

Plans for the future

The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust was set up to plan the future of unique lands on Sydney Harbour, including North Head Artillery School, Middle Head – Georges Heights – Chowder Bay, Woolwich Dock and Parklands, Cockatoo Island, Snapper Island, Macquarie Lightstation, the former Marine Biological Station at Watsons Bay and HMAS Platypus at Neutral Bay.

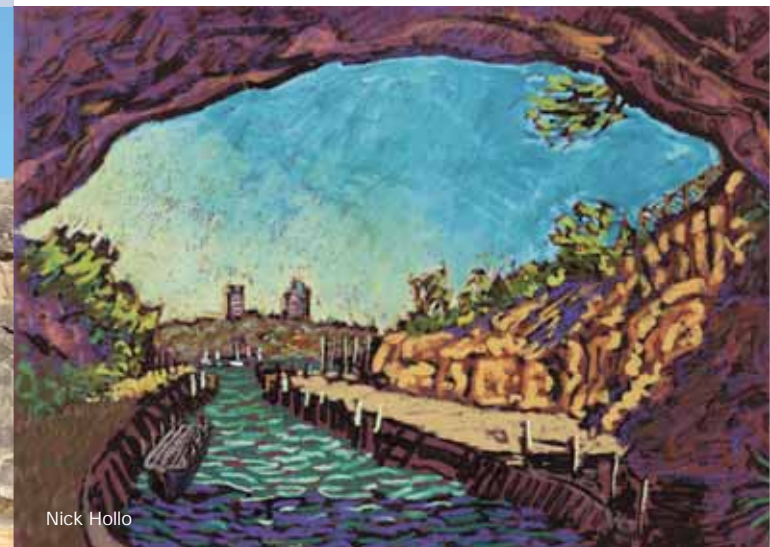
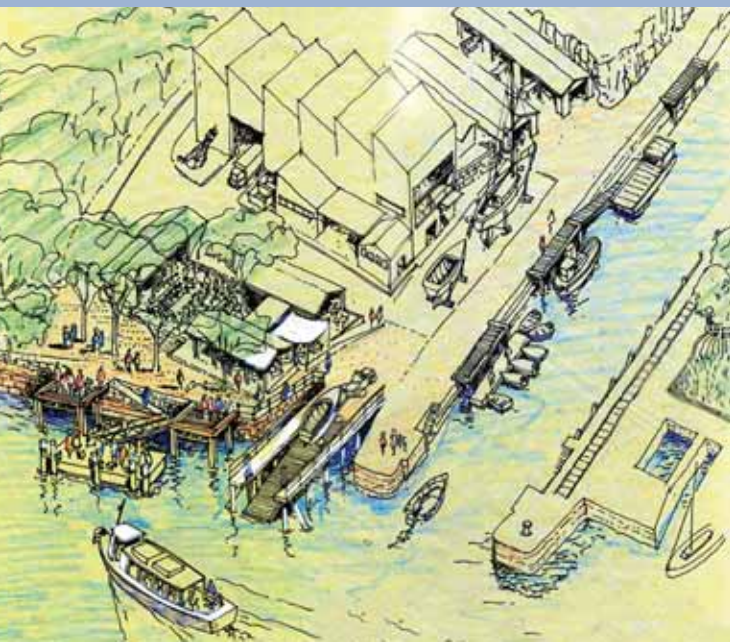
The Harbour Trust is conserving the heritage of its lands, protecting the environment and providing maximum public access.

A Community Advisory Committee is assisting in planning for Woolwich Dock and Parklands and the other Harbour Trust lands. Public meetings, workshops, tours and exhibitions are also held to encourage broad community input into the process.

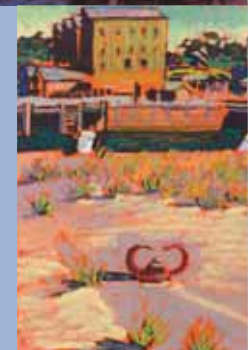
The Trust's Comprehensive Plan for the lands was adopted in 2003 and is being implemented over 10 years. A management plan for Woolwich Dock and Parklands was adopted in 2004.

Woolwich Dock and Parklands will become a maritime village making use of the dock and its facilities for small-scale maritime activities.

Through a diversity of attractions, such as a café, function centre, cultural facilities, offices/studios and an educational facility, the site will also become a gathering place for recreation and enjoyment. Cycle and pedestrian paths will link parklands and boats will again be able to access the entire dock.



Nick Hollo



Want to know more?

To find out more about the Harbour Trust and Woolwich Dock and Parklands, contact us at:



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Woolwich Dock and Parklands



History



SS Sonoma in the dock, Hunters Hill Historical Society



Army landing craft in Woolwich Dock

Woolwich Dock and Parklands

Woolwich Dock, the Horse Paddock and Goat Paddock remain as an example of settlement patterns that shaped much of Sydney Harbour. Here, maritime industry operated on the waterfront, hidden by the cliff from the residences above. The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust is restoring this land for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

Aboriginal people have lived around the Woolwich area for thousands of years. Kellys Bush contains shell middens and a scouring groove used to make stone tools.

In 1835 a family of cabinet-makers, the Clarkes, were granted land on the eastern end of the peninsula (now Woolwich). They cleared the land for cultivation and built several houses.

Atlas Engineering set up maritime operations on 10 acres at Woolwich in 1883. Atlas built new workshops, fitted them out with the latest equipment and linked them to wharves with tramways and cranes. Atlas imported a floating dock from England and used Clarke's house as an office. Land was reclaimed and slipways built on what is now Clarkes Point Reserve. The company closed down in 1898.

The rest of Clarke's land was subdivided in 1895, creating Woolwich as an industrial village with workers' cottages, shops and a hotel. Woolwich was named after an industrial precinct on the Thames River in London.

Morts Dock and Engineering Company, which operated a successful dock at Balmain, purchased the site in 1898. A local

company, W. Solomon & Sons excavated 85,000 cubic metres of sandstone to construct the new dry dock. When it opened in December 1901 Woolwich Dock was the largest in Australia, 188 metres long and 27 metres wide. A pumphouse was brought out in parts from England to operate the dock.

Morts used the Atlas workshops, moved the boiler shop, established a foundry and built several jetties. The dock was lengthened over the years to its present 260 metres. In the 1940s the Atlas workshops were replaced by the sawtooth roofed building and several brick buildings were added.



For more than 50 years, ships from around the world were repaired and fitted-out in Woolwich Dock. The busiest times were during the two world wars when many passenger vessels were converted to armed troopships and repairs were carried out on damaged ships. In 1917 the company employed 1,500 people. The entrance road was named after Managing Director of Woolwich Dock, James Peter Franki.

After the Second World War new work declined and the company closed down in 1958.

The Army purchased the site in 1963 for its water based transport operations, making use of the dock for launching craft and the workshops for repairs and maintenance.

Some of the oldest buildings on the site were demolished and the Army erected several prefabricated buildings. They added piers, wharves and a travelling crane, and concreted the area around the dock. In 1997 the Army units based at Woolwich relocated to Townsville.



An altered landscape

The Woolwich peninsula consists of a succession of knolls leading down to the meeting point of the Parramatta and Lane Cove Rivers, 'Moocooboola'. The dock has been cut into this hillside and the surrounding shoreline altered for maritime industry.

Open forest and woodland originally covered much of the peninsula. Most of this has been cleared, although nearby Kellys Bush is a remnant of the vegetation.



View from the Horse Paddock toward Clarkes Point Reserve

