

## POSTER - AUSTRALIA ON THE MAP 1606 – 2006

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These notes are to accompany my poster to be presented in the poster session at the International Cartographic Congress, A Coruna, July 2005. This forms part of Theme 25, "History of Colonial Cartography", Session 1, *Australasia*, to be held on 11 July. The poster will consist of a sheet probably containing four maps, a list of landings on the Australian coast taken from the "Australia on the Map" website, and several blocks of text. The text to be included in your Proceedings is as follows:-

### AUSTRALIA ON THE MAP 1606 - 2006

"Australia on the Map 1606 – 2006" is a commemoration of the first European landfall on the Australian coast, and of subsequent coastal exploration by mariners of many nationalities. The first landing was by the Dutch ship Duyfken in March 1606, on the west coast of Cape York Peninsula in Queensland. She was captained by Willem Jansz in the service of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), which had been founded in 1602. He charted about 300km of the coast near present-day Weipa, as well as islands off the southern coast of Papua New Guinea. His original journals and charts have been lost, but a copy of his chart made in 1670 survives in the *Van der Hem Atlas* in the Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna (see Fig. 1). In July/August 1606, Spanish captain Luis Vaez de Torres in the San Pedro and LosTres Reijes sailed through the strait later named after him, but did not touch the mainland.

Neither Jansz nor Torres could be said to have actually "discovered" Australia, as Aboriginal people had inhabited the continent for 40 000 years before the first recorded European contacts. Makassan fishermen from Indonesia harvested trepang (sea cucumber) in northern Australian waters from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and possibly earlier.

Many claims have been made of French, Spanish, Portuguese and Chinese voyages which reached the Australian coasts during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, but these offer little proof. Documented journeys subsequent to the Duyfken's, from Dirk Hartog in 1616 to Matthew Flinders in 1801 – 03 are listed in a time-line on the "Australia on the Map" web-site – <http://www.australiaonthemap.org.au> (see Fig. 2), and are shown on many exploration maps (see Fig. 3).

## Victorian coast

The coast of Victoria, Australia's most southerly mainland state, has been chosen to outline the history of exploration by sea. It was the site of James Cook's first landfall in April 1770, at Point Hicks, very close to the present-day border with New South Wales. The coast of Van Diemen's Land or Tasmania had been reached by Abel Tasman in 1642 and 1644, and by various French and English explorers, including Cook, between 1772 and 1793, but its insularity was not known until 1797-98, when first George Bass, and then Bass and Flinders circumnavigated the island. Lieutenant James Grant in the Lady Nelson was the first to traverse Bass Strait from west to east in 1801, and his surveyor, Francis Barrallier, charted this and other voyages made between 1798 and 1802 (see Fig. 4).

Matthew Flinders was beaten to the discovery of Port Phillip Bay in Victoria, by a few weeks in 1802, by Lieutenant James Murray. They were followed in 1803 by Charles Grimes, surveyor with David Collins' expedition which was sent to establish a convict colony on the southern shores of the bay. The settlement was short-lived, but the legacy of discovery of parts of the coast remains in Grimes' chart (actually drawn by James Flemming), and in the elements of it incorporated into Flinders' charts. These were meticulous in their observations, and in their acknowledgement of surveys made by others. They were eventually published with Flinders' "Voyage to Terra Australis" in 1814, and served as the basis for British charts of much of the Australian coast for more than a century.