



Kimberley Society

Book Note

***Where on the Coast is That?* by Ian Murray with Marion Hercock. Hesperian Press, Carlisle (WA), 2008. Soft cover, 336 pages, map, ISBN 978-0-85905-452-2, RRP \$45.**

This A4 volume presents, in alphabetical order, place name information for geographical features and islands situated on and near the Western Australian coast. While it is not evident from the title that it covers only Western Australia, it rapidly becomes clear that a coastline of approximately 12,500 km boasts more than enough place names to fill a book. The introduction mentions the existence of 3,678 islands, many unnamed, and 'many hundreds of reefs, rocks and shoals'. In addition, there are all the anchorages, banks, bars, bays, beaches, bluffs, capes, channels, cliffs, coves, creeks, deeps, entrances, estuaries, flats, gutters, harbours, heads, hillocks and hills, inlets, jetties, lagoons, landings, ledges, lighthouses, passages, patches, points, pools, ports, promontories, rockholes, rocks, rivers, sands, settlements, sounds, spits, swamps, towns, townsites, valleys, wrecks, and so on.

In looking up topical names, one finds, for instance, that the Maret Islands were named 'by the French expedition of 1801-1803, after Hugues Bernard Maret, Duc de Bassano (1763-1839), a French statesman, diplomat, publicist, and a devoted supporter of Napoleon Bonaparte'. But Verco Island, off Strickland Bay (Shire of Derby/West Kimberley), has no connection with our popular paediatrician. Its name dates from 1990 and was 'suggested by the WA Museum to honour Sir Joseph Cooke Verco (1851-1933, the curator of molluscs at the South Australian Museum'.

A useful and space-saving feature in the volume is the four-page chronology of European exploration on the west coast. It reveals, for example, that the man Vereker who named Nellie Bay north of Wyndham in 1888 (listed on p. 205) was the commander of HMS *Myrmidon*, which was undertaking survey work in Cambridge Gulf and other north-western Australian waters. Similarly, where places and features were named by the man Nares, e.g. Poolngin Island in King Sound, the chronology shows that he was the lieutenant commanding HMS *Fantome* during the 1911-1913 survey undertaken on the Kimberley coast by that vessel.

Another useful feature is the cross-referencing of new names and obsolete names. The entry for Bardi, for instance, refers the reader to One Arm Point, where the entry mentions both the feature and the town of that name. After giving the location and the origin of the name, it states that: 'The aboriginal community of One Arm Point, now known as Bardi, is established here. An aboriginal name for this feature is *Ardiyooloon*.' Similarly, working in reverse, a reader who looks up New Island is referred to Kannamatju Island. The entry for Kannamatju Island (in Brecknock Harbour), records that it was known as New Island, after being mentioned by the naturalist James Martin in 1864, and that the name change was approved in 1991 on the basis of information supplied by the Gulingi Nangga Aboriginal Community.

The volume, with its wealth of information and easy-to-use format, will interest people involved in tourism and research as well as those who read for pleasure.

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