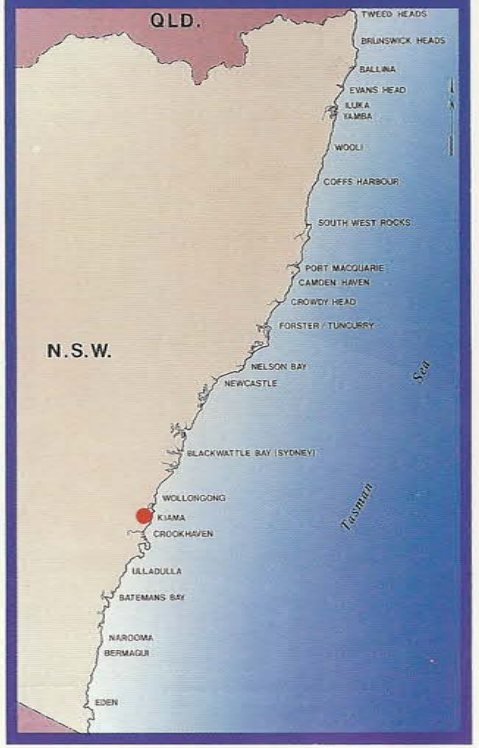
NSW FISHING PORTS PROGRAM



Since 1957, the Government has had a program to construct and improve fishing ports along the New South Wales coast.



Initially, the State Government established the NSW Fishing Ports Program to provide safer harbour entrances for the State's fishing fleets. It wasn't until later that the program expanded to include improved facilities such as wharves, jetties and moorings. The end result is much better support for the commercial needs of the fishing fleets.

The program is a great success. Not only has port development benefited commercial fishing and streamlined fleet operations, but in recent years it has also directly led to increased levels of fish production. By introducing the latest fish handling centres, the State's ports now make more public sales and offer far more community access to seafood produce.

While the commercial fleets benefit from the improved amenities the added bonus of all this development is that the local community and tourists also gain better access to the water. Indeed, the Fishing Ports Program can actually be a focus for people looking for some enjoyment on the water as well as for those interested in gaining a fresh haul of tasty fish.

For more information about the NSW Fishing Ports Program, or about specific fishing ports along the coast, you can contact any of the following Public Works Department offices:

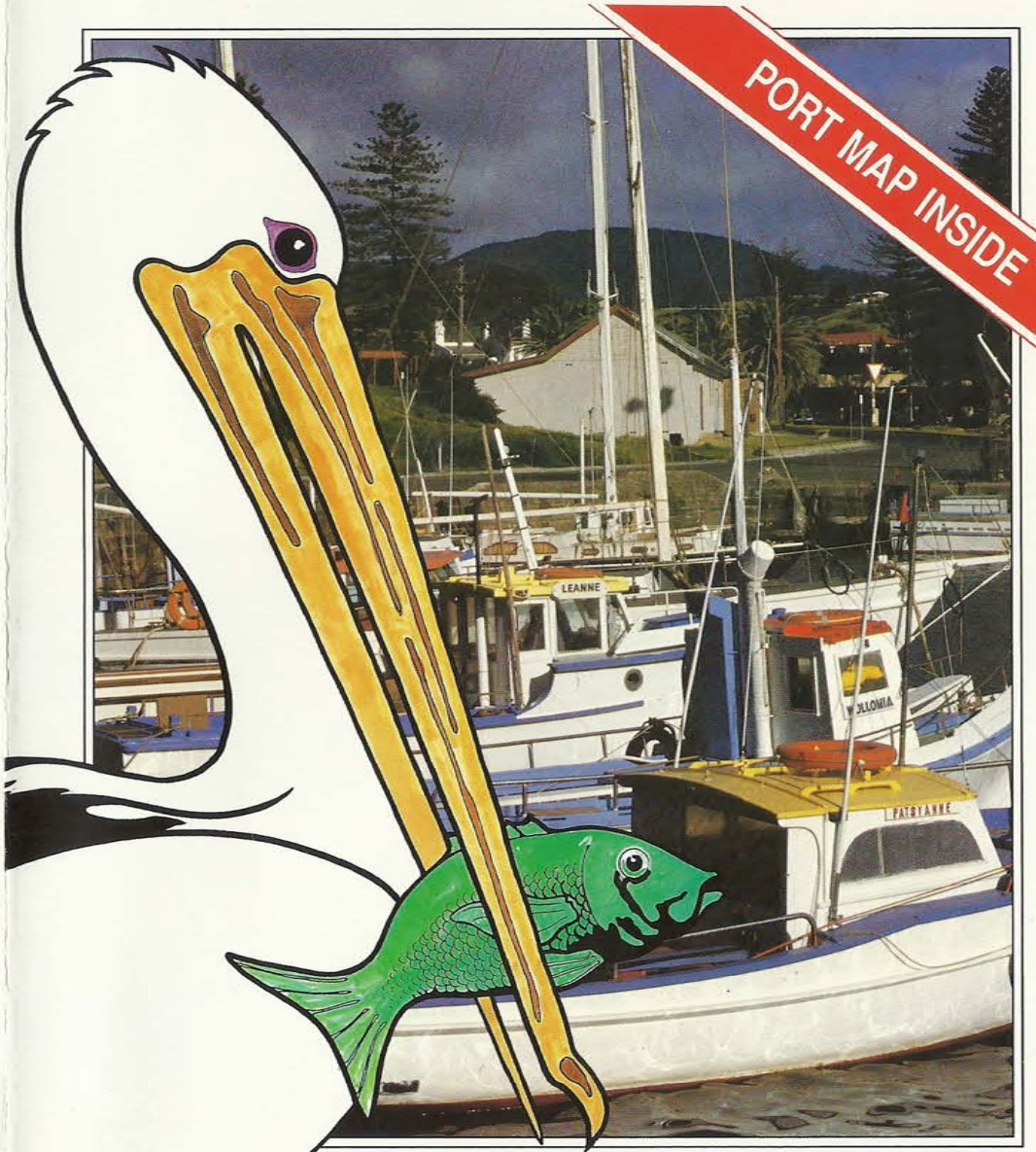
Lismore	(066) 21 1600
Coffs Harbour	(066) 52 0411
Newcastle	(049) 26 9711
Sydney	(02) 228 3722
Wollongong	(042) 26 8111

