of pacers, have continue- to be worked at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, whilst others are worked farther south towards Kwinana.¹²⁴

Proposed re-development of industrial land at Robbs Jetty estate, and for a marina and housing development at Coogee, have led to concerns about the future and continued use of *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*. In October 2003, members of the community concerned about the possible impact of proposals for development of a portion of beach to the south of the South Beach groyne 'as part of a multi-million dollar eco-village' organised a Save South Beach rally which was well attended.¹²⁵

In 2004, City of Cockburn has agreed to allocate \$50,000 to provide signage at *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* with information regarding the use of the place for the exercise and training of racehorses, and about C.Y. O'Connor. On 30 May 2004, despite inclement weather, around 50-60 people attended a Fremantle Heritage Week event in which a group of five horses were led from *Randwick Stables* down to *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, illustrating what was once a common practice.¹²⁶

In mid-2004, *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, continues to be used for horse training and exercise, and the bridle path, cycle path and Ocean Road continues to serve as routes to the place. The designated reserve, the groynes and the beach, are also well used for general recreation.

In late 2004, a portion of *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* was officially renamed C.Y. O'Connor Beach.

119 *West Australian* 4 October 2003.

120 South Beach/Hamilton Hill/South Beach in Draft City of Cockburn Municipal Heritage Inventory, 2002; and Cathie Day, Heritage Today, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, July 2004.

121 Information from Dept. of Indigenous Affairs, 7 July 2004.

122 *West Australian* 23 April and 4 October 2003 p. 5 and p. 55 respectively.

123 Information from City of Fremantle and City of Cockburn, June 2004.

124 Terry Patterson, Bill Horn, Scott Johnson and Peggy Prowse, Keith Frost, Bill Horn and Alfie Spencer, conversations with Robin Chinnery, June-July 2004; B.J. Ryan, WATC Historian, to Christine Lewis, HCWA, 16 April 2004; photographs of horses worked on the beach, courtesy Jim Macbeth, 2003-04.

125 *ibid*; and information from J. Macbeth.

126 Terry Patterson, telephone conversation with Robin Chinnery, 13 June 2004.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

South Beach Horse Exercise Area is the portion of South Beach extending south past Catherine Point to McTaggart Cove. It includes the southern portion of South Beach south of Ocean Road and the whole of the C.Y. O'Connor Reserve. Since 1833, this portion of the coast has been used for the exercise and training of horses and in the period before the completion of South Fremantle Power Station, the area extended to Woodman Point to the south and back to Fremantle in the north.

South Beach Horse Exercise Area is an access route through an area of South Fremantle to the west of Cockburn Road, and south of streets that run south from Douro Road, then a route through to the southern groyne of South Beach, and includes a network of formalised paths and fenced tracks, together with the beach itself from a point south of the groyne along C.Y. O'Connor Reserve, and the site of Robb's Jetty.

Views and vistas

At a number of locations along the coastal strip from the cycleway, and from the dunes and beach there are sweeping views of Woodman Point, Garden, Carnac and Rottnest Islands, and of Fremantle, together with a broad expanse of the ocean. At the southern end of the path system, the remains of the South Fremantle Power Station is a dominant landmark.

Paths

The eastern path comprises areas of land that have been part of Fremantle Rubbish Depot, with informal tracks leading through degraded dunes and fill, terminating in the west. The path has been formalised by being turned into a bicycle path and is bitumenised, with the last part of the path being a fragment of Ocean Road. Access to the beach at the northern end is then via a rail crossing, over Ocean Drive and through the South Beach car park.

Between the groyne at South Beach and along the C.Y. O'Connor Reserve, there is a bitumenised cycleway, fenced at various points with tanalith treated pine poles and wire fences, and in the northern stretch to the west of the foundry, chainlink fencing.

Tracks

The area to the west of the cycleway is laced with tracks, some with a firm and stabilised base, but most simply running through the dunes in informal patterns. Some of the tracks have been formalised with tanalith treated pine pole and wire fences controlling access, while in other areas the informal tracks remain, cut off from access by the fencing. The track fencing is set at various widths and is mainly narrow, with one wide track at the southern end of the system to allow spider access to the water's edge.

Vegetation

The dune system has been degraded by activity and is in the process of rehabilitation. The plants include natives and exotics, with a predominance of native species. The native plants include Wattle (genus *Acacia*), Coastal Moort (*Eucalyptus platypus heterophylla*), Sheoak (genus *Allocasuarina*), and Rottnest Island Pine (*Melaleuca lanceolata* or *Acacia rostellifera*). The exotics include Victorian Tea Tree (*Leptospermum myrtaceae laevigatum*).

