

Ashburton

The only site of ‘normal’ life on The Bleakness, is in the village of Ashburton, which serves mainly as a base for fishing fleets from Justice Island, and those who cannot abide the confining rule of the Hunters on Justice Island. So Ashburton is a fairly lawless place with many individuals pulling in all sorts of directions.

There are three main ‘industries’ – fishing (legitimate); base for intrepid/stupid adventures – both outfitting and buying any ‘treasure’ – at a goodly commission of course (opportunistic, but legal); and wrecking (opportunistic and illegal).

Most buildings are old and weathered, some barely habitable and quite a few ruined.

Following are a few sites of interest:

Black Billy’s Tower: the official lighthouse – and it is occasionally not lit, and a false light further down to coast is lit when the wreckers are in business.

Sailors’ Hostel: A one star dormitory establishment for housing itinerant sailors, and the odd adventurer. Property rights seem to be suspended in this ‘establishment’, and the whores don’t care who sees what they do.

Port Master: black Billy himself, the key figure in the wrecking business. The authorities on Justice Island would give a large reward for proof that he is the mastermind of the wrecking business.

Babes and Booze Inn: the social hub of Ashburton. As its name suggests, plenty of booze, punch-ups and busty babes for afters.

Bosun Ruth’s Court: Here the formidable ‘lady’ Ruth holds a kangaroo court dealing out summary justice to those who are caught infringing the few laws of the town 0 stealing from the bosses, not paying debts, and killing the wrong people. There is only one penalty – a one way trip to Tom’s Cemetery.

Captain Smee Lodging: The only really decent house in Ashburton, and luxuriously furnished inside. It is of course the home of the town’s ‘Mayor’, Captain Smee. And he runs everything that is legal and illegal.