



Harrington location

Harrington (population of approximately 2250) is surrounded by river, ocean and Crowdy Bay National Park. It is just 13km off the Pacific Highway at the northern mouth of the Manning River — a beautiful section of the NSW Holiday Coast midway between Port Macquarie and Forster, just 320 km north of Sydney.

1 Harrington Hotel



This hotel fronts the water, with the rear facing the street. At the turn of the century the road was a rough track and most trade was by boat, not road. The hotel was established in 1882 as a nine room guesthouse and called 'Harrington House'.

2 Waterfront information bollards

The painted bollard figures commemorate the families of early workers in Harrington.



3 Waterfront heritage

The row of Norfolk Island Pine trees along the waterfront were planted in the 1940s to replace a pair of mature trees which had been growing in the front yard of 3 Beach Street. They were so imposing that they had to be felled during WWII to prevent enemy craft using them as landmarks. At the base of the trees there are plaques in dedication to community groups and significant citizens.



4 Beach Street

A rail link between Sydney and Taree was completed in 1913 and Harrington started to develop as a holiday destination. Several of the shops along Beach Street date from the 1920s. Number 5 Beach Street was run as a guesthouse 'The Home by the Sea' for holiday makers in the 1920s and 1930s.

5 Historic bollards



In 1856 the first pilot station was set up with three maritime pilots and a staff of boatmen. They assisted ships entering and leaving the treacherous entrance to the Manning River. This group of bollards commemorate the captain and crew of the John Gollan, the last of the tug boats used to guide ships over the sand bars into or out of the Manning River.

6 War Memorial / Hall



Given the small population of the area, the number of people who served in the armed forces is significant. In the early 20th Century the hall was the centre of social life with dances, concerts, games and church services.

7 The Pilot Station

The site of the original pilot station, was on the corner of Pilot and Hedges Streets (later became Finnan's shop). The original premises were said to have been constructed from the timber remains of ships wrecked on the river bar.



8 Historic residence



The distinctive double gables at the rear of the residence at 3 Beach Street are seen in many of the early photographs of Harrington.

9 School Lane

The first school was built in 1872 from debris collected from shipwrecks on the bar. William T. Brewer was the first teacher. He had 17 students and no supplies. A new building was constructed in 1892 and became a public school in 1896.

With its dusty gravel surface and overhanging trees, School Lane sets the scene for a journey back in time. In the early 20th Century the students would have heard chickens clucking and cows lowing and be surrounded by the smoke from fuel stoves and chip heaters boiling water for the weekly wash.



10 Church Street

This area is surrounded by early 20th Century houses once neighboured by paddocks to the north and east.



11 Site of Harrington's first church

Now demolished, 19 Church Street was the site of Harrington's first church built in 1905. This Presbyterian Church was used by all protestant denominations, a different one each Sunday of the month, until it closed in 1970 with the construction of the Uniting Church on High Street.

12 Pilot Hill graveyard



In this graveyard lie the buried pilots and their families, under neat white timber crosses and headstones. They are maintained by the Harrington Lions Club.

13 Pilot Hill and lookout

Stop and admire the view and take time to read the information board about the early maritime history of Harrington. This is the site of the Pilot's Signal Shed at the crest of the hill.



1 Source: "Crossing the Bar, A History of Harrington. Gateway to the Manning Valley" by Rebecca Linton. Focus Publishing 2004.

Text by Genevieve Godwin 2006

Harrington heritage

Surveyor John Oxley passed through the area in 1818 and named the mouth to the Manning River, Harrington Inlet. The name has remained.

A series of dangerous and dramatic sand bars lie just off the coast where the river meets the sea. During the 19th Century a number of vessels attempting to enter the Manning River were wrecked on the bar. In recent times this problem has been partly solved by the construction of a long breakwater. However in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century the boats entering the Manning River were brought across the bar by pilots familiar with the dangers and the shallow shoals.

Pilot Hill Lookout, is a high headland to the north east of the town. Here the graves of the pilots and some of the members of their families lie overlooking the bar and the ocean.

Today the local fishers, joined by numerous enthusiastic visitors, fish the waters near Harrington and bring in good catches of snapper, bream, blackfish and whiting.

Seven kilometres beyond Harrington is the charming fishing village of Crowdy Head with its 1879 Lighthouse and its fishing fleet.

In recent times this isolated community gained national media coverage when a school of false killer whales beached themselves nearby at Crowdy Head and had to be towed out to sea.



Further information

If you would like to learn more about the area's heritage, please visit Council's website at www.gtcc.nsw.gov.au or www.manningvalley.info



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Harrington Self-Guided Heritage Walk

appreciating our heritage



This self-guided walk around Harrington highlights a number of built and natural items of significance to the history of the village.

The walk is approximately 1.7 kms. Allow about an hour to visit all the items of interest. Take drinking water and wear comfortable shoes.

You may also like to allow time to visit the Pilot Hill Lookout or stop along the foreshore for a picnic lunch.