

Scotland Island

Scotland Island lies at the southern end of Pittwater. The first official land grant of Scotland Island was to Andrew Thompson in 1810. The land grant by Governor Lachlan Macquarie stipulated that the island be known as Scotland Island. It seems Thompson may have already had permission to use the island for his salt boiling works for several years before the grant. Thompson also built boats including a ship, the Geordy, which was launched in November 1810 shortly after his death.

There were various claims of ownership to the island during the nineteenth century but it was finally sold in 1892. It was then subdivided and advertised for sale in 1906. Some holiday homes were built but there were few permanent residents until the 1960s. The island is reached by ferry from Church Point.

Memories

"By the time most people read this, electricity will be available on the Island, and to some parts of the Western Shores. The Mackellar County Council in conjunction with the Progress Associations of Scotland Island and Western Shores arranged a very special function in Catherine Park, Tennis Wharf, Scotland Island at 8 p.m. on Saturday, December 22nd.

The power was officially switched on by Councillor Gordon Brown of Warringah Shire Council and Mackellar County Council. Guests, including Councillors and the men who actually carried out the installation work, were welcomed by the Presidents of both Progress Associations.

This was the day that most of us had looked forward to since our Association was first founded nearly eight years ago.

In his address your President pointed out that it was very fitting that the Ceremony should be performed on such an historic spot... for it was here (near Tennis Wharf) that Andrew Thompson had his ship-building yards back in 1810. He also stressed the fact that the Ladies Committee had done most to get us electricity.. they had felt quite rightly that the men were not moving fast enough.

Within a few weeks power will be available to all houses on the Island, so if you have not already had your house wired, now is the time to get moving. Just think of the difference it will make!"

The Scotland Island News, Christmas 1962.

Reading

Visit to the Island of Manly-Warringah and Pittwater Historical Society

"This took place on Saturday July 4th, 1959. It was a perfect day. Members of the Society were our guests for the afternoon. We left Church Point about 1.45 p.m. and tied up first at Bell Wharf from where we walked around to the rock sculptures. Our visitors were very interested in these and the opinion was expressed that they were of a much later period than convict days. In fact their visit brought to light initials on the carvings which could quite easily identify J. Benns as their originator. We then rejoined the ferry and went past Bangalla which was pointed out as the oldest house on the Island. We continued around the eastern side to Tennis Wharf where the ferry was tied up. The visitors were shown the site of Andrew Thompson's shipbuilding yards and the old tennis court.

Following this the party proceeded to our fireshed, where the ladies of Scotland Island provided and served afternoon tea. At the conclusion the visitors passed a vote of thanks to the ladies for a very enjoyable repast.

An informal meeting followed to discuss the location and type of memorial that should be erected to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the granting of Scotland Island to Andrew Thompson.

One speaker suggested that we should construct a dam to supply water to residents of the Island. This was considered to be quite beyond our combined means. Mr. Gledhill said that his Society's idea of a suitable memorial was a stone block with a plate let into it. This plate would point out places of interest around Pittwater. In reply our President said that our Association would like to have a stone fireplace built for the use of picnickers. This would reduce the risk of bush fires. Finally it was decided that we should combine the two and it was decided that the celebrations and unveiling would take place on the afternoon of January 1st next. The visitors appeared to enjoy themselves so much that it was getting dark before they finally boarded the ferry to return to Church Point."

Scotland Island News, October 1959.

Further reading

G & S Champion, Manly Warringah & Pittwater 1788-1850, 1997.
Andrew Thompson and early settlement and industry.

G & S Champion, Manly Warringah & Pittwater, 1850-1880, 1998.
Changes in ownership.

G & S Champion, Scotland Island: a brief examination of its early European history, 2014
An updated article concerning the early history of Scotland Island.

Alan Corbett, Church Point & McCarrs Creek, 1987.

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Recollection and history from 1920s.

NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL

Jenny Cullen, Scotland Island Matters, 1997.
Environment and water management.

P Gledhill, Manly & Pittwater, its beauty and progress, 1946.
Nineteenth century history.

Joan Lawrence, Pittwater Paradise, 1994. Pittwater Pictorial History, 2006.
Historical and contemporary information.

John Morcombe, "Island was first local site of European settlement", Manly Daily, 28/4/1999.
History

SINEWS, Scotland Island News 1955-1998.
Local newsletter.