

## Boat Sheds

Reg Escott

A number of the older families had boat sheds on Taroona's five beaches. By far the largest and most spectacular was the shed and slipway that well-known Hobart solicitor, Mr E.R. Henry, had built on the southern end of Hinsby Beach to accommodate his 25 foot steam launch in 1936. At the time Mr Henry lived in Hinsby Road. The prevalence of swell on this beach sometimes caused difficulty in launching the boat and after several years Mr Henry decided to give the launch to the Presbyterian Foreign Mission. It was duly shipped to the New Hebrides for the use of Rev. W.F. Paton.

Well-known identity, Mr Tom Briggs, also had a shed on this beach and regularly fished in his dinghy off the Alum cliffs.

Half way along Taroona Crescent Beach Mr C.J.C. Lord had built a bathing shed in 1898. This was later used by the Watkins family. Mr George Burrell, who worked for Mr Watkins, also kept his dinghy there. By 1933 this shed

was no longer in existence. Further north was a large boat shed built by Mr Lord. Adjoining it were two other sheds, one owned by Mr Jack Cowles and the other by Mr Edward Baker, of Hinsby Road, and later by Mr Roy James. Below the Quarantine Station were two more sheds built about 1920. The first was owned by the Vicary family, of the Quarantine Station, and the second by Mr John Brent, of Hinsby Road.

On the beach below Melinga Place, (Beck's Beach) there are now eight boat sheds. Mr Charles Mitchell built the first shed there in 1927, as well as forming part of the beach by moving many tons of rocks to construct a small breakwater. Several years later Mr Arthur Beck bought the Mitchell property and the boat shed. From then on it was always referred to as Beck's Beach by the locals.

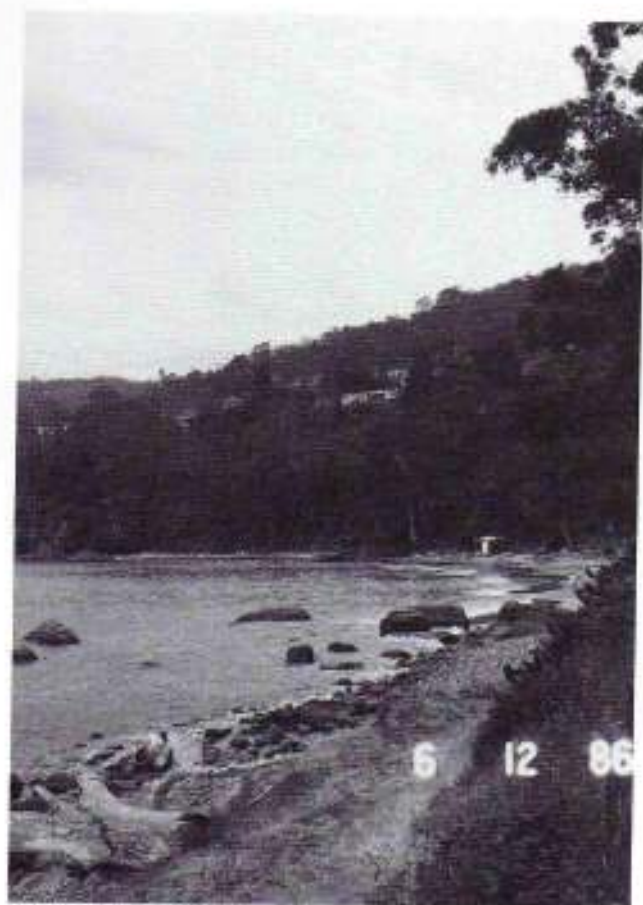
Further north is the Retreat Beach, and here were two boat sheds. The first was built by Mr Dave Charlton before 1930 and the second by Reg Escott in 1947. Neither of these sheds exist now. The only one there today is the Taroona State High School boat shed.

At Grange Point, between 1936 and 1940,



*The 25 foot steam launch owned by Mr E.R. Henry in 1936. Photo from "The Tasmanian Presbyterian", June 1939.*

LOANED BY MRS. BETTY HENRY.



