

THE MILITARY DISTRICT

**Comprising:** *Guard Tower* (4), *Senior Military Officer's Quarters* (6), *Officers' Quarters* (7)

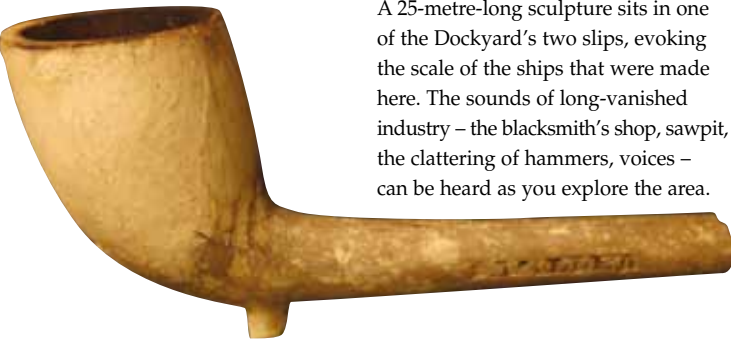
For most of the convict period, the Senior Military Officer's Quarters was the home of the Military Officer in charge of the soldiers at Port Arthur. The soldiers of Port Arthur were responsible for security and for pursuing and capturing escaped convicts. A small number of soldiers were accompanied by their wives who washed, sewed and provided basic nursing care for the men in their husband's company. Children of the soldiers and lower ranking settlement officials and free staff were educated together in the adjoining Free School.

POINT PUER BOYS' PRISON (32)

Point Puer operated from 1834 to 1849 and was the first purpose-built juvenile reformatory in the British Empire. Juvenile offenders were separated from the older convicts to protect them from criminal influence. Most of the boys were aged between 14 and 17, with the youngest just 9 years old. Point Puer was renowned for its regime of stern discipline and harsh punishment, but all the boys received an education while some were given the opportunity of trade training. Tours operate daily.

MEMORIAL GARDEN (25)

On Sunday 28 April 1996, a tragic chapter was added to Port Arthur's history when a gunman took the lives of 35 people and physically wounded 19 others in and around the Port Arthur Historic Site. Among them were members of staff from the Historic Site. The Memorial Garden incorporates the shell of the Broad Arrow Café, where 20 people were killed during the massacre, and has been created as a place of remembrance and reflection.



CONVICT ADMINISTRATION

**Comprising:** *Commandant's House* (5), *Law Courts* (3)

The Commandant was Port Arthur's most senior official. A residence befitting this rank and position was erected on high ground in 1833 and housed five of Port Arthur's ten Commandants. The Law Courts introduced convicts to Port Arthur's regime of 'ceaseless vigilance', discipline and punishment designed 'for grinding rogues into honest men'.

Commandant Charles O'Hara Booth  
by Thomas Lemprière  
Collection: Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery



THE ISLE OF THE DEAD (31)

Between 1833 and 1877 around 1100 people were buried at the settlement's cemetery. The Isle of the Dead is the final resting place for military and civil officers, their wives and children, and convicts. The most common causes of death among convicts were industrial accidents, and respiratory disease. Tours to the Isle operate daily.

THE DOCKYARD

**Comprising:** *Slipway & Sculpture* (27), *Limekiln* (28) *Clerk of Works' House* (29), *Shipwright's House* (30),

During its 15 years of operation, Port Arthur's Dockyard produced 16 large decked vessels and around 150 small open boats. At its peak, more than 70 men worked here. The precinct included a blacksmith's workshop, two sawpits, two steamers for bending timber, a rigging shed and several other workshops. The lime produced from the Limekiln was an essential ingredient for building construction at Port Arthur. A 25-metre-long sculpture sits in one of the Dockyard's two slips, evoking the scale of the ships that were made here. The sounds of long-vanished industry – the blacksmith's shop, sawpit, the clattering of hammers, voices – can be heard as you explore the area.

THE WELFARE AREA

**Comprising:** *The Hospital* (9), *Paupers' Depot* (11), *the Asylum* (12)

In the Hospital convicts were commonly treated for numerous conditions including respiratory or rheumatic ailments contracted from working outdoors and sleeping in cold cells and wet clothing. By the early 1860s, many convicts were housed and treated in the Paupers' Depot or the Asylum, according to new ideas that included creating a calm environment. The Asylum now includes a Museum, Convict Study Centre and the Museum Coffee Shop.

SMITH O'BRIEN'S COTTAGE (8)

This cottage housed one of Port Arthur's most famous political prisoners – Irish Protestant Parliamentarian, William Smith O'Brien (right). Transported for life, he was sent to Port Arthur after an attempted escape from Maria Island.



