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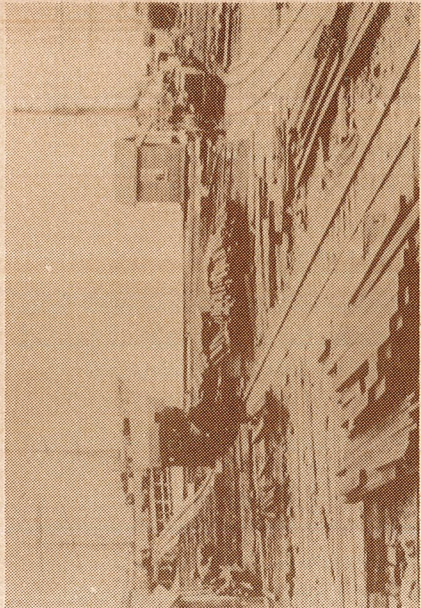
Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions

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Introduction

Soon after the foundation of the Swan River Colony in 1829 the first jarrah - or 'Swan River Mahogany' as it was then known - was exported. The thick stands of jarrah in the Darling Range fired the imagination of some businessmen, yet although Mangles Bay was identified as a suitable harbour in 1846 and the Rockingham port surveyed the following year, a lack of capital and markets prevented large-scale development.

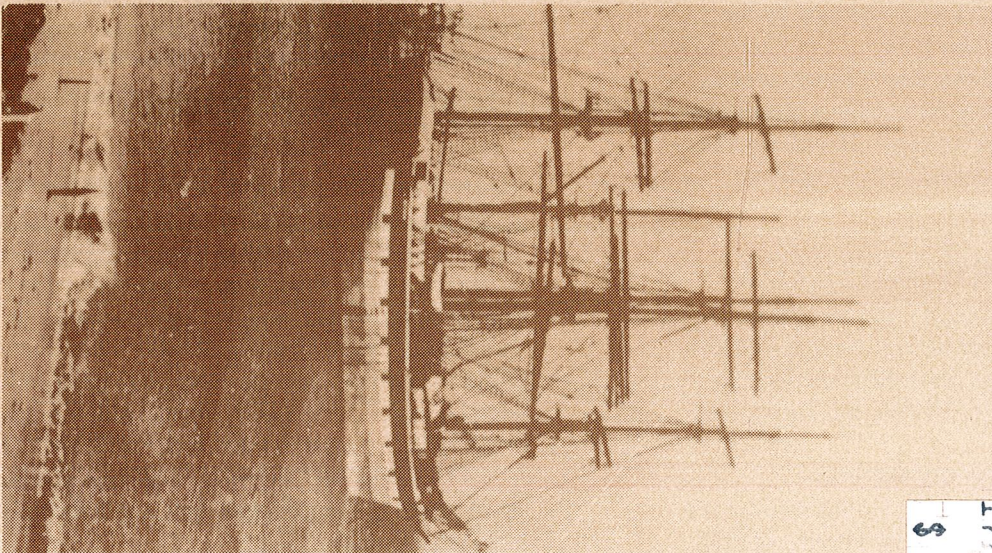
As the overseas demand for jarrah paving blocks and railway sleepers increased in the latter part of the 19th century, concessional leases were introduced. One of the largest of these - 250,000 acres of prime jarrah forest - was made in 1871 to the Rockingham jarrah Company, promoted by Thomas and William Wanliss, James Service and Peter Lalor. Financed by Victorian backers, the company built in 1872 a saw mill on a site which became known as 'Jarrahdale', a jetty at Rockingham port to load the timber onto ships, and a railway linking the two.



Timber ready for loading from the Rockingham jetty, 1885.

The **Rockingham-Jarrahdale Heritage Trail** retraces the route of this railway, one of the earliest built in Western Australia and a vital part of the area's development. Beginning at Railway Terrace, the site of Rockingham's original jetty, it is a 36km scenic drive and at a leisurely pace will take an hour to complete.

A Commonwealth/State
Bicentennial Project



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Retracing the Route of the 1872 Timber Railway

Rockingham-
Jarrahdale
Heritage Trail

The route (which can also be followed from Jarrahdale) is marked by brown and white road signs bearing the Heritage Trail Network's symbol. The first one you will see, driving from Rockingham, is located on the corner of Patterson Road and Read Street.

Please note:
Persons using this Heritage Trail do so at their own risk.



