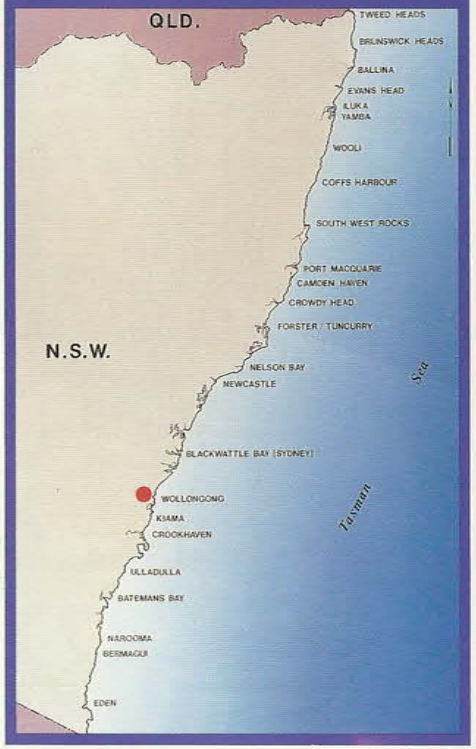
# NSW FISHING PORTS PROGRAM



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.

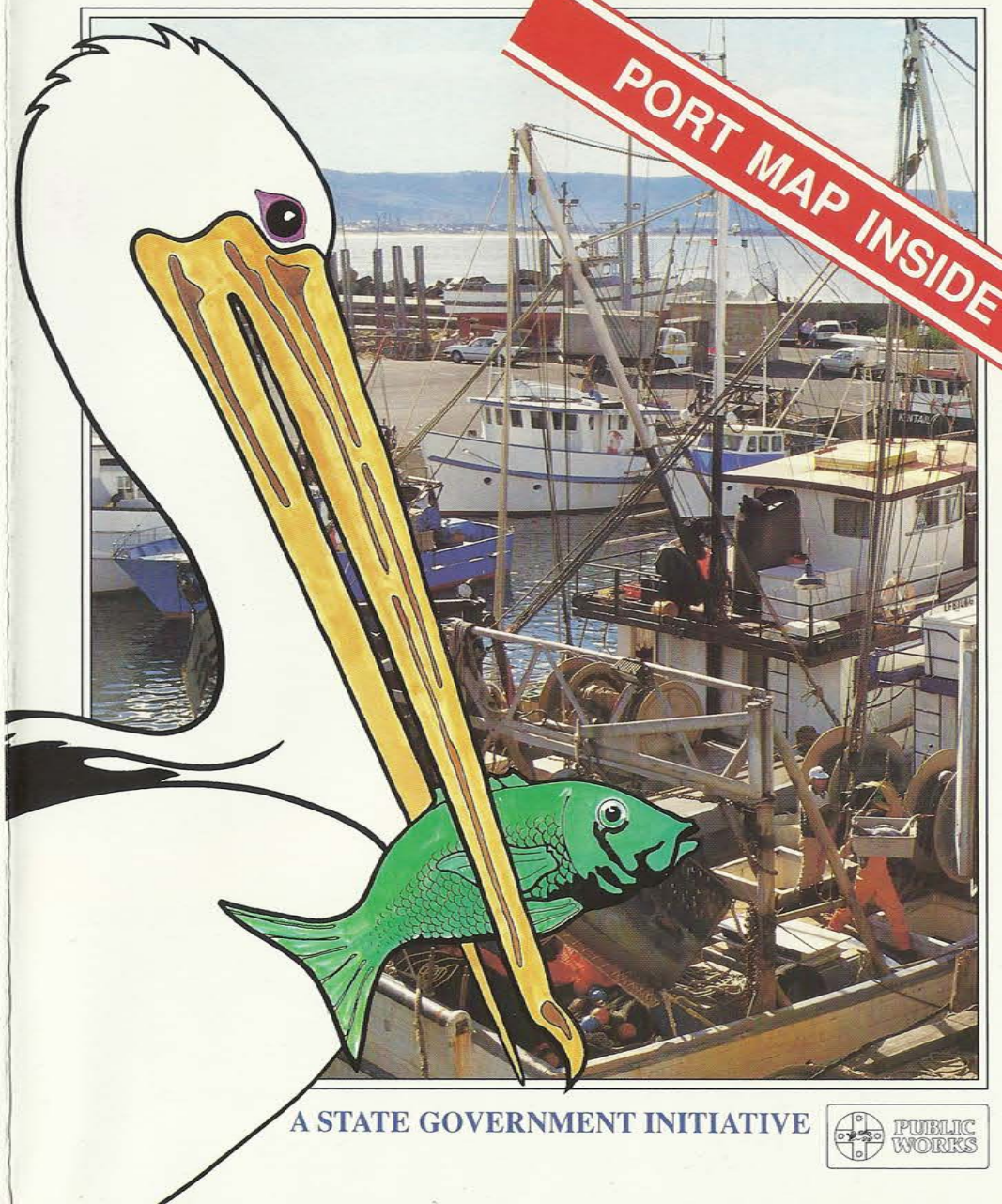
**For more information about the NSW Fishing Ports Program, or about specific fishing ports along the coast, you can contact any of the following Public Works Department offices:**

