

Northern Beaches Thematic History

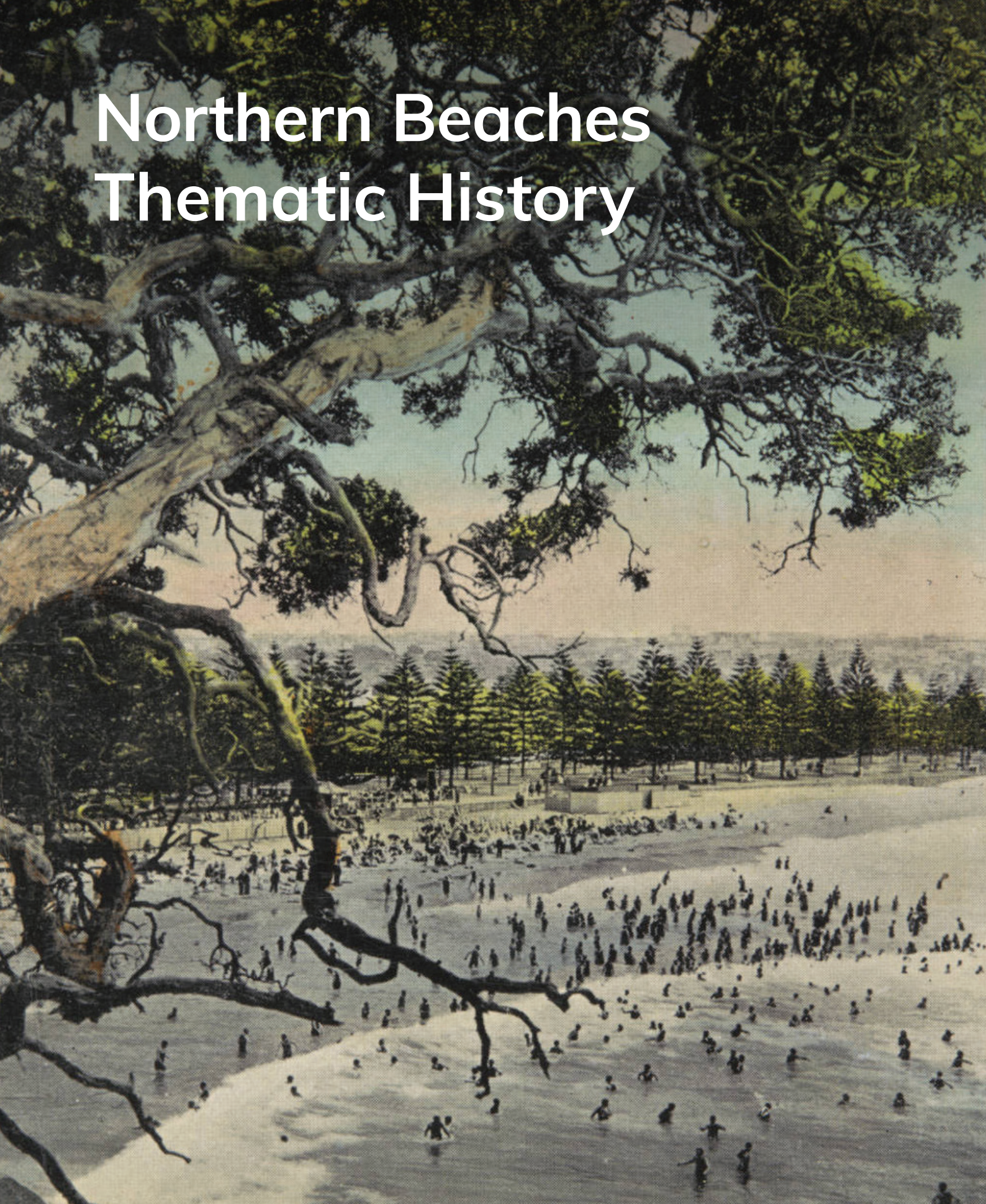


Image credit: National Museum of Australia
Manly Beach from Fairy Bower



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Contents

Preface	1
Introduction	3
Historical overview	7
Theme 1: natural environment	11
Theme 2: aboriginal culture and dispossession	17
Theme 3: isolation and transport	30
Theme 4: surveys and settlement	43
Theme 5: land speculation, creation of towns and suburbs	54
Theme 6: leisure and tourism	74
Theme 7: new suburbs and cultural landscapes	88
Northern beaches today	127
Appendix a: selected timeline of events	129
Appendix b: previous thematic histories	141
Appendix c: historic themes comparison	143
Appendix d: select bibliography	149

Preface

This thematic history has been prepared for the amalgamated Northern Beaches Council, which was formed in 2016 by the amalgamation of the former Manly, Warringah and Pittwater councils.

It is not intended to be a comprehensive report of all aspects of the history of the Northern Beaches. Rather, it is an overview of the Northern Beaches' past and the major historical processes that have contributed to the significant patterns and character of the area today. In doing so, it identifies the key local themes evident throughout this history, which have been fundamental in shaping the existing character of the Northern Beaches.

Typically, a thematic history is prepared when a comprehensive heritage study is being undertaken for an area. The history is then used to provide a framework for investigating and identifying heritage items.

This thematic history is different. Its purpose is to consolidate and update existing thematic histories, providing a collated thematic history which applies to the whole amalgamated area of the Northern Beaches. Several existing thematic histories were prepared as part of heritage studies for the former Manly, Warringah and Pittwater areas. These heritage studies identified heritage items and areas, which formed the basis of the current heritage lists within the Manly, Warringah and Pittwater Local Environmental Plans.

The purpose of this thematic history is therefore not to update the current list of heritage items. However, it will be used when the Northern Beaches Council undertakes a full or partial heritage review in the future.

At that time, the thematic history will be used to guide the identification and listing of new heritage items. When potential heritage items are identified, they will be considered in relation to the key local historic themes,

which reflect the pattern of development and the history of the Northern Beaches area.

In the interim, these themes will also be applied to existing heritage items, thereby highlighting any theme that is not adequately represented in the current list of heritage items. This information will then be used to guide future heritage reviews.

This thematic history is centered around seven key local historic themes. These themes are aligned to NSW State Historical Themes and Australian Historic Themes, which are listed in Appendix C.

Research for this thematic history was based on published secondary and primary sources, as recommended by the NSW Heritage Office (now Heritage NSW) guidelines.

It has also been supported by the considerable corpus of prior heritage studies undertaken for the three former local government areas that now comprise the amalgamated Northern Beaches Local Government Area.

Additional research has been undertaken including the reference material published by the Aboriginal Heritage Office; extensive use of primary sources accessed via the National Library of Australia's Trove historical newspapers and collections, including journals and first accounts by early settlers; surveys, maps and subdivision plans held in the State Library of NSW; historical aerial photography from NSW; and the Australian Census, which was a key data source for the development of towns and the built environment.

Images are sourced primarily from public collections, including the State Library of NSW, the National Library of Australia, the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, the Australian National Maritime Museum and the Local Studies Unit of the Northern Beaches Library.

The select bibliography (Appendix D) lists the other published sources that were consulted.



Phillip Osborne and Iris Nichols at Middle Creek, c.1930s. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 61627)

Introduction

Why a Thematic History?

This thematic history provides an account of the history of the physical and social development of the Northern Beaches.

This history outlines the course and pattern of the Northern Beaches to help readers appreciate why the area is like it is today. It identifies and explains a selection of locally distinctive themes that help us understand the area and its historic physical fabric.

The thematic history is focused on key local and state historic themes that have played a significant role in shaping the Northern Beaches. It does not provide a detailed chronological account of everything that has occurred through time on the Northern Beaches. Nor is this history a comprehensive record of every person, activity, event, school, shop, sporting club and institution that may have played a role in the life and development of the area. A selected timeline of events has been included at Appendix A, which identifies some of these important events.

These key themes, and the associated histories, provide a framework for the future identification and assessment of potential heritage places and items. The thematic history provides a backdrop or broader historical context for assessing and determining heritage significance.

This account demonstrates the importance of the history and heritage of the Northern Beaches. It will assist in the formal protection and conservation of the places that make the Northern Beaches distinctive and significant.

Existing Thematic Histories

Prior to the 2016 amalgamation of the Manly, Warringah and Pittwater councils, several thematic studies were commissioned by these councils for each local government area:

Heritage Study Municipality of Manly, Volume 2: Thematic History, Kate Blackmore and Associated Consultants, 1986.

Barrenjoey Peninsula and Pittwater Heritage Study, Volume 1, McDonald McPhee Pty Ltd, Craig Burton, 1989.

Historical Context Report: prepared for the Warringah Heritage Study, Judy Wing, 1992.

Pittwater Community Based Heritage Study Review, Part 3: Thematic History, City Plan Heritage, 2015.

All these previous histories and reports were commissioned as part of major heritage studies and resulted in the identification of heritage items and areas for listing. This thematic history brings all these previous studies together and will be used in the future to assist with the identification of additional places and items of heritage significance to the Northern Beaches area.

Although the existing national and state thematic framework was not formalised until 2001, these previous studies identified themes within the history of the Northern Beaches. The recurring and overlapping themes in the previous studies have been assessed and analysed as part of the preparation of this overarching thematic history.

The seven local themes identified for the Northern Beaches in this history are based on and synthesise those in the previous thematic histories. The themes in the previous thematic histories are included in Appendix B. A full list of NSW State Historical Themes and Australian Historic Themes themes can be seen at Appendix C.

Natural Environment

The natural environment of the Northern Beaches is characterised by an extensive terrain of Hawkesbury Sandstone plateaus, and is deeply incised with heavily vegetated river valleys, which form sanctuaries for wildlife and vegetation. The coastline is defined by a dramatic series of headlands, beaches, bays, estuaries, lagoons and the Barrenjoey Peninsula.

The characteristics of the heads and rock platforms vary according to the geology, or type and structure, of the rock which forms the shoreline. Dramatic formations, such as those at Bungan Head and Bilgola Plateau, have been shaped by atmospheric and marine processes working over thousands of years.

This unique environment has become home to rich marine and terrestrial ecosystems. It has also influenced the course and pattern of human occupation over tens of millennia.

Aboriginal culture and dispossession

The first Australians developed an intimate relationship with their natural environment, as well as shaping it through the controlled use of fire and the creation of pathways. The Northern Beaches' chapter of this history is closely related to the natural history of the area and its exploration by the officers and convicts of the First Fleet.

Our knowledge of the Aboriginal culture and the settlers' exploration of the Northern Beaches is primarily based on the memoirs of First Fleet officers, as is our record of the first extended interactions between Aboriginal Australians and European settlers. This story is significant far beyond Manly and the Northern Beaches.



Harbord, c.1920.
(Source: Northern
Beaches Council
Library Local
Studies, 40061)

Isolation and Transport

This is the most commonly identified theme in the existing thematic histories. The Northern Beaches is the most isolated area of Sydney, separated almost entirely from city and suburbs by natural waterways. For the past two centuries this isolation has slowed the development of transport links and, hence, the settlement and urbanisation of the Northern Beaches, a process which encouraged a focus on visitation and temporary rather than permanent residence. This shifted with the development of early public transport routes including links to Mona Vale, Bayview, Church Point and Frenchs Forest. More importantly, after 1923 road connections such as Pittwater Road and Mona Vale Road and bridges across The Spit, Roseville and Narrabeen began to bind connections within the area.

Surveys and settlement

Like much of Sydney and surrounds, most of the land of the Northern Beaches was granted to a variety of settlers, from ex-convicts to colonial grandees. The main aim of these grants was to encourage farming and settlement, an aim which was not successful for most of the Northern Beaches. For much of the 1800s, poor soil and transport, combined with repeated episodes of lawlessness, restricted the settlement, agricultural production and population increase north of Manly. Therefore, most of the land remained in its natural state for some time. Market and poultry farming proved more successful during the first half of the twentieth century and is thus an important part of the area's history, overlapping with migration history.

Land speculation, creation of towns and suburbs

Truly the leading Australian industry, land speculation became part of the Northern Beaches' history from the 1880s as numerous residential subdivisions were surveyed and advertised. That most new building sites remained unsold was partly due to the Depression of the 1890s, but mostly thanks to the ongoing isolation of the area, apart from Manly, which was poorly serviced by transport until tramway construction commenced early in the twentieth century. Even then the towns and suburbs north of Manly were distinct from those of Sydney in their transient populations and somewhat makeshift, low-cost built environment.

Leisure and Tourism

The creation of Manly as a resort town during the 1850s initiated a leisure economy, which became the main driver of urban development at the Northern Beaches. Initially confined to European-style resort pleasures and urban forms, this economy boomed when Sydneysiders began to interact with the natural environment in new ways, notably swimming and surfing.

Ocean pools, surf life saving clubs and 'weekender' clusters of rudimentary camp buildings were among the prominent expressions of the new leisure economy. 'Weekenders' were a new form of urban development across Western society; the Northern Beaches settlements were part of this international phenomenon as well as a distinctive expression of it. As our society and economy become increasingly focused on service and leisure industries rather than industrial production, Manly and the Northern Beaches can be acclaimed as pioneers of our present.

New suburbs and cultural landscapes

The Northern Beaches' leisure focus attracted architects familiar with the architecture of environment and pleasure-focused living. The first were exponents of the bungalow genre, notably James Peddle, while from the middle years of the twentieth century Northern Beaches suburbs became home to a rare concentration of Modernist residential design. Architect commissions were more common at the affluent north and south ends of the peninsula; vernacular design ruled elsewhere.

The mid-twentieth century also saw a concerted attempt to provide more local employment on the Northern Beaches. Brookvale was the centre of an industrial boom, with a variety of large and small enterprises locating there. This was amplified by the development of large retail shopping centres in the early 1960s. The matching suburban boom of the 1960s and 1970s was part of a cultural efflorescence as the Northern Beaches became a world capital of surfboard riding and manufacture. The area also produced numerous successful rock bands, some of them products of the surfing craze.

Surfing was also an inspiration for the environmental consciousness which emerged as a factor in local politics and development policies from this time. Today the Northern Beaches remains renowned for its unique environment, lifestyle and focus on leisure opportunities.

Historical Overview

This historical overview is a concise summary of the following more detailed thematic account of the key patterns and phases of the development of Northern Beaches.

Aboriginal people have lived in Australia for at least 60,000 years. Vast changes occurred over this period. The ice age 30,000 years ago caused the sea level to recede by more than 100 metres, creating an arid climate and challenging conditions to survive in. As the globe warmed 6,000 years ago, hundreds of generations of coastal Sydney people witnessed water fill the valley of Sydney Harbour.¹ The present shoreline of the Northern Beaches was formed at this time and the new coastal environment supported a rich harvest of aquatic and terrestrial life.

Around 1,500 years ago, trade networks between Aboriginal groups changed, extending north and south along the coast rather than inland. This reflected new technological developments in Aboriginal people's use of local quartz, fish, bone and shells in tool making. What they were not able to gain through the sea they gained on land, using controlled fires to clear country for hunting, travel and agricultural production. Cultural beliefs were not just performed and spoken but also etched into the landscape. Some carvings were oriented to align with the passage of constellations, signalling phases of a complex seasonal calendar that guided the availability of food or warned of weather conditions such as storm seasons and the associated dangers of travelling on water.

1 Paul Irish, 'Aboriginal Paddington', in Dr Greg Young (ed), *Paddington: A History*, New South and The Paddington Society, 2019, p.19.

Much knowledge of early Aboriginal cultural life and practice across the Northern Beaches is based on the writings of First Fleet officers and other Europeans. It is important to note that this only captures an outsider's viewpoint of their complex and unique societies. Colonial recordings and observations of different groups, combined with the views and values of the period, shaped encounters and interactions which in turn flowed into the history of the area, the colony and indeed concepts of sovereignty and nationhood in Australia today.

As the colony expanded in Sydney Cove, the Northern Beaches area attracted people on the peripheries of colonial society drawn by its isolation. In 1819, a police constable was established in Pittwater to combat the criminal activity in the area. The isolation also proved useful for the colonial government, which established a quarantine reserve on North Head in 1838.

The landscape alterations and patterns of urban development on the Northern Beaches were shaped by early land grants and later subdivisions. The boundaries applied to nineteenth-century land grants in the area and the great swathe of estate subdivisions in the early twentieth century were the precursors to the Northern Beaches suburbs, towns, public spaces and overall urban pattern of today.

A portion of the ownership boundaries, instated by the region's earliest land grants, were determined by natural features of the environment. Access to fresh water was fundamental. The location of waterways, lagoon mouths and the junctions of beaches and headlands, as well as the setting aside of lands for public recreation, were largely dictated by the natural landscape and its topography.

The largest nineteenth-century land holdings included:

- James Napper, 'Larkfield' (Palm Beach Estate);
- John Joseph Therry, 'Mount Patrick' (Careel Head, Avalon, Newport);
- James Jenkins, 'Cabbage Tree Hill' (Bongin Bongin Beach);
- Elizabeth Jenkins (Narrabeen, Turimetta Head, Mona Vale);
- John Ramsay (Collaroy);
- William Cossar (Long Reef Head, Dee Why);
- James Jenkins, James Wheeler and John Harper (Dee Why);
- Thomas Bruin (Freshwater);
- Charles Andrews and Christopher Shelley (Queenscliff Beach);
- John Thompson (centre of Manly Beach);
- Gilbert Baker (Manly CBD);
- D'Arcy Wentworth (Manly Vale); and
- Richard Cheers (Manly CBD and Eastern Hill).

An initial phase of land subdivision and speculation began in the mid to late decades of the nineteenth century. This was followed by an influx of estate subdivisions in the early twentieth century as the area became more popular and its transport connections improved.

In 1867, much of the farming land in the area lay fallow and the area remained sparsely populated. However, grants continued to be given during the mid-nineteenth century, and increasingly farther inland to areas such as Frenchs Forest. Farther south, Manly was developing at a faster pace. A trader named Henry G Smith had acquired a large amount of land in the area by 1853, setting out to create a new seaside resort town reminiscent of Brighton in England. That year he was

given permission to build a private wharf and laid out his town, naming streets and boulevards after famous European places, one of which was to be 'The Corso'. After buying shares in ferry companies, Smith arranged two paddle steamers to make a run to his Manly Wharf twice a day, vastly improving the accessibility of the Northern Beaches.

During the 1870s the number of households and businesses in Manly more than doubled. The area became home to some of Sydney's wealthiest, most high-profile individuals, who were attracted by its natural beauty and setting. Following pressure from the Council, ferry services to and from Manly were increased, further opening up the area.

Aboriginal people were still living on the Northern Beaches but tended to occupy the spaces on the fringe of the newly settled areas, especially in Manly. Aboriginal people periodically camped in Manly Cove between the 1850s and 1870s. However, as the colony grew, government intervention resulted in policies that relocated Aboriginal people away from the settled areas to other places such as La Perouse and Malaga.

By 1889, the Manly Municipality had over 3,000 residents. This growth signalled the area's transition over the decades from a wealthy holiday-retreat to a commuter suburb. Yet the area retained its sense of leisure, and remained popular for day trippers and picnickers. Several large estates were subdivided around this time, opening the area to new residents. The sale of these lands were fuelled by the growth of suburbs such as Dee Why, Collaroy and Narrabeen, and the holders of the large estates took advantage of this. Unlike Manly, these areas were not as intensively developed. The dramatic natural setting of the coast was a drawcard for visitors, who could engage in recreational pursuits such as fishing and shooting.

Recreational interests expanded and swimming became a popular activity for residents and visitors. Initially this activity was confined to baths constructed in the harbour, which were built as early as 1879. The picturesque beaches of the area began to be filled with bathers too, despite the bans put in place. Once the bans were rescinded in 1903, the beaches' popularity boomed. Safety became paramount as drownings increased, prompting the need for patrols. In response Manly Council hired a paid life saver in 1907, the first in Australia. Rock pools offered a safer alternative to beach swimming, the first being the Dee Why Rock Pool, carved out in 1914.

Manly's expanding population precipitated the development of key infrastructure like the Manly Cottage Hospital, which was mainly funded by donations from residents numbering 10,000 in 1911.² Meanwhile, the rest of the Northern Beaches was still sparsely populated.

Clontarf and Middle Harbour were dedicated as pleasure grounds and camping areas. Seaforth was subdivided, yet recorded only 48 residents in 1921. Warringah Shire Council was formed in 1906, having just 2,800 residents in its borders by 1911. Freshwater, Brookvale, Dee Why, Newport and Curl Curl were popular beaches and teemed with people on the weekend, but had few permanent residents. Many of the structures on the beaches and the surrounding areas were modest timber shacks. There were few masonry buildings.

The construction of trams between Northern Beaches suburbs in the early twentieth century vastly improved access to the area. More permanent residences were built within land subdivisions in attractive beachside areas. This was assisted by a push by local councils to remove the beachside shacks in favour of permanent buildings. It was during this period that the bungalow became a defining feature of Northern Beaches suburbs.

The built form character of the Northern Beaches changed during this period, as did the culture. Surfing was introduced to the area in the 1910s. It had obvious appeal, becoming a popular pastime by the 1950s and 1960s. With many surf beaches on its doorstep, the Northern Beaches became synonymous with surfing in Australia and the world at large.

Farther inland, the experience of development in the early twentieth century was very different. The inland areas of Brookvale and Warriewood were devoted to market garden sites. Many farmers were of Chinese background. Despite the discrimination they faced in everyday life, they were well respected for their skill in growing produce. From the 1930s to 1950s, this position came to be held by southern European immigrants, who broadened both the culture of the area and the palates of Northern Beaches residents through the introduction of new food.

The mid-twentieth century saw a coming of age across the Northern Beaches. Residential development flourished and flats came to dominate construction. Many of the hotels along the Corso were renovated at the time, matching the new tastes of Australian society and accommodating the influx of American soldiers during the Second World War. Warringah Mall opened in 1963, establishing a commercial retail centre in the heart of the Northern Beaches. Brookvale became industrialised. Its market gardens were progressively bought up and converted to factories, such as the Top Dog clothing factory built in 1950.

Over time, residents of the Northern Beaches became more affluent. Bespoke residential design projects reflected the taste and style of wealthier residents. In 1938, one of Australia's first Modernist houses was constructed at Palm Beach and over the next

² The Sydney Morning Herald, 14 December 1896, p.3.

few decades, the Northern Beaches came to be associated with high-profile Modernist designs. Designer home subdivisions became popular too, bringing the dream of owning a Modernist home to everyday families.

In the 1960s, surfing was accompanied by counterculture, and the Northern Beaches became a hotbed for psychedelia, environmentalism and alternative lifestyles. Pubs became important centres of live music, heralding the era of 'pub rock'. The crowds of the Northern Beaches were raucous, and bands like Midnight Oil, Rose Tattoo, and INXS cut their teeth in and around Northern Beaches venues.

Since the 1970s the Northern Beaches has grappled with competing visions of the future. The politics of the area came to be dominated by questions of urban renewal and development. Residents felt as though the character of the area was at threat of being destroyed. They stridently opposed large residential towers, arguing such buildings were at odds with the area's low-density

residential housing. Despite some high-density development, residents were largely successful in resisting. It was recognised that the area could not accommodate high-density residences without major improvement to the transport infrastructure.

The environment became another concern for residents, as degradation and development had destroyed significant ecological features of the Northern Beaches. Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park was declared in 1985 (though it has been a conservation area since 1894), protecting some of the Northern Beaches' most unique environments. An unusually large proportion of the total land area of the Northern Beaches is dedicated as reserves or sanctuaries, showing the value its residents place on the area's natural beauty.

The history of the Northern Beaches demonstrates and explains its distinct character and development. It is unlike any other area in Sydney, its relative isolation giving it the freedom to develop the unique culture enjoyed by its residents today.



Freshwater Beach Kiosk, c.1918.
(Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 40358)

Theme 1: Natural Environment

Today the Northern Beaches Council area encompasses 250 square kilometres, the majority of which comprises residential, coastal foreshores, beaches, bushland and reserves.³

Approximately 150 square kilometres of the Northern Beaches is bushland. The Northern Beaches Council manages 17 square kilometres and another 114 square kilometres is within three local national parks.

The natural heritage of the Northern Beaches is a significant theme in the development of its history and occupation. Known for their beauty and easy access, the area's beaches, headlands and national parks are a drawcard for visitors and residents.

Many of the Northern Beaches' current heritage listings are landscape items or landscape/natural conservation areas, reflecting the importance of this theme. In Manly, the Manly Cove Pavilion and Wharf are listed, as are many other items. Manly Dam, Bantry Bay Explosives Depot and Waratah Park are listed on the State Heritage Register.

³ Northern Beaches Council area: community profile, *Id Community: Demographic Resources* (<https://profile.id.com.au/northern-beaches/about/>), accessed 30 June 2021.

Barrenjoey Head Lighthouse and several historic homes (such as Hy Brasil, Loggan Rock and Walter Burley Griffin Lodge) reflect the history of significant architectural responses to managing and living within the unique natural environment of the Northern Beaches.

Coastline and Waterways

The coastline of the Northern Beaches is 80 kilometres long, stretching from Manly to Palm Beach, rounding into Middle Harbour and Pittwater. This coastline includes natural and built foreshores, beaches, dunes, rocky headlands, cliffs, intertidal areas, marine waters, harbours, estuaries and reefs. Four aquatic reserves have been established at North Harbour, Cabbage Tree Bay (more than 160 species of fish and 50 marine invertebrates have been recorded here along the rocky shore), Long Reef (the oldest aquatic reserve in NSW), Narrabeen Head and Barrenjoey Head to protect the diverse habitats and associated marine life. Bungan Head, Mona Vale and Dee Why Headland are also classified as Intertidal Protected Areas to protect the unique marine life found at these rock platforms.

Bungan Beach south headland looking south toward Mona Vale. c1910 (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 60786)



The present Northern Beaches shoreline is a relative newcomer in geological terms, forming from about 6,000 years ago as the planet warmed, and the seas rose again. Freshwater rivers and creeks became saltwater tributaries of the ocean and the main Sydney valleys drowned, forming the harbour and Broken Bay at the south and north extents of the Northern Beaches. The form of the coastline was shaped by the sandstone ridges running parallel to the shore, comprising Hawkesbury Sandstone to the north, and Narrabeen Group shales and sedimentary sandstone to the south. Rugged headlands were formed from eroding sandstone ridges, which also helped shape the area's small bays, sand dunes and beaches. The 24 beaches which make up the Northern Beaches coastline are for the most part bounded by rocky headlands, rock platforms or reefs. Some of these beaches are flanked by a dune or lagoon system. The characteristics of the heads and rock platforms vary according to the geology, or type and structure, of the rock that forms the shoreline. Dramatic formations, such as those at Bungan Head and Bilgola Plateau, have been shaped by atmospheric and marine processes working over thousands of years.

The Northern Beaches contains a series of smaller waterways, lagoons and estuaries with their own distinct character. Narrabeen Lakes (or Narrabeen Lagoon) is the largest of the Northern Beaches lagoons and is fed from the catchment of Deep Creek in Garigal National Park. It remains the most intact coastal saltwater lagoon in the Sydney region. Dee Why Beach intersects with the estuarine barrier lagoon and wildlife sanctuary of Dee Why Lagoon. The lagoon is a significant and special coastal environment, a remnant of a network of saline marshlands which were formerly widespread throughout the Sydney region. Long Reef plays host to an important geological rock platform and habitat sanctuary, the oldest aquatic reserve on the NSW coast. Its prominent cliffs and headlands offer long, sweeping vistas that stretch as far as the Central Coast on a clear day. From Bangalley Head the peninsula narrows and stretches north to become a sandy isthmus, with Whale Beach and Palm Beach running along the east side and Pittwater (a tide-dominated drowned valley estuary) along the west.



Bilgola Beach, looking south along the coast c1939 (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 42053).

Degradation and Protection

Away from the coast, the more fertile ironstone soils concentrated on the western ridgetops at Frenchs Forest, Belrose and Terrey Hills whilst the fine clay and shale soils from Long Reef to Pittwater were more fertile than the sandy soil to the south. As a result, the Northern Beaches is home to a variety of ecological communities and protected areas such as Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and Garigal National Park, which give a sense of the rich harvest that became available to the people of the Northern Beaches. Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park is still home to about 1,000 native plant species.

There is no doubt that much of the Northern Beaches environment has been degraded. Creeks and lagoons have been filled in or reclaimed, including Mona Vale Lagoon, or destroyed for the 'Brock's Folly' resort. Sand hills have been removed, for example at Curl Curl beach. Several ecological communities are also endangered and exist today only as remnants. These include the Swamp Sclerophyll Forest at Dee Why Lagoon; stands of swamp mahogany (*Eucalyptus robusta*) and related trees once flourished by the lagoons from Curl Curl north to Avalon and Newport. Other endangered communities include the Spotted Gum Forests, now confined to the western slopes of Avalon, Newport and Palm Beach.

Yet the Northern Beaches also has a long history of environmental protection. Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park was Australia's second national park and one of the oldest in the world. Garigal National Park, Manly Dam Reserve and numerous other nature sanctuaries are also found within the area. The result is that an unusually small amount of the Northern Beaches' 250 square kilometres of land area is devoted to residential and commercial uses; the higher densities of the beachside suburbs contribute to that result. The recognition and protection of environments

within the Northern Beaches was established early, with Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park protected as a conservation area in 1894. In 1923, the Middle Harbour area of present-day Garigal National Park was first reserved for public use. The park includes the valley of Middle Harbour Creek and its tributaries, the slopes along the northern side of Middle Harbour as far as Bantry Bay and part of the catchment of Narrabeen Lakes. Several additions expanded the park holdings, with the Narrabeen Lakes area reserved as Garigal National Park in 1991 and the former Davidson Park State Recreation Area absorbed in 1992. Today the Garigal National Park covers over 2,000 hectares of bushland in northern Sydney, protecting unique ecosystems of sandstone swamp, mallee woodlands containing yellow top mallee ash (*Eucalyptus luehmanniana*), floodplain wetlands, rainforest and vegetation.