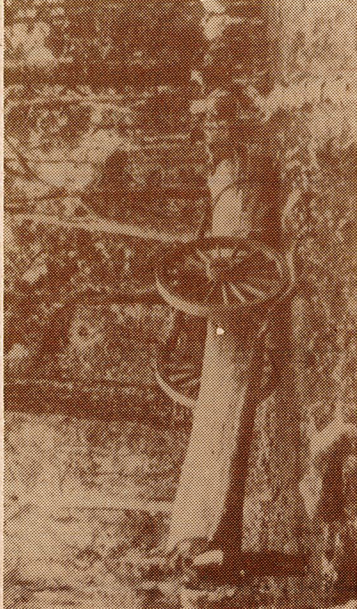
A rake of timber on the line, c. 1894.

Operation of the Railway Line

The first steam engines used on the railway were not powerful enough to hold a rake of trucks on the steeper gradients, and were soon replaced by teams of horses. On the steep sections the horses were unhitched and the trucks sent one by one down the slopes, their descent checked by ropes fastened to sturdy trees. Upon reaching level ground, the trucks were recoupled, the horses reharnessed, and the whole train proceeded to the next decline.

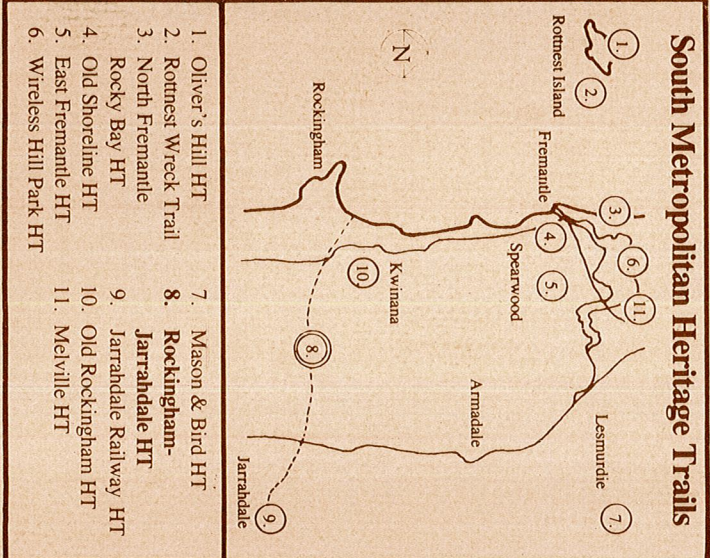
This was a slow, costly and dangerous journey, and later heavier and more powerful locomotives replaced the horses. Likewise, the original timber rails (which had a disturbing tendency to buckle, often derailing the log trucks) were replaced in 1878 by iron rails. These remained until the line from Mundijong to Rockingham was removed in 1952.

The **Jarrahdale Railway Heritage Trail** is a 7km walking and bridle trail which follows a section of the original railway line. Pamphlet guides for this Heritage Trail are available from the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale and local stores and garages. For those interested in Western Australia's early timber industry, the **Denmark Timber Heritage Trail** is a 20km scenic drive retracing Denmark's origins as a timber mill town and featuring old bush tramways. Booklet guides are available from the Denmark Tourist Bureau.



A *whim*, or horse-drawn log carrier at Jarrahdale, c. 1901.

Further Information: W.A. Heritage Committee
(09) 322 4375



W.A. Heritage Trails
Network
A Bicentennial Project
for Community Participation

The **Rockingham-Jarrahdale Heritage Trail** is part of the Heritage Trails Network, a project for community participation devised by the Western Australian Heritage Committee. To commemorate the 1988 Bicentenary, the project established a statewide network of 'Heritage Trails' - routes designed to enhance awareness and enjoyment of Western Australia's natural and cultural heritage. The Heritage Trails Network was jointly funded by the Commonwealth and Western Australian governments under the Commonwealth/State Bicentennial Commemorative Program. The map below illustrates Heritage Trails in the South Metropolitan region of Western Australia.

Serpentine-Jarrahdale Scenic Drive

Having now completed the Heritage Trail drive you may wish to continue through Jarrahdale to Serpentine Dam where there is a kiosk and picnic and barbecue areas. From the dam follow Kingsbury Drive which will lead you back on a picturesque drive along the South West Highway.

Further information may be obtained from the Rockingham and Serpentine-Jarrahdale tourist bureaux.

Acknowledgements

The **Rockingham-Jarrahdale Heritage Trail** was developed by the Rockingham Bicentennial Community Committee, which acknowledges the co-operation of the Rockingham and Serpentine-Jarrahdale shire councils and the Serpentine-Jarrahdale Bicentennial Committee.

The Committee would also like to thank the following:-

- Commander W.G. Ritchie AM RAN (Rtd)
- Mrs Mary Davies
- Rockingham and Districts Tourist Authority (Inc.)
- Serpentine-Jarrahdale Information Centre
- Rockingham District Historical Society (Inc.)
- Main Roads Department

Photographs

Courtesy Rockingham District Historical Society (Inc.)

