History

Queen Anne’s Island was first discovered in 1615 by an explorer by the name of Richard Gilmore. Five years after the original discovery Gilmore returned with 2 ships to establish a fort, Fort St. James. This fort was used as a jumping off point for the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630. The fort soon expanded become one of the largest compounds in the 18th century America. The island always had a permanent population for the families of soldiers who manned the fort, but soon more people began to set down roots on the island. The island officially become part of the Provence of Massachusetts Bay, incorporated as the Town of Queen Anne’s Island, in 1669. Until this point the island had just referred to as Gilmore’s Island but, was officially named Queen Anne’s Island after the current Queen of England.

Industry

Through most of its history the island’s main industry was whaling and, like the island of Nantucket, was a haven for whalers, especially for whaler who hunted up north near Canada and Greenland. After the practice of whaling was discontinued, the island found a new attraction, Education. The Bruce Maddox Institute for Technology originally opened as an agricultural institute in 1840 by an agricultural scientist named Bruce Maddox. Eventually the scope of it’s teaching changed and in 1921 it was renamed to what we know it as today. The islands revenue also comes from tourism and is heavily involved in the states marine transportation industry.

Seal and Flag Symbolism

The Seal pictures Queen Anne, looking at three stars, which is also on the city flag. The three stars reference the discovery of the island. The legend states that the island was only found because the navigator in Gilmore’s ship made and error in his navigation. He mistakenly thought that three starts were the lower part of the Sagittarius constellation and so directed them slightly east, leading them to discover the island. Gilmore would later state that it was “It was an act of god to discovery a land such as this by the mistake of man.” The Flag features the same stars, as well as a whale that harkens back to the islands whaling days. The flag also features the flag of England in the canton, a somewhat controversial feature that represents the island days as a British fort. Many on the island wish to have it changed while others disagree, arguing that the design itself is somewhat poor.