Conservation works by the community have been matched by Australian governments through legislative protection for unique ocean environments. Other works include the heritage listing of sites and landscapes with significant natural and cultural values, establishment of aquatic reserves and Intertidal Protected Areas along the peninsula and creation of the Coast Walk. Examples of other protected communities on the Northern Beaches include Pittwater Spotted Gum Forest, Coastal Upland Swamp, Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest, River-Flat Eucalypt Forest, Coastal Saltmarsh, Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub, Littoral Rainforest and Sydney Coastal Estuary Swamp Forest Complex. Grey-headed flying fox camps occur at Warriewood and Avalon and endangered populations of little penguins and long-nosed bandicoots occur within the Manly area.

Key facts - Northern Beaches coast and waterways

Coast

**80km**

Coastline

**24**

Ocean beaches

**27**

Coastal and public rock pools

**36km**

Coastal walkway

**5**

Aquatic reserves

**2**

Surfing reserves

**4**

Intertidal protected areas

Waterways

**7**

Major catchments

**20**

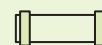
Major creeks

**5**

Coastal lagoons

**3**

Major estuaries

**600km**

Stormwater pipes

Biodiversity

**540**

Native animal species

**1,460**

Native plant species

**48**

Plant community types

**60**

Threatened species

**13**

Threatened Ecological Communities

**50**

Wildlife protection areas

One of the earliest activist groups was the Tree Lovers' Civic League, who petitioned the Government to purchase sites of arboricultural and scenic merit. Restoration works have also been undertaken by a range of community bushcare organisations up to more recent times. The region has a long history of environmental conservation thinking and action. Various contemporary environmental citizen science projects take place on the Northern Beaches, including for example 'CoastSnap', a community beach monitoring tool, and 'Dragons of Sydney', a water dragon data collection program. Community bushcare and preservation organisations on the Northern Beaches include:

- Friends of Bungan
(formerly Bungan Beach Flora and Fauna Committee, 1969);
- Friends of Dee Why Lagoon;
- various local Surfriders Clubs;
- Newport Bushlink Group;
- Angophora Reserve Bushcare Group;
- Avalon Dunes Bushcare Group;
- Avalon Golf Course
- Volunteer Bushcare Group;
- Bangalley Headland Reserve Bushcare Group;
- Careel Creek Bushcare Group;
- Plateau Park Bushcare Group;
- Toongari Reserve Bushcare Group; and
- Avalon Preservation Association.

The global challenge of climate change is the new peril for the natural environment of the Northern Beaches. It is expected to bring increased flooding, prolonged periods of drought, sea level rise, changes in the flow and patterns of local waterways, more frequent and severe bushfires, more damaging coastal storms and erosion. Northern Beaches Council has committed to net zero emissions by 2045 to align with the Paris Agreement and NSW Government targets. The community too has turned its focus towards sustainability and preservation of the Northern Beaches' iconic natural landscapes.

The iconic landscapes of the Northern Beaches remain today – the beaches, lagoons, forests and headlands, which embraced the First Peoples and challenged Arthur Phillip. Says author Tom Keneally, a long-time Northern Beaches resident:

It's a difficult area because, for example, when we first moved out here it was still trying to make up its mind as to whether it was going to be an environment of weekenders or one of permanent residents. You can see the marks of that all over the Peninsula. And in a way, all of us have built fairly shoddily along this coastline and the only thing that saves us from a sort of squalor are these wonderful headlands, the wonderful beach and the wonderful vegetation.⁴

⁴ Sydney Morning Herald, 12 March 1987, p.62.



The following theme on Aboriginal history was written by Dr Charles Pickett. It was written within the limits of the scope of a thematic history. Dr Pickett based his research on primary historical documents (for example, diaries, letters, government records, published papers, images, books, etc). In Australia, the written historical record has typically been produced by non-Aboriginal people and may therefore not accurately represent Aboriginal knowledge, traditions and practices.

These accounts are just fragments – snapshots in time left by colonial-era European observers. These observers brought their own perspectives and prejudices with them. They were often active participants in the colonial project, and their accounts of what they witnessed – in terms of the Aboriginal responses, adaptations and resistance to the arrival of Europeans – may have been shaped by this broader agenda.

This theme provides a high-level summary of just some of the key places and people associated with Aboriginal cultural heritage on the Northern Beaches. It needs to be complemented by future projects that record and listen to the oral histories and traditions of the Aboriginal community living on the Northern Beaches, contemporary Aboriginal expressions of culture and connections to the area today, and the archaeological record.

To its first people, the environment of the Northern Beaches provided food, shelter and law. For the Europeans who came much later, Sydney's environment was so baffling and unyielding that they were soon in danger of starvation. To survive, Governor Arthur Phillip and his officers sought the knowledge of the Aboriginal people of the Northern Beaches.

Manly was the site of this tragically brief attempt to befriend and learn from the local Aboriginal people – one of modern Australia's founding stories.

Aboriginal people have lived in Australia for at least 60,000 years. We often assume that the first Australians lived in harmony with an unchanging environment. In fact, their history is one of change and adaptation as their environment altered dramatically. About 30,000 years ago an ice age settled over the planet, drying and cooling the environment and lowering the sea level by more than 100 metres. The harbour and Broken Bay were sandstone valleys with rivers running into a vast coastal plain which met the sea at the edge of the continental shelf, 10 to 20 kilometres east of today's shoreline.

The arid climate forced a change in the abundance of flora and fauna, including among the large megafauna that had once thrived here and had been hunted by Aboriginal people. Eucalypts adapted best, thriving in the sandstone soils of Sydney and forming the botanical heart of dozens of vegetation communities. The Indigenous population adapted as available food resources diminished or changed; there is archaeological evidence that seed grinding became an important way of providing food in this period.⁵ The end of the last ice age dramatically shifted the landscape as the main Sydney valleys drowned and the present-day Northern Beaches coastline formed.

⁵ Jessica Curry, *Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go. Yesterday Today Tomorrow: An Aboriginal History of Willoughby*, Willoughby City Council and Aboriginal Heritage Office, 2008.

As the seas stabilised, the people of the Northern Beaches took advantage of the new shoreline, with marine food resources made more plentiful and more diverse by the warmer sea waters. The sea became the major source of food for harbour and beach dwellers. This change was embodied in new fishing technologies, notably the bone barbs used to tip fishing spears and the fishing hooks fashioned from shell. Raw materials of hatchets and other tools were gained through trade networks. Hatchets were also essential to strip the bark sheets which were formed into fishing canoes, shields and huts.

Lieutenant William Bradley of the First Fleet described the production of fish hooks:

One of the women made a fishing hook while we were by her, from the inside of what is commonly called the pearl oyster shell, by rubbing it down on the rocks until thin enough and then cut it vertically, shape the hook with a sharp point rather bent and not bearded or barbed.⁶

When we reached the opposite shore we found Abaroo and the other women fishing in a canoe, and Mrs Johnson and Barangaroo, sitting at the fire, the latter employed in manufacturing fish-hooks.⁷

Long before Arthur Phillip and his fleet of convict ships arrived, the landscape of the Northern Beaches had been shaped by its inhabitants. Controlled fire was used to clear country for hunting, to attract kangaroos, wallabies and other game, make travel easier and encourage the growth and visibility of root vegetables. The resulting clearings misled the first European arrivals, then searching for arable land for the precarious new colony, into believing that they had discovered pastures 'very proper for cultivation', in Phillip's words.⁸ The landscape had cultural roles as well, expressed most enduringly in the carvings on rock platforms and walls, 'proofs of their ingenuity in the...representations of themselves in different attitudes, of their canoes, of several sorts of fish and animals...'⁹ These form an outstanding gallery of outdoor art, with hundreds of examples of rock art.

⁸ Barrenjoey Peninsula and Pittwater Heritage Study, 1988, p.69.

⁹ John White, *Surgeon General to the First Fleet*, Angus & Robertson, 1962, p.123.

⁶ *A Voyage to New South Wales: The journal of Lieutenant William Bradley RN...*, State Library of NSW, 1969, p.92.

⁷ Watkin, Tench 1788, p.149.

Contact

Although comparatively isolated from the first European settlement in Sydney Cove, the people of the Northern Beaches were the first to develop a relationship with the new arrivals. For a few years Manly and its people were central to the life of the new colony and saw the beginning of its troubled relationship with the Sydney people.

In January 1788, Captain Arthur Phillip embarked on a reconnaissance north from Botany Bay and in passing inside North Head, later recalling:

the boats ... were seen by a number of men, and 20 of them waded into the water unarmed, received what was offered them and examined the boats with a curiosity that gave me a much higher opinion of them ... And their confidence and manly behaviour made me give the name of Manly Cove to this place.¹⁰

Manly Cove was later renamed Eve's Cove after the first meeting of British settlers and some Aboriginal women on 29 January 1788. Eve's Cove was shown on the first known map of Port Jackson. The local name for Manly was Kay-ye-my, one of numerous place names recorded by William Dawes at this time.¹¹ A Lieutenant of Marines, Dawes was also a surveyor and astronomer and his interest and concern for the Sydney people was genuine to the extent of initially refusing to take part in a 1790 punitive expedition against the Aboriginal assailants of Phillip's gamekeeper. With his classical and scientific education, Dawes was typical of the inquisitive and worldly officers supporting Phillip, who were under instructions to 'endeavour by every possible means to open an intercourse

with the natives, and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all our subjects to live in amity and kindness with them'.¹²

Phillip and his officers returned to Manly and the Northern Beaches several times during 1788, completing expeditions to Pittwater, Frenchs Forest, Middle Harbour and elsewhere using the creeks and the established Aboriginal paths through the bush. His interest in the Sydney people was not entirely one of curiosity or diplomacy; the first European settlement was a fragile construct, the land around the harbour was difficult to farm and the newcomers were desperate to find fertile land to feed themselves. By becoming familiar with the Aboriginal people and their language, Phillip hoped to learn more of the new land and its resources. The Northern Beaches proved a disappointment to that end. Its steep ridges and gullies meant that land appropriate for farming or grazing was uncommon, as was the sandy soil and low-lying estuarine flats of seaside areas.

However, Phillip learned enough from his encounters with Aboriginal people to realise that he was not dealing with one people, but with interconnected groups of people. This would have been particularly evident at Manly, because the spectacular North Head was a place of significance to the people of the Sydney coast and beyond, a place of trade and ceremony.¹³ Like all parts of the landscape, North Head bore meanings shaped by ancestors; it was a place of burial and mourning, where bodies of those with an ancestral and familial connection to the northern harbour were carried. These kinship connections were widespread, for although clans were associated with particular territories, their members' family associations spread much farther north and south along

¹⁰ Pauline Curby, *Seven Miles from Sydney: A history of Manly*, Manly Council, 2001, p.20.

¹¹ William Dawes, *Vocabulary of the language of New SW in the neighbourhood of Sydney, 1790–1791*.

¹² Arthur Phillip, Memorandum, October 1786, *Historical Records of New South Wales*, vol. 1, p.52.

¹³ *Draft Management Plan: Former School of Artillery, Sydney Harbour Foreshore Trust*, 2005, pp.17–18.

the coast between Shoalhaven and Port Stephens. Marriage was not permitted within clans, so each clan was linked to others by marriages and other familial relationships.¹⁴

The kooringals (elders) and koradgee (doctors, clever men)¹⁵ came to North Head to perform initiations, burials and other ceremonies. These spiritual leaders have been recorded as mostly members of the Cammeraygal clan of the north harbour.¹⁶ However, the Cammeraygal were only one recorded clan of Aboriginal people who depended on the harbour and Northern Beaches for their livelihood. Manly has been recorded as home to the Cannalgal clan, whose land stretched to Dee Why.¹⁷ Yet today we have a much less certain view of Aboriginal language groups and clans in metropolitan Sydney. Much debate exists regarding the clans and languages across and within various land areas given the bias in the documentary records. This uncertainty is not likely to be clarified or resolved given the inherent limitations. Much evidence of Aboriginal people's presence survives at North Head: shell middens, a canoe scar

tree, carved and painted rock art, and stone artefacts, largely on the western side of North Head, which has beaches, fresh water and a large variety of plants (compared to the cliffs and sandstone ledges of the eastern side).¹⁸ Meanwhile, North Head often blazed with fire, as in May 1788 when a First Fleet surgeon reported having seen 'a great Fire ... we found it to be the burning of a Healthy brush-wood which we supposed the Natives had set on Fire for some Purpose'.¹⁹

18 John Ogden, *Saltwater People of the Broken Bays: Sydney's Northern Beaches*, Cyclops Press, 2011, p.35.

19 George Worgan, *Journal of a First Fleet Surgeon*, Library Council of NSW, 1978, p.49.

14 Grace Karskens, *Colony: A history of early Sydney*, NewSouth, 2010, pp.37–38.

15 Jakelin Troy, 1993 *The Sydney Language*, Aboriginal Studies Press p.38.

16 *From Quarantine to Q Station: Honouring the Past, Securing the Future*, Arbon Publishing, 2017, p.24.

17 Emma Lee, *The Tale of a whale: Significant Aboriginal landscapes of the Northern Beaches*, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, 2002, pp.8–9.



Bennelong, by Samuel John Neele, 1790–1799. (Source: National Library of Australia, PIC Drawer 4043 #S4297)

Bennelong

In admiring terms Phillip and his staff recorded the Aboriginal people's fine physique and comfort in their environment, including the 'dextrous management' of their bark canoes, 'added to the swiftness with which they paddle, and the boldness which leads them several miles into the open sea'.²⁰ Also impressive were the diving skills of the men and women:

Getting onto the rocks that projected into the sea, they plunged from them to the bottom in search of shell-fish. When they had been down for some time, we became very uneasy on their account ... At length, however, they appeared, and convinced us that they were capable of remaining underwater twice as long as our ablest divers ... They did this repeatedly until their baskets were nearly full.²¹

During 1788, Phillip had mostly amicable encounters with Aboriginal people on the Northern Beaches. On 22 August Phillip and Surgeon John White landed at Manly Cove and saw 16 canoes, each containing two or three people. Daniel Southwell, a mate on *Sirius*, wrote that they 'affected a good deal of humour and unconcern; but 'tis believed they do not much like our coming amongst them.'²²

By this time Aboriginal people knew that the new arrivals were not about to depart; there was also increased competition for the seafood bounty of the harbour as the fledgling colony struggled to feed itself. Watkin Tench, a Captain of Marines and close friend of William Dawes, wrote: 'The dread of want in a country devoid of natural resource is ever particularly terrible.'²³

The Northern Beaches Aboriginal people

²⁰ A Voyage to New South Wales: The journal of Lieutenant William Bradley RN..., State Library of NSW, 1969, p.100.

²¹ John Ogden, *Saltwater People of the broken bays*, p.28.

²² Curby, *Seven Miles from Sydney*, p.23.

²³ Watkin Tench, *A Complete account of the settlement at Port Jackson*, University of Sydney, 1988, p.9.

gained the great majority of their sustenance from the harbour, but this bounty was seasonal and Aboriginal people near Manly often moved north during autumn and winter as harbour fish stocks declined. Now their livelihood was being threatened.

The result was increasing tension. Skirmishes became more frequent: 'In addition to former losses, a soldier and several convicts suddenly disappeared and were never afterwards heard of.' In December 1788, 'tired of this state of petty warfare and endless uncertainty', Phillip decided to capture a few of the Sydney people in the hope of understanding 'the cause of their mysterious conduct, by putting us in possession of their reasons for harassing and destroying our people'. Two boats were sent 'down the harbour, with directions to seize and carry off some of the natives. The boats proceeded to Manly Cove'. There two men were seized but, as Tench reported: so desperate were their struggles, that, in spite of every effort on our side, only one of them was secured; the other effected his escape. The boats put off without delay; and an attack from the shore instantly commenced.²⁴

The abducted man was Arabanoo, who died of smallpox during May 1789: 'By his death, the scheme which had invited his capture was utterly defeated.'

The autumn of 1789 was the height of the smallpox epidemic. Instead of descriptions of a thriving waterside society, the First Fleet officers recorded heartbreaking sights:

It was truly shocking to go around the coves of this harbour, which were much frequented by the natives; where in the caves of the rocks, which used to shelter whole families in bad weather, were now to be seen men, women and children, lying dead.²⁵

The smallpox epidemic is believed to have

²⁴ Tench, *An Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson*, pp.10, 12.

²⁵ Bradley, *A Voyage to New South Wales*, p.93.

killed at least half of the Sydney people during 1789, undermining their clans and social structure. At the same time colonists' rations were being steadily reduced:

Intercourse with the natives, for the purpose of knowing whether or not the country possessed any resources, by which life might be prolonged ... being every day more desirable, the governor resolved to make prisoners of two more of them.²⁶

In November 1789 two men were captured at Manly, one of whom, Colebee, a koradgee (doctor, clever man), soon escaped.

The other was Bennelong, an elder of the Wangal clan of the Parramatta River, who had married Barangaroo of the Cammeraygal clan, and lived mostly at Manly and North Head. Bennelong was held captive for some months, during which he learned English and began wearing European clothing. During the first half of 1790 the colony was edging towards starvation, yet 'during this season of scarcity' Bennelong was 'taken care of as well as our desperate circumstances would allow':

We knew not how to keep him, and yet were unwilling to part with him. Had he penetrated our state, perhaps he might have given his countrymen such a description of our diminishing numbers and diminished strength as would have emboldened them to become more troublesome. Every expedient was used to keep him in ignorance...²⁷

It is not fanciful to suppose that had the Sydney people known how close the colony was to failure, they may have combined to destroy it. Before the smallpox disaster the Sydney people had greater numbers than the colonists; the epidemic reduced the possibility of such a campaign. In any case, Bennelong seems to have plotted a more traditional form of revenge

on his captors. When finally released from his shackles he discarded his new garb and left the colony, being sighted soon after at Manly Cove.

During July 1790 a whale entered the harbour, capsizing a small boat before being wounded by harpoons. A month later the whale's carcass washed up on the beach at Manly Cove, where it was seen by a party of soldiers 'who had travelled to Manly Cove to walk to Broken Bay'. Bennelong was among the hundreds of people feasting on the whale and according to Watkin Tench:

Bennelong asked for Governor Phillip. Captain Nepean sent the Boatswain back to Governor Phillip at South Head. The Aboriginal men cut large chunks of whale meat off and put them in the boat for Governor Phillip.

When Phillip arrived, he conversed in a relaxed manner with Colebee and Bennelong, before an older Aboriginal man appeared with a spear ... The Governor moved towards this man and the man became agitated ... The spear was thrown and Governor Phillip was hit in the shoulder. All was confusion, there was a call to bring the muskets. Bennelong and Colebee disappeared...²⁸

²⁸ Tench, *The Settlement at Port Jackson*, p.44.

²⁶ Tench, *An Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson*, p.28.

²⁷ Tench, *An Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson*, p.35.



Pencil & sanguine drawings by Pavel Mikhailov, 1820 (Source: Australian Institute of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders Studies.)

Phillip's assailant was Willemering, a koredgee man from Broken Bay. The spearing may have been a premeditated kinship payback for Bennelong's abduction and captivity. During September Bennelong and Barangaroo met several of Phillip's officers at Manly and asked if Phillip had survived the attack. Assured of Phillip's recovery, Bennelong promised to visit him and suggested that he had beaten Willemering as punishment for his attack. However, when Bennelong visited Phillip in December 1790 he assured the Governor that he was on good terms with the Cammeraygals: and being asked if he had seen the man who threw the spear at Governor Phillip, he said yes, and had slept with him; nor was there any reason to suppose he had ever beat, or even quarrelled with him on that account.²⁹

Partly due to Phillip's orders that there be no reprisal for his spearing, the attack seems to have briefly improved relationships between the colonists and the Aboriginal people of the Northern Beaches, exemplified by Bennelong's rekindled friendship with Phillip. Increasing numbers of Sydney people, their society and livelihood disrupted by smallpox and competition for land and food, began to inhabit the lower levels of colonial society. The Second Fleet had arrived from July 1790 bearing supplies and increasing the colony's population.

Phillip had a hut constructed for Bennelong at the point that today bears his name, but with the colony's future secured the governor had less need of the knowledge or friendship of the Sydney people. By 1791, the new colony was no longer so closely bound to the Aboriginal people of the Northern Beaches.

29 John Hunter, *An Historical Journal of the Transactions at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island ...* John Stockdale, Piccadilly, London, 1793, pp 499–500. Bennelong had slept by Willemering's campfire.

Bungaree

Six weeks following the establishment of the colony at Sydney Cove, Arthur Phillip led an exploratory longboat party along the Northern Beaches. Arriving at the entrance to Broken Bay Phillip encountered 'the finest piece of water I ever saw, and which I honoured with the name of Pitt Water', for the prime minister, William Pitt. Inside the bay he found almost every inlet occupied by families and men who, although 'armed with spears, clubs stone hatchets and wooden swords', quickly put aside their weapons and 'became very friendly'.³⁰

During August 1788 another expedition followed the established path from Manly to Pittwater; when repeated in June 1789 the group led by Captain John Hunter witnessed the devastation that smallpox had visited upon the Pittwater people.

With their society struggling to survive, many Aboriginal people moved south during the 1790s, including Bungaree, who became one of the Indigenous people assisting the colony's expansion by acting as guides, interpreters and intermediaries to explorers and settlers.³¹

Bungaree excelled in this role. In 1798 he was one of three Indigenous people employed on the *Reliance* for a 60-day round trip to Norfolk Island. On this voyage he met Lieutenant Matthew Flinders, who employed Bungaree on the basis of his 'good disposition and open and manly conduct'. During 1802 and 1803 Bungaree again sailed with Flinders, this time during his circumnavigation and charting of the Australian continent. Bungaree negotiated meetings and safe passage with the coastal peoples encountered on the way. He served in similar roles on other exploratory voyages.

30 Bradley, *A Voyage to New South Wales*, p.90.

31 Tench, *An Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson*, ch.14.

Bungaree was living on the north shore of Sydney Harbour when Governor Macquarie arrived in 1810, gaining a fishing boat and the first Aboriginal land grant from the new governor. Although conferred with the European title 'Chief of the Broken Bay Tribes', Bungaree had little authority in Indigenous society, but instead adapted his diplomatic skills to town life, gaining land and other favours for his clan, and exhibiting his comic skills on the streets of Sydney, where he would mimic governors and other worthies in between rowing to greet ships entering the harbour. Astute and adaptable, Bungaree took advantage of the new society while simultaneously mocking it. His fame was such that he became the subject of more than 20 portraits, most notably Augustus Earle's 1826 representation of Bungaree as symbolic master of the harbour and surrounds.

Bennelong, Barangaroo and Bungaree remain perhaps the best-known Indigenous names of Sydney and Australia's history, proof of the prominence of the people of the Northern Beaches in Sydney's founding years.

Resistance

Bungaree's connection with the colonial invaders was one mode of survival; another was continued resistance. At Broken Bay, this often took the form of piracy of the numerous passing boats. Following an 1805 attack with five canoes at Pittwater on the *William and Mary*, the *Sydney Gazette* warned that 'the natives seem inclined to try their dexterity in piratical achievements, now that they are assured we are tolerably upon the guard against their atrocities by land'.³² Musquito, a Gai-Mariagal man from the north shore of Sydney Harbour, moved to Broken Bay and the Hawkesbury, and became notorious during 1805 for leading a series of attacks on settlers. During April a form of martial law was imposed on the Hawkesbury people, the governor hoping that 'the apprehension of the Native called Musquito might effectually

32 *Sydney Gazette and NSW Advertiser*, 28 April 1805, p.3.



The taking of Colebee and Bennelong at Manly Cove, 25 November 1789. (Source: Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Call Number Safe 1/4, File Number 1113938)



'William Govett notes and sketches taken during a surveying Expedition in N. South Wales and Blue Mountains Road by William Govett on staff of Major Mitchell, Surveyor General of New South Wales, 1830–1835.' Sketch may have been drawn at Avalon. (Source: State Library of NSW, Call Number: SAFE/A 330 Safe 1/404)

prevent any further mischief in those quarters'.³³ During July, several Natives suspected of being concerned in the late Outrages ... were liberated on Tuesday last on a promise to use their utmost endeavours to apprehend the Native called MUSQUITO, who has been reported by the Natives themselves ... as the Principal in all the wanton acts of Cruelty they have perpetrated.³⁴

Thus betrayed and arrested, Musquito was exiled to Norfolk Island and later to Hobart, where he continued his bushranging activities.³⁵

By the time of Bungaree's death in 1830, many of Sydney's surviving Aboriginal people had regrouped in waterside locations, including Camp Cove just inside the harbour near South Head, as well as La Perouse, Kurnell and along the Georges River and Port Hacking. The town of Sydney remained concentrated near Sydney Cove and was extending west and south rather than towards the coast, where swamps, sandstone and sand continued to be viewed as unattractive and unproductive. Hence the coastal Sydney people could continue to fish, an activity made even more important as kangaroos and other land-based wildlife were hunted and scared away.³⁶

³³ *Sydney Gazette and NSW Advertiser*, 9 June 1805, p.4.

³⁴ *Sydney Gazette and NSW Advertiser*, 7 July 1805, p.1.

³⁵ Naomi Parry, 'Musquito', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 2005.

³⁶ Irish, *Hidden in plain view*, p.34.

The area from Palm Beach to Manly was first surveyed by James Meeham, Government Surveyor, in 1815. Later, in 1829, the Assistant Surveyor, William Govett, surveyed the area again from Broken Bay to Manly and recorded the location of Indigenous camps at Broken Bay, Barrenjoey and Cowan Creek. Govett described and sketched fishing at Bilgola:

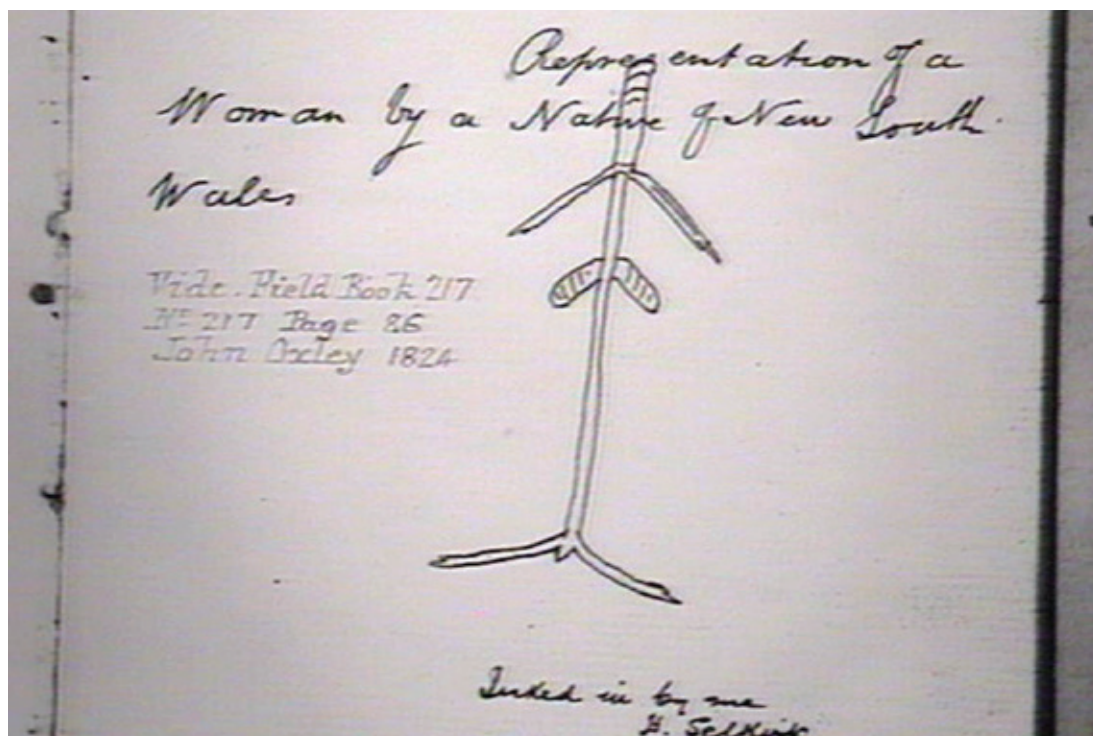
They stand at the very extremity of the rocks, the breakers often forcing them from their footing – and, as soon as they have thrown out the line – cautiously but gradually bring it in coiling it as before, wh. care, – but when, they feel a fish they haul in with great rapidity ... In this manner I have seen a native catch eight large snappers in less than half an hour from the time he commenced fishing – If a party of blacks has been assembled together on the coast for the purpose of fishing for themselves, as they were sometimes accustomed to do,

they form an animated and lively group of figures – On these occasions they make good fires as near their fishing ground as possible and generally rest and eat them as soon as they are caught until they are satisfied – The women attend the fires while the boys catch bait, collect oysters and the men fish.³⁷

The remoteness of Pittwater and Barrenjoey also meant that escaped convicts often hid there and took to bushranging, including 'a notorious bushranger named Johnson, who had been committing depredations for a considerable time past in the neighbourhood of Broken Bay' and was captured with another escapee from Hyde Park Barracks.³⁸

37 William Govett, *Notes and sketches taken during a surveying Expedition...*, State Library of NSW, 1830–1835.

38 *Sydney Herald*, 12 December 1836, p.1.