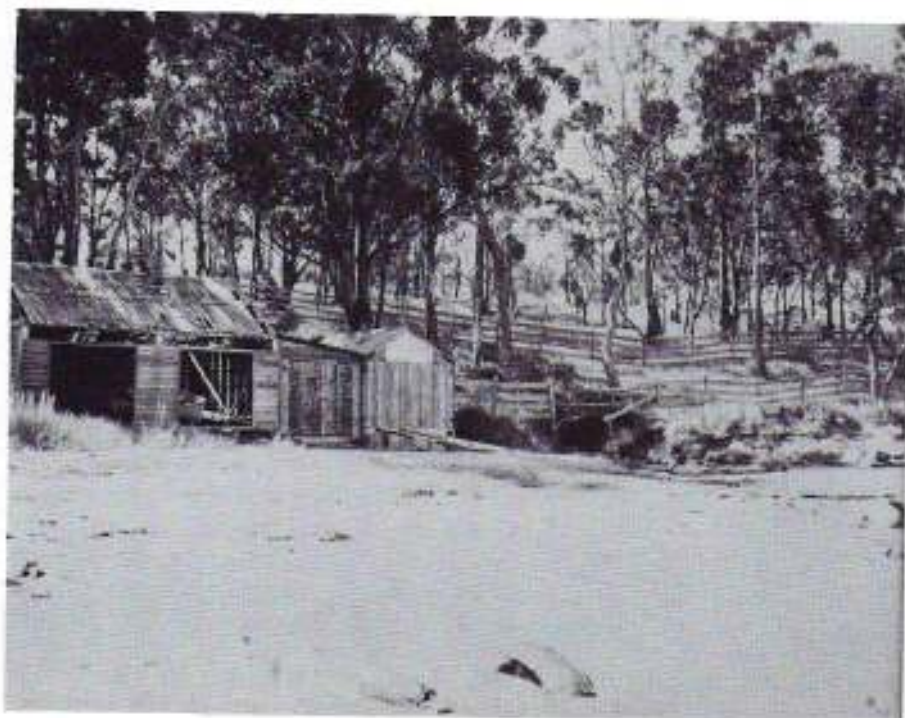
*Hinsby Beach, looking south, 1986.*

PHOTO J.C.S. BOWLER

Mr Doug Nichols of the Grange kept a dinghy in a little shed and from there he rowed to his boats in the Retreat Cove. He first owned a 14 foot yacht, "Yeldis", and then a 25 foot launch, the "Nina".

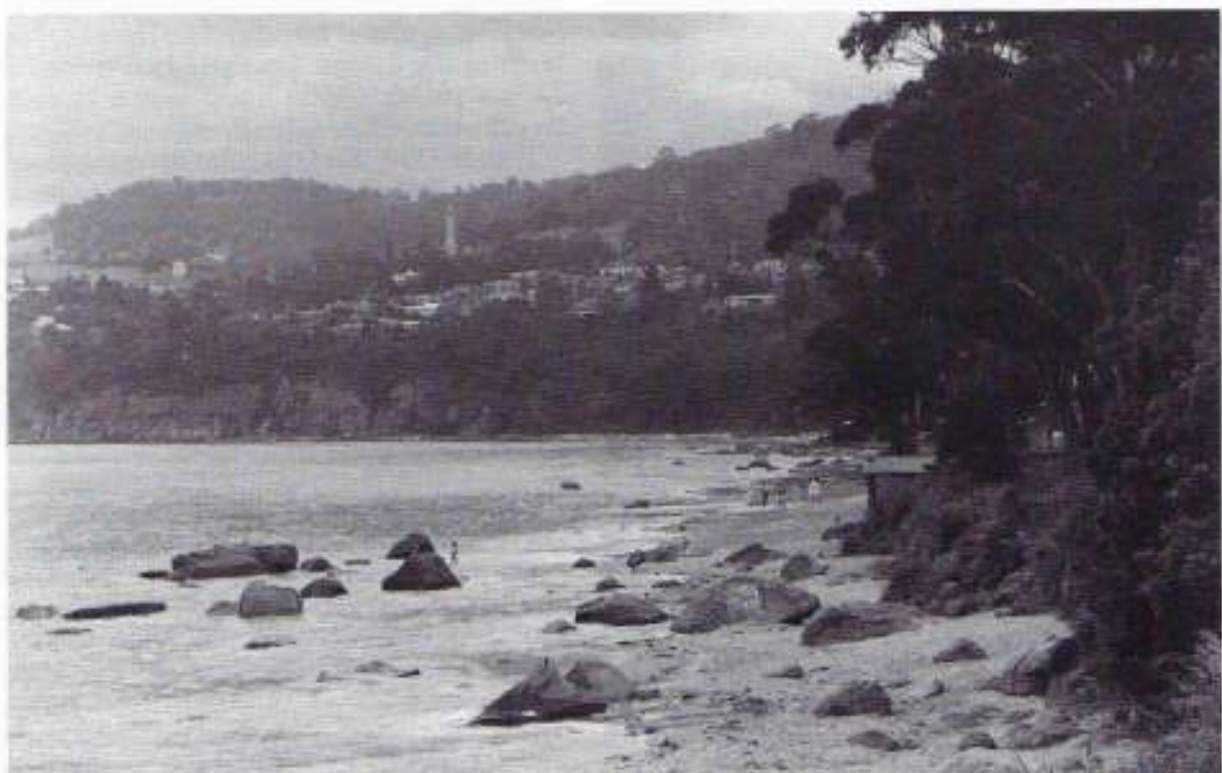
Retreat Cove was a popular mooring place and from 1930 through to the present day there have almost always been boats moored there. Two of the earlier boats in the 1930s were a 28 foot auxiliary cruiser built and owned by Dave Charlton and Frank James' 30 foot yacht, "Taroona". Both of these boats were built in Taroona. Another well-known identity who moored a yacht in the Retreat Cove before World War II was Cyril (Mick) Hinsby who kept the trim 16 foot yacht "Gull" there.

In 1951 a severe south-easterly gale damaged the Hobart floating bridge and caused havoc in the Retreat Cove. Moored there at the time was the yacht "Taroona", a 22 foot launch owned by Dave Charlton, the 29 foot yacht "Picaroon" owned by Dennis Hunt and the 32 foot yacht "Pirate" owned by Reg Escott. The seas in the bay were so big that the launch and "Picaroon" dragged ashore. The launch was pounded to pieces and "Picaroon" was badly damaged, but later restored by Max Creese. "Taroona" and "Pirate" were sailed with difficulty to the shelter of Sandy Bay.



*Boat Sheds on Taroona Beach, c1940, originally built by L to R: C.J.C. Lord, Jack Cowles and Edward Baker.*

KEN JAMES



*Taroon Beach, looking south from Batchelor's Grave, 1986.*

PHOTO J.C.S. BOWLER.



*Beck's Beach, looking south, 1986. Note how the stones have been moved to form a breakwater.*

PHOTO J.C.S. BOWLER.



*Dixon's Beach, looking north, 1986.*

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*Retreat Cove, 1967, Showing the Taroona State High School Boat Shed.*

PHOTO AMY ACTON.