NSW FISHING PORTS PROGRAM

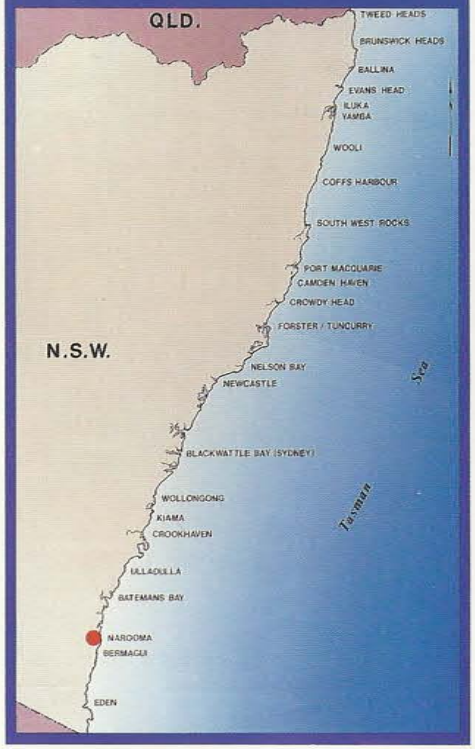


Initially, the State Government established the NSW Fishing Ports Program to provide safer harbour entrances for the State's fishing fleets. It wasn't until later that the program expanded to include improved facilities such as wharves, jetties and moorings. The end result is much better support for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