Representation of a woman by Boin (Bowen) Bungaree in John Oxley's Journal, 1823 taken from the Government Printing Office; NRS 4481, Glass negatives. [7/15973] St7211 Bowen Bungaree, Representation of a woman by a native of New South Wales 7/1923, GPO 1 – 13890, (Source: NSW State Archives and Records)

Convicts Joseph Bennett, William Wicks and William Smith escaped in 1837 from Goat Island in the harbour before spending some weeks on the run and stealing from settlers at Pitt Water. Perhaps the most notorious case was that of Michael Toole, who was executed for the robbery with violence of an elderly couple at 'Kreele Bay [i.e. Careel Bay], in the district of Pitt Water'.³⁹

Toole was apprehended by the Pittwater police constable, this position having been established in 1819 when Robert McIntosh was appointed 'Constable to the districts of Pitt Water and North Harbour' with the direction that he 'be obeyed and respected'.⁴⁰ Yet Toole's actual captors were two Indigenous men assisting the constable. They were not named in press reports but the local man who located Bennett and Smith was described in

the Sydney Herald as 'a black fellow named Bowen'.⁴¹ This was Boin (Bowen) Bungaree, son of Bungaree and his first wife Matora, who followed in his father's footsteps as an interpreter, intermediary and guide. In 1823 he travelled with John Oxley during his exploration of the coast north of Port Macquarie. During this voyage Boin Bungaree drew a portrait of a woman in Oxley's journal, the first attributed artwork by an Indigenous Australian.

⁴¹ Sydney Herald, 17 April 1837, p.3.

³⁹ Sydney Gazette 20 May 1830, p.3.

⁴⁰ Sydney Gazette, 5 June 1819, p.1.



'Aboriginal painting on rock/cliffs, off the road, about 500 yards before the Bridge is reached over Manly Lagoon, towards Deewhy', by James Samuel Bray, 28 September 1895. (Source: Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, [c004070012 / PXA 187/10])

By 1832, Boin was living with his wife Maria and children at Barrenjoey, where he caught and sold fish and worked as a tracker and boatman for the police. With Broken Bay remote from Sydney but frequently visited by ships en route to the Hawkesbury, smuggling was recognised as a problem but not seriously addressed until 1842 when a cargo of rum and brandy which had left Sydney Harbour aboard the schooner *Fair Barbadian*, bound for Lombok, Java, was unloaded at Cowan Creek and sold in Sydney.⁴²

⁴² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 November 1842, p.2.

The following year a customs house was established at Barrenjoey 'in consequence of the extensive frauds on the revenue which had been discovered and for the purpose of watching the Brisbane and the Pitt Waters'.⁴³ During the following decade Boin became so valuable to the Broken Bay customs officer that he recommended to the Collector of Customs that Boin 'have a second boat which would cost about four hundred pounds and enable him to get a living for himself and family consisting of two daughters and a son...as he will be liable for insult and oppression for having aided me'.⁴⁴

It was claimed that Boin was shot by a bushranger near Bushrangers Hill, Newport, in 1853, although there is no corroboration of this event in the contemporary press.⁴⁵

⁴³ *The Australian*, 30 September 1843, p.3.

⁴⁴ *Pittwater Online News*, 22 May 2011.

⁴⁵ *Sydney Mail*, 10 August 1861, p.2.

Aboriginal hand stencil on Northern Beaches showing evidence of Malgun, a women's cultural amputation practice' (Source: Aboriginal Heritage Office, 2014)



Theme 3: Isolation And Transport

The Northern Beaches area was the most isolated part of the Sydney coast. The peninsula was bounded by water on three sides – four, if we count Middle Harbour or the creeks and lagoons which needed to be forded for access by land. As such, the survival of a fragmented Aboriginal society there is not surprising. Nor is the slow growth of European settlement despite the awarding of several large land grants from 1810 and, later, the peninsula's role in housing the Quarantine Station for the colony.

According to William Wells' *Gazetteer of the Australian Colonies*, the population of Manly Cove parish in 1848 was '24 houses and 63 inhabitants'. As well as Manly and Balgowlah, the parish covered the peninsula north to Narrabeen Lagoon.⁴⁶ Narrabeen parish, which extended from Narrabeen to Palm Beach, hosted six houses and 36 people while the parish of Broken Bay, which included land on the western side of Pittwater and around West Head, was home to 22 houses and 64 people – a total of just 163 people for the 264 square kilometres of the district, no doubt not including Indigenous people.

Land grants of 100 acres (40 hectares) or more were introduced by Arthur Phillip early in the colony's life as a means of encouraging farming and grazing. Awarded initially to officers and civil servants, land grants hurried the colony towards self-sufficiency while creating a class of powerful graziers and merchants such as John Macarthur and George Johnston. Governor Macquarie dispensed smaller grants and convict workers to former convicts and wealthy free settlers who joined this milieu.

The first Northern Beaches grants were made in 1810, while in 1815 former convict turned Government Surveyor James Meehan set out several farms as part of his extensive survey of the whole coast from present-day Barrenjoey

to Manly. Some of the Northern Beaches grants went to serial grantees, including Robert Campbell junior, granted 700 acres (283 hectares) at Mona Vale in 1819. The nephew of the pioneering Scots merchant after whom Campbell's Cove is named, Robert Campbell also succeeded as a merchant and pastoralist and had a track known as Campbell's Road cleared to his windfall. It was developed as a farm before being leased, and was described by a touring journalist in 1833 as:

a very fair cultivation farm leased to a small settler by the name of Foley. But the patches of arable land all along from Port Jackson to Broken Bay are generally of such limited extent ... that there must always be a very limited and widely scattered population.⁴⁷

Campbell soon sold his estate to D'Arcy Wentworth, another favourite of Governor Macquarie. In 1819, Wentworth was granted 380 acres (154 hectares) at Balgowlah and Manly Vale, one of numerous grants and purchases that made him the colony's largest individual landholder. Wentworth's purchases included the 400 acres of Barrenjoey Estate between Palm Beach and Pittwater granted in 1810 to naval surgeon James Napper. Although he named his estate Larkfield Farm, Napper had sold the land to Wentworth by 1822:

TO be LET: Situate at Pitt-Water, TWO FARMS, the one containing 700 Acres, the other 400 Acres of Land, nearly contiguous to each another, and particularly well calculated for the purpose of Grazing and Agriculture. Apply to D'ARCY WENTWORTH, Esq. the Proprietor.⁴⁸

Wentworth arrived in the colony in 1790 to take up the post of assistant surgeon. He went on to occupy numerous positions, including that of personal physician to Governor Macquarie. The father of William Charles Wentworth, he

⁴⁶ WH Wells, *A geographical Dictionary or Gazetteer of the Australian Colonies*, W & F Ford, 1848, p.252.

⁴⁷ *Colonist*, 28 February 1833, p.2.

⁴⁸ *Sydney Gazette and NSW Advertiser*, 2 August 1822, p.2.

was one of the contractors engaged to build Sydney Hospital (now The Mint and NSW Parliament House). He was Sydney's richest man by the time of his death in 1827, having amassed 22,000 acres (8903 hectares) of land.

This land included the first Manly grants, made in 1810 to ex-convict and butcher Richard Cheers and his employee Gilbert Baker. Cheers' 100 acres (40 hectares) extended from today's Ashburner Street to St Patrick's College, while Baker's 30 acres (12 hectares) ran from Ashburner to what is now the Corso. Farmed together, the properties were known as Cheers' Farm.⁴⁹

The largest Northern Beaches land grant was made to Father John Joseph Therry, one of the first Catholic clerics permitted to officiate in Britain's southern colony; until 1829 British law discriminated against the Catholic faith. Father Therry arrived in Sydney in 1820 and for some years was the sole Catholic cleric in mainland Australia. In 1826, Father Therry established a farm on 1200 acres (486 hectares), which encompassed most of the land south of Palm Beach to Avalon and Clareville.

In 1833, during the relatively tolerant governorship of Richard Bourke, the grant was made official although the attempts of Father Therry's workers to run cattle were foiled by 'barren rocks and hills of sand ... badly supplied in dry seasons with fresh water'.⁵⁰ In later years coal mining was attempted at Avalon, where from 1864 the Jesuit Fathers fruitlessly drilled in search of a payable coal seam. Father Therry also hoped to establish Josephton, a workers' village at Careel Bay, and to this end a small timber church, St Joseph's, was built there in 1870, some years after Therry's death in 1864.⁵¹

49 Paul Ashton, *Heritage Study Municipality of Manly*, Kate Blackmore and Associated Consultants, 1986, Volume 2, pp.87–88.

50 Shelagh and George Champion, *Manly, Warringah and Pittwater 1788–1850*, 1997, p.49.

51 *Freeman's Journal*, 16 January 1941, p.20.



Father John Joseph Therry, c.1854, by Wheeler & Co.
(Source: State Library of NSW, P1 / 1745, FL3295805)

Scotland Island

Like Robert Campbell and some other Northern Beaches grantees, D'Arcy Wentworth was content to lease or sell his property there. An exception was Andrew Thompson, who in 1810 was granted the 120 acres (49 hectares) of Scotland Island in Pittwater, although he had already in 1806 installed a salt works on the island.

Thompson was transported from Scotland, arriving in 1792 and joining the police force the following year. Pardoned in 1798, he became Chief Constable at Windsor, but public office was no barrier to private profit and Thompson accumulated land along the Hawkesbury River by grant and purchase. This area became Sydney's food basket and Thompson its main grain grower, employing a shipwright to build four boats to transport his produce to Sydney via the Hawkesbury and Broken Bay. Thompson received the Scotland

Island grant for his rescue efforts during the Hawkesbury floods of 1806 and 1809, although in 1805 he is recorded in the Sydney Gazette as having led a retaliatory massacre of several Indigenous men near Richmond.⁵² In the expanding but still fearful colony, this act presumably enhanced his reputation further.

During the same year local Aboriginal people attacked the convict workers at Thompson's salt works at Mullet Island (now Dangar Island):

two of the persons employed by Mr. A. Thompson as salt boilers at Broken Bay are missing since Monday last; and that the apprehension is strengthened by the circumstance of their arms being found, it being improbable, that if they had fled for security from the natives, they should have gone off unarmed, unless unfortunately cut off from the place they were left at, and precipitately obliged to take refuge in the woods.⁵³

The works were then moved to Pitt Island in Pittwater; Thompson's Land Grant stated the island 'is to be known by the name of Scotland Island'.⁵⁴ Salt was the main means of preserving food and Thompson's workers produced it by evaporating sea water. Thompson used some of this salt to preserve food on his transport boats, the last of which, the Geordy, was built on Scotland Island – one of several boats to be built on Pittwater.

Thompson died in October 1810. Because he lacked a wife or heirs, his vast estate was auctioned, including 'those valuable Salt-works at Scotland Island, Pitt-water, with a Dwelling-house and other requisite buildings attached'.⁵⁵ The salt works operated at least until 1819

when they were again offered for sale or rent.⁵⁶

However, salt making did not return to the island until 1900 when an oil burner was used to extract salt from sea water. By this time Scotland Island had been sold and resold a few times before being subdivided in 1906.

Although some holiday homes were built, permanent residents did not arrive until the ferry from Church Point began regular services during the 1950s.⁵⁷

The Jenkins Road

In 1810, William Cossar received one of the first Northern Beaches land grants, of 500 acres (202 hectares) from Dee Why to Long Reef, a name in use by 1815 when Cossar complained of the 'daily trespasses by 'Horned Cattle, Horses and Pigs' on 'the Farm at Long Reef'.⁵⁸ Cossar was Master Shipbuilder at the government shipyard on the western side of Sydney Cove. In this capacity he may have met James Jenkins, who was building boats at Darling Harbour within a few years of his arrival as a convict in 1802.

Cossar left the colony during 1819. His land passed through several hands, and was briefly acquired by D'Arcy Wentworth before being purchased by Jenkins. During 1823 he also gained ownership of the 410 acres (166 hectares) granted to John Ramsey in 1818:

A FARM, containing 410 Acres Land ... Bounded in the South Side by John Cossar's farm ... On the North and West sides by a north line to Narra-Bang Lagoon; and by that Lagoon; and on the east side by the Sea, to be called Mount Ramsay.⁵⁹

In 1827, Jenkins' daughter Elizabeth was bequeathed 200 acres (80 hectares) by

52 Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 12 May 1805, p.2. See also 'Andrew Thompson', Pittwater Online News, 3 August 2014.

53 Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 21 April 1805, p.2.

54 Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 15 September 1805, p.2 / pers comms with Local Studies – NSW Land and Property Maintenance Authority.

55 Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 22 December 1810, p.3.

56 Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 5 June, 1819, p.4.

57 Virginia Macleod, 'Scotland Island', Dictionary of Sydney, 2008.

58 Sydney Gazette, 24 June 1815, p.1.

59 Register of Land Grants and Leases, 21 August 1818, NSW Land Registry Services; Sydney Gazette, 23 January 1823, p.4.

family friend Alexander Macdonald. This land extended from North Narrabeen to Mona Vale and may well have been used by the Jenkins family before gaining formal ownership. James Jenkins also successfully petitioned for further grants of 100 acres and 250 acres at Cabbage Tree Hill, inland from Elizabeth Jenkins' holding.⁶⁰ The farm at Long Reef was described in 1826 as 'very superior It is the property of the name of Jenkins, whose improvements, extent and hospitality, evinced him as a farmer of some substance'.⁶¹ In 1829 Jenkins advised the Colonial Secretary that his farms hosted 440 head of cattle and 14 horses; his convict workers had cleared 14 acres (5.6 hectares) and built several kilometres of fences.⁶²

As a result of these and other grants and purchases, the Jenkins family by 1827 owned all the foreshore land from today's Mona Vale Hospital site south to Pacific Parade, Dee Why. With the addition of land purchased at Manly Vale in 1831 and two more grants at Mona Vale, the family amassed 1840 acres (744 hectares), becoming the major landowners on the Northern Beaches.

Although the Jenkins' farms seem to have been productive, cattle and produce could only be conveyed to market north to Mona Vale Road and then overland to Sydney. Jenkins petitioned the Government for land at North Harbour (Balgowlah) where he built a cottage and cattle pens, as well as a stone half-way house on his Manly Vale land. With four convict workers, Jenkins built Jenkins Road in seven weeks from the Long Reef farm to North Harbour via 13 bridges constructed at his own expense. Completed in 1826, it formed the basis of Condamine Street as well as Pittwater and Old Pittwater Roads.⁶³

These roads made travel to Sydney less onerous and improved the viability of Jenkins' farms at Long Reef and Narrabeen. The improved access to Sydney from the farms was advertised as 'obvious, having a good road only 6 Miles (9.6 kilometres) from Manly Point, from whence a boat can at any time reach Sydney in 2 hours'.

This claim was part of an advertisement offering the farms for lease following James Jenkins' death in 1835:

Long Reef Narrabeen Head, containing upwards of 150 Acres, 150 of which are in cultivation, and a considerable part cleared and fenced into convenient Paddocks; there is a substantial built stone Cottage on each Farm, with Barns and Out-offices as necessary for such an Establishment; there is a constant supply of Water in the driest seasons ... For further particulars, apply to Miss. Jenkins, Kent-street, North.⁶⁴

Before 1835 the family had resided primarily at their Kent Street address. However, Elizabeth and her siblings lived at the Long Reef homestead (at today's Homestead Avenue, Collaroy) for some years following their father's death in 1835. By 1852, when Mount Ramsey, the northern part of the Jenkins land, was offered for lease, the trip from Mona Vale to Sydney was advertised as taking 'four hours ... should business or pleasure require it'.⁶⁵

The Northern Beaches' closeness to Sydney, combined with its small and isolated population, meant that accounts of travels there became something of a journalistic genre, generally beginning with a variation of:

It seems strange that a portion of the country so near to Sydney ... should be a veritable terra incognita to all but a very few of the citizens of Sydney – yet so it is.⁶⁶

60 Register of Grants, 1792–1830, NSW Land Registry Services.

61 *Australian*, 20 December 1826, p.3.

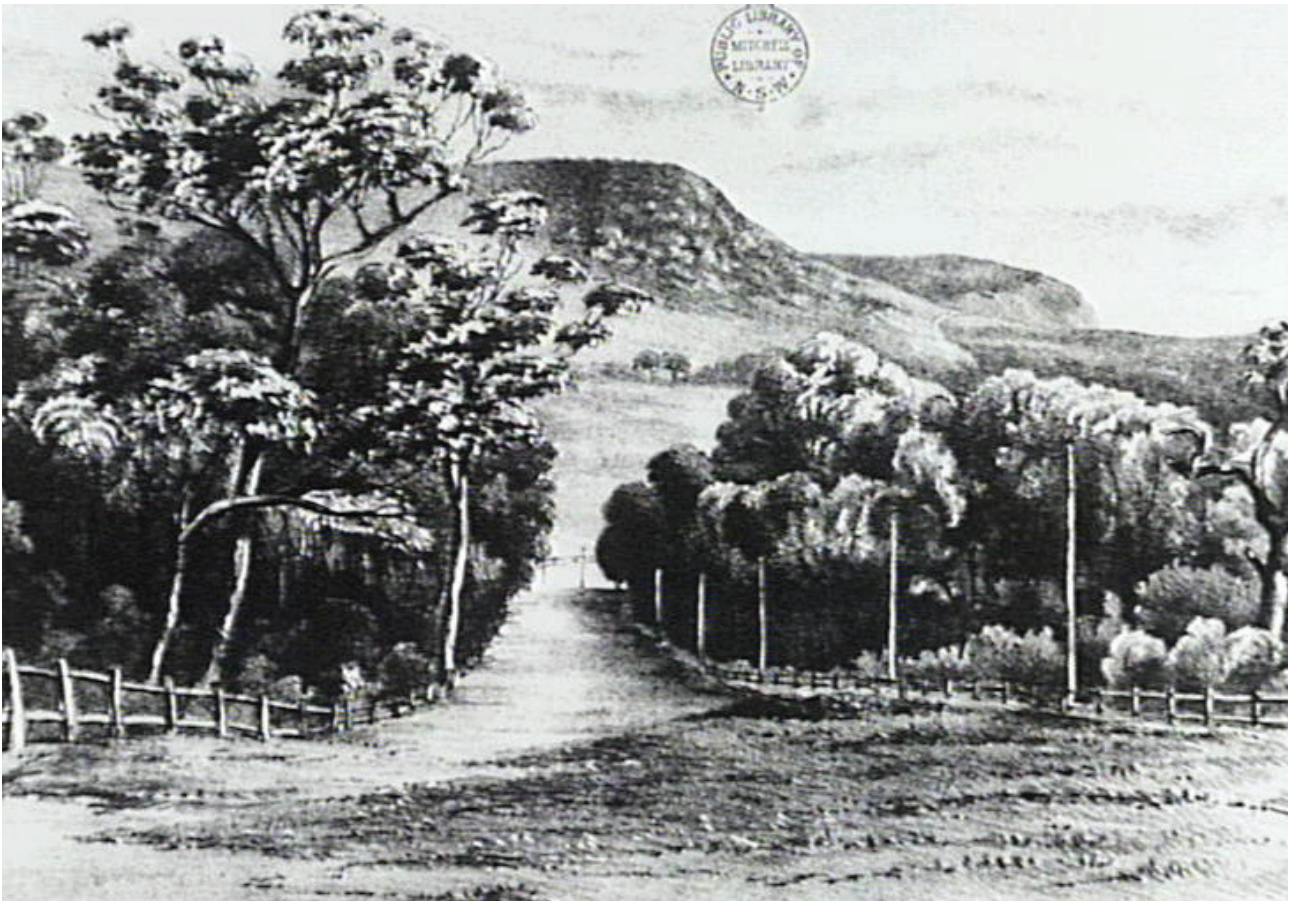
62 Tropman & Tropman, *Warriewood Heritage Study*, 1993, Vol.1, p.8.

63 Alan Sharpe, *Manly to Palm Beach*, Atrand, 1983, p.7.

64 *Sydney Gazette*, 3 March 1835, p.3.

65 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 May 1852, p.1.

66 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 March 1867, p.5.



Campbell's Avenue (Main Road) Newport from the Corner of Beaconsfield Street - Watercolour by H. Brees. From Pittwater & Hawkesbury Lakes Album, published 1880. (Source: Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW (Q 981.1M))

A writer for the *Sydney Mail* made much of two children who 'stood gaping at us with that bashful, half-wondering, half-spoony look often seen on the faces of children unaccustomed to strangers. The boy simply stood in open-mouthed astonishment ...'⁶⁷ Meanwhile the nomenclature of the Northern Beaches was becoming established: 'Narra-been' was in common use by 1830 as were versions of 'Deewy'.⁶⁸ The name 'Curl Curl' was common by 1842;⁶⁹ however, it was used to refer to Manly Lagoon (then called 'Curl Curl Lagoon') rather than its present-day location.

North Head Quarantine Station

Manly Cove was home to a few farmers and timber getters, but its diminutive population and isolation from Sydney were crucial factors

in the selection of North Head as a quarantine station. The first ship to quarantine there was the prison ship *Bussorah Merchant*, which arrived in July 1828 with numerous convicts displaying symptoms of smallpox. The ship was briefly quarantined at Neutral Bay, before the 'military guard and convicts were subsequently landed and encamped on a small point of land at Spring Cove'.⁷⁰

Smallpox, like whooping cough, influenza, measles, cholera and numerous other infectious maladies, was not treatable and this and other cases sparked fear and concern in Sydney, especially following the 1829 outbreak of a cholera pandemic in Europe. In 1832, the Quarantine Act was passed, legislating that the sick remain on the vessel on which they arrived in New South Wales. However, in 1837 the *Lady McNaughton*, bearing mainly women free settlers, arrived in Sydney with 56 of its

⁶⁷ *Sydney Mail*, 6 July 1861, p.2.

⁶⁸ *Sydney Herald*, 3 October 1831; *NSW Government Gazette*, 1 April 1835, p.181.

⁶⁹ *Australasian Chronicle*, 1842, p.4.

⁷⁰ *Hobart Town Courier*, 6 September 1828, p.2.

400 passengers having died from typhoid fever and another 90 sick with the same disease. It was decided to quarantine the passengers in tents at Spring Cove, to the horror of the Sydney press: 'It must be evident that tents cannot afford proper accommodation or protection to persons labouring under fever in its worst form'.⁷¹ After two months in these conditions the survivors 'expressed much joy on having left the Quarantine Ground'.⁷²

From 1838, North Head was declared a quarantine reserve while a wharf, disinfecting and administration buildings, several houses and a hospital were constructed, as well as a cemetery rather thoughtlessly sited in clear view of the inmates. The economic depression of the 1840s reduced the arrivals of immigrant ships and, hence, quarantine cases. However, when prosperity returned, the station's capacity of 150 inmates was expanded after proving inadequate to house the sick of the Beejapore, which arrived in 1853.

'The road is one series of hills'

The formation of Jenkins Road (Old Pittwater Road) in 1826 did not herald significant advancement of settlement in the upper Northern Beaches. The area remained sparsely settled and distant from the main town in Sydney. Travel to and from the peninsula was long and arduous, with travellers forced to make use of multiple forms of transport via water and land.

In 1859 John S Parker visited Broken Bay and Pittwater, 22 miles distant from Manly Beach 'over a country only passable by bush track, which is none of the safest for either man or beast, being hilly and rugged'. He wrote in the Sydney Morning Herald:

Occasionally you come across patches of rich, alluvial soil between the hills, and stretching along the sea-coast, unoccupied by man—a result undoubtedly attributable, in a great measure, to the want of a good road.⁷³

⁷¹ Colonist, 2 March 1837, p.4.

⁷² Sydney Monitor, 14 April 1837, p.3.

⁷³ Sydney Morning Herald, 19 October 1859, p.5.



Slocombe's Diggers' Motor Service, c.1925. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 40012)

He recounted arriving at Broken Bay after walking several miles, 'part of the road being through a salt water swamp through which I had to wade.'⁷⁴ Parker praised the hospitality, industriousness and health of the local residents and the attractions of the area, noting no less than 12 vessels sailing out of the harbour on the Sunday morning. He recommended forming a good road to the area to boost prosperity of the district, increase property values and encourage settlement in the neighbourhood.

The following year the road from Pittwater to Manly Cove was proclaimed and resurveyed. Work commenced on forming the new Pittwater Road, including building a new bridge across Dee Why Lagoon in 1861, replacing the structure built by Jenkins in 1826. By 1863, Mr Keele and one overseer were managing 19 road working parties across Sydney including Manly Cove to Pittwater.⁷⁵ In the same year the Trustees of the Manly and Pittwater Road advertised tenders for 40 stone piers across Manly Lagoon. The 16-mile stretch of the new Pittwater Road was completed and in use by the end of the decade. In 1879 Charles Edward Jeanneret, owner of the Parramatta and River Steamers Company, commenced a coach service from Manly to Pittwater.

During the same period a deputation from Manly Beach and Pittwater met with the Minister for Public Works in October 1871 to request a road from the punt across Middle Harbour to Manly and its extension through to Pittwater. The road was duly proclaimed and formed, and in 1876 Trustees were appointed to manage the 5-mile stretch of roadway.

Roads from Mona Vale to Church Point and onwards to Barrenjoey and Bayview were surveyed in 1879; however, crossing the Narrabeen Lagoon remained an 'exciting' experience, with horse and cart loaded onto a punt for the short trip. In April 1880, when a party of guests attended Barrenjoey for the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the new lighthouse, travellers could not reach the tip of the peninsula by road as it was not yet formed. Instead, the group travelled by horse coach to the head of Pittwater where they were met by Charles Edward Jeanneret's steamer *Florrie* for the 8-mile ride down the bay. They were unloaded onto a whaleboat off the shore opposite the Customs House and brought ashore. A tramway then conveyed the party to the top of the headland.⁷⁶

Residents of Pittwater met in March 1883 to call for action on the poor condition of the northern end of Pittwater Road. Some parts of the road were 'almost impassable'⁷⁷ according to Mr Crawford. A deputation to the Colonial Secretary complained 'the road was a mass of sand and ruts, and that in consequence of being hilly in some places this made it much worse'.⁷⁸ The Premier admitted the 'road was a very bad one' and promised to spend more money on improvements to it.

A network of roads gradually developed across the terrain of the Northern Beaches, which was rugged in some areas, to provide access to new subdivisions in the district. Roads climbed the escarpment at various points along the peninsula. These roadways also linked the coastal towns with inland settlements on the plateau as well as isolated homesteads and properties lying along the creeks and head of bays along the Hawkesbury River and Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park.

⁷⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 October 1859, p.5.

⁷⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 August 1863, p.2.

⁷⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 April 1880, p.7.

⁷⁷ *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 9 June 1883, p.39.

⁷⁸ *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 9 June 1883, p.39.

The NSW Government foresaw the need for better roads in the early twentieth century with the introduction of the motor car to the country. By the time the Main Roads Board was established in 1925, there were two roads in the area designated 'main roads': No. 162 – the Pittwater Road from Gladesville Road via Lane Cove and Gordon to the Narrabeen Road at Rocklily; and No. 163 – the Narrabeen Road from Manly to Newport (with a branch from Rocklily to Church Point), and Condamine Street.⁷⁹ Later in the year, the Sydney Morning Herald detailed the conditions of the main roads on the Northern Beaches as follows:

From Sydney to Manly the road is mostly good to Condamine street, and on to Brookvale, fair to Narrabeen, and very good, having just been repaired, to Rocklily. From there to Mona Vale is patchy, and on to Newport it is wearing badly until Newport is reached.

From there to Barrenjoey, the road is fairly rough, and as there are many narrow, blind corners, caution should be exercised. The road over Roseville Bridge through French's Forest is now very fair, but bumpy in places, and the roads through the Forest are only in fair condition, while the Pittwater road has a few rough patches, where it is breaking up badly.⁸⁰

By this date the Northern Beaches had direct connection to and from the city via the Roseville Bridge and Spit Bridge, both completed and opened in 1924. The bridges became an instant hit with locals and tourists alike.

79 Main Roads Board of New South Wales, First Annual Report 1925–26, p.7, OpenGov NSW (https://media.opengov.nsw.gov.au/pairtree_root/41/f5/8f/19/93/3e/43/a1/aa/f1/f7/e2/01/d9/fa/c2/obj/MRB_1925_26.pdf), accessed 28 May 2021.

80 Sydney Morning Herald, 23 December 1925, p.16.

Bridging the district

Building roads was just the first step in opening up the Northern Beaches. Bridges were required at points along the narrow coastal fringe as Pittwater Road had to navigate around or over several waterways including Manly Lagoon, Dee Why Lagoon and Narrabeen Lagoon. In September 1882 'The Sketcher' described difficult travel conditions north of Manly heading towards Pittwater:

A little further on we entered Narrabeen Lagoon, where the water came over the bottom of the coach [and] for three quarters of a mile the coach struggled along through marsh and water not daring to stop lest the wheels sink in the sand.⁸¹

During formation of the new Pittwater Road, Narrabeen Lagoon was bridged in 1883 with a wooden bridge on iron piers. The bridge was rebuilt in 1927. The wood piles were encased with concrete, the structure was redecked and a footway 4 feet and 6 inches (1.37 metres) wide added for pedestrian traffic. These works extended the life of the bridge for the next two decades but growth of residential and tourist traffic in the district spurred on construction of a new bridge, planned in 1946 yet not built until 1954.

