

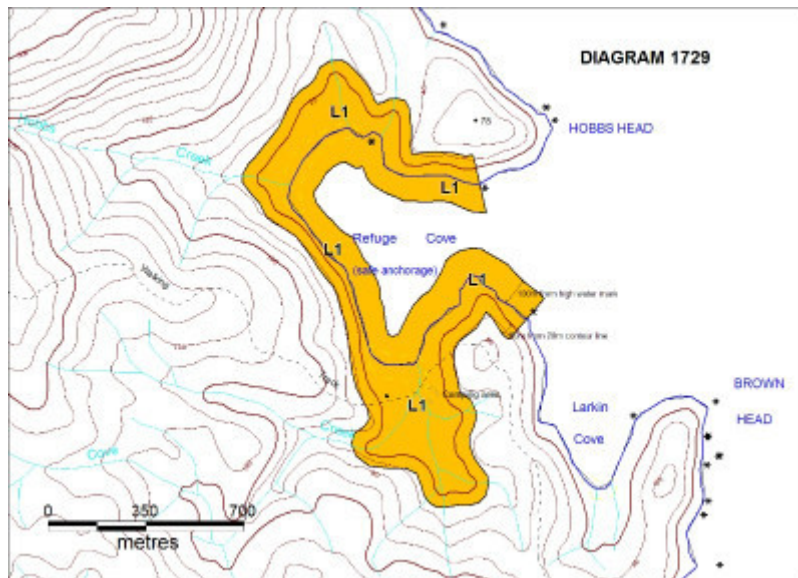
# REFUGE COVE



Refuge Cove



Refuge Cove, evidence of a stone base of what was originally thought to be part of try works but later identified as a house



H1729 refuge cove

## Location

WILSONS PROMONTORY, SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE

## Municipality

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1729

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO139

## VHR Registration

August 9, 2007

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 13, 2007

### What is significant?

Refuge Cove, located on the eastern side of Wilsons Promontory, south of Sealers Cove, was discovered by Captain Thomas Wishart in 1837 and originally named Lady Bay. Bay whaling operated at Refuge Cove in the late 1830s and a shore whaling station was established in 1841, continuing as a boiling down works until 1845. From 1859 to 1863 granite quarrying took place on the eastern side of the bay and a temporary wharf and worker's residences were established. Natural resource exploitation also included timber getting (1828-1858) and commercial fishing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Between 1941 and 1946, during the Second World War, the site was used by the military as a commando training centre and outstation.

The landscape of the cove has featured in paintings by artists including Nicholas Chevalier (1865) and Samuel Calvert (1872). The area around the bay was gazetted in 1905 as part of Wilsons Promontory National Park and the site is currently used for recreational purposes as part of the National Park.

Archaeological remains include the deposits relating to the whaling, granite quarry and remnants of a wharf and a jetty.

### Why is it significant?

Refuge Cove is of aesthetic, archaeological and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

### How is it significant?

Refuge Cove is of aesthetic significance, being an inspirational landscape for nineteenth century artists. Refuge cove is archaeologically significant for its potential to contain evidence relating to the whaling industry and other nineteenth century activities including quarrying and timber getting. Refuge Cove is historically important for its association with the exploitation of natural resources and their contribution to the early settlement and development of Victoria. Refuge Cove has important historical associations with the military for its use as an infantry training centre during the Second World War.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which

don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### **Specific Exemptions:**

General Conditions: 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. Note: All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component. General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan endorsed by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan. General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable.

