

job was taken over by Lily Mouatt, wife of the new pilot, Peter Mouatt. In 1916 the Post Office was moved to a house at the top of Paragon Avenue (now a car park.)

Walk a little further down Gregory Street until you are opposite the School of Arts. You may wish to cross the road to have a better look at this building.

9. The South West Rocks School of Arts. This building was erected in 1926 and took over the role of Town Hall from the shed in Prince of Wales Avenue. It was extended in length in September 1933, an action apparent from an examination of the side walls. The School of Arts is still very much used by the community and is administered by trustees and a volunteer committee.

If you crossed the road, return now and walk down to Paragon Avenue (the next one-way street). As you walk on, you will pass the site of the first bakery (almost opposite the School of Arts on Gregory Street). It was moved here from Jerseyville in 1922 and managed by three successive generations of the Wilson family.

South West Rocks Public School. From this position you could take a small detour, walking straight ahead down Gregory Street to its junction with Landsborough Street to see the first SWR Public School. Originally called the Macleay Entrance Public School, it was built at the New Entrance in 1897 and brought over to this site (the western side of Gregory Street) in 1909. Return and walk down Paragon Avenue. The first shop operated here adjacent to the Sea Breeze Apartment block. Further down Paragon, on the western corner of Paragon and Prince of Wales Avenue was another early shop. The newsagency is built on the site of an early general store.

Continue walking in Paragon Avenue

10. The heritage significance of this avenue has been eroded as a result of new development. This area had many seaside holiday cottages and, even today, names of respected citizens are connected with the cottages. The **Sanders Guest House** was at no. 25, built by Mr Perritt of Jerseyville in 1898. Following the Sanders it became the home of the Range family in 1931. The name Cannane is also widely known. Thomas Cannane and Vince Cannane built two cottages at no. 4 and no. 6 as holiday homes in 1924 and 1943.

Cross to the car park and walk down through it to the other end. Pause there to look out on Landsborough Street.

Uniting Church. From this vantage point you can see the new Uniting Church (opened in 1989) to your right on the opposite side of the street. The small building which this replaced was erected in 1915 as the first church in the village. The Norfolk Pines in Landsborough Street were planted at about the same time as those in Livingstone Street i.e. 1914

Turn to your left and walk down to the corner of Landsborough and Memorial Avenue.

11. Memorial Avenue. Of the 83 men from this district who enlisted for active service in WW1, 10 did not return. Anzac Day services were held on this corner for many years. This section of what was originally called Sturt Street was renamed Memorial Avenue in reference to the ten

memorial tablets which line the street. Originally, eight tablets were each accompanied by the planting (in 1927) of a Norfolk Pine. Only four of these trees remain. The rest were replaced with New Zealand Christmas bush when their growth threatened overhead power lines.

Walk down Memorial Avenue to its intersection with Paragon Avenue. Some of the houses to your left are quite old. Walk across Memorial Avenue to enter Paragon Avenue and walk down towards Brighton Park at the end of the street.

12. Brighton Park. Brighton Park was originally included in the 'suburban lands' surveyed as part of the Town of Arakoon in 1866. When the town plan was altered in 1901, it became a Reserve. In 1902, it was designated 'for police purposes' and the visiting constable from Jerseyville would leave his horse here on his regular visits to SWR. Over the years it has seen a cricket pitch, then lots of tents when it was a camping ground. Now it is just wonderful open space.

You may wish to return to the Reserve area by taking the track down to Saltwater Creek where you can either follow the path or cross the small wooden bridge and walk along the beach back to the Surf Clubhouse.

Information for items mentioned in this 'Walk in History' may be found at The Macleay River Historical Society Inc. Museum and Resource Centre



Australian Government

Department of the Environment and Heritage

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MACLEAY RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

is a resource centre and promotes the study of local history. The centre houses material such as maps, photographs, textiles, documents and files on the history of early settlers.

Museum open 10am – 4pm

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SOUTH KEMPSEY PARK PACIFIC HIGHWAY

KEMPSEY SHIRE COUNCIL
supporting the heritage of the Macleay



SOUTH WEST ROCKS

Distance covered: Stop 1 to 19 - 2 kilometres
Estimated time to complete walk - 1 hour 40 Minutes

1. The Boatman's Cottage - Tourist Information centre
This cottage is part of the Pilot Station Complex opened in 1902 to house the Macleay River Pilot, John Jamieson, and his staff of four. The pilot station had to be relocated from its original site at Grassy Head because in the great flood of 1893, the Macleay River made a new entrance into Trial Bay - placing it about 12km south east of that original Pilot base.