CONVICT WATER SUPPLY TRAIL (10)

This trail tells the story of an ambitious project that aimed to make the convict settlement self-sufficient in the production of flour. A 600 metre, self-guided trail reveals the surviving artefacts from this convict-built hydro-engineering project. The walk takes about 30 minutes.

THE SEPARATE PRISON (13)

The Separate Prison was designed to deliver a new method of punishment, of reforming the convicts through isolation and contemplation. Convicts were locked for 23 hours each day in single cells. Here they ate, slept and worked, with just one hour a day allowed for exercise, alone, in a high-walled yard. A major conservation program for the Separate Prison began in 2007.

CIVIL OFFICERS' ROW, GOVERNMENT COTTAGE AND GOVERNMENT GARDENS

**Comprising:** *Visiting Magistrate's House* (16), *Roman Catholic Chaplain's House* (17), *Junior Medical Officer's House* (18), *Accountant's House* (19), *Parsonage* (20), *Government Cottage* (22), *Government Gardens* (23)

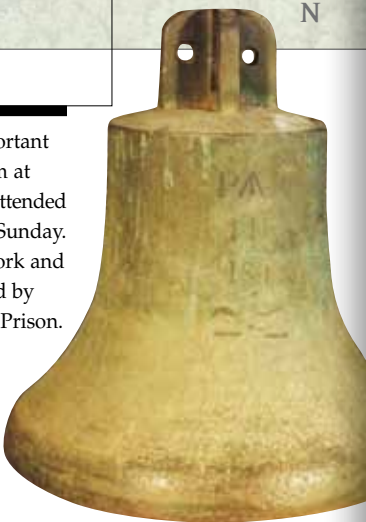
Civil Officers' Row separated senior officers and their families from the convict population and provided them with housing suited to their status. The Government Gardens offered a quiet and beautiful space, free from the unwanted presence of the convicts.

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| 1  | <i>The Penitentiary</i> (1857)                           |
| 2  | <i>Police Station</i> (1936)                             |
| 3  | <i>Law Courts</i> (1846)                                 |
| 4  | <i>Guard Tower</i> (1835)                                |
| 5  | <i>Commandant's House</i> (1833–56)                      |
| 6  | <i>Senior Military Officer's Quarters</i> (1833)         |
| 7  | <i>Officers' Quarters</i> (1844)                         |
| 8  | <i>Smith O'Brien's Cottage</i> (1840s)                   |
| 9  | <i>Hospital</i> (1842)                                   |
| 10 | <i>Convict Water Supply Trail</i> (1842)                 |
| 11 | <i>Paupers' Depot</i> (1864)                             |
| 12 | <i>The Asylum</i> (1868)                                 |
| 13 | <i>The Separate Prison</i> (1849)                        |
| 14 | <i>Soldiers' Memorial Avenue</i> (1918)                  |
| 15 | <i>Trentham</i> (1898–1904)                              |
| 16 | <i>Visiting Magistrate's House</i> (1847)                |
| 17 | <i>Roman Catholic Chaplain's House</i> (1843)            |
| 18 | <i>Junior Medical Officer's House</i> (1848)             |
| 19 | <i>Accountant's House</i> (1842)                         |
| 20 | <i>Parsonage</i> (1842)                                  |
| 21 | <i>The Church</i> (1837)                                 |
| 22 | <i>Government Cottage</i> (1853)                         |
| 23 | <i>Government Gardens</i> (1846)                         |
| 24 | <i>St David's Church</i> (1927)                          |
| 25 | <i>Memorial Garden</i>                                   |
| 26 | <i>Ferry Dock</i>  |
| 27 | <i>Dockyard Slipway</i> (1834–48) <i>&amp; Sculpture</i> |
| 28 | <i>Limekiln</i> (1854)                                   |
| 29 | <i>Shipwright's House</i> (1834)                         |
| 30 | <i>Clerk of Works' House</i> (1848)                      |
| 31 | <i>The Isle of the Dead</i> (1833)                       |
| 32 | <i>Point Puer Boys' Prison</i> (1834)                    |



THE CHURCH (21)

The Church represents the important role of religion in convict reform at Port Arthur. Up to 1100 people attended compulsory services here each Sunday. Much of the decorative stonework and joinery in the church was crafted by boys from the Point Puer Boys' Prison.



