

Coasters Retreat

Elanora is an Aboriginal word meaning home beside the water. Parts of Elanora Heights used to be called Green Hills.

In 1929 the Elanora Heights Estate was offered for sale and included the proposed development of Elanora Country Club. Roads were already prepared and electricity and water available. The area was promoted as close to the city, only 12 miles (20 kilometres). The Sydney Harbour Bridge was soon to be opened, providing easier access via the two main routes, Manly to Palm Beach and Mona Vale to Pymble. In 1888 coal mining was attempted near Deep Creek. Natural gas was found and piped to adjacent cottages.

Coal was discovered at 1900 feet (625 metres) but the drilling was abandoned.

The area is almost entirely residential now, commanding views across Narrabeen Lake to the south and to the east overlooking North Narrabeen to the ocean. To the west is Garigal National Park and Elanora Heights suffered severely in the bush fires of January 1994 which spread from adjacent bushland.

Memories

Letter from Mrs. Jean Norris, a resident from 1937-1984.

"Settling in Narrabeen in 1937, my father and younger brothers, to supplement the 'dole', as most of the men folk in Green Hills, would caddy at Elanora Golf Club and find lost golf balls. The golf balls were sold to a man called Choko Murril. Later he and my father Peter de Gail became partners in an S/P Bookie business which was mainly conducted at Narrabeen Hotel. We bought our meat from a cart operated by a Charlie Laws, where he cut and wrapped it. I worked as a domestic for a Mrs. Emma Schultz and her husband Charles, who owned a large home on the lakes at the lower end of Lagoon Street, last house on the right.

Powderworks Rd now, was Kobado Road. The terrain was very countryfied, no footpaths etc. The trams operated from Manly to Narrabeen hence Narrabeen Terminus. The tram shed is still standing as it was then, now bush shed.

Proceeding to Green Hills it was best to walk along the road & safe as not many cars were around. The only taxi cab was owned and operated by Mr. Stebar who also built boats as a hobby. Turning into Powderworks Rd, (then) a wooded horse trough was situated on the right and along further, was swamp over to Namona Street where the High School stands. The football ground on Pittwater Rd also was underwater. The dredging of the lakes gradually filled in this land, also along the right hand side of Powderworks Rd. A few houses existed on the hillside, one owned by Mrs. Alice Wheeler. This house before the cessation of World War II was rented and occupied by my family for 25 years. The corner of Powderworks Rd & Kabada had a wooden-structured grocery shop owned by the Mr & Mrs Chappels and sons Henry & Fred. The Warraba & Kabada Rd corner held a Post Office and General Store, prop. Mr & Mrs Palmer. A dentist, Mr. Jones, lived in Kabada Rd. Later his

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son moved into a cream fibro house where now stands St. Joseph Catholic school, where he operated his dentist business. The Valley of Green Hills was beautiful with Willow Trees especially, and white lillies grew bountifully. Some of the families were Pierces, Stacks, Brunells, Ernest Godden & family (related to me), Youngs and we lived in The Crescent, de Gails.

A very fine woman, a school teacher, Mrs Norman, to my mind needs recognition for the wonderful part she took in the foundation of Nth Narrabeen Public School, Garden Street, (was once Powderworks Rd). Mrs Norman conducted her class of approx 40 children in the Welfare Hall which later on became the 'Wireworks' owned by Mr. Bambach. ...Mrs Norman was the school Mistress, she drove an old Chevy to and from work. When Mullet Creek flooded, so was the school yard. On these occasions she would take her shoes and stockings off and with her skirt tucked up and a child on each hip, she would take the children to the toilets and back".

Elanora-Narrabeen News, April 1984 Vol.1, Nos. 4 & 5.

Reading

"It is the road to the powder works, the scene of the remarkable enterprise of M. Von Bieren; the locality also most frequented by the artistic collectors of flowers for the show. All the flowers grow out here, from the tall waratah to the lowest creeping heath. All are abloom now, and the face of the forest is alight with their colour, and the air is heavy with their odours. The gatherers have not stripped the earth, and save in the matter of waratahs, have scarcely impoverished the show. A little tender care, a little sympathy must be craved for these waratahs, even at the cost of a little self sacrifice to the decorators of flower show stalls. The waratah show is not as it used to be, either on the seaboard or the mountains, and there is danger that the next generation will talk of waratahs as of things of beauty which have lived and died, but return no more."

Francis Myers, *A Traveller's Tale: From Manly to the Hawkesbury*, 1885.

Further reading

Hugh Barry, *Elanora The history of the Elanora Country Club*, 1997.
Historical information Elanora Heights and club.

Joan Lawrence, *Pittwater Pictorial History*, 2006.
Historical and contemporary information.