Middle Harbour proved the greatest impediment to development on the peninsula. A private punt service operated from the 1830s between Mosman and Seaforth. By 1870, the NSW Government had installed a hand punt to replace the service offered by Peter Ellery. Manly locals were still unhappy with the government service, complaining in the late 1870s that it was slow and antiquated, and often unavailable at night. They urged the construction of a bridge and a better road

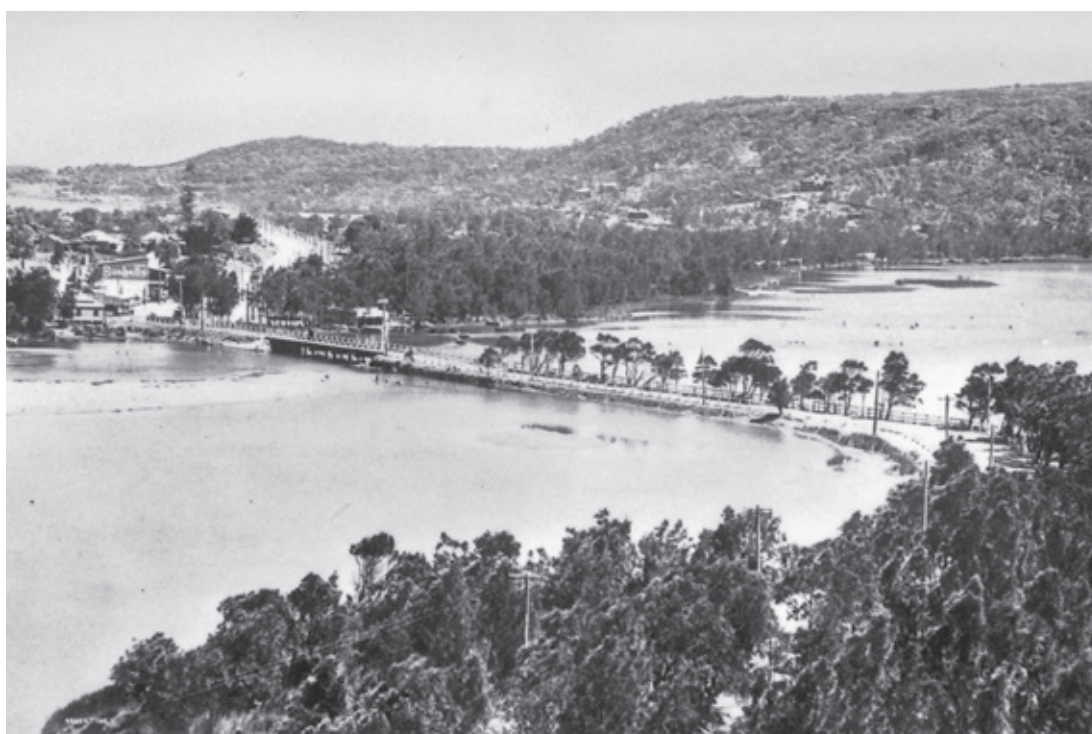
81 The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser, 30 September 1882, p.542.

approach at Seaforth. Punt services continued operating between Mosman and Seaforth for many years, and a new iron steam punt was put into service in September 1889. A new steam punt was introduced in 1922; however, it could still only accommodate up to 30 cars or vehicles. This was only a short-term solution. In 1923, Manly Council raised a £60,000 loan for construction of the bridge by the Sydney Harbour Trust. The wooden bridge was completed in seven months and open to the public in 1924. A total of 62,6745 vehicles paid the toll within the first four weeks of operation. This structure was replaced in 1958 by the present lift bridge.

Also in 1924, a second bridge to the Northern Beaches was constructed across Middle Harbour between Roseville and Frenchs Forest meeting a new road approach constructed from the north. The bridge was conceived during World War I to provide access to soldiers' farms at Frenchs Forest. In 1916

the Warringah Shire surveyed possible road routes from Middle Harbour opposite Roseville Baths to the soldier settlement at Frenchs Forest. A temporary punt was erected by the Army Engineers to provide access across the waterway for the public travelling to and from the settlement. Roseville Bridge was replaced in 1966 with the current high-level, six-lane bridge upstream to accommodate the increasing suburban development and population across the peninsula.

Construction of bridges improved transport connections and reduced the relative isolation of many parts of the Northern Beaches, including the Frenchs Forest area and the Pittwater area. Road improvements and the increased use of private motor vehicles made the upper reaches of the peninsula north of Collaroy more accessible to wealthy North Shore residents, which in turn resulted in more substantial weekend cottages being built.



Narrabeen Lagoon and Bridge, Pittwater Road, c.1920. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 61503)

Manly Wharf and Fun Pier, c.1939. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, MML/2040)



The Manly Ferry

Various ferry owners united in 1877 to form the Port Jackson Steam Boat Company, gaining sole rights to the Circular Quay to Manly route. Manly's population was only about 1,000 at the time, so the main customers of the service were day trippers visiting the area. The company invested in upgraded and more comfortable steamers to accommodate the influx of tourists and the growing commuter population. It is no exaggeration to say that the ferry played a critical role in perceptions of Manly as an attractive area to live in and travel to, and hence in its nineteenth-century development more broadly. Still isolated from the city, residential development of the area remained dependent on the growth of the ferry service.

Annual ferry patronage was around 600,000 by 1887. By the end of the nineteenth century, Manly Council and the ferry company resolved the issue of access to Manly Wharf and the Port Jackson Steamship Company was running

over 24 daily trips during the week (more on the weekend) at 30–60-minute intervals between 6.30am and 11.30pm. Manly's population grew from 3,200 in 1891 to 7,600 in 1906, increasing past 20,000 in the 1920s and 30,000 in the 1940s. There was also an exponential increase in ferry patronage during this period; in 1900 five steamers could carry 4,500 passengers and travel up to 13 knots compared to 1946 when seven vessels carried up to 10,500 passengers at a maximum speed of 16 knots. A large permanent residential population, coupled with the tourist attractions of the area, heralded the 'golden years' of the Manly ferry and the birth of the slogan 'Seven miles from Sydney and a thousand miles from care'.



First tram to Brookvale, 1911. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 40050)

Tram vs Bus

The construction of roads, particularly the Pittwater Road, facilitated the development of a tram network on the Northern Beaches, albeit on a smaller scale than in other parts of Sydney. The tramways of Manly were constrained by geography and technology coupled with a low population density across the peninsula. The system was never financially viable, and plans to extend the lines up the escarpment were ruled out by the Government. At the closure of the system in 1939 the network comprised just 20 miles (32 kilometres) of tramlines.

The first section of tramway was completed in 1903 and opened to the public on Saturday 13 February from West Esplanade to the intersection of Pittwater and Balgowlah Roads, North Manly, travelling via the Corso, North Steyne, Carlton Street and Pittwater Road. The Evening News declared:

The Manly tram made a start this morning, and crowds of people stood and watched the spectacle of an empty steam tram running along the Corso.⁸²

This account was later corrected by The Newsletter writing: 'on its first two or three trips the tram was empty, but so were the streets. After midday, however, on every trip the tram was crowded with people, while many were hanging on to the footboard'.⁸³ However, once the initial novelty wore off, patronage declined. The line was not a financial success, which possibly held back delivery of the extension of the line to Brookvale and beyond to Narrabeen.

In the same period the Tramway League and Manly Council lobbied for an extension of the tram to The Spit to connect with the existing North Sydney tramway system, well before the construction of a connecting bridge. The Spit to Manly tramway opened in 1911, with the first electric tram travelling the route on 9 January. Construction of the line was an engineering feat as it had to traverse hilly terrain and steep gradients on both ends of the line.

⁸² Evening News, 14 February 1902, p.6.

⁸³ The Newsletter: an Australian paper for Australian people, 21 February 1903, p.5.

Car sales yard,
Warringah
Road and
Pittwater
Roads,
Brookvale,
1950s. (Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
61720)



Coinciding with the construction of The Spit to Manly line, the Government voted to fund the extension of the Brookvale Line to Narrabeen in 1911. This was completed in two stages. The section to Collaroy Beach commenced service in August 1912 and the second section to Ramsay Street, Narrabeen, opened on 8 December 1913. Apart from duplications and track work rearrangements in Manly the final extension of the Manly system was opened to Harbord Beach in December 1925. The introduction of trams from the 1910s enabled working-class people to live permanently in suburbs such as Harbord (now Freshwater) and Narrabeen, as they could now commute to work. This resulted in more substantial cottages being constructed in these areas in the interwar period, changing the built and social character of the suburbs.

Continuing financial losses on the Manly–Warringah tramway system led to its closure in October 1939. During the 1930s, government bus services gradually took over as the principal means of public transport within the peninsula. The government bus service on the Manly–Cremorne route (144) commenced on Christmas Day 1932 and on its second day of operation carried

between 3,000 and 4,000 passengers. Less than one week later, a government-operated bus service between Manly and Narrabeen Peninsula was inaugurated. Seventy red buses took over all Manly tram runs on Sunday 1 October 1939. The return of the last tram to the depot on Saturday night was marked by a funeral procession:

Tramway men and the public made it a burlesqued funeral journey through Manly. There was an undertaker and pall-bearers, and appropriate music provided by two drummers. The tram, draped in black, was densely packed, but none of the passengers appeared to be overcome with grief. Many more followed, on foot, and in cars, and there was an occasional cheer by late passers-by.⁸⁴

The red buses were not the first motor buses to operate on the Northern Beaches. Private operators ran various services throughout the area, including Jack Pearce, Guy and Bailey's Bus Service, Slocombe's Diggers' Pittwater Motor Service, Wilson's Manly Vale Bus Company and Henry Charles Bottle's 'Bottles Buses'.

⁸⁴ Sydney Morning Herald, 2 October 1939, p.5.



Women standing in front of a car, with a tram in background, in Narrabeen, 1930s. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 60495)



Residents of Hilltop Road, Avalon, working on clearing the road, 1937. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, AV-094)

Theme 4: Surveys and Settlement

After Governor Phillip's expedition in 1788, the next significant surveys of what is now the Northern Beaches were slow to take shape on paper. An 1802 map drawn by Surveyor-General Grimes indicates the Narrabeen Lagoon, but no other European land holdings. Sir Joseph Banks' botanist, George Caley, reached the coast on the northern side of the lagoon before turning back south. In 1815, James Meehan followed with a survey of the land from Palm Beach to Manly. Meehan's talent was recognised by Governor Macquarie, who commissioned him on tours of NSW and Van Diemen's Land. Land was still being surveyed for grants in 1821 when James Meehan was actively surveying in the Bayview area, measuring lots for Peter Patullo and Jeremiah Bryant among others.

In 1829, surveyor William Romaine Govett also undertook surveys in the area. He published his impressions of the country between Port Jackson and Broken Bay in the mid-1830s, which included rare detailed accounts of flora, fauna, topography and customs of the Aboriginal people.

The first settlers began to move into the area during the first decade of the nineteenth century, pursuing rural activities.

James Jenkins and his children were one of four families which by 1850 owned most of the land between Manly and Pittwater. The other three were the Foleys, the Farrells and the Collins. Irish convict David Foley had arrived in Sydney in 1818, and leased Robert Campbell's grant in 1825. Foley was pardoned in 1831, having cleared 60 of the 700 acres within a few years. He built a few kilometres of fencing and a cottage at Bungin (Mona Vale) where he lived with his wife, Sarah.⁸⁵ On the north side of Foley's land was that of John Farrell, convicted of forgery in 1812 and transported to Sydney the following

year. Farrell was granted a ticket of leave in 1820 as well as 60 acres of Pittwater land in 1832; he had prospered sufficiently to have already purchased 70 acres nearby, stocked with 100 head of livestock.⁸⁶ Finally there was Thomas Collins, who arrived in 1835 and worked as an assigned convict at Long Reef farm before being pardoned and granted 115 acres on the Manly side of Foley's farm.

The activities of the Jenkins family made it appear for a time that farming and grazing could flourish on the peninsula. But in 1827 it was reported that: A number of cattle have been lately missing from the run of Mrs. Jenkins, and other persons in the neighbourhood of Pitt Water. Strong suggestions are afloat, that the cattle have been stolen, driven to Sydney, and slaughtered.⁸⁷

James Jenkins advertised: 'NOTICE. – All Persons found trespassing on my Farm, of late the Property of Messrs. Ramsay, Cossar and James McDonald ... will be prosecuted to the utmost Rigour of the Law'.⁸⁸ Surveyors' marks and maps could not control livestock or people and by this time cattle stealing was the most common crime in the colony.⁸⁹ Advertisements like that of Jenkins were frequent during the 1830s and 1840s. In 1842 Samuel Taylor, newly arrived from England, purchased a new farm but, because his was wife seriously ill, offered the property for lease:

Fifteen acres in cultivation fenced in. There are three Huts on it and two Wells. The situation is known to those at all acquainted with the Pitt Water district, as having the advantage of boat carriage for the conveyance of produce to the Sydney Market or by the Lane Cove Road ... desirable purchase for men of small capital.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Pittwater Online News, 22 July 2012.

⁸⁶ Champion, *Manly, Warringah and Pittwater*, pp.49–50.

⁸⁷ *The Australian*, 11 July 1827, p.3.

⁸⁸ *Sydney Gazette*, 1 October 1827, p.3.

⁸⁹ *Karskens, Colony*, p.298.

⁹⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 February 1842, p.4.

Before a new tenant could move in, the buildings and fences were destroyed and neighbours' cattle were grazing on Taylor's property. By this time David Foley had become the local constable and made complaints against his neighbours for threats, damage to his property and livestock.⁹¹ Thomas Collins' son Daniel was the main target of these actions. Shortly afterwards Foley's 15-year-old son John was found dead from gunshot wounds, determined by the Coroner to be accidental.

In 1849, David Foley was also found shot dead shortly after his neighbour Thomas Collins had been charged with theft. Collins fled south of Sydney on the morning following Foley's death, yet at his trial for murder he was discharged on bail for lack of evidence.⁹² The evidence presented at Collins' trial emphasised that the land between Manly and Pittwater was a lonely, sparsely populated place: 'Thomas Collins' house was about two miles from Foley's on the road towards North Harbour. The next house on the road was James Jenkins', about a mile further on; the next William Jenkins, about a mile further'.⁹³ Yet there was also a claustrophobic familiarity between the four families, members of which all recalled seeing the others passing on the day of Foley's murder.

Some years later, in 1862, Elizabeth Jenkins took a civil action against Thomas Collins, claiming 'about fifty-four acres of land, and arose out of a dispute as to which was the proper boundary line between the properties of the plaintiff and defendant, Miss Jenkins and Mr. Collins. Land, including this disputed piece, had been purchased by Collins for one of his children'. The jury found for Elizabeth Jenkins.⁹⁴ This was one of numerous legal affrays between the four families.⁹⁵

Also in 1862 the lease on Foley's farm – by then known as Mona Vale – was taken by James Therry, a nephew of Father John Joseph Therry. He was welcomed to Pittwater by having his farmhouse and other buildings 'wilfully and maliciously set fire'. Therry had 'prevented the cattle of other persons from trespassing, to the wounding of the feelings of his neighbours', who nonetheless were not charged for the arson.⁹⁶ Therry was 'threatened that if he does not leave the district he may expect further injury – not only to his property but to his person'.⁹⁷ He commenced a series of legal actions against John Farrell junior, in 1865 succeeding in having him gaoled for seven years for stealing and killing his livestock. The following year Farrell's wife Mary-Ann (nee Foley, David Foley's daughter) was gaoled for three years for similar crimes.

'The story of Mona Vale has now become quite famous', observed the Freeman's Journal.⁹⁸ The Empire caused a sensation by publishing a narrative of the past 25 years, 'a series of charges and counter-charges of perjury, cattle-stealing, assaults, and other crimes between members of certain families residing in the district of Pitt Water', with the result that 'there are not now more than ten or twelve families in the district'.⁹⁹

By this time the Northern Beaches farms were 'almost exclusively used for grazing and dairying purposes'. A Herald journalist observed in 1867 that much former farming land now lay fallow:

The history of the Mona Vale case reveals a condition of society, within a few miles of Sydney, that might well deter persons from settling there; and although the arm of the law fell on some of the evil-doers in that locality,

91 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 February, p.2, 22 March 1843, p.1.

92 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 December 1849, p.3.

93 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 December 1849, p.3.

94 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 November 1862, p.8.

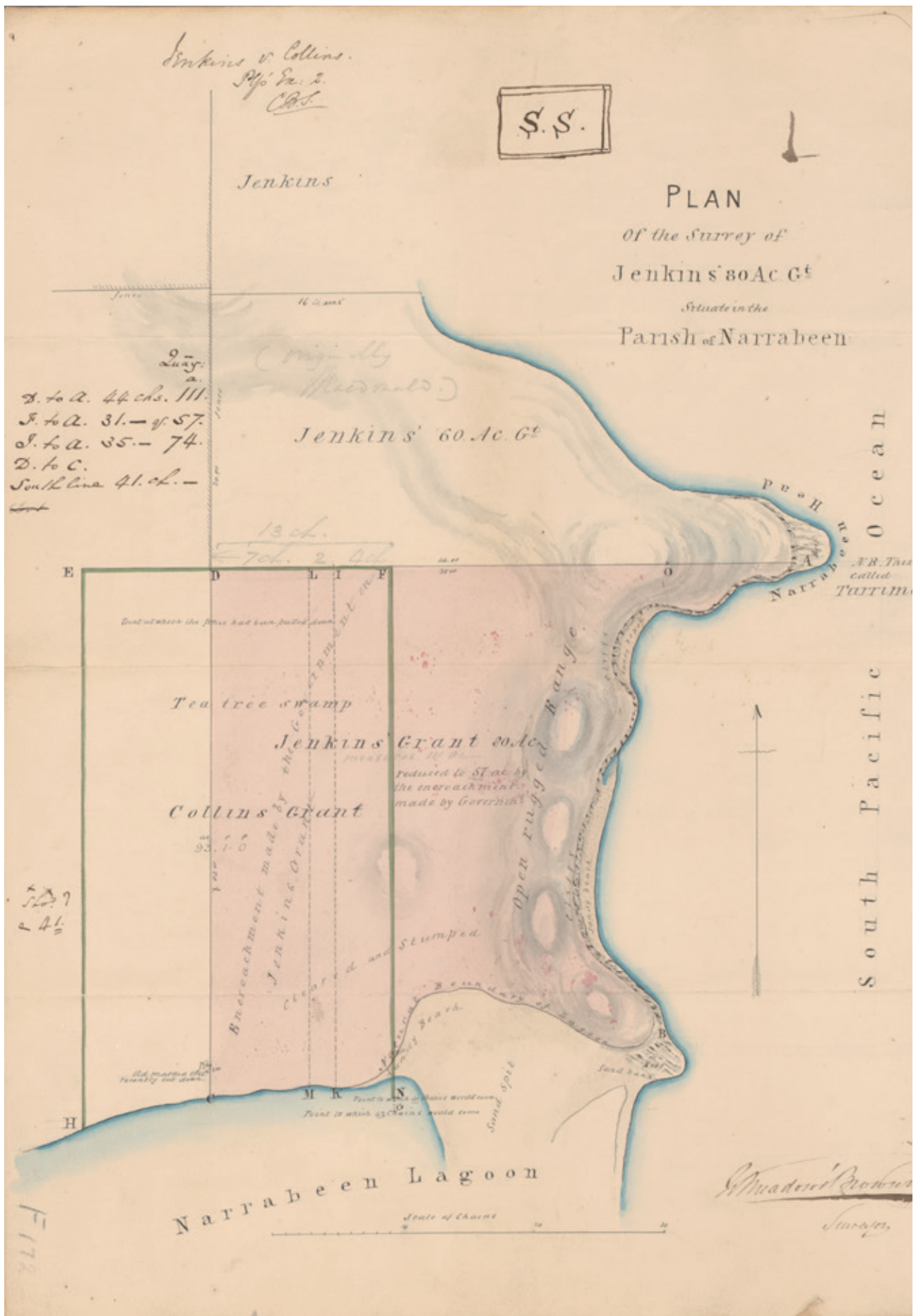
95 George and Shelagh Champion, *Arson, horse and cattle stealing in Manly, Warringah and Pittwater*, 1993.

96 *Maitland Mercury*, 6 December 1862, p.7.

97 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 December 1862, p.5.

98 *Freeman's Journal*, 11 February 1865, p.92.

99 *Empire*, 15 May 1865, p.5.



Map of the Jenkins and Collins land grants at Narrabeen, 1862. (Source: National Library of Australia, Map F 172)

Bottle's Car,
Pittwater Road
at Mona Vale,
Pittwater,
NSW, 1900.
(Source: State
Library of NSW,
PXA 635 / 747-
748)



there is now too much cause to fear that similar outrages will again disturb the district.¹⁰⁰

A decade on, the *Town and Country Journal* saw at Mona Vale:

evidences of a once busy time; but desolation now presents itself on every hand. The houses are in ruins, and the fences dilapidated ... If ever red-blooded crime flourished in any country, it flourished and triumphed here.¹⁰¹

By this time a third John Farrell, son of John Farrell junior, was also imprisoned for cattle stealing, the judge commenting: 'The prisoner had ... long been accustomed to cattle stealing. He had been brought up amongst such scenes, having lived in a most lawless district'.¹⁰²

The Farrell and Collins families remained leading landowners, yet Pittwater's lawless reputation was only one reason for the failure of grazing and farming there; more important was the greater fertility and extent of the land west of Parramatta, especially that bordering the Hawkesbury and Nepean rivers.

The western farms were also more

accessible, with construction of Windsor Road commencing as early as 1795, while little public investment was made on the Northern Beaches. An 1859 correspondent to the *Herald* found the coast north of Mona Vale 'unoccupied by man, a result undoubtedly attributable, in great measure, to the want of a good road'. Travellers remained sufficiently rare for hospitality to be offered at the few houses along the way.¹⁰³ In that same year, the NSW Government

announced their intention of extending the main road from Pittwater to the [Manly] Cove, and forming a public wharf, which will give increased facilities for landing, and greatly enhance the value of the land in the neighbourhood.¹⁰⁴

Land access developed with the survey of Pittwater Road in 1870 and then, in 1879, surveys of roads from Mona Vale to Church Point onwards to Barrenjoey as well as Bayview. Dee Why Lagoon gained an improved bridge in 1861 (first bridged by Jenkins in 1826), yet in 1879 the few miles from Narrabeen to Pittwater were still 'in very bad order' despite the advent of a regular

¹⁰⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 March 1867, p.5.

¹⁰¹ *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 6 January 1877, p.20.

¹⁰² *Sydney Mail*, 25 February 1871, p.3.

¹⁰³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 October 1859, p.5.

¹⁰⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 December 1859, p.10.



Manly Cove Parish Map, c.1840s. (Source: NSW Land Registry Services Historical Land Records Viewer, Sheet Reference 6, No.: 140661, A.O. Map No. 240)

coach service from Manly to Pittwater offered by Charles Edward Jeanneret, owner of the Parramatta and River Steamers Company.¹⁰⁵ The Narrabeen Lagoon was later bridged in 1883, with a replacement in 1954.

Day trips to Pittwater by boat were already common, notably to some of the Northern Beaches' first tourist attractions, St Michael's Cave and St Michael's Arch at Avalon headland, both named by Father James Therry. The latter stone arch, also known as the Hole in the Wall, collapsed during a fierce storm in 1867, but not before boat excursions there were popular.¹⁰⁶

Increasing availability of coach runs into the district enabled closer settlement. In 1879, horse-drawn coaches were advertised as being operated by William Boulton, John Collins and John Farrell. Leon Houreaux profited from these services by opening the Rock Lily Hotel at Mona Vale in 1886 at a strategic point in the journey. Travellers could take refreshments and change horses. The route after Mona Vale reached a fork, the northwest road continuing to Bayview and Church Point and the northeast route taking passengers to Newport via a smaller coach.¹⁰⁷ In 1887, a wharf was built at Church Point with a store where boats could be hired. Wharves built around Pittwater demonstrate the importance of water transport to the area but also its continued recreational use as people travelled to the foreshores and Scotland Island for leisure.

Later, at the turn of the century, increased public transport included a bus service known as the 'Bottles Buses', operated by Henry Charles Bottle. The car depot burnt down in 1917 and Bottle went bankrupt during the 1920s.

¹⁰⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 July 1879, p.6.

¹⁰⁶ *Empire*, 5 April 1862, p.1.

¹⁰⁷ Pittwater Community Based Heritage Study Review.

Barrenjoey

In 1838, the lease on D'Arcy Wentworth's Barrenjoey land had been taken by 'a very industrious small settler by the name of Sullivan', who planted crops of maize and tobacco.¹⁰⁸ But by 1850 there was 'no-one living at Barrenjoey except the Customs house officer and his crew', although there was 'an extensive trade in agricultural products and timber' from Pittwater settlers while the 'shell trade has fallen off a good deal'. The Customs House, a timber cottage, had 'a picturesque appearance' and a 'very good garden has been formed in the rear'.¹⁰⁹

By 1861, fishing huts stood on the Pittwater side of Barrenjoey owned by Chinese traders, who also owned a provisions store and 15 or so boats, 'principally manned by Europeans', to catch fish which were then cleaned, gutted, salted and dried at the camp before being barrelled, 'to be distributed ... wherever Chinese do congregate. This season they had obtained about two hundred barrels of fish'.¹¹⁰ The shell gatherers were also still active.

Customs House was one of the first significant items of public infrastructure constructed on the Northern Beaches, followed by a ships' warning light during the 1850s and two towers holding lanterns in 1867. Eventually, in 1881, Barrenjoey Lighthouse was constructed in sandstone to the design of Colonial Architect James Barnet, whose office designed more than 20 lighthouses, creating a highway of light running the length of the NSW coast. Architect-designed lighthouses are unusual as the job was usually the province of engineers, and Barrenjoey Lighthouse is typical of the resulting legacy of finely proportioned towers and galleries.

¹⁰⁸ *Colonist*, 28 February, 1838, p.2.

¹⁰⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 January 1850, p.2.

¹¹⁰ *Sydney Mail*, 7 September 1861, p.2.



During the 1850s, land was granted and purchased on the sandstone plateau behind the coast. In 1853, Simeon Henry Pearce and his brother James purchased 200 acres north of Bantry Bay, Middle Harbour. In today's Frenchs Forest, this land is bounded by Fitzpatrick Avenue, Rabbett Street, Frenchs Forest Road and Allambie Road. The land became known as 'Pearce's 200 acres', and later as Rodborough.

Pearce seems to have followed a similar strategy with his Middle Harbour land, which he named Rodborough, after the town near Randwick, Gloucestershire, where he was born. In 1858 the Lands Minister John Robertson granted £100 'for a new road from Bantry

The purchaser was James Harris French, a Ranger for the Lands Department, in which capacity he prosecuted illegal land clearing and timber getting. Presumably as a reward for this work, French was granted 41 acres near Bantry Bay in 1853 and was one of the three trustees appointed to oversee construction of the new road, which proved useful once he had founded two sawmills; sawn timber was hauled by bullocks along Bantry Bay Road to Middle Harbour for shipment to Sydney.

113 Sydney Morning Herald, 28 November 1857, p.3.

Hews
brickworks,
Frenchs
Forest, c.1905.
(Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
42459)



Brookvale
House, showing
members of
the Malcolm
family, c.1900.
(Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
60512)



Shingle splitters and timber getters had operated at Pittwater for some time, including Peter Joseph Duffy, who acquired 100 acres of forest northwest of French's land. Duffy had a stone wharf built at Cowan Creek, to which logs were dragged down a track cleared for the purpose. The logs were cut and dressed in sawpits, loaded on barges and towed to the Brisbane Water Timber Yard at Market Wharf, Woolloomooloo Bay. In 1856, Duffy opened his own yard at Brodie and Craig's Wharf at the bottom of Bathurst Street, Darling Harbour:

SAWYERS. – Wanted, ten pairs of Sawyers for the Bush, about 18 miles from Sydney, to cut hardwood. The timber is of the very best description, there not having been any cut or removed therefrom. The logs will be drawn to the pit. For further particulars apply to PETER J DUFFY, Brodie and Craig's Wharf.¹¹⁴

Duffy also advertised regularly for 'Rough Carpenters', 'Bullock Driver for the Bush' and similar jobs.¹¹⁵

Like other local landowners James French did not live at Frenchs Forest. The first permanent residents were William and Hannah Hews and family, who purchased 10 acres of land from James French in 1885. William Hews had already owned a brickworks at Petersham and established a similar enterprise at Frenchs Forest, using forest timber to fire the kilns. The Hews brickworks employed about 40 workers and a small village sprang up. At about the same time Austin's brickworks also began production at Bayview; these were the first of several Northern Beaches brickworks, the only extractive industry to thrive there despite attempts to mine coal, oil and gas.

Hews' bricks were hand-made, and from the 1890s his brickworks struggled to compete in an increasingly mechanised industry. In 1903, the Kuring-gai Brick and Pottery Works began production in a new factory near the corner

of Spit and Forest Roads, Frenchs Forest.¹¹⁶

This factory produced pipes and other types of pottery as well as bricks, but with the early brick pits worked out it was necessary to sink shafts to access the red clay, pipeclay and shale. In 1913 a worker was suffocated by fumes in one of these shafts and shortly after brick production ceased at Frenchs Forest, although new works and quarries were being established at Brookvale and Beacon Hill.¹¹⁷

Balgowlah

In his first year as NSW Surveyor-General, Major Thomas Mitchell drew up a plan for the village of North Harbour, just west of Manly Cove. Mitchell's 1828 subdivision set out a rectangular grid with 31 house and land-sized blocks of about one to two hectares. A sheltered harbour and reliable access to fresh water was a factor in Mitchell's choice of the site ahead of Manly as one of the first 10 villages of the County of Cumberland.¹¹⁸

Despite Major Mitchell's ambitions only three allotments were granted. Allotment 19 was granted to ex-convict John Fincham, who built a hut on his land where the North Harbour Reserve shop stands today. The last reference to Fincham was in the 1836 post office directory and he still lived at North Harbour at this time. Lot 20 was granted to another ex-convict, Robert Tiffen, who does not appear to have occupied his land. Tiffen primarily lived at North Sydney following his marriage to Mary Blue, daughter of Billy Blue of Blues Point.

Notably, Lot 29 was granted to James Jenkins, who built a stone house there for horses and carts to complete his road from Long Reef to the harbour. By 1834 Balgowlah, believed to be the Aboriginal name for North Harbour, was in use but it would be some decades before a town developed there despite the sell-off of most of the land during the 1850s.

¹¹⁶ *Sydney Mail*, 6 May 1903, p.1115.

¹¹⁷ *Sun*, 22 December 1913, p.1.

¹¹⁸ John MacRitchie, 'Balgowlah', *Dictionary of Sydney*, 2008.

