



Above: The replica of the Duyfken under sail in Australian waters. (Image: Rupert Gerritsen)
Willem Janszoon was born some time around 1570, probably in Amsterdam, and died in 1630.

He was a Dutch navigator and colonial governor, and is believed to have possibly been the first European known to have seen the coast of Australia.

His name is sometimes abbreviated to Willem Jansz.

Janszoon served in the Dutch East Indies for some time, from 1603 - 1611, and 1612 - 1616.

He also served as governor of Fort Henricus on Solor for a time.

Willem Jansoon: Explorer

On 18 November 1605, the Duyfken sailed from Bantam to the coast of western New Guinea under Janszoon's command. He then crossed the eastern end of the Arafura Sea into the Gulf of Carpentaria.

He made landfall on 26 February 1606 at the Pennefather River on the western shore of Cape York in what is now the Australian state of Queensland, near the site of the modern town of Weipa.

This was the first recorded European landfall on the Australian continent.

Janszoon proceeded to chart some 320 km of the coastline, which he thought was a southerly extension of the island of New Guinea.

Finding the land swampy and the people inhospitable Janszoon decided to return and arrived at Bantam in June 1606.


He called the land he had discovered "Nieu Zeland" after the Dutch province of Zeeland, but the name was not adopted and was later used by Abel Tasman for New Zealand.

Janszoon and the Duyfken were actually in Torres Strait in March 1606, just a few weeks before Torres sailed through.

In 1611 Willem Janszoon returned to Holland believing that the south coast of New Guinea was joined to the land along which he sailed. Dutch maps reproduced this error for many years.

Though there have been suggestions that earlier navigators from China, France, or Portugal may have discovered parts of Australia, the Duyfken is the first European vessel definitely

known to have done so.

	Dutch Republic
Name:	<i>Duyfken</i>
Launched:	1595
Fate:	Condemned beyond repair July 1608
General characteristics	
Type:	Barque
Displacement:	110 tons
Length:	65.4 ft (19.9 m)
Beam:	19.7 ft (6.0 m)
Draft:	8 ft (2.4 m)
Propulsion:	Sail
Speed:	7 knots (13 km/h; 8.1 mph)
Armament:	8 cannons

About Willem Janszoon's ship!

Duyfken (Dutch pronunciation: [ˈdœyfkən]; Little Dove), also spelled Duifken or Duijken, was a small ship built in the Dutch Republic.

She was a fast, lightly armed ship probably intended for shallow water, small valuable cargoes, bringing messages, sending provisions, or privateering.

The tonnage of Duyfken has been given as 25-30 lasten (50-60 tons).

[More from Wikipedia](#)

Below right: the decorated rear of the Duyfken replica. (Image: John Hill)

The Duyfken Replica Project



The Duyfken Replica Project founder was Dutch-born Australian historian Michael John Young who became aware of Duyfken as early as 1976 and lobbied extensively for a new replica project after the launch of the Endeavour replica in Fremantle, Australia in the mid-1990s.

The Duyfken Replica committee was established in 1995 with Michael Young and the late Dr. Kees de Heer and late journalist James Henderson. This led to the establishment of the 'Friends of the Duyfken' group then ultimately with John Longley's support, the 'Duyfken 1606 Replica Foundation'. The Foundation was initially chaired by the dynamic late entrepreneur Michael G. Kailis of Perth, who led the charge in raising the \$3.5 million building budget.

On 27 March 1997, Dutch Crown Prince William-Alexander laid the Duyfken Replica's Keel at the Duyfken Replica Ship Yard in front of the Fremantle Maritime Museum in Fremantle, Western Australia.

A full size reproduction of the Duyfken was built by the "Duyfken 1606 Replica Foundation" jointly with the Maritime Museum of Western Australia and launched on 24 January 1999 in Fremantle. She then undertook goodwill tours to Sydney, Queensland, Indonesia, Sri Lanka,

Mauritius, South Africa, and finally Texel in the Netherlands. While in the Netherlands, the floor of the hold was replaced by antique Dutch bricks.

[More from Wikipedia](#)

Find Out More

This article is by no means the complete story of Willem Jansoon, and it is not intended to be.

To help you in your research, I have included the links below:

[Wikipedia](#)

[United East Indies Company](#)

[National Library Of Australia](#)

[Australian Dictionary Of Biography](#)

[Australia For Everyone](#)

Please note that this is not the only information available online about the life of Willem Janszoon, Dutch Governor and Explorer.

The links that I have included here are a guide to help in your search, and I am not responsible for the content that they have published!

[Another history post that you may find interesting...](#)



Above: The Duyfken replica berthed on the Swan River, Perth, Western Australia (image: Nachoman-au)



I enjoy coffee with Allan
each day. You should too!

www.allancockerill.com