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

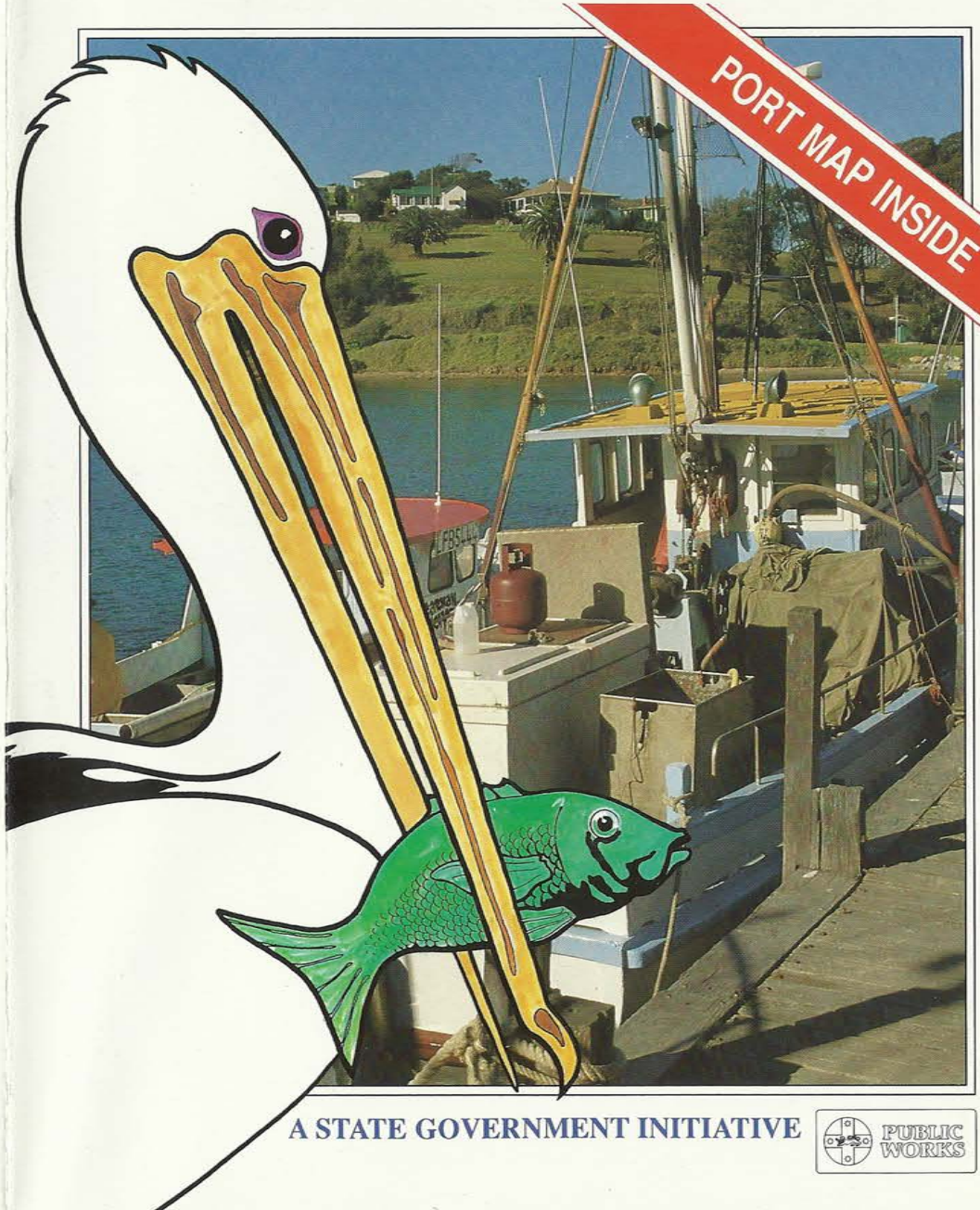


For more information about the NSW Fishing Ports Program, or about specific fishing ports along the coast, you can contact any of the following Public Works Department offices:		
	Lismore	(066) 21 1600
	Coffs Harbour	(066) 52 0411
	Newcastle	(049) 26 9711
	Sydney	(02) 228 3722
	Wollongong	(042) 26 8111

PUBLIC WORKS

NSW FISHING PORTS PROGRAM

NAROOMA

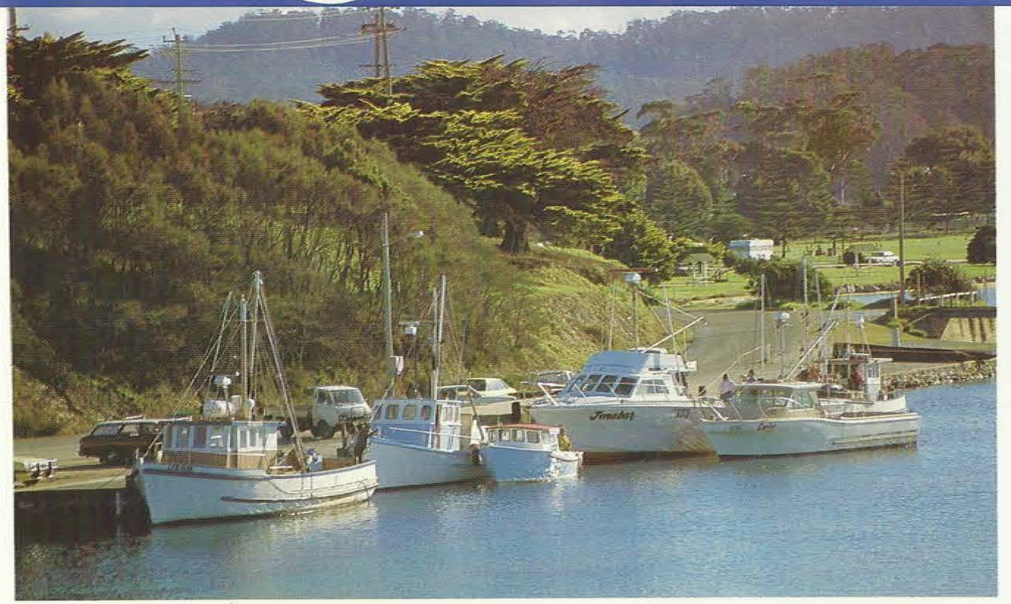


A STATE GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

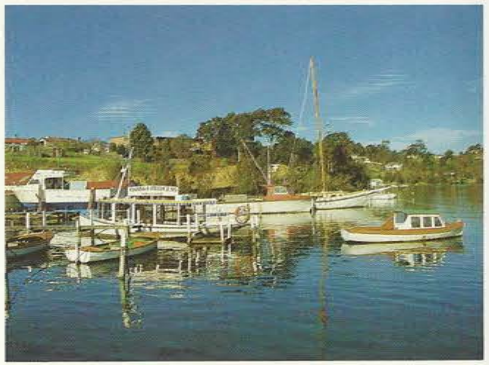
PUBLIC WORKS

NAROOMA FISHING PORT

The entrance to Narooma has always been considered hazardous because of a sand bar which lies across the entrance to the harbour, in some places less than 1.5 metres below the water level.