¹¹⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 November 1856, p.1.

¹¹⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 January 1857, p.1.

However, in 1837, John Crane Parker planted a market garden on his land grant just east of Balgowlah at today's Fairlight. Parker arrived as a free settler in 1828; his successful enterprise was promoted as an example by those who supported free settlement and the abolition of convict transportation. The *Colonist* predicted that Parker would within a few years transform the '20 acres of rocks and land, hitherto deemed good for nothing, into one of the best cultivated, most romantic and most valuable properties of its size within a day's journey of the capital'.¹¹⁹

Other Early Settlers

In 1836 and 1837, William Frederick Parker, son of John Crane Parker, was granted 158 acres northwest of Manly on the Jenkins Road. His land lay in a vale, near a brook, and Parker called his land Brookvale Farm. On this land he built a homestead for his family where William Street lies today, and named his cottage Meadowbank. Parker farmed his land and resided at Meadowbank until his death in 1892. Two more houses were built on Brookvale Farm: Eucalyptus Cottage (1874), built for his widowed daughter Elizabeth Smith at the end of where Robert Avenue lies today; and Brooklands (1879), built by Parker's son William Francis Parker. Brooklands lay at the end of where Cross Street lies today and William Francis lived there with his family until his death in 1925.

The Parkers donated land for the first church hall in the area, St Luke's, which lay on land that is now part of Warringah Golf Course at the end of Robert Avenue. This hall was also where Brookvale Primary School was first established in 1887.

The Greendale Estate joined Brookvale Farm to the northeast and was subdivided for residential development in the 1880s. For a few years this area was known as Greendale, but was later changed to Brookvale when the post office and school opened (as there was already a place called Greendale).

Brookvale House was built in 1884 for Sydney Alexander Malcolm and his family on 8 acres of land purchased from William Frederick Parker of Brookvale Farm. Warringah Mall was built on the site of Brookvale House.

The Wheelers had numerous early land grants, but they were smaller in size. They purchased larger amounts of land later in the 1840s and 1850s. James Wheeler had 150 acres on the southern side of Narrabeen Lake. The family moved to this land in the 1840s where they grew potatoes and cabbages for the Sydney market. The Wheeler family remained on the land until it was forcefully resumed by the Government between 1941 and 1948 as part of the War Veterans' Project.

¹¹⁹ *Colonist*, 28 February 1838, p.2.

Theme 5: Land speculation, creation of towns and suburbs

A New Brighton

Henry Gilbert Smith first came to Australia from England in 1827, aged 25. Three years later, with his brother Thomas, he started an importing firm as well as building the *Surprise*, Sydney's first steam ferry. In 1852 he launched the *Keera*, Australia's first propeller-driven steamship, running between Sydney and Wollongong.¹²⁰

During the intervening two decades, Smith's trading company prospered. He also became chairman of the Commercial Banking Company and bought and sold land at Kiama, Deniliquin, Bathurst, Parramatta, Ourimbah and elsewhere. Smith spent the years between 1836 and 1846 in England where in January 1839 he married Eleanor (Ellen) Whistler, sister of Penelope, wife of his brother Thomas. Eleanor died later that year aged 26.

Before his departure for England Smith 'brought such a nice house in a little town or village known as Wollongong with 4 acres situated on the seaside'; he also purchased two hotels and numerous town blocks there. That 'Wollongong would one day become the Brighton of New South Wales' became a journalistic cliché by the 1840s.¹²¹

Following his return to Sydney, Smith formalised his retirement from trade to spend more time at Wollongong. After another sojourn to England, he also began to invest in Manly, writing to a nephew in 1853 that:

This spec in addition to my Wollongong properties, which is also to be a good Watering Place before long, though 50 miles away, make people think that I am far gone on this point but I shall by and by have the laugh on them.¹²²

The first land Smith purchased in Manly was John Thompson's 100 acres in 1853.

This was before he purchased John Crane Parker's land and also before he took the lease from Katherine Darley, Wentworth's daughter and heir. He also purchased John Thompson's neighbouring 100 acres stretching from Manly Cove to Manly Beach. In 1855, Smith's final purchase was from John Wheeler, 19 acres facing the west side of Manly Cove. At Balgowlah he had a four-room stone cottage built to the design of Edmund Blacket, former Colonial Architect, which he named Fairlight House after the Sussex birthplace of his deceased wife.

Smith also sold his Wollongong ferry *Keera* to Melbourne; Manly was now his choice for a new Brighton, a Sydney equivalent of London's favourite holiday resort. In 1855 Smith gained permission to build a private wharf at Manly Cove and began construction of a hotel nearby, advertising for a lessee and publican in December of that year:

This first-class Hotel ... its Venetian enclosed verandas and balconies are now on the point of completion, and has been erected at a considerable outlay, with a view to supplying that great want of Sydney, a convenient watering place.¹²³

Ellensville was Smith's name for the Manly resort, after his late wife. The first plan of Ellensville laid out the main streets of Manly as well as 'Promenades and Squares' that 'will be the means of ensuring health and amusement to residents and Visitors'.¹²⁴ The *Empire* observed that:

Gilbert Smith is a gentleman who has visited all the capitals of Europe ... Thus he has formed a Montpellier, a Tivoli and an Arthur's seat ... We have also a Corso, the street famous at Rome for the throwing of sugar plums during the Carnival.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ *Shipping Gazette*, 12 June 1852, p.156.

¹²¹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 January 1846, p.2.

¹²² Ashton, *Heritage Study: Municipality of Manly*, p.94.

¹²³ *Empire*, 8 December 1855, p.1.

¹²⁴ Ellensville, The property of H G Smith Esq, Allan & Wigley, 1855.

¹²⁵ *Empire*, 6 March 1856, p.2.



Map of Manly's Montpelier, 1855. (Source: National Library of Australia, MAP F 642 B)

Manly's Corso followed the track between Manly Cove and Manly Beach, used for centuries by Aboriginal people. The trees bordering the sandy path were cleared in 1855, and the first of many Norfolk Island pines were planted along the new main street.¹²⁶

Perhaps the main feature of Smith's plan was a 10-acre Victoria Park south of the Corso to Victoria Parade (Pacific Street on the 1855 plan), which was presumably the site intended for a local version of Tivoli Gardens à la Rome, Copenhagen and elsewhere. Manly's Montpelier seems to have been modelled on Montpelier, Brighton, an upmarket suburb which boomed during the 1840s after the fashionable resort was connected with London by rail; it was to be sited on Manly's Arthur's Seat, the steep hill above Shelly Beach.

During 1857, Smith began selling some of this land 'either for private residences, places of amusement, or Botanical and Horticultural Gardens'.¹²⁷ Charles Hemington took a lease on three hectares of land

along the cliffs at the south end of Manly Beach, and created a picnic area there:

The Fairy Bower had, as it deserved to have, a large number of visitors. Its cool, quiet, sequestered, and tastefully arranged grounds will always make it a favourite spot to those who would spend their holiday out of the reach of the noise and bustle, the gaiety and sport that pervade the immediate neighbourhood. The attention that is paid to visitors, the excellence of the supplies but, above all, the cool and shady nook in which the Bower is placed will always bring a fair share of the ... visitors to this charming spot.¹²⁸

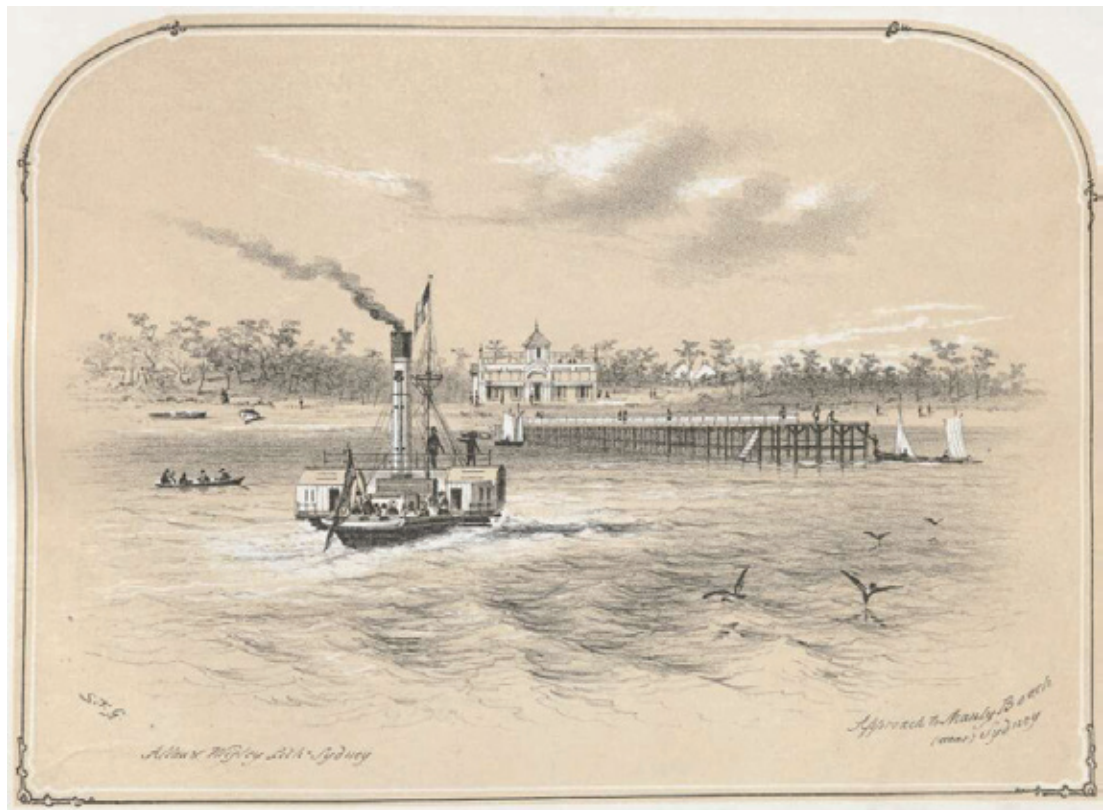
Few similar enterprises materialised and Smith backed away from his initial promise to ensure 'that the places thus reserved for public recreation may be soon laid out and embellished', by devoting 'to this purpose one sixth of the proceeds of all sales made by him during the ensuing Ten years' – the latter words are crossed out in the copy of the Ellensville plan held by the National Library.

¹²⁶ Ashton, *Heritage Study: Municipality of Manly*, pp.95–96.

¹²⁷ *Maitland Mercury*, 10 December 1857, p.3.

¹²⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 January 1864, p.4.

Manly by ST
Gill, 1856.
(Source:
National
Library of
Australia, PIC
Volume 196
#S4022)



Map of Manly,
1855. (Source:
National
Library of
Australia, MAP
F 642 A)



The first Manly ferries were chartered by Gilbert Smith for the purpose, though he soon purchased shares in two ferry companies and arranged for the paddle steamers Victoria and Black Swan to run to his Manly wharf twice a day. By 1859 the Phantom and other steamers made three round trips daily for a fare of one shilling (10 cents) each way, plus two trips on Sundays when the fare increased to a shilling and sixpence.¹²⁹ During the week 'the theatre boat left Sydney just before midnight, its festive passengers hand-laden with Garden Honey's "potatoes, pies, and saveloys, all hot, all hot."¹³⁰

Sunday was the most popular day, although these fares were out of reach to many Sydneysiders; even skilled workers mostly earned just a pound (\$2) or so a week. Other ferries were chartered for public holidays and special excursions. On Easter Monday 1856:

Hundreds steamed down to Manly Beach; a lovely spot for picnic parties and such like, which has totally eclipsed the once favoured Watson's Bay, and where Mr. Griffiths, proprietor of the Pier Hotel ... appears to be making a rapid fortune.¹³¹

A healthy retreat

Gilbert Smith had timed his resort project perfectly: the 1840s trade depression was forgotten following the gold rush and boom in migration to the colony. According to the Herald, during 1857 the number of visitors to Manly, 'reckoned by passengers' tickets, was thirty thousand'. In early 1856 there were 'few permanent dwellings, but several tents have been set up, where fruit and other refreshments are sold to-visitors'.¹³² By 1858:

the Corso has already several dwellings, shops, a temporary church; and an inn, at which Dr

Johnson would not have retracted his opinion, "An inn, sir, is the throne of human felicity".¹³³

There was also 'a lofty rustic tower' on a hill above the town containing a camera obscura 'by which the surrounding ocean and country are shown, as in a water-coloured painting' projected inside the tower. In addition, 'Mr. G. SMITH has erected baths of a superior order', offering 'every kind of bathing'.¹³⁴ These were additions to the baths at Manly Cove for which Henry Smith sought tenders during 1855:

The Proprietor of Ellensville, and Montpellier, Manly, North Harbour, is desirous of receiving plans, specifications and tenders, to erect three first-class weather-boarded Houses; and also, a building for six baths. The houses are intended for Hotels, to contain not less than six rooms, with two frontages, and capable of future additions.¹³⁵

The three weather-boarded houses were built at the corner of The Steyne and Raglan Street and were named the Baden Baden Guest House. Managed by the 'Misses Horner' from 1857, the Baden Baden was licensed and offered 'the comforts of a home combined with the luxury of a hotel'.¹³⁶

Gilbert Smith also had plans to build 'a large Marine Hotel ... overlooking the sea, for the convenience of invalids'.¹³⁷ Although Manly was a pleasure resort, the supposed health benefits of fresh sea air were the focus of its advertising, the Pier Hotel claiming that 'the whole of the most eminent medical practitioners of Sydney invariably recommend to their patients Manly Beach, in preference to any other watering place in the colony'.¹³⁸ At this time medical science held that infections were spread by noxious air, polluted by

¹²⁹ Empire, 5 July 1859, p.1.

¹³⁰ Sydney Morning Herald, 29 November 1924, p.13.

¹³¹ Maitland Mercury, 26 March 1856, p.2.

¹³² Sydney Morning Herald, 1 March 1856, p.7.

¹³³ Sydney Morning Herald, 10 April 1858, p.9.

¹³⁴ Sydney Morning Herald, 5 April 1858, p.4.

¹³⁵ Empire, 8 August 1855, p.1.

¹³⁶ Bell's Life in Sydney, 26 April 1862, p.4.

¹³⁷ Empire, 6 March 1856, p.2.

¹³⁸ Sydney Morning Herald, 23 May 1857, p.7.



Pier Hotel,
Manly, 1858.
(Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
MML/1514)

rotten matter or foul water. That disease was spread by bacterial infection was not widely accepted until the late 1800s; in the meantime, seaside and mountain resorts boomed on the myth of their health-inducing qualities.

Two new hotels were completed in 1859: the first New Brighton Hotel opposite the wharf; and the 30-room Steyne at the beach end of the Corso, designed by Edmund Blacket. In 1856, Smith had married Anne Margaret Thomas, and had Blacket design a new Fairlight House, a two-storey mansion in Georgian style. Perhaps as a result of his second marriage, Brighton replaced Ellensville as Smith's preferred name for his Manly resort:

THE STEYNE HOTEL, Brighton, Manly. TO LET, for a term, the above newly erected commodious stone-built premises, situated in the best position, on the Steyne, at that now established and favourite watering place, Brighton, Manly Beach.¹³⁹

Edmund Blacket made his name during the 1840s designing churches for the Sydney Anglican Diocese; he was appointed Colonial

Architect in 1849, but the office was in disrepute for mingling public and private commissions and, like his predecessor Mortimer Lewis, Blacket resigned under a cloud. In 1854, he became the founding architect of the University of Sydney. His private practice also boomed, including 'Six Weatherboard Cottages, at Manly Beach' in 1857.¹⁴⁰ In 1863, he produced a new design for the Steyne, the original having been destroyed by fire, as well as a design for St Matthew's Church on the Corso.¹⁴¹ Completed in 1865, this sandstone edifice replaced a small church opened in 1863 on land donated for a nominal sum by Katherine Darley and her husband Benjamin Darley. The church and its neighbouring hall were demolished in 1928 to widen and straighten the Corso.

When offered for sale in 1869, Fairlight House was described as:

containing about eleven rooms (four of which are large) besides kitchens, pantry, and servants' bedrooms. The main portion of the building is of stone, with slated

¹⁴⁰ *Empire*, 7 July 1857, p.6.

¹⁴¹ *Sydney Mail*, 8 April 1865, p.2.

¹³⁹ *Empire*, 8 October 1859, p.8.



Steyne Hotel,
1860. (Source:
State Library of
Victoria)



Fairlight
subdivision
plans (Source
State Library of
NSW, CALL
NUMBER: Z/
SP/F2)

Phantom
paddle steamer
at Manly
Wharf. (Source:
State Library of
NSW, SPF/691,
FL1227163)



roof. The grounds, extending over 35 acres ... have a never-failing stream of the purest water running through them.¹⁴²

This was part of a sale of Smith's Manly property following the death of Anne Smith from tuberculosis in 1867. Smith left for England with his three children and never returned to Manly.

By this time Smith's dream of a handsome resort town was faltering. Despite the weekend crowds, few of the offered allotments had sold; the handsome avenues of Ellensville and Montpelier remained a dream, while the Sands directory reveals a rapid turnover of shopkeepers and other businesses along the Corso. Yet it is easy to admire Smith's success, his Manly thronged with day trippers as on New Year's Day 1865:

This favourite locality was visited yesterday by an immense number of persons. The Steamers Urara, Grafton, Breadalbane, Kembla, and Phantom, were plying between there and Sydney during the day, and on leaving the Circular Quay, and Woolloomooloo Bay wharf, at each trip were crowded with persons desirous of thus initiating their New Year's pleasure. There appeared to be no lack of amusement provided by the proprietors of the hotels, and sports of all descriptions were catered on during the day. Dancing, of course, secured the attraction of the largest number of the visitors; foot-racing, hurdle races, jumping in sticks, climbing the greasy pole, cricket, skittles, quoits, and rounders; prizes being given to the winner in each contest. Clowns, harlequin, and the Sacramento Minstrels produced much fun.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Sydney Morning Herald, 15 March 1869, p.7.

¹⁴³ Empire, 3 January 1865, p.5.



Thomas Rowe, *Bulletin*, 13 May 1882. (Source: National Library of Australia)

From Village to Town

Despite its popularity as a resort, Manly was slow to become a town. In 1870, the Sands directory listed just 67 households at 'Manly Beach, or New Brighton'. This was a decline since 1865, when 75 were listed. The Corso of 1870 hosted just 16 businesses or households, plus St Matthew's Church.¹⁴⁴

One of the few Manly tradesmen to stay in business for a decade or more was French-born Hippolyte Aourousseau, who purchased a bakery at the Corso in 1868. His son George, later a well-known artist and teacher, published a memoir of his Manly childhood:

The Ocean Beach in 1870 was in its natural state, sand dunes and Ti-tree scrub where the stone wall now stands ... the Steyne Hotel had large paddocks fenced with three rail fences with wooden stables at the back ... Further along the ocean front was scrub and at the corner of South Steyne

and Ashburner Street, Mr Smith had a small dairy and used to sell milk to the residents.

Manly's isolation added to the difficulties of running a business there:

On many occasions when the Ferry was taken off on account of cyclonic gales and rain, I had to walk from Manly to the Spit where I was rowed across by one of the Ellerys who ran the punt service. From here I walked to Lavender Bay, crossed in the ferry to Circular Quay, took a horse bus at Macquarie Place to Tooth's Brewery, brought a can of yeast returning the same way to Manly with the yeast for, no yeast, no bread for the Manly people...¹⁴⁵

However, during the 1870s the number of Manly households and businesses more than doubled, and building began to spread away from the Corso.¹⁴⁶ As well as shopkeepers and publicans, Manly became home for several of Sydney's most wealthy and high-profile people.

One of these was former City councillor Thomas Rowe, without doubt Sydney's most prolific and high-profile architect when he came to live at Manly in 1876. Rowe designed Newington College, the Great Synagogue, Sydney Hospital, the Sydney and Imperial Arcades as well as numerous churches and residences.

When sold in 1883, Rowe's home, named Roseville, was described as 'An extraordinary pretty and well-built VILLA RESIDENCE, opposite the PARK RESERVE, with streets on three sides...'¹⁴⁷ However, with four bedrooms, drawing and dining rooms, two pantries, detached kitchen and servants' room, stable and coach house, it was relatively modest in comparison to Esplanade neighbours, including

¹⁴⁵ George Aourousseau, *Reminiscences of Old Manly*, Sydney, 1952.

¹⁴⁶ Terry Metherell, 'The Corso, Manly 1855–1990', Address to the Manly, Warringah, Pittwater Historical Society, 6 August 2002.

¹⁴⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 November 1883, p.14.

¹⁴⁴ Sands Sydney Directory 1870.



Dalley's Castle, Sydney Road, 1887. (Source: Manly Art Gallery & Museum, MAGM/P1028)

Hope House and Hope Lodge, three-storey sandstone mansions owned by wine merchant and Manly alderman James C Peters, and Brighton Villa, the similarly impressive home of the Reverend Robert Willis. These residences and others nearby were damaged by fire on a Sunday night in May 1877, an event which inspired the Council to create a fire brigade.¹⁴⁸

The construction of impressive villas and residences continued. Leona was built in 1878 for stock and station agent Robert Matcham Pitt:

It faces the harbour, is built of stone, and is replete with every modern convenience. The bathroom, pantry, kitchen, etc, have to be seen to be appreciated. The rooms are all large and lofty, and the furniture, is all new, and in keeping with the house. The billiard-table was manufactured expressly by Alcock and Roberts and has only been in use two months.¹⁴⁹

However, Leona and the others were soon outclassed by Marinella, the Gothic 'castle' built for barrister and politician William Bede Dalley in 1882. A few years later the Town and Country Journal praised Manly's recent progress:

Land which a few years ago could have been purchased for a few shillings' per acre now brings as many pounds per foot; and on every side large and tastefully-designed mansions have been erected, such as that forming the residence of the Hon. W. B Dalley, acting-Colonial Secretary ... It is situated on one of the highest portions of the town, and the peculiar style of architecture adopted gives it the appearance, at a distance, of a feudal stronghold.¹⁵⁰

Manly Municipal Council

In 1877, Thomas Rowe was elected first mayor of Manly as the Municipality became the Northern Beaches' first local government, with responsibility for much of Manly Cove parish. One of Rowe's mayoral duties was to join other North Shore mayors in criticism of the schedules and fares of the harbour ferries. During 1877 the Port Jackson Steam Boat Company was formed from an amalgamation of ferry owners, gaining a monopoly of harbour services including those to Manly. The new company introduced new and larger ferries, the Fairlight and the Brighton, in its early years but its services were still aimed at day trippers rather than commuters and were priced accordingly. In 1879 ferries ran between Circular Quay and Manly six times daily; between Woolloomooloo and Manly three times daily; and the 11pm theatre special ran only on Saturdays. Fares were one shilling and six pence return and one shilling for children; monthly tickets 'Gentlemen 20s; Children 10s' (no women's price was offered).¹⁵¹

Deputations of North Shore mayors regularly met NSW Government ministers to campaign for bridges across the harbour and Middle Harbour. A joint statement of one deputation complained that 'the whole ferry arrangements are a close monopoly and the company can and do alter their fares and times of running with a sole eye to profit'.¹⁵² Manly Council pressured the Government and the ferry company into the 1880s, arguing that Manly 'deserved much consideration on the part of the Government, as the great sanatorium of the city and the colony to which thousands of people resorted every week'.¹⁵³ In 1883, agreement was reached on additional services and more moderate fares; a second ferry wharf was built on the eastern side of Manly Cove.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁸ Sydney Morning Herald, 29 May 1877, p.5.

¹⁴⁹ Sydney Morning Herald, 18 January 1879, p.11.

¹⁵⁰ Australian Town and Country Journal, 28 March 1885, p.27.

¹⁵¹ The Monthly Railway Guide: steamer and 'bus time table, Government Printer, May 1879, p.24.

¹⁵² Sydney Morning Herald, 21 June 1879, p.3.

¹⁵³ Sydney Morning Herald, 27 February 1878.

¹⁵⁴ Curby, Seven Miles from Sydney, pp.74–76.

Dalley's Castle,
Manly c.1930s.
(Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
MML/3627



East
Esplanade,
Manly c1880s
(Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
MML/3060)





The Corso,
Manly, c.1912.
(Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
MML/3640)

The new council concentrated primarily on the practical issues of sewerage and water supply. Thomas Rowe boasted of the 'miles of streets and thousands of yards of kerbing' installed: 'it would be admitted on all hands that Manly was progressing'.¹⁵⁵ The Steyne also gained a stone sea wall, stabilising the beach and creating a seaside promenade.

Rowe also had the opportunity to set out new streets because in 1877 most of the land between the Corso and the Quarantine Reserve became available for sale and subdivision. This was the land bequeathed by D'Arcy Wentworth to his daughter Katherine in 1827. Katherine was only two years old at that time but in adulthood realised that her father's will stipulated that she could only lease her land; it could not be sold until her eldest male heir reached the age of 21. This was D'Arcy Wentworth's means of ensuring that his estate remained in family hands.

In 1847 Katherine married Benjamin Darley, an Irish ship captain and shipowner; Darley Road is named for him. Darley died in 1864, leaving Katherine with four children. Much of the estate had been leased to Gilbert Smith and although Katherine attempted to lease parts of it the returns were poor: 'BRIGHTSIDE, MANLY BEACH, east side of

the Pier. – Choice Building ALLOTMENTS of LAND, at a nominal rental, on a lease for 12 years'.¹⁵⁶ In 1877, only the Brightside boarding house occupied this part of the estate.

Katherine married William Bassett in 1867, first entering into an agreement that the estate would remain in her hands and would be administered by two trustees. However, the agreement neglected to give the trustees power of sale and in 1877, when Katherine's only son Benjamin turned 21, a private act of Parliament – the Bassett-Darley Estates Act – was passed to change this. By then Katherine was living in London (her husband remained in Sydney) but quickly moved to finally capitalise on her estate:

FREE STEAMER ANY TIME. GET A PLAN,
GET A TICKET. DON'T BE LATE

RECREATION, HEALTH, LIFE THE PICK
OF THE BASSET-DARLEY ESTATE....

That MANLY is unequalled for health, and the consequent enjoyment of life by its residents and visitors, is never questioned, and to these the GREAT NEW SUB-DIVISION offers every facility for the poorest to secure his own piece of land on the WATERSIDE HEIGHTS OF MANLY.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Sydney Morning Herald, 27 September 1878, p.6.

¹⁵⁶ Sydney Morning Herald, 28 December 1863, p.7.

¹⁵⁷ Sydney Morning Herald, 13 December 1879, p.15.

The Corso,
Steyne Hotel,
New Brighton
Hotel c.1912.
(Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
MML/1520



The New
Brighton Hotel
Manly c.1880s.
(Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
LH010078



First offered in 1877, the Bassett-Darley Estate was Manly's first major subdivision since Gilbert Smith's 1855 plan, creating new streets and building lots rather than the parks and promenades originally envisaged. The new subdivision coincided with a colony-wide land and building boom. Prices quickly increased and even by 1880 the turnover of Corso merchants had slowed, indicating that the town centre was becoming profitable and sustainable.

The most stable and lucrative enterprise was inn-keeping, the Corso hosting five hotels: the Steyne, the New Brighton, the Colonnade, the Square and Compass, and the Pier. An 1882 visitor concluded 'that the Licensing Act has no effect here', as even on a Sunday the police allowed hotel doors to be left wide open and patrons to drink on the pavement.¹⁵⁸

The New Steyne Hotel was originally the New Brighton, built in 1858. It changed its name to the Manly Beach Tavern and then to the New Steyne. It was demolished or ceased trading as a hotel in 1876.

The Colonnade Hotel was built and owned by John Farrell II in 1875. Its ownership passed to John Farrell III and then to Hannah Farrell, who owned it from 1884 to her death in 1933. The hotel licence was owned by Thomas Adrian in 1884 and then by Emma Adrian from 1885 to 1902. The Adrians changed the name of the hotel to The Ivanhoe Hotel.

Another woman publican was Charlotte Phoebe Sargeant, one of a succession of women to hold the licence of the Baden Baden Guest House, renamed the Clarendon Hotel in 1875. Hotels and boarding houses were one of the few careers welcoming to women.

