

The Town of Derby

Beyond the boab trees of Derby, the pioneer town of the Kimberley, you'll discover adventures on land and sea. The country around Derby is rich with them, but there are other riches to discover beyond the boabs, where the giant northern tides rush in to meet outback adventure. Explore the Gibb River Road, the awesome Horizontal Waterfall and the Buccaneer Archipelago or explore the rich history of the "oldest" town in the Kimberley. {nomultithumb}

The town of Derby is located on the tidal mud flats on the edge of the King Sound. It has the highest tidal range of any port in Australia.

The boab tree is a major feature of Derby. It has been used as a street tree and many of the larger growing natural specimens have been preserved. Population

The town has a population of some 4,500 people. Half of the population are Aboriginal Australians, with three different Aboriginal languages.

A high proportion of the population are employed in State and Commonwealth Departments or Instrumentalities such as Main Roads WA, Health Services and the Water Authority, and in providing services to outlying Aboriginal Communities. The remainder are small business people employed in servicing the mining, pastoral and tourism industries.

Amenities

As a service town Derby offers all the amenities. It has recreation facilities including a swimming pool, library, art gallery, ovals and courts for football, cricket, tennis, squash, netball, basketball, rodeo and horse riding. A good selection of shopping is available with two chain stores, clothing and furniture shops, newsagency, chemist and hotels and restaurants/cafes. There are two primary schools, a high school, Telecentre and pre school facilities. Health services are provided by the hospital and there are extended care facilities for the aged and infirm. Origins

The town had its origins in the pastoral and mining industries. It developed as a Port to service the pastoral properties along the Fitzroy River after the exploration of the area by Alexander Forrest in 1879. Pearl luggers collecting in the Buccaneer Archipelago also used the Port after it was established in 1883. Then the town boasted a police detachment and Government residence. By 1884 a hotel, jetty and tramway were being constructed - all firsts for the Kimberley. The 1886 gold rush at Hall's Creek led to a boom in development.

Derby is the main base for the Royal Flying Doctor Service in the Kimberley. The base was established in Derby in 1955.