Further Reading

Fall, V.G. **The Sea and the Forest. A History of the Port of Rockingham, Western Australia** (UWA Press, 1972)

Taggart, N. **Rockingham Looks Back. A History of the Rockingham District 1829-1982** (Rockingham District Historical Society Inc., 1984)

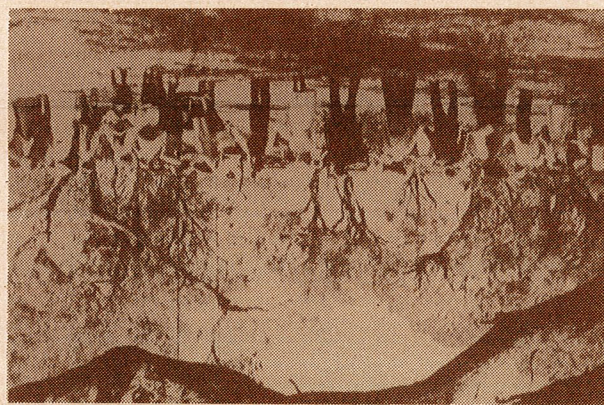
1. The Three Jetties

The lease taken up by the Rockingham Jarrah Company in 1871 carried the provision that it was to build a sawmill and a suitable jetty to load the timber onto ships in Mangles Bay. By 1898 three jetties had been built, and ships of up to 1,000 tons could load with perfect safety.

Imagine the scene in those early years: the tall sailing ships at anchor in the Bay, steam locomotives hauling timber, men and horses hard at work.

2. The Founders' Memorial

In 1979, the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Swan River Colony, this memorial was built to honour Rockingham's first settlers'. It was designed by students and staff at Rockingham Senior High School.



Returning to Dixon Road, turn right into Man-durah Road then the first left into Millar Road. Driving through natural bushland, you will see on the left the railway built by Alcoa of Australia in the 1960s to carry bauxite from Jarrahdale to its Kwinana refinery. This line follows the route of the 1872 railway to east of Wellard.

At the T junction turn left into Baldiavis Road and then right into St Albans Road.

The district's first families settled in the East Rockingham area, along a fertile strip of swampy country several miles inland from the coast. The names of these families recur throughout the history of the district and the southwest, and include the Mead, Thorpe, Key, Day, Chester, Hymus, Thomas, Smirk and Bell families.

Most of these settlers arrived in the 1850s and established small farms, building wattle and daub (mud and straw plaster) huts later replaced by the stone homes still visible in the area.

The Old Rockingham Heritage Trail retraces many of these early settlers' cottages. Booklet guides for this trail are available from the Rockingham Tourism and Visitors' Centre.

3. Lake Cooloongup

Known by residents as White Lake, this picnic spot was a favourite for family gatherings until the 1920s. The lake was also a popular camping place for hunters and duck-shooters from Perth in the settlement's early days.

The lake's picnic area has recently been redeveloped by the State Planning Commission, making it once again a pleasant place for family outings.

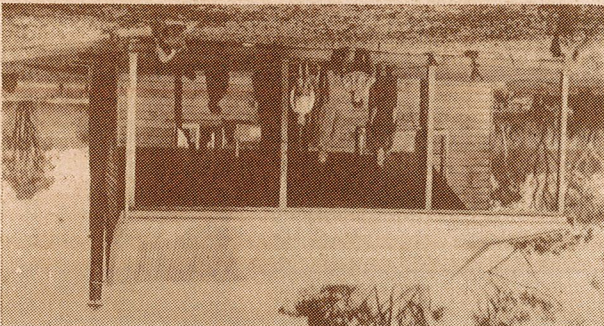
4. Wellard and Baldiavis

These areas were opened up in 1922 as part of the Peel Estate Group Settlement Scheme, implemented after the First World War to relieve the high unemployment in Britain and assist in populating areas in Western Australia.

Between September 1922 and February 1923 twenty-four groups were settled, and others followed in quick succession. Each community was required to clear the land and to concentrate on dairy farming. Unfortunately, the scheme, financed by the British and Western Australian governments, was an expensive failure. Much of the land had poor soil or was prone to flooding, and the plots (averaging 113 acres) were too small to be viable. The majority of settlers came from British cities and knew little about farming. Those who had farming experience survived by amalgamating the plots to create a number of productive farming units.

Wellard and Baldiavis are now mixed farming areas. Wellard takes its name from the track made by John Wellard, who owned Serpentine Farm, while Baldiavis is a composite of the names of three ships which brought settlers to the colony - 'Balranald', 'Bendigo' and 'Jervis Bay'.