Early Government work on the harbour began in 1918 when work started on two short training walls.



EARLY START TO PORT WORKS

The training walls were finished in 1920 and two years later, extra protection was added when blanketing was carried out at the outer end of the eastern training wall.

Rock used for the training walls came from the Narooma Quarry on Bodalla Estate (now the Bodalla Pastoral Company). The land was part of one of the early land grants in the area, to the pioneer, Sutcliffe Mort. The eastern wall was again extended in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and the western wall was also extended.

In 1935 the eastern wall was extended for a third time.

By 1938, repairs were needed on the eastern wall. Not long after they were finished in 1939, a salmon drive was built in the wall. A small lifting gate and winch controlled the opening for salmon which bred upstream before setting out to sea again.

RECENT WORKS

Narooma's fishing fleet developed rapidly after World War II.

By 1960 the Public Works Department carried out improvements to the harbour and river.

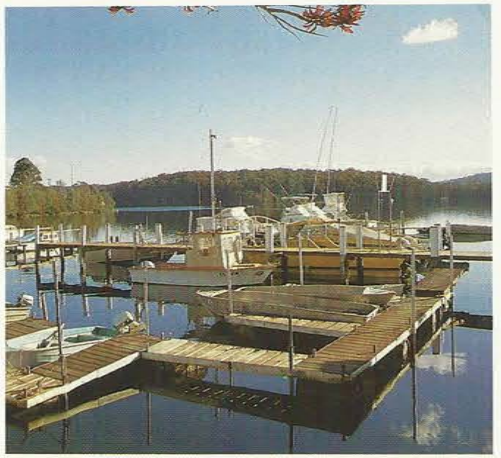
These made little difference to the fishing fleet's plight in rough weather, which saw the boats stranded in the harbour for days on end.

In 1972 the Public Works Department started work on a series of improvements, to make entry and departure to and from the harbour safer. Those improvements took more than seven years.

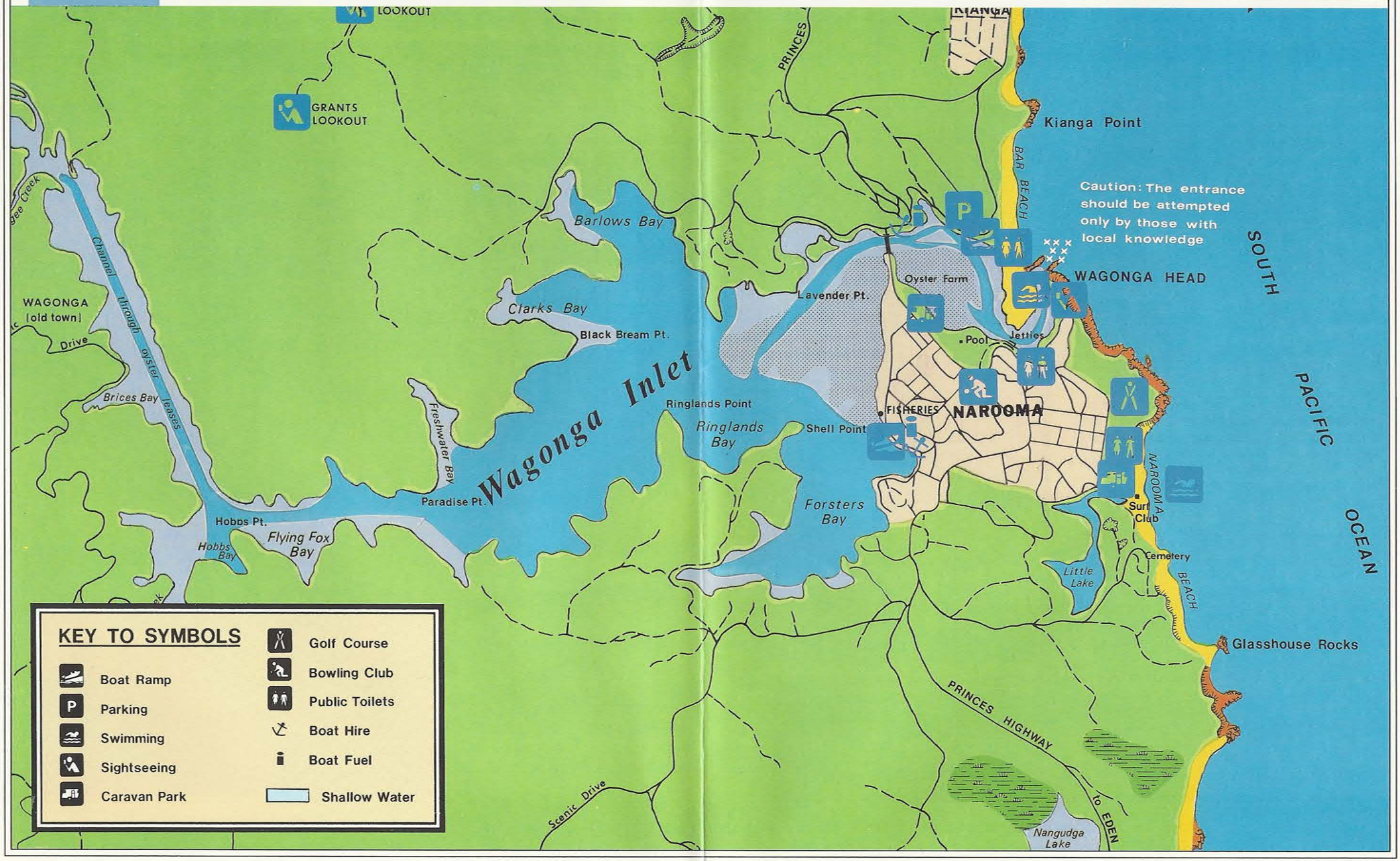
The breakwaters were a $2 million project. They were constructed at the northern and southern sides of the entrance. The northern breakwater was about 300 metres long and the southern breakwater about 250 metres long.