PUBLIC WORKS

NSW FISHING PORTS PROGRAM

KIAMA

PORT MAP INSIDE



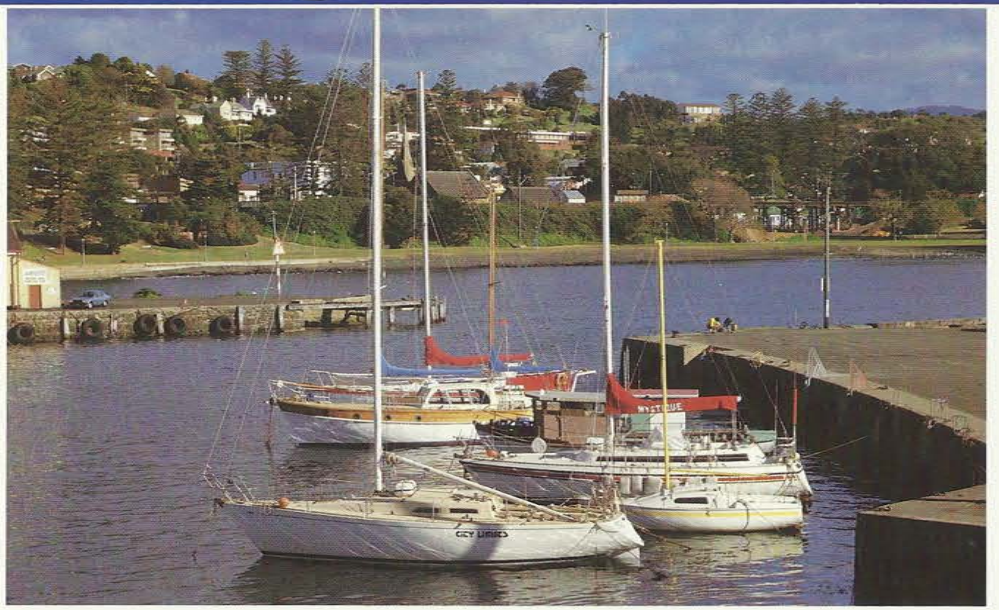
A STATE GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

PUBLIC WORKS

KIAMA FISHING PORT

The first breakwater around the Kiama Harbour was begun in 1861 in an effort by the Government to make the tiny port more suitable for a growing shipping industry.





Later, Kiama town folk signed a series of petitions which were sent to the Government requesting development of an all-weather harbour.

EARLY START TO PORT WORKS

In 1867, a survey schooner visited the area. Four years later the town held a celebration after the announcement that a Government harbour works program would begin. The plan was to build a coffer-dam and excavate the basin - previously suitable only for ships of light draught - similar to work which had been recently completed at Wollongong.

Sixteen years later, the port of Kiama, known as Robertson Basin, was opened.

