



FROM THE GALLERIES AND COLLECTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY MUSEUM OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Typically only a small portion of a museum collection is exhibited at any one time. This is due not only to practical consideration of display space but a range of professional considerations designed to protect and preserve the artefact.

This series highlights objects and stories you may have overlooked in the galleries or collection items awaiting their story. Enjoy and explore further.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?



Round House atop Arthur Head, Fremantle



Sir George Arthur (1784-1854) was Governor of Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) in 1827 when Captain James Stirling visited in HMS Success on his way to explore the Swan River. Stirling was well entertained in Hobart Town during January and February 1827, and the two Governors became friends. They would correspond for many years. It was not surprising that the southern headland of the Swan River mouth was named after Sir George [Arthur Head].

Arthur's biography and career make interesting reading from anti-slavery initiatives in Honduras to founding the prison establishment at Port Arthur, to which in a later appointment as Governor of Upper Canada he was to transport rebellious Canadians in 1838.



Another visitor to Hobart town during Stirling's stay was Captain Henry John Rous, a former school friend of Stirling. The name of the northern headland was assigned to him. [Rous Head].

The Commander in Chief of the East Indies Station at the time, Admiral William Hall Gage, had his name given to the water between Rottneest Island and the mainland [Gage Roads]

Stirling named the hill in honour of William Buckland who was well known for his books on geology and mineralogy. Buckland Hill, named by Captain Stirling after William Buckland, FRS, a reader in Geology at Oxford University and later Dean of Westminster, is the last remaining peak of seven hills in the area. It is one of the highest points in the Perth Metropolitan area.

Admiral Henry John Rous by George Hayter

Proceeding south past the mouth of the Swan River, Gage Roads becomes Cockburn Sound, which extends 23 km south to Point Peron. Today it is an important part of Fremantle's outer harbour encompassing an area 5–9 km with a depth of 9 to 22 metres. It is named after Admiral Sir George Cockburn, 10th Baronet. Cockburn had interesting responsibilities in both his naval and political careers including the burning of Washington DC and escorting Napoleon to St Helena. Within the sound, dredged artificial channels cross the Parmelia and Success Banks both named after the naval vessels which made their direct contact.



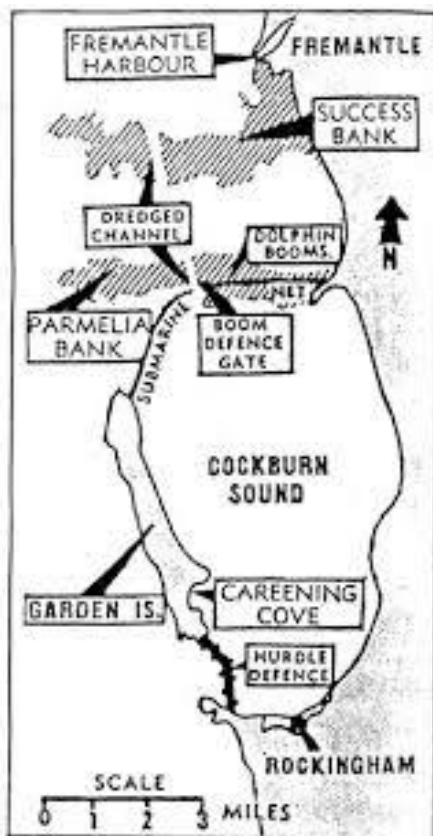
Defences and wartime role



HMS Repulse visited Fremantle in 1925 accompanying *HMS Hood* on their round the world cruise

Following the losses of battleships HMS *Prince of Wales* and HMS *Repulse* on 10 December 1941 and the fall of Singapore in March 1942, many ships sought refuge at Fremantle; at times 30 were at anchor in Gage Roads.

"In the inner harbour, it was ... a common sight to see up to as many as four vessels of substantial size lying in tier, and it was due solely to the circumstances forced upon the port and the prevailing weather conditions that such a state of affairs could be permitted. Altogether, some 75 vessels were using the inner and outer harbours at one and the same time, and in the fortnight ending 20th March, a total of 103 vessels, Naval and merchant, and mainly seeking refuge, arrived at the port. Until these vessels could be ordered to some other destination, acute conditions persisted at the port for some weeks."



In 1940 boom defences were installed in the harbour as a security measure and anti-aircraft installations were built. By January 1941 an anti-submarine indicator loop was installed between Swanbourne and Rottnest to warn of any ships passing over it. Outer harbour defences included an anti-submarine net from Woodman Point to Garden Point to Garden Island along Parmelia Bank, as well as another indicator loop 183 metres further north.

During World War II, the harbour accommodated scores of Allied naval vessels on active service. Battleships, troop transports, hospital ships and support vessels, including many [passenger ships](#), were seconded into the war effort. Visitors to Fremantle during the conflict included passenger liners and converted troop carriers [RMS Queen Elizabeth](#) and [RMS Queen Mary](#). Because of their size neither was able to take up an inner harbour berth, and instead anchored in Gage Roads. Fremantle Submarine Base was the largest submarine base in the southern hemisphere.

<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/arthur-sir-george-1721>

http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/arthur_george_8E.html

https://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion_to_tasmanian_history/A/George%20Arthur.htm

<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/rous-henry-john-2611>

<https://bookmerchant.com.au/products/James-Stirling-Admiral-and-Founding-Governor-of-Western-Australia-by-Pamela-Statham-Drew-p148202868>

Artillery Barracks, home of the Australian Army Museum of Western Australia, was at the heart of Fortress Fremantle and its joint and combined defences during World War 2. The history of the Barracks is now summarised in a news series of panels on the upper verandas of Building 17, the former accommodation block.