Mrs Sargeant was one of Manly's commercial fixtures, managing boarding houses and hotels from the 1860s to the 1880s. In 1878 she and

a barman were charged with arson for a 2am fire which severely damaged the Clarendon:

It appeared that she had laid out some money in improvements, for which the landlord failed to make any allowance. Mrs Sargeant felt aggrieved thereby, and had been heard to exclaim that she wished the premises were burned down.¹⁵⁹

Found guilty by the Coronial jury, the two were acquitted at a criminal trial and Mrs Sargeant was soon back in business: 'MRS. SERGEANT'S PRIVATE BOARDING ESTABLISHMENT. COLONNADE HOUSE ... MANLY BEACH. Visitors from Saturday to Monday Liberally Treated'.¹⁶⁰

Colonnade House was a 10-room sandstone structure next to the Colonnade Hotel owned by none other than John Farrell Junior, fresh from his incarceration for cattle stealing at Mona Vale. Despite their notoriety, the Farrell family remained wealthy and purchased considerable Manly property during the 1870s, including a butcher's shop and the Colonnade Hotel, prior to its purchase by Mrs Adrian. Old habits die hard; in 1881 Farrell was fined for stealing a Devon bull.¹⁶¹

Manly's new prosperity was satirised in 1883 by William Bede Dalley, with Henry Parkes the colony's most in-demand orator. Speaking at a dinner to celebrate the improved ferry service, Dalley provoked hilarity by warning of the likely consequences, as reported in the Sydney Mail:

the influx of a large population here, which will charge the face of our simple life, invade and occupy lovely spots, disturb that repose which is one of the chief charms of life in this secluded spot, and alter our whole simple manner of living, (laughter) ... Gentlemen, I would in the interests of your own happiness earnestly implore you to bind yourselves

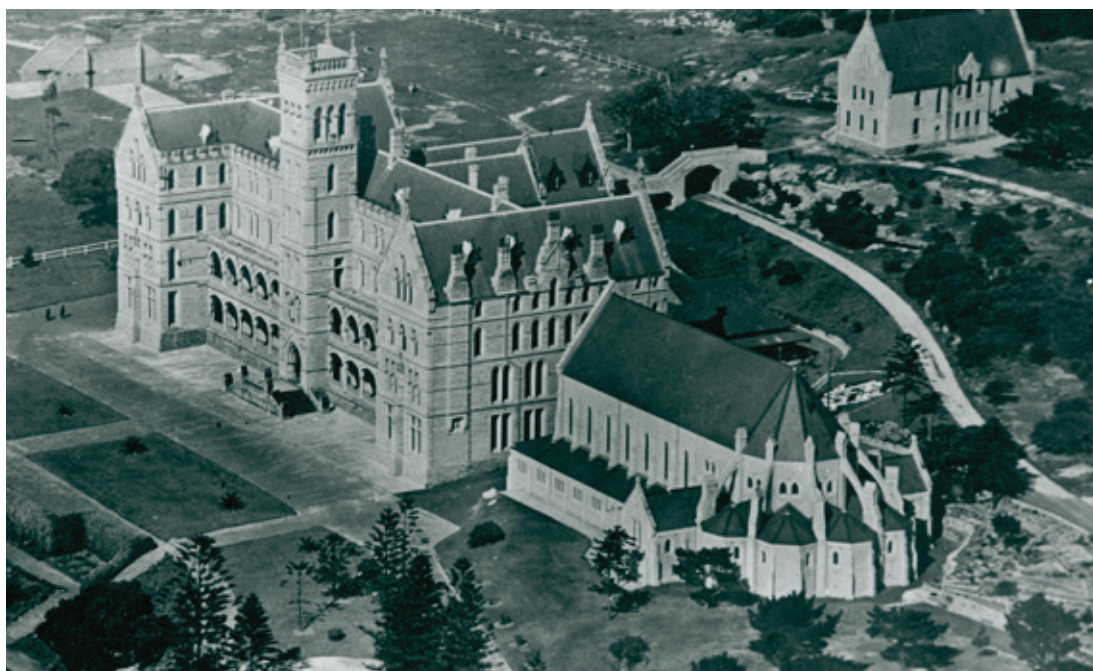
¹⁵⁹ *Evening News*, 23 May 1878, p.2.

¹⁶⁰ *Freeman's Journal*, 2 July 1881, p.2.

¹⁶¹ *Goulburn Herald*, 19 January 1881, p.2.

¹⁵⁸ *Daily Telegraph*, 11 November 1882, p.6.

Aerial view of St Patrick's College, Manly, 1947. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, MML/2414)



together in a determined effort to resist such an oppression as this. (Roars of laughter.) ... Let me tell you that the man who loves quiet, and beauty and seclusion, and who sees them all menaced by invasion, is your true story. (Cheers and laughter.)¹⁶²

Manly's Palace

William Bede Dalley was one of Sydney's most prominent Catholics and a supporter of Manly's largest building project, the Archbishop's Residence and St Patrick's

College and Seminary on North Head. A site for a residence had been sought since the 1850s, with part of the Quarantine Reserve first promised by the NSW Government in 1859 although the land grant was not finalised until 1879, by which time the Sydney church also lacked a clerical training facility.

Both buildings were designed by Jack Hennessy and Joseph Sheerin, whose recently formed partnership would go on to design

numerous Catholic churches and schools, as well as several hotels and other secular buildings. The residence was constructed first, the Freeman's Journal reporting in 1885:

The palace will be complete, all except the finishing work, by the end of the year, and it will be a conspicuous and noble ornament of Manly. Built of excellent white stone in Gothic style – looking at a distance like marble – the palace even in its unfinished state presents an imposing and graceful appearance, and the picturesque surroundings add a charming element of romance.¹⁶³

The scale, siting and character of the Residence and College were statements of the size and commitment of Cardinal Moran's Sydney flock. The construction site and its workers overlooked and threatened to overwhelm the Manly village:

Mr. Jennings, the contractor ... has 200 men in his employ on these works. All the stone

¹⁶² Sydney Mail, 28 November 1883, p.833.

¹⁶³ Freeman's Journal, 31 October 1885, p.14.

used, and it seems to be of excellent quality, is quarried on the ground some little distance from the building. Visitors to Manly lately must have noticed the enormous steam cranes used for lifting the blocks of stone. These cranes are said to be the largest in the colonies. There is quite a little bush township formed on the estate by Mr. Jennings' workmen.¹⁶⁴

Henry Parkes' Public Instruction Act 1880 had recently become law, creating a 'free, secular and compulsory' public school system. The Act was opposed by the private and church schools, which were the primary options for education at that time, in part due to Parkes' insistence that the 'Act was to promote non-sectarian – he would prefer to say, non-priestly – education'.¹⁶⁵ In this climate the Manly palaces attracted sectarian barbs.

The Sydney Mail complained that:

you have often heard of unearned increment; but I doubt if you can quote a better example than this. It is the Catholic grant at Manly ... 60 acres which to-day are worth £60,000. And yet there is no gratitude for that great donation.¹⁶⁶

Meanwhile, if the Protestant Standard can be believed, an 1888 byelection to fill a vacancy on Manly Municipal Council was fought as a contest between Catholic and Protestant candidates 'under the shadow of the Cardinal's Palace, the Castle of the Hon. Mr. Dalley, P.O., and a Convent'.¹⁶⁷ At this time Manly parents could have their children taught at Anglican, Catholic or public schools.

A government school, Manly National School, had opened in September 1858 in a Swiss cottage on Tower Hill, lent for use as a school by Gilbert Smith. A year later the school moved into a new building on the corner of Carlton and Belgrave Streets on land also donated by

Smith. Enrolments began with only eight pupils, but with the completion of the new school in January 1859, 23 children were enrolled. Manly's Anglican families had established a 'grammar school' on the Corso, next door to St Matthew's Church of England in 1865. In January 1866, the rector of St Matthew's Church advertised his new school on the Corso:

Grammar School, Manly Beach... [to resume on] 22nd of January. Boarders £15.15.0 per quarter. Day Boarders £6.6.0 per quarter. For further particulars apply to the Reverend George Gurney, Manly.¹⁶⁸

St Matthew's Church of England Grammar School was to operate from its single room schoolhouse next to the church for over 40 years, as the main private school in the 'village'.

When St Patrick's College was completed in 1889, Manly was no longer a resort village. Lamps, telegraph poles, trees and footpaths lined its main streets, gas, water and sewerage was connected, while the town was 'well provided' with parks and reserves, 'those fronting the ocean having been converted into delightful promenades'.¹⁶⁹ Manly Municipality boasted 524 houses and its population in 1891 was 3,236, one of the smallest of Sydney's 36 municipalities, but a five-fold increase since 1848.¹⁷⁰

As William Bede Dalley had feared, Manly was now less of a rich man's retreat and more of a commuter suburb. This change was embodied in the promotion of Fairview Estate, a subdivision on the west side of Manly Cove. The promotional materials and maps of the estate namedropped buyers' potential neighbours, 'local magnates' already ensconced in their mansions:

¹⁶⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, 30 March 1886, p.3.

¹⁶⁵ *Illawarra Mercury*, 6 August 1880, p.4.

¹⁶⁶ *Sydney Mail*, 8 August 1885, p.317.

¹⁶⁷ *Protestant Standard*, 25 February 1888, p.7.

¹⁶⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 January 1866, p.1.

¹⁶⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 February 1888, p.11.

¹⁷⁰ *The Sydney and Suburban Municipalities XXXV – Manly* – *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 February 1888, p.11.

MANLY BEACH. THE FAIRVIEW ESTATE. Close to the STEAMERS' WHARF, adjoining the RESIDENCES of G A MURRAY, Esq, THOMAS A STRICKLAND, Esq, JAMES BROAD, Esq, and other Local Magnates. THIS FINE ESTATE is situated on THE SLOPE of the BEAUTIFUL HILL which DOMINATES MANLY from the WEST, and on the crest of which is built the PALATIAL RESIDENCE of The Hon W B DALLEY.¹⁷¹

Commuters became more plentiful following the 'ferry war' of 1893. In that year the newly founded Manly Cooperative Steam Ferry Company, subsidised by Manly Council, challenged the monopoly of the Port Jackson Steamship Company, offering sixpenny return fares to the city. 'Almost immediately the older company reduced its fare to threepence for the return journey in the hope of running its competitor off.' After a few years of frantic competition the two companies merged in 1896 and fares stabilised at sixpence.¹⁷² Almost a million and a half ferry trips were made that year, a threefold increase from 1888.

One group of Manly residents missed out on the boom. At Manly Cove, Aboriginal people had camped periodically from the 1850s to the 1870s,¹⁷³ according to George Thornton, a merchant, City councillor, politician and Manly resident. In 1880 Thornton became a founding member of the NSW Aborigines Protection Association. Formed to create 'missions to the heathen', the Association planned to 'gather the scattered remnants of the aboriginal race'. The Association quickly gained government funding and legal powers to move people to church missions and government reserves.¹⁷⁴

Thornton had long been concerned by the numbers of Aboriginal people living on the fringes of white society, especially those taking blankets and other forms of charity. By 1880, Thornton decided that all remaining Sydney

people originated elsewhere and urged Premier Parkes that they should be returned to their 'own lands'. A mission had recently been opened at Maloga, far away on the Murray River, and Thornton encouraged Sydney's coastal people to move there. Although many resisted his promises of assistance and charity, Thornton 'broke up' the Manly camp and about two dozen people boarded a train to Maloga on 2 August 1881.¹⁷⁵ As the coastal camps accommodated only about 100 people, this was a significant blow to their viability.

The 1880s marked the height of Sydney's first real estate boom, a frenzy of auctions, subdivisions and suburb-building. Numerous subdivisions were surveyed on the Northern Beaches at this time, but auctions and sales were few compared to elsewhere in Sydney, and home-building even rarer, before the first Great Depression of 1890 brought speculation to a halt.

Several of the early land grants were sold and subdivided during the 1880s. The Jenkins family's Mount Ramsey farm at Collaroy and Narrabeen was first put on the market in 1881: 'Land for the Multitude. New Township. Almost 1000 Lots to select from'.¹⁷⁶ This sale had been delayed by family legal disputes, finally settled in 1880 when Elizabeth Jenkins and her siblings Martha and John divided the Jenkins land.

The Jenkins Family and the Salvation Army

James Jenkins arrived in Sydney in 1802, having been transported for stealing sheep. James Jenkins' eldest child Elizabeth inherited land from a family friend, Alexander McDonald, at North Narrabeen in 1821. By 1825, James and his daughter owned all the foreshore land from Mona Vale south to Dee Why. Eventually the Jenkins family owned around 1,800 acres on the Northern Beaches.

¹⁷¹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 November 1885, p.11.

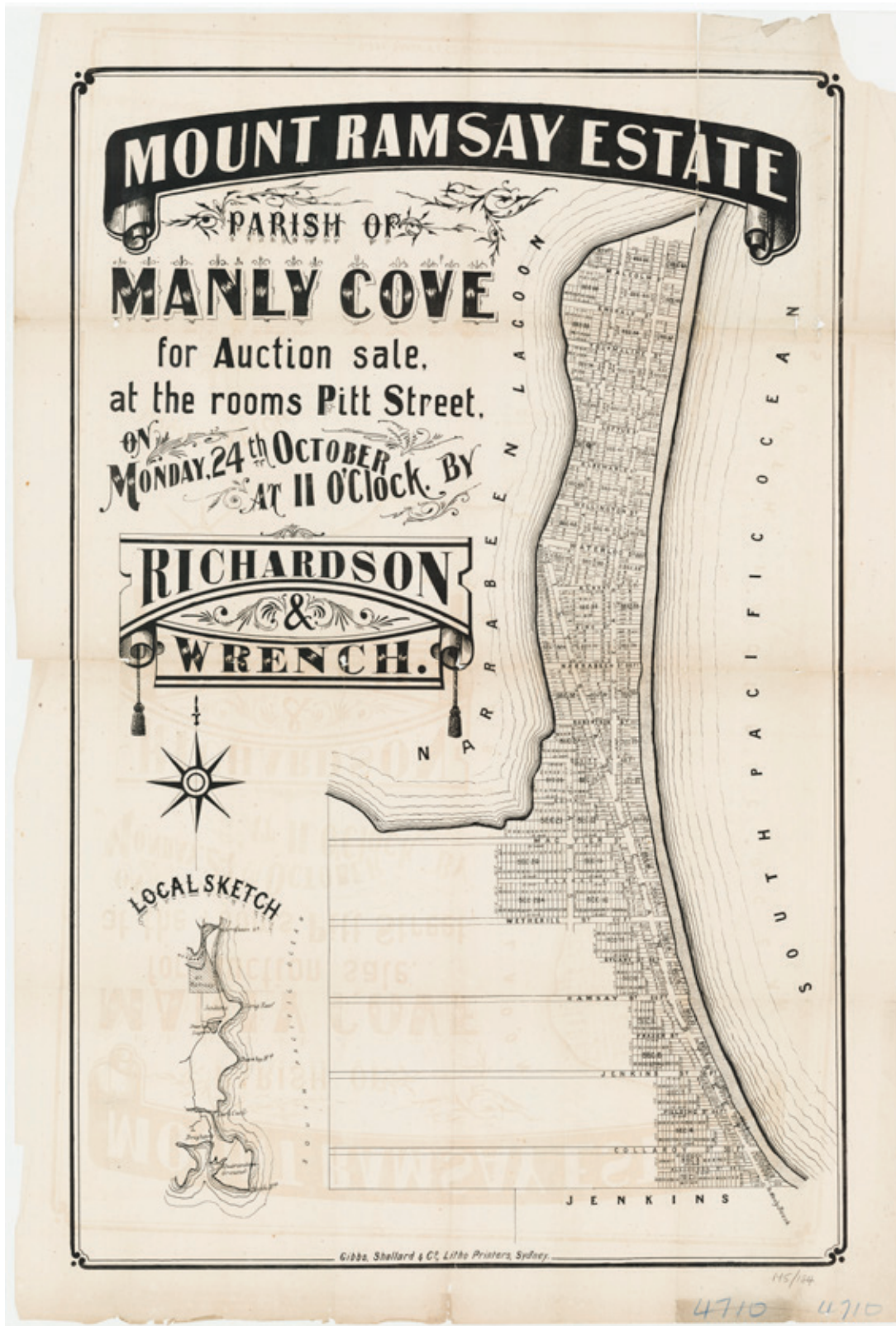
¹⁷² *Wagga Wagga Express*, 21 May 1896, p.1.

¹⁷³ Irish, *Hidden in plain view*, p.109.

¹⁷⁴ *Sydney Mail*, 6 November 1880, p.901.

¹⁷⁵ Irish, *Hidden in plain view*, p.116.

¹⁷⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 October 1881, p.11.



Mount Ramsey
Estate, 1890.
(Source: State
Library of
NSW)



First tram to Brookvale, 1910. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 40054)

Elizabeth Jenkins, daughter of James, became an ardent supporter of the Salvation Army in Sydney. In 1885, she gifted the Salvation Army 72 acres of her father's land at Dee Why and Narrabeen Lagoon. She also donated £400 for the Home of Rest, a hostel for Salvation Army officers, although used primarily as a respite home for 'inebriates' and finally as an aged care home, named Pacific Lodge. Opened by General Booth in 1892, the refuge still stands and is a hidden treasure in the heart of Dee Why, near the Dee Why Library. The Army also built homes for boys and girls and an industrial farm at Dee Why.

One of the myths surrounding Elizabeth Jenkins and her relationship with the Salvation Army is that she donated all her land to them. In reality, apart from the land already mentioned, Elizabeth entered into a mutually beneficial arrangement with the Salvation Army. The collapse of the Australian Banking Company in 1892 left Elizabeth feeling potentially liable as a shareholder. An intensely religious person, and worried by her position in relation to the bank, she decided to transfer her land and property to the Salvation Army in return for an annuity paid to her and her family.

Elizabeth never married and died in 1900. After her death her nephew Phillip challenged the arrangements Elizabeth had made

in her will, questioning both her mental health and the influence the Salvation Army held over her. Probate was finally granted to the Salvation Army and the annuity ended with Phillip's death in 1931.

After Elizabeth's death the Salvation Army owned much of the present-day area of Dee Why. This land acquired from Elizabeth was used to further the community work undertaken by the Salvation Army. An industrial farm and the Dee Why Home for Boys occupied the flat land to the east of Pittwater Road. A Home for Little Girls was built to the south of Dee Why Lagoon. Eventually the Salvation Army concluded that it owned too much land in the area. The proceeds of the sale of the Dee Why land could be put to good use to expand community work in other parts of Sydney.

The subdivision of the Dee Why Salvation Army land holdings began after 1911. With the subdivision by other landowners around the same time the town centre of Dee Why started to develop.¹⁷⁷

The sale of the Jenkins' land fuelled the growth of Dee Why and Collaroy, already encouraged by the construction of a tram line from Manly north along Pittwater Road. The line opened to Brookvale in 1910 and to Collaroy in 1912.

¹⁷⁷ Evening News, 31 July 1901, p.4.

Theme 6: Leisure and Tourism

Campaigns for the tramway had begun during the 1890s. At a 1898 public meeting at the Narrabeen Hotel:

all were agreed that if proper travelling facilities were afforded hundreds of city folks would come to Narrabeen and district, and enjoy the beautiful scenery and fresh air. They would only be too glad to get away from the smoky city. The time had arrived when a man should be able to jump into a tram at the Manly Wharf and be taken to Narrabeen in decent time and with some degree of comfort.¹⁷⁸

The Narrabeen Hotel had been a popular tourist address since the 1880s, 'a most charmingly situated hotel facing the road ... Close to the hotel are the celebrated Narrabeen Lakes, where there is splendid fishing, shooting, and boating, to be had within a half-a-mile of the hotel.'¹⁷⁹ From 1902 the Narrabeen was owned and managed by Belgian-born Charlotte Boutin, who had previously been licensee of the Rock Lily Hotel opened at Mona Vale in about 1886 by French hairdresser Leon Houreux:

Rock Lily Hotel. Mr Leon Houreux, Proprietor, wishes to be remembered to his many clients and Tourists and Strangers travelling through Sydney for the Christmas Holidays to pay a visit to his Establishment, noted for its Curious Picture Gallery, its Lovely Gardens and Parks.¹⁸⁰

In 1907 the Narrabeen Hotel was destroyed by fire and Madame Boutin commissioned a grander hostelry to replace it.

The Rock Lily and Narrabeen Hotels sought the same day tripper and tourist market as the Manly hotels. So did the Newport Hotel, the first on the Northern Beaches, which in 1842 advised 'settlers and the Public generally, that they may be accommodated with every

comfort for themselves, and good stabling for their Horses'.¹⁸¹ However, this service seems to have lasted only a few years of the 1840s. In 1880, a new Newport Hotel was built for Charles Edward Jeanneret, who ran excursion ferries to his Newport wharf. Jeanneret had partnered with land agent and auctioneer George Pile to build the wharf, so that ferry advertisements also promoted Pile's auctions of 'allotments of the new marine township of NEWPORT, which has been laid out on a grand scale'.¹⁸² Sold to William Boulton in 1887, the timber Newport Hotel was replaced by a large brick hotel when it was purchased by Reschs Limited in 1919. Newport prospered from this time, the locality's population reaching 452 in 138 dwellings by 1933.

The Rock Lily and Narrabeen Hotels ran coach services for guests to Manly, while Mona Vale would have to wait. In anticipation of business to be made from pleasure, George Brock, a Newtown haberdasher, bought the Mona Vale farm from Eliza Collins in 1897. Brock drained and filled Mona Vale lagoon – 'a pestilential lagoon which appeared to have no enticing features' – and had polo fields and a golf course laid out as well as a 37-room mansion and resort built in expectation that the planned tramway would run to Mona Vale. It never did.¹⁸³ In any case, Brock's debts forced a sale in 1907 some years before the tramway even reached Narrabeen.¹⁸⁴ The mansion was initially intended as a club house for the Oaks Polo Club.¹⁸⁵ However, the resort's new owner, high-profile land agent Arthur Rickard, 'brought it up to date and then let it to M. and Mdm. Rainaud ... Instead of being used as a polo club it became a fashionable boarding house, and on account of its situation and its surroundings, including surfing and golf, it became exceedingly popular'.¹⁸⁶

¹⁷⁸ *Evening News*, 27 June 1898, p.3.

¹⁷⁹ *Illustrated Sydney News*, 25 November 1893, p.15.

¹⁸⁰ *Bulletin*, 11 January 1902, p.6.

¹⁸¹ *Sydney Gazette*, 10 May 1842, p.1.

¹⁸² *Freeman's Journal*, 18 December 1880, p.11.

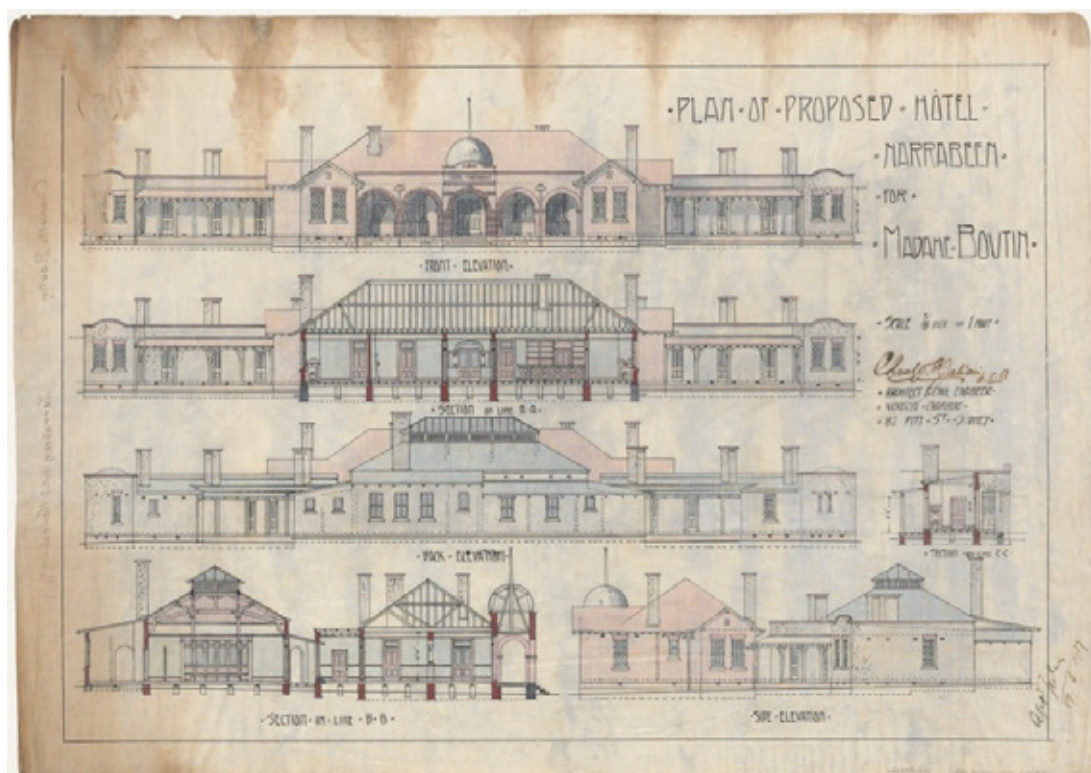
¹⁸³ *Building*, May 1909, p.49.

¹⁸⁴ *Sun*, 25 December 1910, p.11.

¹⁸⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 9 January 1911, p.11.

¹⁸⁶ *Sun*, 8 January 1912, p.1.

Plan of proposed Hotel Narrabeen, 1907. (Source: NSW State Archives, NRS 9590, Plan 62871)



The Rainauds were successful restaurateurs and Henri Rainaud had been chef to the NSW Governor. But in 1912 the mansion, by then named La Corniche, was severely damaged by fire. Although it was later restored, it did not achieve success comparable to the Blue Mountains' Hydro Majestic with which it was frequently compared. Despite a succession of tenants and uses, the fortunes of 'Brock's Folly' continued to decline until its eventual demolition. However, Rickard's subdivisions of Brock's estate became the foundation of Mona Vale village.

During the 1920s, new hotels were built at Harbord and Narrabeen (the Royal, later the Royal Antler), followed by the Dee Why Hotel in 1930; all of these offered more accommodation than most of the brewery-owned hotels of the time.

Surf and sun

At the 1911 census Narrabeen boasted 115 dwellings and 460 people, although the tram service did not arrive there until 1913; 'coaches and motors carry thousands of persons along this beautiful route' to Narrabeen 'on holidays and at week-ends, for there are splendid fishing grounds and surf beaches'.¹⁸⁷ Narrabeen's surf club was formed in 1910 due to the 'large number of people frequenting the Narrabeen beach for surf-bathing'.¹⁸⁸ Meanwhile the Narrabeen Progress Association was 'becoming alarmed at the possibilities of a percentage of rowdies going along in the crowd of holidaymakers'.¹⁸⁹

Clearly Narrabeen was a different sort of resort to Manly, which had been founded on fundamentally urban pleasures – promenading, dancing, eating and drinking at the several hotels and refreshment rooms; engagement with nature was primarily limited to picnicking and sightseeing.

¹⁸⁷ Sydney Morning Herald, 26 September 1911, p.13.

¹⁸⁸ Sydney Morning Herald, 4 February 1910, p.10.

¹⁸⁹ Sun, 19 September 1911, p.6.



Arthur
Streeton, *Manly
Beach*, 1895.
(Source: Gift of
Mr Bert Levy,
1900, Bendigo
Art Gallery)

By 1911, many Sydneysiders had begun to engage with their environment in new ways; the bays, lagoons and beaches became sites of physical pleasure rather than objects of passive appreciation. This cultural change was the impetus behind the Northern Beaches' population growth during the twentieth century.

Manly was not left behind; the new beach culture was first evident there. During 1878, Manly mayor Thomas Rowe led a deputation to the NSW Minister for Lands requesting:

sites for municipal baths at the corners of the bay. Manly ... was considered the Brighton of the colony, and to call a place Brighton without its being provided with bathing accommodation was to his mind a misnomer.¹⁹⁰

Work began on the Men's Baths in 1879, 'prettily situated in Little Manly Cove', at the eastern extremity of Manly Cove but designed to enclose only 200 square feet (18.5 square metres) of the harbour: 'There will be 10 dressing-rooms enclosed under the rocks, on a long platform with a spring board to allow of a "header" into deep water'.¹⁹¹ The NSW Government contributed half of the cost of the new baths, the only one to receive such generosity: 'This was done on the grounds that the building was not for the use of the residents of Manly Beach alone, but of the general public'.¹⁹²

¹⁹¹ *Evening News*, 23 May 1879, p.3.

¹⁹² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 March 1889, p.3.

¹⁹⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 January 1878, p.3.



Surf bathing at Manly, 1907. (Source: State Library of NSW, At Work and Play, 03458)

Bathing at the cove or the beach, except at the Baths, was prohibited between 7am and 7pm. This concern for 'public decency' was also a factor in the secluded location of the Men's Baths and the delay in constructing the Ladies Baths, situated in a more populated location on the western side of the Cove 'opposite Mr Pitt's residence'.¹⁹³ Suitably shielded from public view, the Ladies Baths were in use by 1886, although they did not stop the 'outrage on public morals caused by the customary practice of men and women bathing together on the harbour beach without appropriate costume'. To the horror of Manly's aldermen, 'the ladies come down in their night gowns, and go into the water with the men ... coolly walk out and dress in view of each other'.¹⁹⁴ The Mayor promised to 'have the evil remedied', yet this was to be a recurring controversy during the succeeding two decades.

¹⁹³ *Evening News*, 5 December 1884, p.5.

¹⁹⁴ *Globe*, 3 May 1886, p.6.

Harbour baths and pools were an established part of Sydney life by the 1870s and 1880s, originating with the Domain Baths on the western shore of Woolloomooloo Bay, where swimming enclosures were built as early as 1825. The first public baths were built there by the Sydney Council in 1858 and, like Manly's baths, were justified as sources of health and cleanliness. However, these baths were later enlarged as swimming became popular, especially with the advent of the Australian crawl and breaststroke from the 1870s. In 1897, the Manly Ladies Baths pool – 'formerly a very limited one' – was 'extended 40ft, which will give a respectable swimming space'.¹⁹⁵ The large new Corporation Baths were constructed in 1892 near the eastern ferry wharf, hosting Manly Swimming Club's first carnival that year.¹⁹⁶ The club would go

¹⁹⁵ *Evening News*, 12 July 1897, p.7.

¹⁹⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 April 1892, p.7.

on to produce several Olympic champions, although childhood member Andrew Charlton remains its most famous alumni. The new pool also hosted 'Continental' evenings of mixed bathing, novelty events and entertainment.¹⁹⁷

As swimming for pleasure boomed in popularity, the state-wide ban on daylight bathing was flouted with increasing frequency.¹⁹⁸ In 1903, Manly Municipality made it 'lawful for all persons, whether male or female, to bathe in the sea at all times and at any hour of the day'.¹⁹⁹ It has been claimed that this change resulted from a civil disobedience campaign by local busybody William Gocher.²⁰⁰ Gocher may have been summonsed but not fined in 1902 for wearing inappropriate beach attire.²⁰¹ However, he was not named in the press, and Manly Council had already decided to enforce modest dress rather than time restrictions; 'mixed bathing' had been infiltrating the Council pools for some years.²⁰² Hence, following Randwick Council's lead, 'persons desirous of bathing, being male or female, shall be clothed or covered from the neck and shoulders to the knees with a suitable bathing dress or costume'.²⁰³ Council also set aside part of the beach 'for such bathing', built three changing sheds and employed inspectors to enforce the dress code.