Regular Site Maintenance : The following site maintenance works are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995: a) regular site maintenance provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; b) the maintenance of an item to retain its conditions or operation without the removal of or damage to the existing fabric or the introduction of new materials; c) cleaning including the removal of surface deposits, organic growths, or graffiti by the use of low pressure water and natural detergents and mild brushing and scrubbing; d) repairs, conservation and maintenance to plaques, memorials, roads and paths, fences and gates and drainage and irrigation. e) the replacement of existing services such as cabling, plumbing, wiring and fire services that uses existing routes, conduits or voids, and does not involve damage to or the removal of significant fabric. Note: Surface patina which has developed on the fabric may be an important part of the item's significance and if so needs to be preserved during maintenance and cleaning. Note: Any new materials used for repair must not exacerbate the decay of existing fabric due to chemical incompatibility, obscure existing fabric or limit access to existing fabric for future maintenance. Repair must maximise protection and retention of fabric and include the conservation of existing details or elements. Fire Suppression Duties : The following fire suppression duties are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) Fire suppression and fire fighting duties provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; b) Fire suppression activities such as fuel reduction burns, and fire control line construction, provided all significant historical and archaeological features are appropriately recognised and protected; Note: Fire management authorities should be aware of the location, extent and significance of historical and archaeological places when developing fire suppression and fire fighting strategies. The importance of places listed in the

Heritage Register must be considered when strategies for fire suppression and management are being developed. Weed and Vermin Control : The following weed and vermin control activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) Weed and vermin control activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; Note: Particular care must be taken with weed and vermin control works where such activities may have a detrimental affect on the significant fabric of a place. Such works may include the removal of ivy, moss or lichen from an historic structure or feature, or the removal of burrows from a site that has archaeological values.

Landscape Maintenance : The following landscape maintenance works are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) landscape maintenance works provided the activities do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; b) watering, mowing, top-dressing and fertilising necessary for the continued health of plants, without damage or major alterations to layout, contours, plant species or other significant landscape features; c) tree surgery by a qualified horticulturalist or tree surgeon necessary for the health of those plants.

Public Safety and Security : The following public safety and security activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) public safety and security activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground structures or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; b) the erection of temporary security fencing, scaffolding, hoardings or surveillance systems to prevent unauthorised access or secure public safety which will not adversely affect significant fabric of the place including archaeological features; c) development including emergency stabilisation necessary to secure safety where a site feature has been irreparably damaged or destabilised and represents a safety risk to its users or the public. Note: Urgent or emergency site works are to be undertaken by an appropriately qualified specialist such as a structural engineer, or other heritage professional.

Signage and Site Interpretation : The following Signage and Site Interpretation activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) signage and site interpretation activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground structures or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; b) the erection of non-illuminated signage for the purpose of ensuring public safety or to assist in the interpretation of the heritage significance of the place or object and which will not adversely affect significant fabric including landscape or archaeological features of the place or obstruct significant views of and from heritage values or items; c) signage and site interpretation products must be located and be of a suitable size so as not to obscure or damage significant fabric of the place; d) signage and site interpretation products must be able to be later removed without causing damage to the significant fabric of the place; Note: The development of signage and site interpretation products must be consistent in the use of format, text, logos, themes and other display materials. Note: Where possible, the signage and interpretation material should be consistent with other schemes developed on similar or associated sites. It may be necessary to consult with land managers and other stakeholders concerning existing schemes and strategies for signage and site interpretation.

Mineral Exploration : The following Mineral Exploration activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) mineral Exploration activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; b) preliminary non-intrusive exploration, including geological mapping, geophysical surveys, and geochemical sampling and access to shafts and adits; c) advanced forms of exploration (drilling), including the location of drill pads and access tracks where this has been the subject of on-site negotiation and agreement with representatives of Heritage Victoria, DSE and Parks Victoria, and where all significant historic site features have been identified and protected as part of an approved work plan.