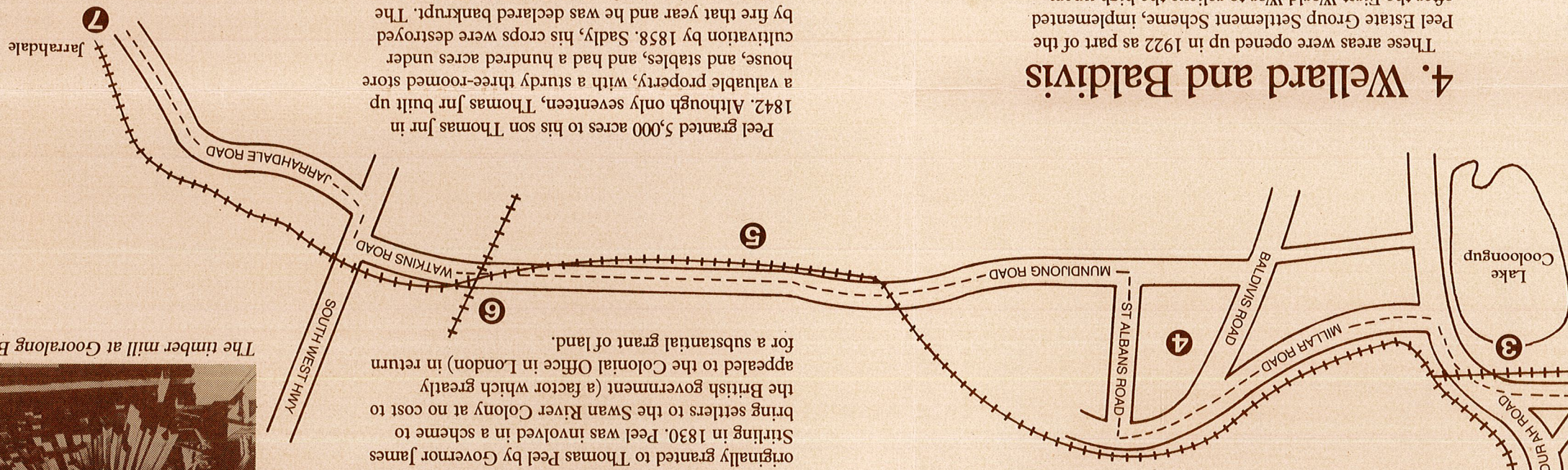
Turn left into Mundijong Road.



5. Serpentine Farm

Private property: not open to the public.

The land to the south was part of the 250,000 acres originally granted to Thomas Peel by Governor James Stirling in 1830. Peel was involved in a scheme to bring settlers to the Swan River Colony at no cost to the British government (a factor which greatly appealed to the Colonial Office in London) in return for a substantial grant of land.



6. Mundijong

In 1893 the government railway line was built from Perth to Bunbury, crossing the timber railway here at Mundijong (then known as 'Jarrahdale Junction'). The subsequent growth of the south west timber trade, coupled with the opening of Fremantle Harbour in 1897 and the increasing size of ships which could not enter Mangles Bay, began the decline of Rockingham as a port.

It became cheaper and easier to load timber at Mundijong and rail it to Fremantle and Bunbury.

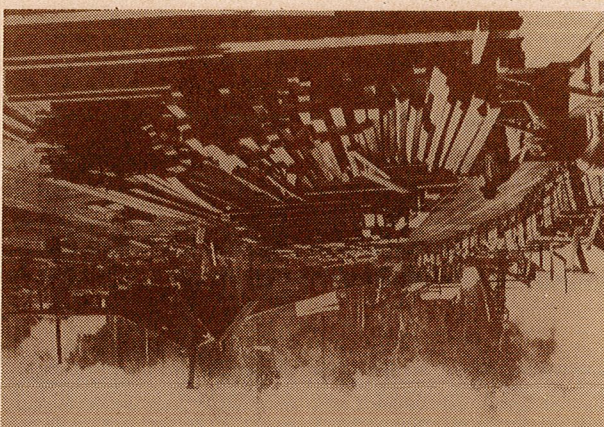
The Fremantle Harbour Trust's decision not to dredge the passage to Mangles Bay in 1903 sounded the death knell for the Rockingham port, and the last trading ships left there in 1908.

Continue along Watkins Road, turn right into South West Highway, then left into Jarrahdale Road.

7. Gooralong Brook

Near here was Jarrahdale's first mill, built in 1872 and commemorated by a large jarrah log and a stone memorial by the brook.

At the peak of Jarrahdale's timber industry six mills were operating. However, fierce competition from the south west mills caused four of these to close by 1902.



The timber mill at Gooralong Brook, early 1900s.



Mrs Cope's boarding house for mill workers at Gooralong Brook, c. 1920.