That damp, half-dressed strangers were permitted to mingle in public is remarkable given the censoriousness of the times – a major cultural change and testimony to the irresistible delights of beach, sea and sun. The fact that Manly may otherwise have lost visitors to Eastern Suburbs beaches presumably played a part.

However, Manly Council – and the press – were more concerned with the number of drownings and near-drownings occurring at Manly Beach as surfing became a popular yet potentially dangerous novelty. Council 'decided to employ the local fisherman – Messrs. Sly Brothers – to patrol the waters outside the breakers each morning'.²⁰⁴ By 1907 the rescue boat had saved over 100 lives; that year Manly became the first beach in Australia to have an appointed, paid life saver.

With the added attraction of surf bathing, Manly continued to prosper into the twentieth century, relentlessly publicised by both the Port Jackson and Manly Steamship Company and the Municipality of Manly. The marketing slogan 'Seven miles from Sydney and a thousand miles from care' quickly became a favourite expression. The Council produced a succession of souvenir booklets modestly describing Manly as 'the most fashionable and popular of health resorts, justly named the Queen of the Southern Seas'.²⁰⁵ By 1895, Manly was sufficiently populous and wealthy to fund a hospital; the founding chair of the hospital committee was Edmund Barton, barrister, politician and Balgowlah resident, soon to be Australia's first prime minister. Most of the Manly Cottage Hospital's budget came from individual donations and funds raised by the women organisers of a variety of fundraising events, the most notable being an annual January carnival, known from 1912 as the Manly Venetian Carnival:

A choir of 150 voices will render a programme of choral music from an illuminated pontoon, while a party of gondoliers has prepared an attractive bill of madrigals and part songs. The Manly Champion Band is assisting, while the great event of the evening will be the procession of illuminated craft about 9.15 p.m. and display of fireworks.²⁰⁶

197 *Evening News*, 12 January 1899, p.2.

198 *Sydney Mail*, 7 January 1903, p.25.

199 *NSW Government Gazette*, 11 December 1903, p.9118.

200 Bruce Mitchell, 'William Henry Gocher', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 1983.

201 *Australian Star*, 16 December 1902, p.6.

202 *Evening News*, 16 October 1900, p.3.

203 *NSW Government Gazette*, 11 December 1903.

204 *Daily Telegraph*, 9 September 1903, p.7.

205 *Manly and its environs: A reminiscence*, Manly Municipality, 1910, p.3.

206 *Evening News*, 17 January 1912, p.11.

Manly Cottage Hospital, c.1900s. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, LH010008)



In 1911 the population of Manly Municipality was 10,465, living in 1,853 residences, concentrated in Manly itself. Balgowlah, Seaforth and other addresses to Manly's west had yet to flourish and the eastern side of Middle Harbour was best known for pleasure gardens. The first of these was the Clontarf Pleasure Grounds, established in 1863 by Sydney publican Isaac Moore:

STEAM EXCURSION to CLONTARF PLEASURE GROUNDS, Middle Harbour, on BOXING-DAY, 26th December. A first-class steamer engaged. GREAT ATTRACTION. Foot races, jumping in sacks, climbing the greasy pole, pig with greasy tail, throwing the sledge, old English sports, cricket, quoits, skittles, football ... Two large pavilions erected on the ground, one 20 x 60 feet, boarded for dancing. A splendid band engaged.²⁰⁷

Clontarf was quickly established as a favourite Sunday and public holiday resort, with church and temperance societies initially the main users. Its popularity was only briefly reduced by its having been the site of an 1868 attempt

to assassinate Prince Alfred, Queen Victoria's son. Bantry Bay was also a picnic spot, enjoyed by 'those who favour the quieter and more secluded of the various beauty spots around the harbour'.²⁰⁸ It was nonetheless sufficiently popular to feature dining and dancing halls, but this bayside pleasure garden was closed in 1913 and resumed by the Government to store military explosives.²⁰⁹ A few years later the Clontarf pleasure gardens were also under threat as its owners began to sell its land for residential subdivision. Despite campaigns for the NSW Government to resume the land and protect the gardens, only the existing Clontarf Reserve remained in public hands.²¹⁰

The main force behind residential development in the area was Henry Ferdinand Halloran, who purchased 90 acres of land opposite The Spit in 1904. The same year Halloran offered the NSW Government a 66-foot-wide (c.20-metre) strip through his property, to be used for a tramway between The Spit and Manly.

²⁰⁸ *Australian Star*, 8 February 1901, p.11.

²⁰⁹ *Evening News*, 23 January, 1913, p.11.

²¹⁰ *Smith's Weekly*, 24 May, 1919, p.21.

²⁰⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 December 1864, p.1.

8/185

THE NEW WATERSIDE SUBURB

SEAFORTH

MIDDLE HARBOUR

FOR PRIVATE SALE BY

HENRY F. HALLORAN & CO

Auctioneers &c. 82 Pitt St Sydney. Open Mondays till 9 p.m.

All colored Lots are Sold.

EXCEPTIONALLY EASY TERMS
 10 per cent deposit, balance by 60 equal Monthly payments
 Interest 5 per cent per annum.
 The excellent system of building conditions which has been devised
 will make Seaforth the leading Suburb a safe place to erect a good residence.
 Full particulars in free illustrated art booklet, send for one.

"TORRENS TITLE"

Note: All measurements subject to Deposited Plan.
 Water Boundary lengths approximate only.

THE BLUFF

W.E. Smith & Co.

58/18

Seaforth Estate subdivision advertisement, 1908. (Source: State Library of NSW)



Middle Harbour Camping Lots advertisement, 1906. (Source: State Library of NSW, M2 811.1433/1906/1)

A steam punt was then the means of crossing Middle Harbour to The Spit and Mosman. In 1871, a public ferry had replaced the small hand-driven punt operated since 1850 by local farmer Peter Ellery, who charged horse-drawn vehicles a shilling and sixpence per crossing. In 1904 the mayors of Manly and Mosman had been campaigning for some time for a tram line from Manly to The Spit, where it could connect with Mosman trams. Halloran's offer was the game changer, reducing the cost of the project significantly, although in 1906 the Minister for Public Works was 'surprised at the little building along the road from The Spit to Manly, there would be a long run not earning any money at all'.²¹¹ Here reality met publicity, for Halloran was already describing Seaforth as the 'great new waterside suburb ... Where fortunes can be made even more quickly than they have been made over and over again in Mosman and Manly'.²¹²

Surveyor, valuer and realtor Henry Ferdinand Halloran was, like Avalon developer AJ Small,

an active member of the Town Planning Association and a friend of planning pioneer John Sulman. Influenced by the 'garden suburb' ideals then in vogue, Halloran advocated for urban zoning so that new suburbs would be separated from factories, workplaces, hotels and other urban influences, as well as for street layouts that respected the environment. He combined these ideals with a flair for publicity, enlisting journalists, politicians and celebrities such as Nellie Melba to endorse his promotions.

The Spit to Manly tramway opened in 1911, but it would be a decade or so before reality began to accord with Halloran's publicity. In 1921, Seaforth boasted just 10 dwellings and 48 residents; in 1925, the Sun reported that Seaforth:

originally the name of a big subdivision, wants to be recognised as a 'suburb' of Manly, in the same way as Balgowlah and Brookvale. The Manly Council has written to the Postal Department, asking it to make Seaforth a postal district.²¹³

Like most of the houses, Seaforth's post office did not eventuate until the 1930s.

²¹¹ Daily Telegraph, 11 May 1906, p.8.

²¹² Seaforth, Middle Harbour, where fortunes can be made, HF Halloran & Co, 1906, p.2.

²¹³ Sun, 3 September 1925, p.18.

Freshwater

Narrabeen was the largest of a string of new beach settlements running from Manly to Pittwater, their growth a direct result of the liberalisation of bathing laws; others included Freshwater, Brookvale and Newport. Australia's first volunteer surf life saving clubs were formed at Sydney beaches including Manly and North Steyne, while similar clubs formed at Freshwater in 1908, South Curl Curl and Newport in 1909, Narrabeen in 1910 and Collaroy in 1911. Brookvale Surf and Life Saving Club merged with its Dee Why neighbour in 1912.

Freshwater's popularity was helped by being close to Manly yet secluded and difficult to access.²¹⁴ It was also a favourite of artists, notably William Lister Lister, President of the Art Society:

He has large classes for landscape painting, and is very much liked by all his pupils. 'Uncle' (as he is called by some of those who have been longest with him), followed by a dozen or more lady students, is a familiar sight at Freshwater Beach.²¹⁵

Just north of Manly Lagoon (then called Curl Curl Lagoon), Freshwater Beach could only be reached by a 'rough and rocky' path for some years, 'yet thousands of visitors' came every summer.²¹⁶ The Sydney Morning Herald reported in 1911 that Freshwater was 'progressing at a rapid rate. A few years ago the place was practically deserted; today its popularity as a surf-bathing and camping resort is well-known'.²¹⁷

Warringah became a Shire during 1906 and by 1911 the new Council was responsible for 700 dwellings and 2,823 people. The Warringah Shire Council had to deal with the

issues springing from this sudden population growth, including water supply, sewerage, roads and bridges, as well as beach related matters such as the construction of changing sheds and the behaviour and dress of bathers.

The 1911 census put Freshwater's population at 250, although this number swelled to 2,000 and more on summer weekends. In 1915 a Sun journalist described the scene behind the beach:

Stretching back for a mile or more, are dotted the week-end shacks camps, cottages, or what other name one chooses to call the two or three room wooden structures. These are the residences of the week-enders ... Coming over Queenscliff head you see squat wooden houses perched among the rocks. Some are giddily poised on slender piles of stone or brick, others on wooden stakes, and yet others dumped down flat on a convenient nook in the rocks. There is no building covenant over that way, and the shacks are destitute of any architectural pretensions. Occasionally cottages with wide verandas can be found, but the majority of the Freshwater buildings are utterly destitute of external appurtenances, their eyebrow less appearance being emphasised by the funny little doors and windows ... But the great majority of the cottages or huts carry inside and outside the stamp of the simple life. Single and two-decker camp bunks or stretchers provide the sleeping accommodation, the other furniture consisting of rudely fashioned tables, benches, and stools, and occasionally deck chairs ... From Monday to Friday the place is as dead as a door nail, and there are not many about except the few who reside there permanently. But during the long summer every Friday night sees the arrival of long streams of week-enders.²¹⁸

²¹⁴ Sydney Mail, 18 November 1903, p.1305.

²¹⁵ Catholic Press, 25 December 1897, p.5.

²¹⁶ Daily Telegraph, 5 September 1907, p.5.

²¹⁷ Sydney Morning Herald, 22 December 1911, p.10.

²¹⁸ Sun, 4 April 1915, p.22.

I advise you, My dear Parkes to live as MANLY.

FRESHWATER ESTATE MANLY

Adjoining QUEENSLIFF

Clearance Sale on the Ground
SATURDAY, 21ST NOV^R
at 3 o'clock.

You look wonderfully well in health, My dear Sally

LOCAL SKETCH

ALBERT STREET

1	44
2	43
3	42
4	41
5	40
6	39
7	38
8	37
9	36
10	35
11	34

CHARLES STREET

12	33
13	32
14	31
15	30
16	29
17	28
18	27
19	26
20	25
21	24
22	23

FRESHWATER STREET

45	34
44	33
43	32
42	31
41	30
40	29
39	28
38	27
37	26
36	25
35	24

OCEAN VIEW

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
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TERMS
10% deposit, Balance in 12 quarterly Payments Interest 6%

MILLS & PILE Auctioneers
11/2/23

S.T. LEIGH & CO. LITH.
28 O'CONNELL ST.

Freshwater Estate, 1903. (Source: State Library of NSW, Z/SP/H2)

The camp huts were identified by names rather than addresses; these included Government House, Devil Dodgers, Paradise Lost, Shark's Bait, Simple Life and so on. Freshwater had attracted the attention of officialdom even before the camps were established:

Mixed bathing is there exceedingly popular. It seems, however, that things on a recent holiday were not quite what they ought to have been, and Alderman D. S. Ogilvy has asked the Manly Council to have a policeman sent there to keep order. The alderman claimed to have witnessed scenes that had astonished him, and he was sorry to say that members of the gentler sex were among the offenders.²¹⁹

Part of D'Arcy Wentworth's land, the Freshwater Estate was first put on the market in 1885; however, from 1900 several buyers rented the still-cheap land to campers, or built camps for rent. These included Charles Paterson, director of the NSW Immigration and Tourist Board and president of the newly formed Surf Bathers Association.²²⁰ Others subdivided parts of the estate into narrow lots suitable for camp huts; the Surfers Rest Estate offered '46 choice sites for week-end cottages & camps'.²²¹

From 1906, Amos and Ruth Randall ran a general store for campers as well as letting out 20 camp cottages:

Mr. A. Randell gave his first annual dinner to his camp tenants at Seanook Camp City, Freshwater, Manly. The purpose of the dinner was to terminate the Summer Season and inaugurate the Winter Season ... Mr. Randell spoke in praise of the occupiers of his camps, having found in them gentlemen who diligently and carefully watched their mutual interests. Mr. G. Lewis replied on behalf of the East End Retreat (No. 3) ... Messrs. Slade ('Pioneer Camp'), Johnston ('Bull and Bush'), Stevens ('Water Rats' Rendezvous'), Walford ('Shark Bait') also replied on behalf of their respective camping parties.²²²

Warringah Shire Council remained concerned by the 'repeated acts of indecency' at Freshwater Beach, although the formation of the surf club in 1908 had a regulatory effect.²²³ Women were at first permitted to visit the camps only on Sundays, although this rule seems to have lapsed after 1910. That decade saw a steady stream of press stories chronicling rowdy behaviour, public nudity and similar scandals at Freshwater, culminating in a 1919 shooting during a two-up game at the Brush Villa camp.²²⁴

Initially the Pittwater tram bypassed Freshwater, but in 1925 a branch tram line was built from North Manly: 'Thousands come to us now that a tram service runs right on to the beach. The camps have been replaced by a thickly-populated area. Freshwater has become "residential"'.²²⁵ By this time Freshwater Post Office had been renamed Harbord in an attempt to improve the reputation of the area:

²¹⁹ *Evening News*, 6 October 1904, p.4.

²²⁰ Phil Jarratt, *That Summer at Boomerang*, Hardie Grant, 2014, pp.99–100.

²²¹ *Surfers Rest Estate, Freshwater, Manly*, Arthur Rickard & Co., 1908.

²²² *Sunday Times*, 19 May 1907, p.3.

²²³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 January 1908, p.11.

²²⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, 27 May 1919, p.6.

²²⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 24 February 1928, p.5.

THE SURFER'S REST ESTATE



FRESHWATER. MANLY

46 CHOICE SITES FOR WEEK-END COTTAGES & CAMPS
 — Close to the Ocean Beach —
GOOD ELEVATION & VIEWS, NO ROCKS, SPLENDID LEVEL LAND, RICH SOIL
TORRENS TITLE *Free Transfer to all cash purchasers*

WYADRA (66' wide) AVENUE																		OLIVER ROAD (44' wide)
28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	
£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£29. 9' 10"
£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£29. 8' 10"
£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£29. 7' 10"
£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£29. 6' 10"
£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£29. 5' 10"
£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£29. 4' 10"
£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£29. 3' 10"
£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£29. 2' 10"
£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£20	£30. 1' 10"

WYUNA (66' wide) AVENUE

LOCAL SKETCH



TERMS **£1 PER LOT DEPOSIT & 10/- PER MONTH**
Interest 5% per annum charged on quarterly balances.

FOR PRIVATE SALE
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ARTHUR RICKARD & CO LTD
Realty Specialists.
84B PITT ST. SYDNEY.

All dimensions subject to Deposited Plan.

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 Licensed Surveyor
 Australasia Chambers.
 MARTIN Place.

F. CUNNINGHAM & CO LITHO.

F8/10

Surfer's Rest Estate subdivision advertisement, 1908. (Source: State Library of NSW, 007 - Z/SP/H2/7)



Randell family outside their store in Harbord, c.1910. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 41/WAR41213)

With a change of name effacing unpleasant memories Harbord is moving rapidly. Shacks are giving way to modern villas, a movement which has been assisted by the coming of the tram, sewerage, gas, etc.²²⁶

While weekend cottages remained closer to the beach, Harbord continued to develop into the 1930s as a place to live, rather than a place to camp on the weekend. An increasing number of timber cottages were being built. By the late 1930s and into the 1940s, a number of solid brick houses were built, mainly by Steven Raffo, a local builder,

which locals called 'Raffo's Rows'.²²⁷ The aerial photographs of 1943 clearly show the increasing number of cottage houses scattered throughout the suburb of Harbord.

By that time, shack living was gaining a fresh burst of popularity through the efforts of trade unions and associated organisations to create affordable holiday camps for their members. Among these was the Currawong Camp, founded by the NSW Labor Council in 1949 at Little Mackerel Beach, Pittwater. Still in use, the camp consists of several fibro holiday cottages and related facilities.

²²⁶ Sydney Morning Herald, 2 October 1929, p.10.

²²⁷ Gwen Gordon, *Harbord, Queenscliff and South Curl Curl, 1788–1978*, p.100.

Dee Why

From around 1912 the Salvation Army began to subdivide and sell its land in the area. With the tram coming to Dee Why, the suburb began to develop as a popular holiday and weekend destination. Dee Why Surf Life Saving Club was formed in 1912. Up until the Second World War Dee Why was largely a holiday resort with few permanent residents.

The origin of the name 'Dee Why' is not really known, although there are several theories. The first recorded use of the term was in 1815 when James Meehan surveyed the area and wrote 'Dy beach' in his notebook and then used the term in several other places. The name was soon in common use on maps with a variety of spellings.

Theme 7: New suburbs and cultural landscapes

Camps & cottages to suburbs

In September 1921 the Sun announced that 'the week-end camps are starting to buzz. A few of them have been going right through the winter, but all have their crew now'. Each camp 'freshens up an army of Sydney workers of all grades. It fits them for another five or five and a half days toil, and breaks the monotony of city life'. With many workers by then having Saturday or at least Saturday afternoon off work, weekend camps were a mainstream part of Sydney life and places like 'Deewhy, Point Clare, Palm Beach, Woy Woy, Curl Curl and Berowra are springing into their once-a-week life again'.²²⁸ Not everyone agreed. Manly's mayor had recently declared that 'the sooner we wipe out week-end camps altogether the better for the progress of the municipality'.²²⁹

Northern Beaches camp villages outnumbered the others listed by the Sun, having sprung up at Freshwater, Queenscliff, North Curl Curl, Dee Why, Collaroy, Bilgola, Narrabeen, Palm Beach and elsewhere. North of Manly the camp huts were one of the Northern Beaches' main building types during the first two decades of the twentieth century; they left a long mark on its built environment. At Curl Curl in 1910:

already the week-ender has made his advent, several camps are erected and inquiries for others are prevalent, and already a resort equal if not superior to Freshwater has been founded there.²³⁰

In 1909 an auction flyer for Curl Curl Beach Estate depicted a timber camp cottage at Warrigal Camp, Curl Curl. The following year the Seagull Estate offered '85 Camping Blocks', only 30 feet (9 metres wide) at North Curl Curl; 'No Building Restriction – Build what you like'.

Warringah Shire Council was not always sympathetic, prosecuting a Curl Curl camper

for inadvertently building his dwelling on public land. The Daily Telegraph commented:

a permanent camp is not – according to some standards – an ornament to a modern and progressive suburb; and, secondly, its rateable value is small. Consequently it is rare to meet an alderman whose eye lights up with pleasure at the mention of 'camp'.²³¹

However, as at Freshwater, many of the North Curl Curl shacks survived into the 1940s if not later.

In 1952, Warringah Shire Council evicted long-term residents from the camping reserve.²³² Similar evictions first occurred during the 1920s, when the Council introduced permits and charges for camping on public reserves for a maximum of three months:

At the present time there are large numbers of camps at Griffith Park (near Collaroy Beach), Lake Park Reserve (Narrabeen) and at Palm Beach. The camps are occupied mainly by family parties, many of which have their own motor cars and motor lorries, and rigid regulations exist in regard to sanitation ... The council has made an exception in the case of a number of maimed returned soldiers, who, for health reasons, have been permitted to remain in Griffith Park longer than the stipulated period.²³³

Long Reef Headland, on 179 acres (72 hectares), was part of the land left by Elizabeth Jenkins to the Salvation Army. Recognising its potential for public open space, the NSW Government resumed the Long Reef Headland in 1912 and it was dedicated as Griffith Park in honour of the Minister for Works at the time, Arthur

Griffiths, who initiated the resumption. Camping on the headland had been happening

²²⁸ Sun, 14 September 1921, p.6.

²²⁹ Evening News, 13 July 1921, p.6.

²³⁰ Sun, 23 September 1910, p.15.

²³¹ Daily Telegraph, 15 January 1910, p.12.

²³² Tribune, 17 December 1952, p.12.

²³³ Sydney Morning Herald, 29 December 1926, p.9.

Northern Beaches Thematic History

See it !!

Buy it !!

SEA GULL ESTATE

CURL CURL

BROOKVALE

85 CAMPING BLOCKS

MANLY

THE GREAT ESTATE

SEA BATHING AT YOUR DOOR

ALL LEVEL LAND, LOVELY VIEWS, MUST BE SOLD.

For Auction Sale
ON THE GROUND

JANUARY, 1ST, 1910.

NEW YEARS DAY - AT 3 O'CLOCK.

Free Busses, Band Etc.
Deed Costs £2-10-0.

Making Money

Surf Bathing

ocean

To Brookvale
Tram Terminus

PITT ROAD

1	2	3	4	5	6
45	46	47	48	49	50
44					7
43					8
42					9
41					10
40					11
39					12
38					13
37					14
36					15
35					16
34					17
33					18
32					19
31					20
30					21
29					22
28					23
27					24
26					25
25					26
24					27
23					28
22					29
21					30

SPRING ROAD

ABBOTT

PITT ROAD

1	2	3	4	5	6
40	41	42	43	44	45
39					7
38					8
37					9
36					10
35					11
34					12
33					13
32					14
31					15
30					16
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28					18
27					19
26					20
25					21
24					22
23					23
22					24
21					25

ROAD

GRIFFIN ROAD

Solicitor to the Estate
R. N. HENDERSON Esq.
Savings Bank Chambers
Moore St.

ROAD

GRIFFIN ROAD

local sketch

— TERMS —

£1 DEPOSIT & £1 MONTHLY.
INTEREST 5 PER CENT.

Glorious Manly ! Crowds waiting !
Low Rates, Double your money in a short time.
Near the new Tram Terminus
Any local Agents will show you the Land.
Every buyer will be presented with a Bathing Costume.
No Building Restriction - Build what you like.
TORRENS TITLE.

ARTHUR BLACKWOOD.
Property Auctioneer.
SAVINGS BANK CHAMBERS,
Haymarket.

Phones { City 1251.
Petersham 445

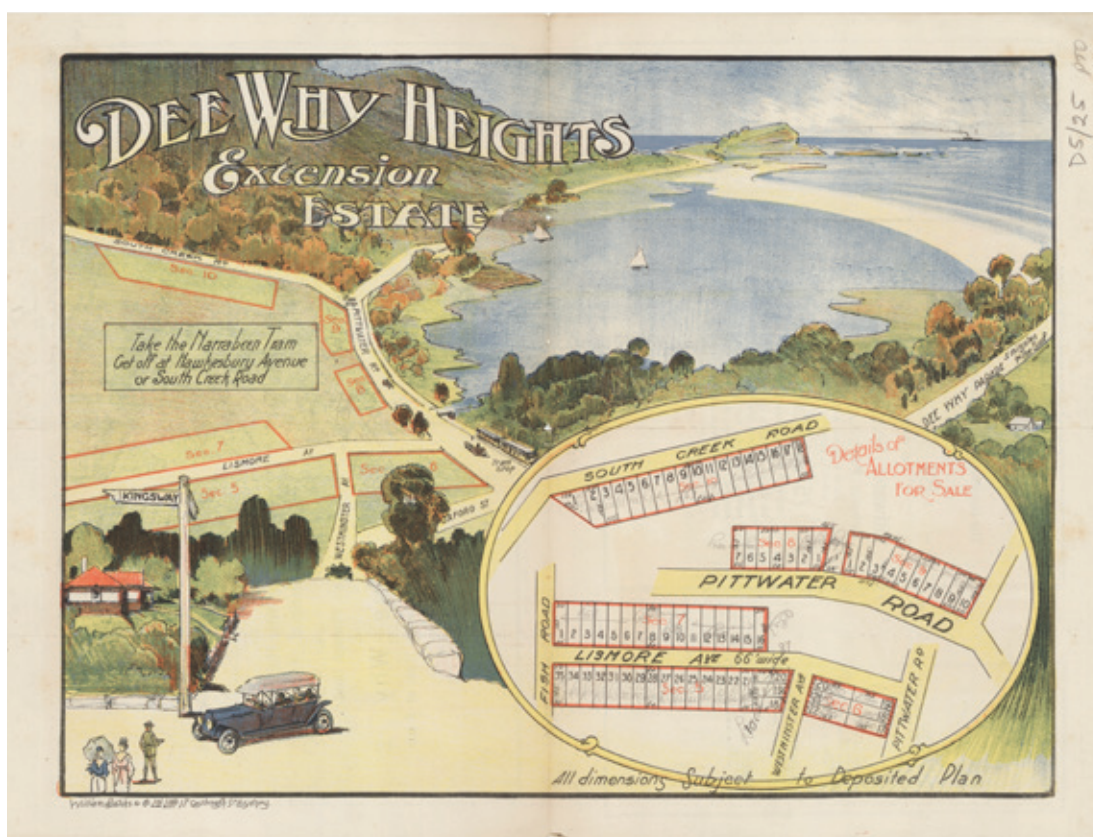
Fisher & Nott.
Licensed Surveyors and R.P.A.
86 Pitt St City.

All dimensions subject to Deposited Plans.

145/330

Sea Gull Estate advertisement, 1910. (Source: State Library of NSW, Z/SP/C37)

Version 1 | March 2022



Dee Why Heights subdivision advertisement, 1923. (Source: State Library of NSW, Z/SP/D5)

since the Jenkins family owned the land, especially by the fishermen at Fishermans Beach, and the Salvation Army continued to recognise the fishermen's claims when they inherited the land. The NSW Government, however, served notice to those camping at Long Reef in 1913, which included seven fishermen and two old aged pensioners.²³⁴ Warringah Shire Council agreed to become trustee of Griffith Park in 1914 and initially allowed the fishermen and campers to stay. When Council sent an inspector to the park in 1917, he found that the casual campers were mostly wives and children of serving soldiers who had been taken to the area for a holiday by friends.²³⁵ There were also 26 men and six women in occupation at Fishermans Beach.²³⁶

234 Department of Lands, letter to Crown Lands
bailiff, Manly dated 28 February 1913.

235 Manly Daily, 17 January 1917.

236 Report by Lands Department's Metropolitan
District Surveyor, 3 May 1917.

Griffith Park between Dee Why and Collaroy remained home to several families escaping 'landlords who persist in raising weekly rentals' as well as the 'one-legged Diggers'.²³⁷

The park was partly occupied by a golf course, 'responsible for the popularity of the southern end of Collaroy' and real estate values along the nearby Pittwater Road were spiralling by 1929.²³⁸ The Depression swelled the campers' numbers and the voices of their opponents:

Councillors of Warringah Shire do not know what to do with the unemployed campers in Griffith Park, Collaroy. Complaints have been made by residents in the vicinity concerning the families living there. They asked that the camps be shifted.²³⁹

237 Sunday Times, 14 March 1926, p.1.

238 Sydney Morning Herald, 2 October 1929, p.10.

239 *Daily Telegraph*, 9 April 1932, p.1.



Newport
Beach, 1922.
(Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
NEW-543)

Shortly afterwards the unemployed campers were evicted from the camp.²⁴⁰ Some may have moved to other Depression 'happy valleys'; one at Allambie Heights housed 90 people 'living in galvanised iron and bag humpies'.²⁴¹ Others may have moved to Clontarf: 'there are about 40 or 50 camps in a pleasant area close to the silvery sands and the crystal clear water of Middle Harbour'.²⁴²

In 1915, the Referee had opined that 'cheap land and no covenant has set Freshwater ... back many, many years'.²⁴³ Warringah Shire Council and the real estate industry came to the same conclusion. Yet the Northern Beaches' housing stock remained small, cheap and informal and at the 1921 census, Warringah's 2,238 dwellings were distinct

compared to those of Sydney suburbia. Only 293 were constructed of brick or stone, the majority – 1457 – had timber walls, a much higher percentage (64 per cent) than the one timber house in five across Sydney. There were 68 canvas tents occupied on an April census night as well as 264 houses clad with a newfangled material called fibro-cement. Warringah's dwellings were also on the small side, with 70 per cent (1557) comprising four rooms or fewer while across Sydney most dwellings had five, six or more rooms.

²⁴⁰ *Daily Telegraph*, 9 December 1932, p.8.

²⁴¹ *Workers Weekly*, 28 February 1936, p.4.

²⁴² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 December 1933, p.9.

²⁴³ *Referee*, 15 December 1916, p.11.

The beachside townscape comprised the 'thousands of small promiscuous bungalows, built of everything from patchwork of kerosene tin up to fine red brick and stucco' viewed by the novelist DH Lawrence during his brief Sydney sojourn in 1922. Taking the tram from Manly, he arrived at Narrabeen:

This was the end of everywhere, with new 'stores' – that is, flyblown shops with corrugated iron roofs – and with a tram shelter, and little house-agents' booths plastered with signs – and more 'cottages'; that is, bungalows of corrugated iron or brick.²⁴⁴

At Dobroyd Head, the Crater Cove huts were built by fishermen for short stays but then permanently occupied for a period during the depression years in the 1930s.