A South Coast company, Cleary Bros., was the contractor. Almost 200,000 tonnes of rock were taken from the quarry on Bodalla Estate and hauled to the entrance. 70,000 tonnes were made up of rocks weighing five to 16 tonnes each.

The ends of the breakwaters were further strengthened by specially shaped 13 tonne concrete units known as dolosse. The harbour is now used widely not only by the fishing fleet, but also by tourist game fishing boats and local pleasure craft.



NAROOMA FISHING PORT



EARLY HISTORY

Narooma sits at the mouth of the Wagonga River, 350 kilometres south of Sydney.

The town and port has been called Narooma for many years but, until it was officially altered in 1972, the original name was Noorooma, meaning "clear blue waters".

In the early days, the mailman would go to the beach near the quarry and wait on the sand spit for the rowing boat which took him across the inlet to the wharf.

There was no road, and the mail came from Bodalla twice a week by way of a coastal track to the sand spit. Supplies from Narooma and Wagonga to the nearby town of Tilba came by sea. The ships, mostly ketches, went up the inlet to the Government wharf, the remains of which are still at Wagonga, just off the Scenic Drive, on the western shores of the lake.

During this time, vessels of up to 300 tonnes were built at Narooma. Vessels of the Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Co. serviced Narooma regularly, but eventually the introduction of efficient road transport closed down the sea trade.

A factory at the head of Forsters Bay produced cheese which became famous throughout New South Wales. This factory closed about 10 years ago.

A fish cannery also boosted Narooma's economy. Bluefin tuna was caught and processed for canning but when the supply of tuna ran out about 20 years ago, that factory was closed.

In the early 1900s a bridge was built across the inlet, helping Narooma to become the popular tourist resort it is today.

Narooma NSW, 1906.





"Wee Lyde" on left at Narooma Wharf where Rotary Park now is.

Photo Credit: National Library of Australia.

FISHING FLEET TODAY

About 16 licensed fishing boats operate from Narooma all year round. Other commercial fishing boats use the entrance from time to time. One of the boats' main catches is yellowfin tuna, which is sent to a packing plant in Narooma and exported to Japan for sashimi.

The professional fishermen also catch kingfish and crayfish.

Snapper is caught off the rocks and species such as bream and flathead are caught from the inlet.

Salmon can be caught in the surf along the coast as they leave the inlet after breeding.

A small number of tourist game fishing boats fish for marlin, tuna and kingfish on the ocean side of Montagu Island.

There is a significant oyster industry based at Narooma which produces over 1000 bags of oysters annually.

During the summer hundreds of amateur fishermen come to Narooma and outnumber the permanent commercial fishing fleet.

It is illegal for the licensed fishermen to net in the inlet, but the large number of amateur boats each summer catch estuary fish.