| | |
|---|---|
| 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

# Wollongong

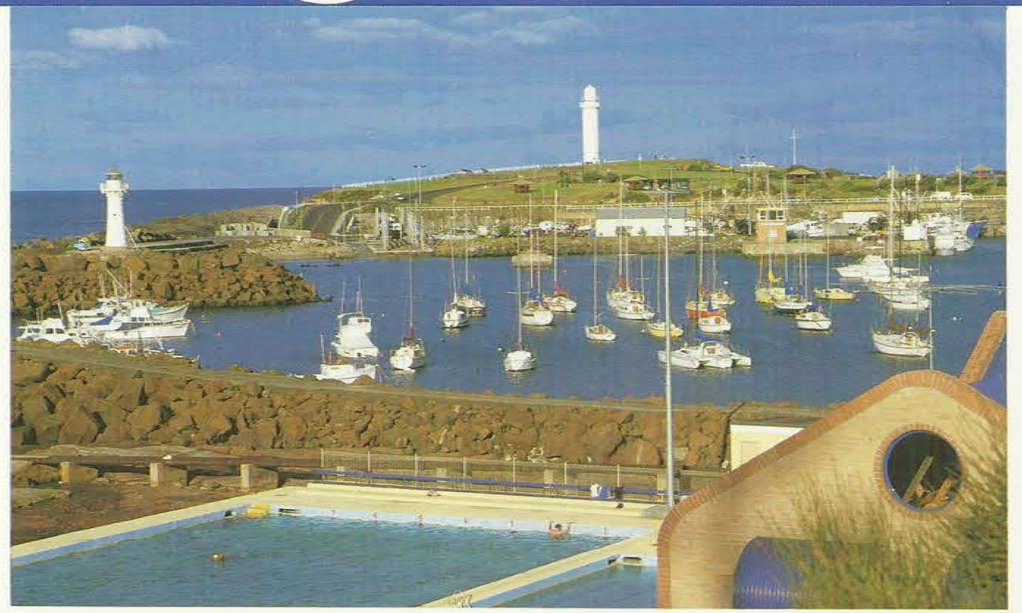



A STATE GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

PUBLIC WORKS

# WOLLONGONG FISHING PORT

**The Wollongong Harbour fishing fleet provides the area with much of its character and tourist appeal, and contributes significantly to the economy and employment in the Illawarra region.**



The Government has been at work in Wollongong Harbour upgrading its fishing facilities as part of the NSW Fishing Ports Program.



## EARLY START TO PORT WORKS

In 1837, 300 convicts began digging a basin with a pier forming its northern side. The larger blocks of stone were deposited on the pier, and the rest was used to form a road leading from the town to the intended dock.

Work on the basin, the pier and approaches took almost seven years to complete and cost £3500. A second pier was built in 1856.

In 1861, workers started deepening the old basin, digging a new one opening into it, and forming a breakwater for the protection of the outer roadstead.

The project was completed in 1868, and the new basin was named after the Countess of Belmore.

In 1871, a new lighthouse was built at the end of the existing breakwater.

Between 1906 and 1909 the concrete breakwater built by the Wollongong Harbour Trust was holed by heavy seas and repaired with concrete.

For several years the breakwater suffered sea damage, and in 1918, rather than patching the breakwater with concrete, concrete blocks were made and placed over the wall to provide protection from heavy seas.

## RECENT WORKS

Over the past 30 years, the Public Works Department has carried out various minor works to upgrade the port. They include dredging, drainage and road works.

