

ANNUAL REPORT 1968 - SPERM WHALING SEASON

by Inspectors Ostle and Williams

The Cheynes Beach Whaling Company commenced operations for the year 1968 on the 5th of March and finished on the 15th of December, although one chaser the "Cheynes II" ceased whaling on the 1st of December. A total of 658 sperm whales were captured and processed.

Production and Value

Oil = 24,143 barrels or 4,026.3 tons at an average price of \$111 per ton	=	\$446,919
Meal = 968 tons at an average price of \$111 per ton	=	\$107,448
Solubles = 1929.07 tons at an average price of \$106 per ton	=	\$204,925
Filtered oil = 94 tons	=	\$16,152
Teeth = 2,673 lbs at \$1.00 per lb.	=	\$2,673
Ambergris = 146½ lbs. at an average price of 43c per oz.	=	\$5,452
Whale meat = 31,498 lb.	=	\$1,100

Statistics

Total number of whales	658			
Total number of females	75			
Total number of males	583			
Total number of size whales	606,	compared with	1967,	583
Total number of undersize whales	52,	"	"	" 3
Percentage of undersize	7.9%	"	"	" .51%
Total number of embryo	14			
Total number of males	10			
Total number of females	4			
Smallest mother = 31'9"				
Largest mother = three at 25'6"				
Smallest embryo = 2' male on 11.5.68				
Largest embryo = 13' male on 27.3.68				

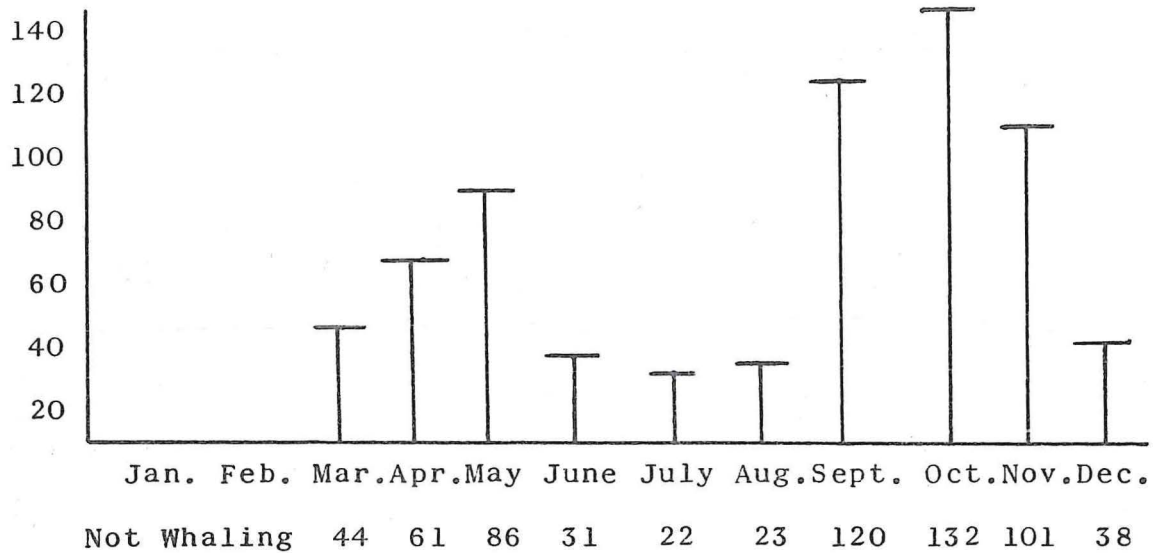
Average number of barrels of oil per whale for:

1968 = 36.71 barrels

1967 = 39.33 barrels

1956 = 43.5 barrels

which infers a decline in the average size of whales taken over the years



### Aircraft

The same aircraft was used as for 1967, a Cessna 337 twin engine push pull centre time thrust aircraft. This was piloted by two pilots and flew 1212 hours 30 minutes, including flights to Jandakot for services, and time taken to reach the whaling grounds and return.

### Chasers

The company used the same three chasers it has in previous years, the Cheynes II, Cheynes III, and Gascoyne, and a 28' steel boat was again used to tow the buoyed whales into the station. Sonar is to be fitted to the Cheynes III this year and this should assist in the tracking of whales particularly deep divers.

### Staff

The company employs 88 staff and these are distributed as such:

10 flensers on contract  
47 on chasers  
22 on station  
1 pilot  
6 salaried staff at station  
2 mess contractors

One member of staff also second pilot.

### Weather

The weather conditions during the year were the worst yet experienced by the company and 125 days which include half days were lost owing to this factor. There were 159 days which include half days when whaling was possible, giving an average of approximately 4 whales per whaling day.

### Markets

Oil was sold in the United Kingdom and the U.S.A., while filtered sperm oil was sold on the Australian market.

Solubles were sold to Japan and on the Australian market and every effort is being made to promote the sale of this product. Whales' teeth were sold in Seattle, for scrimshaw work.

### Improvements

A pilot filtering plant was successfully operated during the year and this used a cloud point temperature of 72°F. The lower the temperature used to filter the wax from the oil the lower the cloud point becomes and the greater the amount of wax residues that is able to be removed through the filters. The full scale plant which is to be built and operated this year will incorporate a freezer and work on a cloud point of 40°F, thus producing an even purer product than the pilot plant. The plant will have a capacity of 1800 tons per year, but the probable output will be approximately 1000 tons per year.

The wax residue which has been subject to laboratory experiment by the company's chemist during the past year has an infinite number of uses from barrier cream to degreasing oil and wine fish lure.

Small quantities of hand lotion and fish lure were marketed locally as a trial and the future is unlimited for the advancement of products derived from this wax.

A new office extension is being constructed at present and new timber on the top flensing deck, to replace the old boards which were warped and loose.

In conclusion, it could be said that although the company made a profit of \$34,000 this was fully paid by the fifty-two undersize whales, and this fact is very disheartening and shows little promise for the future of the sperm whale.