Minor Works : Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works may submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Construction dates 1830,

Heritage Act Categories Registered place, Registered archaeological place,

Hermes Number 12968

Property Number

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## History

History:

Refuge Cove was discovered by Captain Thomas Wishart of *Lady of the Lake* in 1837 and was originally named Lady Bay. The Hobart whaling ship, *Lady of the Lake*, was owned by Alexander Imlay who held whaling and pastoral interests at Twofold Bay and Van Diemen's Land. By the late 1830s bay whaling was established in Lady Bay and there are records of the *Wallaby* whaling in 1839 and 1840. Captain Henry Wishart of the *Wallaby* died on the 1839 voyage to Wilsons Promontory and is believed to be buried in an unmarked grave at Refuge Cove. The Hentys were agents for the *Lady Rowena*, which was whaling during the middle months of the year. Other vessels operating from Lady Bay during this period include William Orr's Hobart based, *Highlander*, Thomas Lucas' Sydney barque, *Sisters*, and Alexander Imlay's brig, *Lord Hobart*.

Shore whaling activity was established by Captain Lawler of *Aphrasia* in June - July of 1841, which was relatively late in the industry. It required access to a high observation point, the construction of buildings for preparing and storing the catch, accommodation, a jetty for mooring boats and cutting up whales and a tryworks for boiling down blubber. The tryworks was typically a more substantial structure than the others which were usually temporary and constructed of wood.

In June of 1842 Lady Bay was renamed Refuge Cove by Commander J. Lort Stokes of the H.M.S *Beagle*. He observed that there was a whaling station in the south-eastern corner of the cove in which the manager and a couple of men remained during the off-season. The site was abandoned early in May 1843 when the *Midge* visited the bay. A sketch by Robert Russell on board the *Midge* records the huts and describes them as being "built by Dr Imlay's men", referring to Alexander Imlay. Shore whaling was in decline from this time. In 1845 shore whaling ceased as a boiling down works. During the 1847 season there was a brief revival of shore whaling in the cove by the *Christina*, however, there were few whales to be caught.

Whaling is only one component of Refuge Cove's past use. From 1828 to 1858 sawmilling operated at Sealers Bay, directly north of Refuge Cove. Timber getting took place in the region around Refuge Cove and the bay was used by the boats for safe harbour. Pastoral leases were held over parts of Sealers Cove in the 1850s and 1860s. It is presumed that the cattle roamed across an area including parts of Refuge Cove.

Granite quarrying took place on the eastern side of the bay between 1859 and 1863 and was another substantial industry associated with the cove. A temporary wharf and worker's residences were erected. The quarry contributed to road development in Port Albert and the north Gippsland goldfields. Commercial fishing in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries took place in the bay. Between 1865 and 1868 Chinese fishermen's catches supplied Ballarat and were transported via Queenscliff. Port Welshpool commercial fishermen also erected fish pens in the bay in 1913.

In 1898 parts of Wilsons Promontory were gazetted as National Park. The area around Refuge Cove was added to the National Park listing in 1905. From 1941 to 1946 all the coves and bays on the Promontory were used as military outstations. Refuge Cove was taken over as the No 7 Infantry Training Centre. The current use of Refuge Cove relates to its National Park status, hiking routes and camping grounds have been established for recreational purposes.

## Extent of Registration

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 1995**, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended in that the Heritage Register Number 1729 in the category described as Archaeological Place; Heritage Place is described as:

Refuge Cove Wilsons Promontory Wilsons Promontory National Park South Gippsland Shire Council

EXTENT:

1. All of the land marked L1 on Diagram 1729 held by the Executive Director, being all of the land and sea bed bounded by a line commencing at a point with the coordinates longitude 146.46863 degrees East and latitude 39.03743 degrees South, thence directly inland to a point with the coordinates longitude 146.46810 degrees East and latitude 39.03554 degrees South, thence following parallel to the 20 metre contour line but 50 metres inland from it in a generally westerly then southerly, then easterly, then northerly direction until it comes to a point with the coordinates longitude 146.46953 degrees East and latitude 39.04152 degrees South, thence directly seaward to a point with the coordinates longitude 146.47102 degrees East and latitude 39.04020 degrees South, thence following parallel to the highwater mark but 100 metres seaward from it in a generally westerly, then northerly then easterly direction until it meets the start point.

Dated 3 August 2007

RAY TONKIN  
Executive Director

[*Victoria Government Gazette* G 32 9 August 2007 1811-1812]

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*