CARNARVON TOWNSHIP

**Comprising:** *Police Station* (2) *Soldiers' Memorial Avenue* (14), *Trentham* (15), *St David's Church* (24)

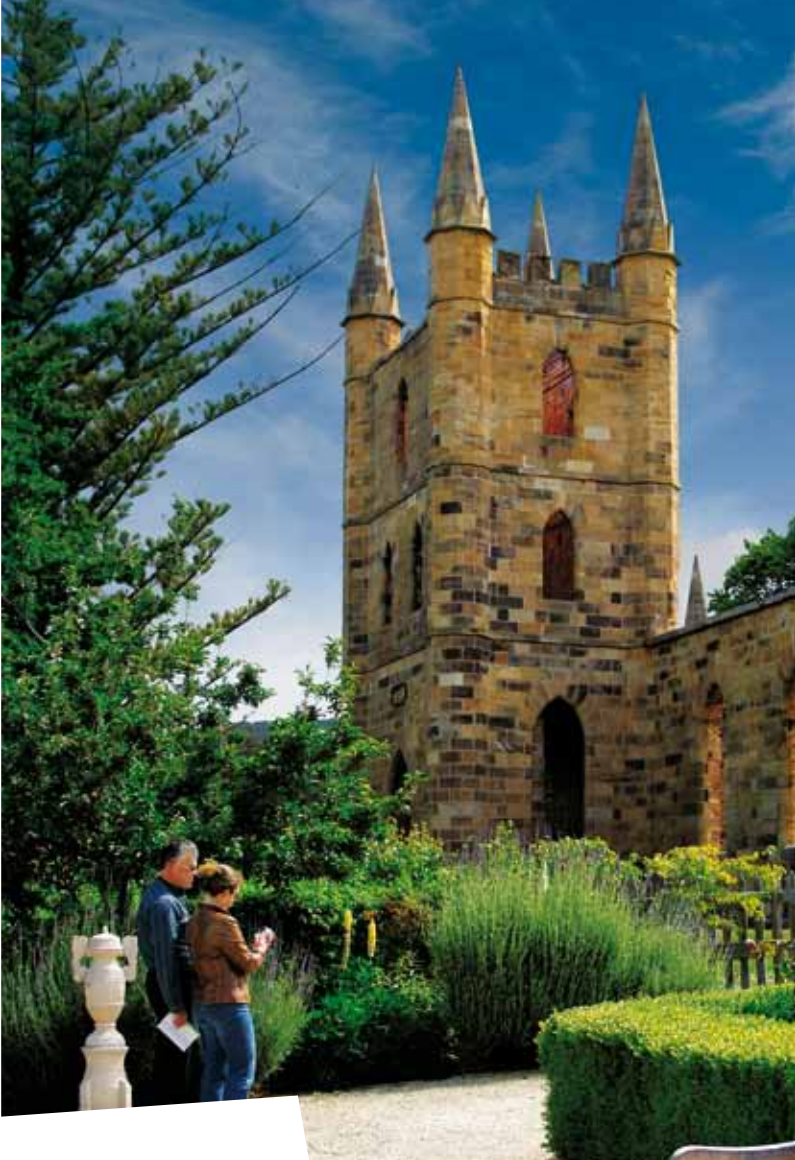
Several buildings and areas remain from the post convict period. *Trentham* was lived in by members of the *Trentham* family up to 1920. The house and garden have been restored and are open to the public. The *Soldiers' Memorial Avenue* was planted to honour the 15 men from the Carnarvon and Oakwood districts who lost their lives serving in the First World War. The *Police Station* was home to the township's policemen from 1936 to 1972. The building is open to the public and has an Archaeology display. *St David's Church* was built after years of Anglican Church services in the Town Hall (Asylum). Services are held regularly and visitors are welcome.

- Information
- Toilets
- Disabled Toilets
- Food
- First Aid
- Telephone
- Post Box
- Eftpos
- Rubbish Bins
- BBQ
- Designated Smoking Area
- House Museums

A NOTE ON DATES  
Buildings and gardens at Port Arthur were constantly being adapted and changed. To avoid long lists of dates, the date given for each place usually represents the year when it was first used.

VISITOR GUIDE

Port Arthur Historic Site



World Heritage Site



WELCOME TO THE PORT ARTHUR HISTORIC SITE

The Port Arthur Historic Site is a place of national and international significance – part of the epic story of the settlement of this country.

Port Arthur was much more than a prison. It was a complete community – home to military personnel and free settlers. The convicts worked at farming and industries, producing a large range of resources and materials.

The Port Arthur Historic Site contains more than 30 historic buildings, extensive ruins and beautiful grounds and gardens. A short ferry ride from the Site is the Isle of the Dead cemetery and the site of the Point Puer Boys’ Prison – both important parts of the Site. Port Arthur’s tale is told in a variety of different ways. As you explore the Site, many stories will reveal themselves to you.