This recently (1993) restored cottage is flanked on one side by the Pilot's house and on the seaward side by two similar cottages (the SWR Arts and Crafts Association is housed in cottage number 2 and the SWR Police Station is housed in cottage number 3). A fourth was removed some years ago to make way for the building of an apartment block. The Governor of NSW, His Excellency, Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair, AC, officially opened the Boatman's Cottage on 10 September 1993. It houses the Tourist Information Centre and a maritime museum.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

MACLEAY RIVER



step back in

time



Walks in History

As you leave the front gate, turn to your right and walk straight down the road behind the pilot's house until you are opposite the back door of the School of Arts. Look for a track into the bush on the creek side of the road. Take care here as this short track is steep and may be slippery. About 4 metres off the road you will see the top of a flight of cement steps.

2. Boatshed, Steps and Footbridge. These steps, built at the same time as the Pilot Station, allowed the Pilot and boatmen ready access to their boatshed and the Pilot boat. The broken concrete slab at the base of these steps is all that remains of that boatshed. In the early years the boat would be launched directly from the shed into the creek and rowed over to the Macleay River's new entrance for the pilot to check on the depth of the river bar. Many ships travelled to and from the Macleay Valley through this river mouth and the Pilot was responsible for their safety in these waters.

The high bridge over the creek replaced the original footbridge, built with the Pilot station; a planked walkway led from it across the dunes to the river entrance where another boatshed was situated for the Pilot's use.

Retrace your steps up the hill to O'Keefe Road on your left. Follow it down until you reach the parking bay at the end, near the mouth of the creek.

South West Rocks Creek Entrance. Immediately below you is the mouth of South West Rocks Creek. This entrance is often difficult and dangerous to navigate. The man-made rock walls of the Macleay River's new entrance can be seen about 1km west along Back Beach. Construction for these break walls commenced in 1896.

Following the coastline around beyond this entrance, you can see a smooth low hillock called Grassy Head - the position of the original Macleay River entrance prior to 1893. Dominating the skyline behind is Mount Yarrahapinni.

Walk up into the caravan park section of the Reserve and head towards the flagstaff on the point. You will see a little wooden fence and gate that will take you through into the Signal House and Flagstaff section of the headland.

3. Signal Station and Flagstaff on Point Briner. These two structures, also built in 1902 as part of the Pilot Station, were used for communicating with ships sheltering in Trial Bay and/or bound for the Macleay River entrance. Flags, telescopes and other communication equipment were stored in this little building. The headland is known as Point Briner, after local Member for Raleigh, George Briner, who owned property in the town early last century and was a great supporter of South West Rocks. The rock outcropping here is called 'Breakwater Conglomerate' and is of the same material as that quarried at New Entrance to build the training walls. Thought to be of fluvio-glacial origin, it is unlayered and contains rounded pebbles up to 30cm in diameter.

Exit this area by the gate, turn left and walk towards Horseshoe Bay along the curving cement path. You may like to choose a seat somewhere in the middle of the grassy area at the back of the beach while you read about Stop 5 and look at the bay.

Horseshoe Bay. This small bay is created by a double rocky headland. In the earliest times of settlement here, when segregated swimming was in vogue, it was known as the ladies' bathing bay. The beach hasn't always been used for swimming, being at times totally devoid of sand and covered with large rocks. This has not occurred in recent times. The headland opposite Point Briner is known as Monument Point and is composed of a fine-grained, light coloured igneous rock called granophyre.

Continue to walk along the path around the beach and then make your way up to the headland behind the kiosk. Choose a vantage point where you can look out to sea and also across to Lagger's Point where Trial bay Gaol is visible

Trial Bay and South West Rocks. Trial Bay extends from Lagger's Point where Trial Bay Gaol is situated, around to Grassy Head. Unusually, the bay faces north. This feature, together with the shelter provided by Lagger's Point and the Smoky Cape Range extending inland from it, means that the water in Trial Bay is calm and sheltered in southerly gales. Thus it was very well known in shipping circles last century and many ships would seek shelter there. The south-west rocks are those just to the east of you. Their name derives from their position - i.e. - they are south west of Lagger's Point. They were used as a marker or guide to the safe, deep water anchorage to be had between them and Lagger's Point. This part of Trial Bay has in the past been much deeper and more indented than it appears today. In an attempt to make Trial Bay a safe anchorage in ALL weathers, the scheme to build a breakwater across from Lagger's Point using prison labour led to the building of Trial Bay Gaol. Land was first surveyed in 1866 which led to the formation of the Town of Arakoon which included South West Rocks.

Short walk here, across the asphalt to the stone monument.