Built Features on the Beach

Built features on the beach line include limestone groynes at the northern end of the area at South Beach on the City of Fremantle side of the local boundary, and a further limestone groyne at Catherine point. There are likely to be archaeological remains of Robb's Jetty that was destroyed in 1975.

Formalised Parks

At the northern and southern end of the *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* there are formalised park settings. At the South Beach end there is a large bitumenised car park, with concrete barrier kerbs, tanalith treated pine bollards, broad expanses of lawn and plantings of Norfolk Island Pines, together with a kiosk and change rooms to the north of the exercise access area, and barbeques and beach shelters within the grassed area.

At the southern end of the *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, the park in the C.Y. O'Connor Reserve comprises a car park to the east and to the south, with an area to allow horse floats to be parked, then retaining walls and ramps with steel balustrades, leading down to a broad expanse of flat lawn, edged with limestone kerbing at the western side. There are showers and toilets at the southern end of the area, and two large picnic shelters located on the eastern side of the grassed area. There is lighting, barbeques, and concrete construction seating. The main construction materials for the built elements are limestone concrete, galvanized and stainless steel and the design of the elements is intended to reflect an industrial aesthetic. Views to the sea are framed by dunes in the foreground.

Other material

Other material in the area includes the steel keel of a scrapped ship, and furnace slag, particularly in the vicinity of the smelters at the northern end of the area.

Public Art

There are three pieces of public art in *South Beach Horse Exercise Area*, all located around the vicinity of the southern end of the C.Y. O'Connor Reserve.

Located 50m offshore there is a sculpture of C.Y. O'Connor on horseback, by Tony Jones.

Alongside, the cycle path and to its east there is a sculpture created by Tony Jones entitled the 'Human Race' leading from the site of Robb's Jetty to the abattoir site. It comprises a series of cattle race fences and gates, with small silhouettes of cattle, all constructed in galvanized steel. There is a pole mounted weather vane at the western end of the race on the beach side of the cycle way.

Anne Neil's depiction of seven horses and riders was sited nearby and subsequently removed following vandalism.

South Beach Horse Exercise Area is a managed environment and the focus is on preserving a number of horse and other tracks, while cutting off some well established tracks. Some paths have been formalised by laying down bitumen and road base. There is a significant amount of re-vegetation being undertaken. The beach is subject to seasonal erosion and accretion, but comparison with historic photographs suggests that the present average beach width is narrow.

Like any area that mainly comprises natural features and tracks that comes under pressure from use and changing attitudes *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* has been the subject of much change. Track formalisation and the closure of informal tracks is one feature of change, with others that include the incursion of exotic

species, creation of park and recreation spaces and the construction and subsequent demolition of Robb's Jetty, erection of art works and the like.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

In 1833, *South Beach Horse Exercise Area* was the site of the first official horse race on the mainland, and as the newspaper reported the site had long been considered suitable, it is most probable that it had been utilised for horse riding prior to this date. The place was also the venue of the second official race meeting in 1834, and through the 19th and 20th centuries, continued in use for recreational riding and also for training and exercising horses, including by the 10th Light Horse in preparation for war during World War I. In the interwar and post-WWII periods through to the 1970s, during the heyday of the Fremantle horse industry, up to 400 horses were being worked at the place on occasion. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, equine use of the place continued albeit at a much reduced level, and continues into 2004.

While the area around Ascot and Belmont racecourses has been part of the horse industry since the mid-19th century, the horses there have not undertaken beach work as at South Beach. Various beaches in other parts of the State have been and are utilised for beach training of horses, but none have been in continuous use by the horse industry and recreational riders for as long as South Beach. The longevity of its association with the equine history of WA, and the varied uses of the place, including its Aboriginal significance both pre- and post-European settlement, and its use by the 10th Light Horse in World War I are unique.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research in private records, such as diaries, and in public records, such as those of the City of Fremantle, may reveal more information about the historic uses of the place in the 19th and 20th centuries, including leasing of the former rubbish tip site for use by stable owners and trainers. Aerial photographs, dating from the World War II period through to the 1990s, revealed few discernible details of tracks and built features in the area.

Further information should also be sourced on the Indigenous history of South Beach generally.