WELCOME

‘Old Bill’ Thompson – Photographer J W Beattie  
Collection: Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts,  
Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office

PORT ARTHUR – A BRIEF HISTORY

The Pydairrmerme people were the traditional owners of the land that is now known as Port Arthur. Middens and other cultural sites from many thousands of years of occupation still remain in the area.

The Port Arthur penal station was established in 1830 as a timber-getting camp, using convict labour to produce sawn logs for government projects. From 1833 Port Arthur was used as a punishment station for repeat offenders from all the Australian colonies.

The English prison reformer Jeremy Bentham designed a radical new Penitentiary at Pentonville in England, which he described as ‘a machine for grinding rogues into honest men’. This became the model for Port Arthur. The cogs of this machine included discipline and punishment, religious and moral instruction, classification and separation, training and education. Many men were broken, but some left Port Arthur rehabilitated and skilled, some as blacksmiths, shoemakers or shipbuilders.

Port Arthur’s community of military and free men and their families lived their lives in stark contrast to the convict population. Parties, regattas and literary evenings were common. Beautiful gardens were created as places of sanctuary and the children played and attended school within the settlement.



By 1840 more than 2000 convicts, soldiers and civil staff lived at Port Arthur, which by this time was a major industrial settlement. A range of goods and materials were produced here – everything from worked stone and bricks to furniture and clothing, boats and ships.

With the end of convict transportation to Van Diemen’s Land in 1853, Port Arthur also became an institution for aging and physically and mentally ill convicts. The penal settlement finally closed in 1877 and many of its buildings were dismantled or destroyed in bush-fires. Others were sold and the area gradually became the centre of a small town, renamed Carnarvon in an attempt to erase the hated convict stain. However, first-hand stories of convict life proved to be a major drawcard, and tourists began visiting almost immediately after the closure of the penal settlement. By the 1920s, some convict-period buildings had become museums, hotels and shops and the settlement was once again named Port Arthur.

Some buildings remaining from the township period include *Trenttham* (1898-1904); *Canadian Cottage* (c.1916); *Jetty Cottage* (c.1920s); *St David’s Church* (1927); *the Police Station* (1936) and *Pat Jones’ Cottage* (1942).

On Sunday 28 April 1996, a tragic chapter was added to Port Arthur’s history when a gunman took the lives of 35 people and physically wounded 19 others in and around the Port Arthur Historic Site.

The Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority (PAHSMA) manages the Port Arthur Historic Site, the Cascades Female Factory Historic Site and the Coal Mines Historic Site as heritage places of national and international significance. All three Historic Sites are included on the National Heritage List and the Tasmanian Heritage Register and are included in the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage listing.

James [Thomas] Smith – Photographer probably A H Boyd  
Collection: Archives Office of Tasmania, AOT30/3256

SITE ENTRY

Your day entry pass is valid for two consecutive days and includes access to:

- interactive experiences for all ages in the Visitor Centre – including the Convict Gallery and Lottery of Life, where you can discover some of the personal stories of Port Arthur’s convicts
- a 40 minute, introductory walking tour – a fascinating introduction to Port Arthur, its people and its past
- a 20 minute harbour cruise passing the Dockyard, Point Puer Boys’ Prison and the Isle of the Dead. The ferry leaves punctually, so please make sure you arrive at the jetty ten minutes before your cruise time (Map No 26)
- the Museum and the Convict Study Centre – located in the Asylum complex
- more than 30 historic buildings, ruins, restored museum houses and grounds and gardens
- access to the Convict Water Supply Trail and the Dockyard
- shuttle buggy service for people with restricted mobility

The **Ticket of Leave** is our great value, two-year pass – available for a small additional fee. This allows free return entry to the Site as often as you like for two years from the date of your first visit.

VISITOR CENTRE SERVICES

- Visitor information
- All tour tickets
- Gift shop
- Port Café
- Felons Bistro (evenings)
- First Aid
- Audio tour hire
- Walk-a-seat loan
- Wheelchair loan
- Stroller hire
- Raincoat sales
- Venue hire and function information
- Tasmanian Visitor Information desk offering information and bookings for accommodation and other attractions around Tasmania



OPTIONAL TOURS

- Ghost Tours
- Paranormal Investigation Experience
- Point Puer Boys’ Prison
- Isle of the Dead
- Audio Tour

Bookings are essential and can be made at the Visitor Centre or by telephone on 1800 659 101.

DISABLED ACCESS

We offer assistance and services for persons with disabilities. All facilities in the Visitor Centre allow independent access, including the designated rest rooms.

The remainder of the Site comprises a variety of areas, some of which allow independent access, and others which may require assisted access.