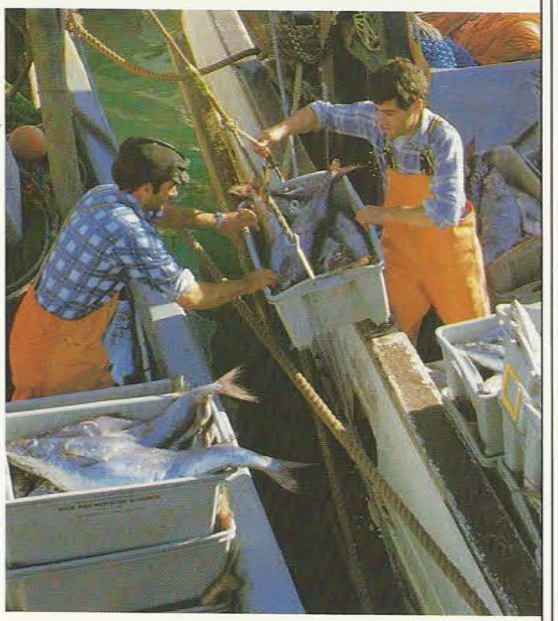
The Department has also carried out major projects in that time: the construction of a northern breakwater in 1967, and the building of an access road from Endeavour Drive in 1984.

The northern breakwater provides safe anchorage double the area of Belmore Basin.

The Department has built a new public jetty which will provide for charter and other boats.

Wollongong District Fishermen's Co-operative has replaced its old building with a new one three times the size. Built on the same site, on the southern side of Belmore Basin, the new co-op building houses a restaurant and two shops.

The area is designed to attract tourists, who can watch fishing boats unloading and enjoy the port atmosphere.



# WOLLONGONG FISHING PORT



# EARLY HISTORY

Wollongong was settled in 1815, and by 1826 it was one of the principal ports for the cedar trade in Illawarra.

Small vessels took surplus produce - such as wheat, turnips and tobacco - from Wollongong to Sydney, and brought supplies to the settlers.

A flagstaff on Wollongong Head relayed signals to the folk of the district so they could have their produce at the harbour in good time for shipment.

Passenger and freight trade - particularly between Wollongong and Sydney - was increasing rapidly in the 1850s, and by the late 1860s more than 30,000 tonnes of coal passed through the port each year.

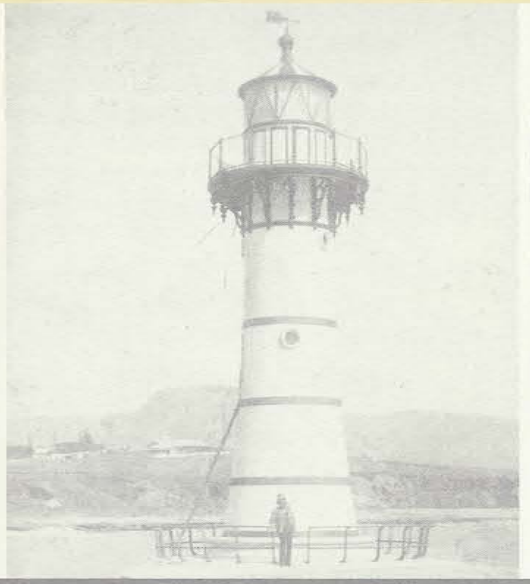
That tonnage trebled in the 10 years from 1868 to 1878. Within the next decade, two coal companies had built jetties at Red Point (now Port Kembla).

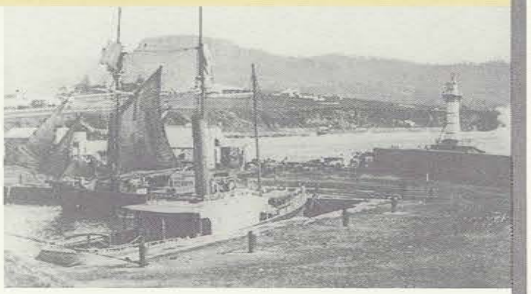
Both jetties provided for ships larger than those which were visiting Wollongong.

Port Kembla was selected in 1895 for the development of a large, safe deepwater port for the Southern Coalfield, and Wollongong Harbour gradually faded in significance as a commercial port.

The word Wollongong is thought to be derived from Aboriginals' attempts to echo the sound of waves breaking on the beach.

*From the collections of the Wollongong City Library and Illawarra Historical Society.*







## FISHING FLEET TODAY

Ten ocean-going trawlers, mainly in the 17 to 23 metre class, and about a dozen smaller line and trap boats, make up Wollongong Harbour's home fleet.

The line and trap boats fish the reef area on the continental shelf for high-value table species, while the trawlers operate mainly on the continental shelf and slope grounds close to Wollongong.

Trawled fish make up about 90% of the catch. The main species are gemfish, redfish and royal red prawns.

The State Government's improvements at the port over the years have boosted the efficiency and effectiveness of the local fishing industry. At the same time, the work has enhanced the port and foreshore areas for the whole community and its visitors.