4. Monument and the Lantern Shed. This stone obelisk, the first man-made structure at South West Rocks, was erected to the memory of three men who drowned when the ketch 'Woolloomooloo' sank just north of the Point on 2 June 1864 in an easterly gale. The stone sections of the monument were brought from Sydney by sailing ship and off-loaded at Rainbow Reach on the Macleay River. They were then brought by boat to SWR Creek and carried on poles to this site.

In the garden in the middle of the road nearby is a concrete slab - all that remains of a small lantern shed built in 1910 to assist the pilot in his communication with shipping.

Follow the cement path that leads from the back of the monument down between the Surf Club and the weather shed. Pause in front of the Surf Club Hall so you can appreciate a wonderful view of the beach and creek.

5. South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club and Salt Water Creek. This building was built in 1924 by volunteers but has been much altered for modern day requirements. The life saving movement had a strong following and many carnivals attracting big crowds were held from the 1920s to 1950s. The clubhouse has many photographs on display from this era. The building has a priceless location and the view from the verandah is spectacular.

Saltwater Creek is fed by run-off from Saltwater Lagoon at Arakoon. Its brownish coloured water derives from vegetation along its route. In times of heavy rain, it will break through to the ocean. An attempt was made in the early 1930s to build a small footbridge across it just near the ramp. Two stone supports are all that remain of this project.

Walk back up a little way towards the kiosk.

Avenues of Norfolk Pines and Kiosk. Originally this Reserve area was grassy with low growing banksia scrub. The first permanent resident (1887), William Arthur, began planting trees to provide shade and beautify the area. At the turn of the century, a Trust was gazetted to administer the Reserve. The Norfolk pines here, and in the centre of Livingstone Street, date from 1914. Unfortunately, some in Livingstone Street are not healthy

and are in the process of replacement. The Kiosk stands on approximately the same site as the original one, which was a small lattice-enclosed building used to store cricket gear and opened on weekends to serve hot water and soft drinks to visitors.

Walk back down the road which leads out of the Reserve. Pause just inside the white stone gate posts.

6. Gate Posts and Cricket. These gate posts originally flanked the entrance to the Reserve opposite the hotel. One contains a memorial to Thomas Snow, a local man killed in a shipping accident. His parents operated a general store in South West Rocks from 1929 to 1954. To the right (just within the Reserve) there used to be a cricket pitch dating from 1906. Games of cricket were very popular and, during the peak holiday seasons, visitors and locals would play social matches. There was also a town cricket team.

Cross Livingstone Street and walk up the hill until you reach the Seaside Café. Look at the building behind this café.

7. Pacific Guest House (1887) This two storey stone house was the second building erected in the Rocks. It was originally called 'Jubilee House' having been completed in Queen Victoria's silver jubilee year. William Arthur was the owner and it became one of the North Coast's top accommodation houses attracting visitors from as far afield as the New England region. Intending guests would travel by steamer to Jerseyville where William would be waiting with his horse and buggy to convey them to South West Rocks. Church of England services were also held here at this time. A Heritage Order preventing any demolition or alteration to its facade now protects the building. However internally not much of the original structure remains. The building which houses the Seaside Café was built in 1925 by the then owners of the guest house and operated as a billiard room. It has had various uses over the intervening years.

In 1889, on the top side of the guest house, William Arthur erected a small building which he called the Jubilee Hall. This was SWR's Town Hall until 1910.

Walk up the hill until you reach Prince of Wales Avenue.

Prince of Wales Avenue and The Sea Breeze Hotel. Prince of Wales Avenue was created in 1898 when two adjoining one acre blocks were subdivided into smaller lots. Thus the future central business district of SWR was created. Originally, Prince of Wales Avenue was U-shaped, being closed off at this end. The Sea Breeze Hotel is the much altered 'Federal Hotel' built by Bridget and Lawrence Rafferty which opened for business in 1900. A hotel buggy shed (approx. position of Pizza and Pasta shop) was used as the SWR Town Hall from 1910 to 1926.

Cross Prince of Wales Avenue and continue up past the Hotel until you reach the top corner (corner of Livingstone Street and Gregory Street), then turn left and look at the house on the opposite corner i.e. the Pilot's House.

8. The Pilot's House - Post Office. This view of the Pilot's house shows a small extension built in 1905 to house the SWR Post and Telephone Office. The first public telephone box was installed next to this small room in 1910. Previously opened in 1903 at No 22 Gregory Street, the Post Office was moved to the Pilot's House at the request of the Department of Navigation because Mrs Jamieson, the pilot's wife was appointed as the post mistress. On John Jamison's retirement in 1907, the