Our introductory walking tour and harbour cruise are both wheelchair accessible. However, our tours to the Isle of the Dead, Point Puer Boys’ Prison and the Ghost Tours are not recommended for visitors with mobility restrictions.

Wheelchairs are available for loan from the Visitor Centre. Our six-seat courtesy buggies provide a regular drop-off and pick-up service around the Site for visitors with limited mobility. Please enquire on arrival for times of operation.

SAFETY ON SITE

The weather at Port Arthur can be changeable. Most tours take place outdoors and operate in all weather, so be prepared with sun protection, warm clothing, a raincoat or umbrella. The ground in some places is uneven, so comfortable, sturdy walking shoes are also recommended.

WHERE TO EAT AND SHOP

Open daily, the Gift Shop offers an extensive range of gifts, books and specialist Tasmanian and Port Arthur items.

There are two excellent cafés on Site. The Port Café in the Visitor Centre is open daily for breakfast and closes after dinner. The Museum Coffee Shop, located in the Asylum complex, is open for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. Indulge in espresso coffee and fresh cakes, delicious snacks and light meals accompanied by a glass of wine or a range of hot and cold drinks.

Enjoy a quick and tasty family meal or a relaxed dinner of superbly prepared fresh local produce at Felons Bistro – located in the Visitor Centre. Open evenings, Felons also offers great value children’s meals and an extensive wine list of fine local, Tasmanian and Australian wines.

COAL MINES HISTORIC SITE

Closely linked with Port Arthur is the Coal Mines Historic Site, another compelling chapter in our convict history.

Discover the history of the Coal Mines Historic Site as you walk the paths and tracks and read the stories of some of the people who lived and worked here.

A Visitor Guide about the Coal Mines is available from the Visitor Centre.

**How to get there**

The Coal Mines Historic Site is 25 minutes drive from Port Arthur, near Saltwater River on the Tasman Peninsula and approximately one and a half hour’s drive from Hobart.

**Opening hours**

The Coal Mines Historic Site is open daily. No bookings are required and entry is free.

CONVICT RESEARCH & DATABASE

A project is underway at the Site to identify every convict and free person who passed through Port Arthur between 1830 and 1877. As part of this program we offer advice and assistance with family history research. For a fee we can supply you with a copy or transcription of a particular Tasmanian convict record. For more information please contact our Resource Centre on 03 6251 2324.

WORLD HERITAGE

The Port Arthur Historic Site is one of 11 historic sites that together form the Australian Convicts Sites World Heritage property.

To gain an understanding of Tasmania’s role in the Australian convict story, we recommend that you visit the other Tasmanian sites – the Coal Mines Historic Site, Woolmers Estate and Brickendon (*Longford*), Cascades Female Factory (*South Hobart*) and Darlington Probation Station (*Maria Island*).

CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

We undertake a range of ongoing conservation activities at the Port Arthur Historic Site to ensure that the Site is conserved for future generations to enjoy.

**How can I help to protect and support the Port Arthur Historic Site?**

We have established the Port Arthur Conservation Fund to assist us in conserving this fragile and valuable place for future generations. Please pick up a copy of our Conservation Fund leaflet from the Visitor Centre or ask our staff for more information.

Your entry fee enables us to make the Site available for visitors and to ensure quality services. Your fees also contribute to the conservation of the Port Arthur and Coal Mines Historic Sites, a responsibility supported by substantial funding from the Tasmanian Government.



PORT ARTHUR HISTORIC SITES



- facebook.com/portarthur
- @PortArthur
- #portarthurtassie

CONTACT US

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Tasmania 7182 Australia  
**Booking enquiries:** + 61 (0)3 6251 2310  
**Administration:** + 61 (0)3 6251 2300  
**Facsimile:** + 61 (0)3 6251 2322  
**Freecall:** 1800 659 101  
(from within Australia)  
**Email:** [reservations@portarthur.org.au](mailto:reservations@portarthur.org.au)  
**Website:** [www.portarthur.org.au](http://www.portarthur.org.au)

**Opening Hours**

Tours operate and restored buildings are open at various times between 9.30am – 5pm.

The grounds are open to dusk daily. Our Visitor Centre is open daily until the last Ghost Tour at night.

**Please note**

Port Arthur is a smoke-free site. Please ask our staff for directions to the designated smoking area.

**Visitor feedback**

Your feedback is important to us, so please take the time to complete a survey from the Visitor Centre.

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Commandant’s House

Senior Military Officer’s Quarters

Guard Tower

Officers’ Quarters

Law Courts

Smith O’Brien’s Cottage

The Penitentiary

Hospital

The Asylum

The Separate Prison