The Government steamer Ajax and the Illawarra Steam Navigation Company's Hunter were dressed with streamers. The dairying transport ships the Illalong and Dairymaid also crowded into the tiny harbour. Schooners and ketches joined in and, according to local history books, farmers and townsfolk danced on the quay.

In 1911, repairs to the old breakwater were carried out.

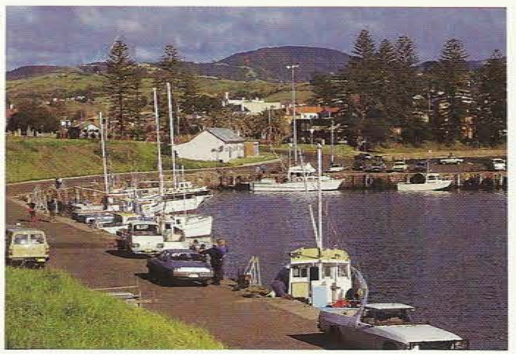
In 1938, a 60 metre concrete wall on the breakwater was completed. Repairs were carried out on this wall during the war years and later, in the 1960s.

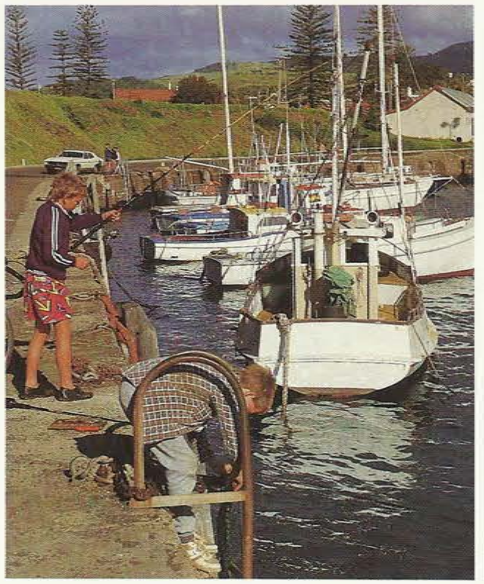
Kiama Harbour has remained largely undeveloped because of dangerous encircling rocks and a rough surge in east and north-east winds.

RECENT WORKS

The Public Works Department has carried out minor maintenance around Kiama Harbour in recent years. About $100,000 has been spent by the Government upgrading parking and maintaining the harbour walls.

The area is most popular as a fishing and tourist resort, with famous natural features such as Cathedral Rocks, the Kiama Blowhole and Seven Mile Beach.





KIAMA FISHING PORT



EARLY HISTORY

Kiama Harbour was discovered by George Bass in 1797, and by 1815 local cedar-cutters were using the port to transport logs to Sydney for milling.

As the south coast ports became important to the produce shipping industry, it was decided to turn the open bays, subject to weather conditions, into safe harbours.

In 1859 estimates to build a harbour at Kiama were first considered. But Kiama was rivalled by Gerringong, where wealthy pastoralist Alexander Berry donated land, a store, a road and mooring chains to establish a port under Black Head.

Although butter, fowls, eggs, bacon and calf hide were regularly shipped out of Gerringong, consistently bad weather hampered the expansion of trade. By 1876, the Gerringong Co-operative Shipping Company had run into financial trouble and after amalgamating with the Shellharbour Co-operative Steam Navigation Company, the first of a series of steamers began to service Kiama.

Regular passenger and cargo services operated between Kiama and Sydney from then on.

By early 1880, butter, cheese and condensed milk factories had sprung up along the south coast, shipping their produce through ports such as Kiama.

Kiama earned itself a special mention in the history books when the first shipment of milk was transported from Kiama to Sydney. The holds of the steamer the Prince of Wales were packed with ice to cool the iron tanks which carried the milk. The product was declared in perfect condition when it reached Sydney, and the trip and method of transporting milk became regular.

Ships carried huge cargoes of crushed rock and basalt cubes, used for laying between tramlines, from Kiama to Sydney, and by 1883 a special "stone fleet" was transporting 400 tonnes of rock daily.

Eventually, the rocks, milk and dairy products all left Kiama by rail.



Photos Credit: Kiama and District Historical Society.

FISHING FLEET TODAY

Kiama operates mostly as a recreational port with only six licensed fishing boats.

These range in size from eight metres to 13 metres. The fishermen catch mostly blue-eyed cod and trap snapper, leatherjacket and lobster.

A small amount of tuna is caught for export as sashimi to Japan and this is sold through an export company in Sydney.

The remainder of the fish is either sold locally or, when large catches are made, is transported to the Sydney Fish Markets for sale.

Amateur fishing boats also use the harbour and these are skippered mainly by weekend pleasure fishermen.

Half a dozen or more yachts may be seen moored in the harbour.