The opening of The Spit and Roseville bridges in 1924 improved access to the Warringah peninsula; car ownership was the province of the wealthy but bus services flourished. By 1933, Warringah Shire was home to 16,054 people, while an extra 2,000 dwellings had been built there. Timber houses plus 884 fibro-clad houses together constituted 74 per cent (3188) of the Warringah total at this time, compared to 22 per cent across Sydney.

New suburbs normally featured cheaper and smaller houses than those in established areas, but Warringah's housing stock remained radically more modest.

Bush Bungalows

In his novel *Kangaroo*, DH Lawrence seems to have used the term 'bungalow' in its original sense – a small, verandahed cottage common in Bengal before being adopted and adapted in England and elsewhere. Bungalows became popular in Australia during the Federation period as verandahs partly encircled many suburban homes, as well buildings in rural and resort locales.

In the early twentieth century, many architects adopted and reworked the style. In 1920, the Sydney architect James Peddle wrote:

In the bush bungalow the human condition to be met is the desire of the prospective owner to secure temporary release from some of the conventionalities of our social system; to live more simply. He has, however, no wish to return to barbarism, no wish to forego either comfort or pleasure ... It is the super-conventionalities, the starched collar and the shoe polish, not the tooth-brush and the bath, from which he desires relief.²⁴⁵

Peddle left his Sydney practice to work in California from 1911 to 1913, gaining familiarity with a new type of bungalow, designed for relaxed living and harmony with a natural setting. The symmetry, history-inspired decoration and artifice of Victorian houses were discarded in favour of wood and stone, functional planning, and openness to views, light and air.

Architect Reginald Prevost published the first edition of his book of *Australian Bungalow and Cottage Home Designs* in 1912, joining the numerous bungalow pattern books from California and elsewhere. The 'Californian Bungalow' quickly became the most popular house genre in Australia's new suburbs. Most were merely budget versions of the generic double-fronted brick cottage; not so on the Northern Beaches, where the timber bungalow flourished. In Sydney's suburban pecking order, timber houses were regarded as a budget choice at best; not so on the Northern Beaches and other holiday addresses where timber construction matched the verandahs and the easygoing simplicity of weekend housing.

According to *Smith's Weekly* in 1921, the Northern Beaches, 'which has long had a floating summer population, is

²⁴⁴ DH Lawrence, *Kangaroo*, Text Publishing, ch.2.

²⁴⁵ James Peddle, 'The Bush Bungalow', *The Home*, September 1920, p.35.

GLIMPSES OF SOME BUSH BUNGALOWS



This view of a bush bungalow shows how well it harmonises with its natural surroundings. The large front verandah has a glassed-in corner for protection against southerlies.



A comfortable living room with the built-in fittings and fireplace suggested in the article. Windows are placed in corners, commanding the views.



The rough-cut stone fireplace is entirely appropriate to a dwelling in the bush. Besides its artistic charm, it has practical advantages, for it does not smoke and is roomy enough for a cozy fire.



Corner of a bungalow verandah where meals may be served on fine days or a dance held in the evening. The low-pitched roof gives plenty of shade in the summer.

gradually developing into a more and more settled suburban area' thanks to the tram service to Narrabeen. Building was 'mainly of the bungalow type'.²⁴⁶ However, subdivisions were still advertised as sites for weekenders rather than permanent homes: 'Palm Beach Estate: the ideal week-end spot with its beautiful scenery, surfing beaches, fishing and boating'.²⁴⁷

In 1912, Palm Beach had only recently been subdivided for residential use but its remoteness encouraged exclusivity and a holiday focus. Within a decade it was providing ample copy for society writers:

Bowral is a dull place. The Vice Regal folk seem to share the general opinion, for after the New Year, they transferred themselves to Palm Beach. They have taken Mr. A. J. Hordern's charming bungalow ... The Governor goes in surfing, every morning before breakfast, clad in a discreet costume ...²⁴⁸

Avalon and other Pittwater locales also prospered: 'Fashions in holiday places change, and Manly is wearing the garb of Cinderella ... The motor-car is taking people past Manly to what were once considered un-get-at-able resorts like Avalon and Bilgola'.²⁴⁹ In 1933, Palm Beach had 66 residences but just 208 residents on June census night.

This was James Peddle's market, and he designed at least four bungalows at Palm Beach before 1920: Craigie Lee, The Moorings, Back O Moon and Inglewood, as well as others at Careel Bay (Marara), and Narrabeen:

PALM BEACH. INGLEWOOD, FLORIDA ROAD
(2 doors past Palm Beach

Boarding-house). Seaside Residence of E. P. M. SHEEDY, Esq. Built under personal supervision of Architects, Messrs. Peddle and Thorpe. OVERLOOKING THE BEACH. A FAITHFULLY-BUILT BUNGALOW, of Redwood, panelled, on solid stone foundations, shingle roof, containing LARGE LIVING-ROOM (15 x 24), SLEEPING-OUT VERANDAH (15 x 21), 4 FINE BEDROOMS, Bathroom, and Lavatory, connected, with septic tank.²⁵⁰

Peddle's Palm Beach houses were regulars of the social pages, demonstrating the classless appeal of the holiday bungalow, adaptable even to respectability: 'The Lieutenant-Commander will take his pretty bride to 'The Moorings' at Palm Beach, where they will settle for a while until their ship leaves for England in April'.²⁵¹ The bungalow genre could encompass both architectural sophistication and do-it-yourself vernacular, perfect for the diverse market and low-density setting of the Northern Beaches.

Several architects adopted and promoted the bungalow style in the area, including Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin, who designed an Avalon weekendender for Stella James and Clare Stevenson.

Another of note was Alexander Stewart Jolly. Born to a family of timber merchants and craftsmen, Jolly began designing houses in his hometown of Lismore, before being pursued by a creditor and declared bankrupt in 1916. Moving to Sydney, he resumed architectural practice in 1918 and designed bungalows and other structures in some of Sydney's northern suburbs before becoming a real estate speculator and agent, working for Albert Edwin Dalwood, a prominent Northern Beaches real estate agent and philanthropist.

²⁴⁶ Smith's Weekly, 25 June 1921, p.16.

²⁴⁷ Evening News, 20 December 1912, p.16.

²⁴⁸ Newcastle Morning Herald, 21 January 1927, p.10.

²⁴⁹ Sun, 29 December 1929, p.8.

²⁵⁰ Sydney Morning Herald, 17 December 1921, p.17.

²⁵¹ Daily Pictorial, 27 February 1930, p.24.

However, two charges of driving while intoxicated and a second bankruptcy petition ended this career and led to a dramatic admission during a 1928 bankruptcy hearing:

I have been fighting drink for a considerable time ... and on June 3 I made up my mind that I would not have another drink. I marked the resolution on myself by cutting off my little finger, more to prove to Mrs. Jolly that I was serious.²⁵²

From 1929, Jolly resumed his architecture career, often camping on site at Avalon where he designed a variety of structures including a café and corner shop at Old Barrenjoey Road. Sited on part of Father Therry's 1836 land grant, Avalon had an exclusive reputation and population similar to Palm Beach: 'Here, refined, congenial people, with tastes similar to your own, are making their homes.'²⁵³ This was the work of AJ Small, a member of the Town Planning Association who subdivided, promoted and named the area, as well as building the golf course and clubhouse, tennis courts and stores, and establishing parks and reserves.²⁵⁴ His publicity for Avalon land noted that 'the vendors have engaged a reliable firm of architects and builders specialising in week-end bungalows to supply free plans and estimates...'²⁵⁵

Alexander Stewart Jolly challenged Small's clientele by designing hand-crafted dwellings so minimalist and complex as to appear outgrowths of the landscape. Walls were pieced together from stone, cut logs and branches that were found and meticulously assembled. Jolly worked closely with his clients and collaborators, helping to establish a Northern Beaches tradition of designer bungalows.

Weekenders or home?

Apart from Manly, most Northern Beaches suburbs had similar histories. Occupying land once owned by the Jenkins, the Farrells and other landowning families, the suburbs developed slowly following the sale and subdivision of the large estates. At the 1911 census just eight villages could muster the 50 residents required for 'locality' status: Bayview, Brookvale, Curl Curl, Dee Why, Frenchs Forest, Harbord/Freshwater, Narrabeen and Newport.

Of these Brookvale and Narrabeen were the largest with 496 and 460 people, although the weekend population of Narrabeen was no doubt considerably larger. With improved transport access the beach towns grew faster during the 1920s and 1930s and by the 1947 census Dee Why was comfortably the largest with 5,940 residents, with Collaroy, Narrabeen, Narrabeen North and Harbord also well populated. In contrast Palm Beach and Avalon remained exclusive with 612 and 554 residents respectively, similar in size to the western villages including Frenchs Forest and Terrey Hills.

As the beach towns formed a leisure coast their housing stock remained distinct from those of Manly and Balgowlah, which were similar to that across Sydney suburbia. However, to their north, the generic residence was a four or five-room timber house with an iron roof. On census night in 30 June 1933, 1,600 people were sleeping out on the verandahs of 778 Warringah Shire residences, the second highest number in NSW (after Hornsby Shire). The sole similarity between the houses of Manly and Warringah was that even in winter a large number were rented out – 1,746 of Warringah's total of 4,293.

²⁵² Sydney Morning Herald, 24 February 1928, p.12.

²⁵³ Goulburn Evening Post, 11 January 1929, p.7.

²⁵⁴ Construction and Real Estate Journal, 6 April 1938, p.8.

²⁵⁵ Palmgrove Estate, Avalon Beach, 1921.



This Bungalow beside the beach has been rented this season by the Warwick Fairfaxes. Rent is 25 guineas a week. Palm Beach is, for a house like this, £10 a week dearer than Collaroy, which is next in line socially among the northern Sydney beaches. Top rent at Collaroy is 15 guineas a week at height of the season.

They Pay up to 25 Gns. a Week for Houses— But You Can Live in a Garage for £6 a Week



Garages Like This have been let for £6 a week at Palm Beach surfside.



Other Palm Beachers stay aboard yachts and luxury cruisers such as this one, Toomerie, owned by H. P. Christmas, managing director of Woolworth's.

PIX — Page Five



Beautiful Vacation Homes include "Kalua," the lovely house and grounds of Mrs. Alfred J. Hordern, which overlooks Palm Beach. Glorious garden has 96 varieties of hydrangeas. A. J. Hordern nearly bought, years ago, the whole beach frontage land. Hordern Park adjoins the property shown. It is a gift to picnickers. Figure in white in the grounds is Mrs. A. J. Hordern.



Miss Carmen Hordern, charming young member of noted family, at the front verandah of "Kalua," which is furnished in colorful seaside style. Playsuit and sandals Miss Hordern is wearing are generally favored by attractive young Palm Beach socialites.

High Life at Night, Page 6 (over).

JANUARY 29th, 1938.

THE PALMGROVE ESTATE AVALON BEACH 1st SUBDIVISION



GENERAL VIEW OF ESTATE SHOWING APPROACH TO BEACH ON RIGHT

The Estate and how to get there.

The Palmgrove Estate, Avalon Beach, is situated 14 miles from Manly Junction, Newport and Pittwater on the main Bayswater Road, within view of the most picturesque and commanding scenery on the whole coast.

It can be reached by car from the City in a little over an hour or by train to Newport from Manly, thence 30 minutes by Bayswater Road, then a short drive to the Estate (about 10 minutes).

Available route is by regular bus service from Newcastle River Station to Newcastle School, about a quarter of an hour's walk from the Estate.

Description of Estate.

The first subdivision comprises about 50 acres, mostly low hills, and not one bad view anywhere. The Estate is situated about four miles from the beach, on a park-like land with beautiful soil.

It is admirably situated from naturally and steadily winds for a residence of hills, while it offers the benefit of sea and north-easterly winds during the summer months.

The finished estate in the future will be surrounded by the Warringah Shire Council, which is a guarantee as to the quality and permanency of the work.

The Future of Avalon Beach.

The aim of the Vendors of the Avalon Beach Estate is to create a world-wide resort from the drawbacks which have made so many other seaside localities.

With this object in view, extensive building programmes have been initiated for the promotion of houses and which will ensure a big increase in values later on.

An Ideal Holiday Resort.

No expense has been spared in the equipping of Avalon Beach for the comfort and convenience of holiday-makers. Besides the natural beauty of the district, probably unrivalled in the Commonwealth, numerous public and private (large) houses given for public use fully equipped with complete amenities, tennis courts, etc., and it is probable that about one a half dozen for cricket and tennis, and possibly later a golf links will be erected.



"AVALON" THE WEEK-END RESIDENCE OF MR. & J. SMITH, BEACH RESIDENTS.

Building Restrictions.

In order to protect buyers and maintain a reasonable standard of building, a minimum cost of \$750 has been fixed for the main building on each lot. The land must be covered with a suitable fence when the building is erected, and the building line must be at least 30 feet back from the front boundary in order to secure some kind of setback. These conditions are for the ultimate benefit of all.

Why you should buy now.

The growth of Sydney in comparison, and the demand for land at the seaside increases every year, while good land near the beaches is getting scarce and expensive. All the more reason why you should get it early before prices are prohibitive. However, there is no better investment than buying land in a rising district, and the payments won't be felt as the terms are so easy.

To Create Avalon Beach a Model Resort.

There has been too little. The Vendors have now done just the thing. The building programme, not a little more \$5,000,000 worth of it, is on.



SHOWING PARKLINE NATURE OF AVALON BEACH.

The Means to Avalon.

"Avalon" - a name that is for a seaside - means "An Exquisite Paradise". It's a most appropriate name for such a beautiful spot.

A Railway to Pittwater.

An electric railway from Gordon to Pittwater, with an extension to Bayswater later on, will probably come sooner than most people think, and will provide the whole of the Northern suburbs with their natural outlet to the sea, thereby opening up for settlement an immense area of valuable Crown lands on the way, and which are urgently required for the expansion of the Metropolitan.

Avalon Beach might yet be the terminus of a Railway Station. Who knows?



ON THE VERANDAH AT "AVALON."

Avalon Beach Store and Refreshment Room.

A large general store and refreshment room is now under construction, where all supplies will be available at reasonable prices.

The refreshment room will cater for the requirements of motorists and others, and the building itself, on stone foundations with plastered stone walls and tiled roof will be an ornament to the district.

A 1/19A

Palmgrove Estate, Avalon, 1921. (Source: State Library of NSW, 035 - Z/SP/A11/32)

Warringah's housing stock remained similar at the next census in 1947, although fibro walls were by then as common as timber. The form of this template varied, as depicted by the photographer and filmmaker Frank Hurley, who lived at Collaroy Plateau from the mid-1940s.

Many of the Collaroy and Narrabeen houses in Hurley's panoramas display the influence of the Californian bungalow, notably their overlapping roofs and panelled gable ends. At least as common are houses reminiscent of the older Federation bungalows, especially its breeze-catching Queensland variant, elevated above their site and framed by generous verandahs often enclosed as sleep-outs. This older, more vernacular bungalow style remained a presence at rural and beachside locales long after it had largely disappeared from suburbia. However, the bungalow genres shared James Peddle's verandah-centric approach:

the veranda must be large enough to live on – large enough to eat, to sleep, to read, to lounge, to dance on ... It will be that part of the bush bungalow around which cluster the happiest memories of weekends and holidays.²⁵⁶

As Peddle's ode to the rural bungalow implied, an architectural continuum runs from the simplicity, informality and communal spaces of the beach shack (or camp, to use Northern Beaches nomenclature) to the formality, calculated façade and interior division and hierarchy of the home. Frank Hurley's photographs were probably taken during the 1950s yet they confirm that until mid-century these beachside villages retained their 'week-ender' character, standing apart from Sydney's brick-and-tile respectability.

²⁵⁶ James Peddle, 'The Bush Bungalow', *The Home*, September 1920, p.41.

Aerial view of Collaroy looking south east. c1940. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 40493)



They were mostly cheaper than more accessible suburbs and hence attractive to creative people like the writer Xavier Herbert, a Collaroy Plateau neighbour of Frank Hurley, and the novelists Ruth Park and D'Arcy Niland. Struggling to survive the wartime housing shortage, Park and Niland rented a room in a Collaroy beach cottage:

The houses looked out on to the sea. In the twilight we watched Peeping Toms prowling around in search of young lovers entwined amongst the dunes or, more interestingly still, fishermen hauling out of the sand the grotesque beach worms that come by the metre ...

At this time the beaches were lined:

with small pyramids of concrete; there were thousands of them. Mysterious creations, they were called tank traps. When the Japanese landed their tanks

anywhere from South Steyne to Palm Beach, they were in for a horrid surprise.²⁵⁷

Ruth Park recalled wartime Collaroy as 'our lowest ebb ... the remoteness from the city, the cost of fares, the impossibility of getting a telephone' cost the writer couple much work. They left when a storm partly demolished the cottage. For the writers and for Collaroy, better times would come.

Rock Pools

Perhaps even more than weekend shacks, beach pools underlined the change from segregated, rule-bound harbour baths to the new beach culture. Unsupervised, unsegregated, free for use at any time, tidal rock pools were created at all the beaches north of Manly from about 1914 when the first part of Dee Why Rock Pool was carved out of the rock platform by members of the Dee Why Surf Life Saving Club.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ Ruth Park, *Fishing in the Styx*, Viking Australia, 1993, pp.90–91.

²⁵⁸ Christa Ludlow, *Survey of Harbourside & Ocean Pools*, National Trust of NSW, 1994.



The bath, Dee Why, about 1920. (Source: State Library of NSW, PXA 635 / 224-230)



Stewart House swimming class at South Curl Curl Pool, 1935. (Source: Hood Collection, State Library of NSW, Home and Away, 1598)

During the 1920s Dee Why pool was taken over and enlarged with concrete walls by Warringah Shire Council; this was a common pattern on the Northern Beaches where most pools were founded by surf or swimming clubs as training and competition venues:

Dee Why formed a new swimming club on Saturday, and affiliated with the association on Monday ... evidence of the club's desire to be 'In the swim.' The new club has a basin excavated from the rock on the southern end of the bench.²⁵⁹

The surf and swimming clubs were initially open only to men, but women's swimming clubs operated at several of the ocean pools; the Dee Why Ladies Amateur Swimming Club was formed in 1922.

During the 1920s, rock pools were constructed at Freshwater Beach (1925), Collaroy Beach (1926), South Curl Curl Beach (1927), and Fairy Bower (1929), as well as Palm Beach, Avalon, Bilgola and Newport. Five more rock pools were constructed during the depression years from the Unemployment Relief Fund. These were at North Curl Curl and Queenscliff (both 1937) and also at Whale Beach, Mona Vale and North Narrabeen, where a 50-metre pool opened in 1934 and has been used since by the Narrabeen Ladies swimming club. The club admitted men swimmers from 1987.²⁶⁰

The survival and continued popularity of the Northern Beaches rock pools, despite their often-hazardous character, is testimony to the elemental pleasure they provide.

The rock pools also functioned as swim teaching venues for the charity camps operated by Stewart House at South Curl Curl from 1933 and the Salvation Army holiday camp at Collaroy:

The Dubbo squad, eight boys and ten girls, had been away for six weeks at the Stewart House Preventorium, at Curl Curl Beach. This fine institution was established and is maintained by the Teachers' Hospital Relief Association, per medium of collections and donations from teachers and school children, plus a princely endowment from that good citizen and humanitarian, Mr. F. H. Stewart M.P., who gave the land and provided the building. Dubbo's 18 were weak in health, and were sent to the Preventorium to build up their constitutions and fortify themselves against any disease ... Excepting one small boy, all learned to swim.²⁶¹

Duke and Isabel

In history, the Freshwater camps – maligned for 'indecent' in the first decades of the twentieth century – have the last laugh, hosting the inspiration for surf riding in Australia. At Christmas 1914, Hawaiian champion swimmer Duke Kahanamoku visited Freshwater and stayed in the Boomerang Camp, owned by Donald McIntyre and Roy Doyle, founding president and secretary of the Freshwater Life Saving and Surf Club.²⁶² Duke (this was his given name) was in Australia as a result of his gold medal performance in the 100 metres freestyle at the 1912 Stockholm Olympics. Following this triumph, he toured internationally, giving demonstrations of his swimming prowess. He starred at a series of swim meets in Melbourne, Brisbane, Newcastle and Sydney during the summer of 1914–1915.

Kahanamoku was not the first person to demonstrate Hawaiian-style surfing in Australia, with surf riding a popular sport for centuries in Honolulu and other parts of Polynesia. However, while visiting Freshwater Kahanamoku, an accomplished surfer, purchased a large piece of pine and shaped it into a surfboard and made an impression on

²⁵⁹ *Daily Telegraph*, 24 February 1915, p.13.

²⁶⁰ Marie-Louise McDermott, 'Ocean baths', *Dictionary of Sydney*, 2011.

²⁶¹ *Dubbo Liberal*, 2 February 1935, p.5.

²⁶² Phil Jarratt, *That Summer at Boomerang*, Hardie Grant, 2014, ch.9.



Isabel Letham surfboard riding, prior to 1918. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 60038)

Chinese market gardens in Manly Vale area, c.1920. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies – 47600)



locals. On 24 December at Freshwater, Duke 'made his first attempt at surf-board riding in Australia and it must be admitted it was wonderfully clever', despite a poor surf and the heavy weight of his improvised board.²⁶³

This was one of the first of several demonstrations before increasingly large crowds. On 6 February 1915 Duke performed at the Dee Why surf club's second annual carnival:

The crowd at the carnival was the biggest that had ever congregated at Deewhy ... About four thousand were present'. Duke kept up these stunts for an hour, and gave a great display. For part of the time he was accompanied by Miss Letham, of Freshwater, an Australian girl swimmer, who, it is said, only comes out of the surf to eat and sleep. On one occasion both swimmers stood riding the board for about two hundred yards.²⁶⁴

²⁶³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 December 1914, p.4.

²⁶⁴ *Sunday Times*, 7 February 1915, p.13.

Although others had already achieved the feat, Isabel Letham is well remembered as one of the first Australians to ride a surfboard. Her father, a builder, had constructed a three-room holiday shack at Freshwater in 1910; the family moved there permanently a few years later. Before the Dee Why exhibition the 15-year-old had been instructed by Duke and practised riding solo at Freshwater: 'Of course you have to be fairly good in the surf before attempting anything on the board, and even then you run risks in the learning. I love anything with a risk in it, though.'²⁶⁵

During 1918, Isabel took advantage of the wide publicity generated by her pioneering role and moved to Hollywood with her father. Although she attracted interest, no movie roles were forthcoming and she returned home to a brief flurry of media attention. Yet Isabel had seen enough of California to know that it offered greater opportunities for women than Sydney and following her father's death in 1921 she returned there, starting a career

²⁶⁵ *Sun*, 1 July 1917, p.5.

as a swimming coach at the University of California. In 1924, she was appointed Director of Swimming for the City of San Francisco and later secured the plum job of 'organising aquatics for the Women's City Club'.²⁶⁶ Isabel returned to Sydney in 1929 to recover from a fall, intending to resume her Californian career, but never did so. She conducted swimming classes at Manly and Freshwater, taught water ballet and synchronised swimming and during the 1970s was the inspiration to a new generation of women surfers.

Market gardens

Balgowlah was home to 150 residents by 1921, partly because, like Manly Vale, it was located close to several market gardens, especially near Condamine Street and Kentwell Road. Several of the market gardeners were Chinese, selling their produce to local grocers, door to door or taking it to the Sydney markets via The Spit or ferry:

On his way to the market in Sydney with a cartful of vegetables, Lee Jong, a Chinese market gardener of Condamine Street, Manly Vale, was stopped near Balgowlah early yesterday morning by a man, who first asked for a match and then demanded money, placing his hand in his coat pocket, as though reaching for a weapon. Jong, in his report to the Manly police, said that he seized his garden fork and threatened to kill the man who ran away.²⁶⁷

Chinese gardeners came to dominate vegetable production in Sydney during the early twentieth century. Chinese workers also had a major presence in the furniture and laundry trades, and were perceived as strong competition to white Australians. Chinese cabinet makers and other tradesmen were discriminated against by the immigration laws and the NSW Factories and Shops Act 1896. In contrast, Chinese gardeners were tolerated

and their numbers increased during the early decades of the White Australia policy; so did those of the Chinese greengrocers who purchased some of their produce. By 1910 Manly's Corso had two Chinese grocers, Sang War and Wing Lee, at numbers 41 and 69.

Market gardens were concentrated on cheap land on the suburban fringe including at Botany, La Perouse, Arncliffe, Chester Hill, Willoughby and similar locales. By 1900, Manly Vale and parts of Warringah, including Curl Curl and Brookvale, were market gardening districts:

Passing along the Pittwater-road for a short distance we come to the road to Curl Curl Beach. On either side are evidences of the fertility of the soil in the district, gardens – one especially, run by Europeans – have some fine crops just maturing; several poultry farmers have lately taken up their abode there, and find the climate eminently suitable, for the prolific production of the feathered tribe.²⁶⁸

The Chinese gardening communities were formed by groups of men working farms collectively and usually living in huts at their gardens, a practice which regularly attracted the disapproval of Warringah and Manly councils.²⁶⁹ Immigration of Chinese women was barred and the men had to return home to China to marry. A few formed relationships with white women, an act fraught with danger for the women as cohabiting with Chinese men could result in ostracism or vagrancy charges:

Her story was that she lived at Manly Vale as the Chinaman's wife. She is a single girl, and had been there for the past three or four weeks keeping house for him. 'He gives me money every time I ask for it,' she said.

²⁶⁸ Sun, 23 September 1910, p.15.

²⁶⁹ Sun, 17 May 1927, p.20.

²⁶⁶ Sunday Times, 30 January 1927, p.33.

²⁶⁷ Evening News, 21 December 1921, p.3.

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Warriewood Estate subdivision advertisement, 1906. (Source: State Library of NSW, 055 - Z/SP/M21/58)

When the market gardener insisted that he would marry her, the Manly magistrate responded:

If they think I am going to be a party to a white woman marrying a Chinaman they will find I am not. I would not dream of being a party to such a thing. I hope this white Australia never comes down to such a state of affairs as that. I sentence her to four months' hard labour.²⁷⁰

The main exception to the prevailing prejudice was a grudging admiration of the hard work and gardening expertise of the Chinese. The Sun's 'Amateur Gardener' column regularly reported on and recommended the methods of the Brookvale gardeners:

Chinamen raise their seedling tomatoes in shallow boxes, which they protect from frost with bagging shelters. They have no faith in any of the forcing methods used by men who work hotbeds and glasshouses for raising seedlings ... Your best plan would be to take a trip to Brookvale or out Botany way and study the plan on the ground.²⁷¹

During the 1920s, several of the Chinese gardens were replaced by subdivisions as well as the new Manly golf course. Chinese migration was by then in decline and market gardens were increasingly worked by other nationalities. Warriewood's market gardens, farmed primarily by Serbians and Dalmatians, made a mark on the industry through the use of glass houses:

Tomato growers who supplied the early market in Sydney by raising their plants in glasshouses are highly satisfied with the results to date ... The pioneers of the glasshouse movement, who are mostly small market-gardeners in the Warriewood district ... are now preparing to extend their glasshouses...²⁷²

These gardens were on 500 acres (202 hectares) from the Macpherson family that Henry Ferdinand Halloran had purchased and subdivided as the Great Warriewood Estate in 1906, including 66 farm blocks. The Macpherson family farm had been named 'Wharriewood', and 'Wharrie' was also a middle name used within the Macpherson family.

Like the Brookvale and Manly Vale gardeners, the prosperity of those at Warriewood was aided by the opening of The Spit Bridge in 1924 (later replaced in 1958 with a steel and girder bridge) and other transport improvements. During the 1930s the 'crystal valley' of Warriewood was carpeted with hundreds of glass houses, and it was reported that:

seventy Yugo-Slavs and Italians at Warriewood and Mona Vale have practically a monopoly of tomato-growing in Warringah, said the president of the shire ... According to the annual report of Manly and District Chamber of Commerce, just issued, Warringah produces 100,000 cases of tomatoes a year ... practically all the tomato-growing in the district was done by Southern European migrants.²⁷³

The 1920s saw the beginning of significant Italian migration to Australia, driven by the poverty of Calabria and other parts of southern Italy. Brookvale, Dee Why, Beacon Hill and Frenchs Forest became home to several Italian gardener families.

The Second World War was a difficult time for Italian-Australians on the Northern Beaches. They were classified as 'enemy aliens' and often interned and expected to work for the war effort: 'Two Italian market gardeners of Brookvale were fined a total of £150 by Mr. Sheridan, S.M., at the Manly Police Court today for falling to obey Instructions' of the AWC (Allied Works Council). 'In Germany enemy aliens who

²⁷⁰ Truth, 24 February 1929, p.24.

²⁷¹ Sun, 5 July 1919, p.7.

²⁷² Daily Telegraph, 16 April 1929, p.17.

²⁷³ Daily Telegraph, 4 October 1937, p.4.

Aerial photograph of Brookvale, 1943.
(Source: NSW Government SIX Maps , accessed 9 March 2022.)



disobeyed the regulations would be shot on the spot, but this country is more tolerant,' said Mr. Sheridan.²⁷⁴ By the 1950s, Italians owned many of the gardens at Brookvale.²⁷⁵

From 1900, parts of Frenchs Forest and Belrose were subdivided for market gardening with mixed success. The soldier settlement established at what is now Forestville failed dismally. This scheme was promoted by Mosman MP Richard Arthur, who wanted to reward wounded soldiers and war widows with 5-acre farm blocks. Two hundred acres in Frenchs Forest (Forestville) were granted by the NSW Government and numerous volunteers helped to clear the land:

There is quite a rush of applicants for the farms being cleared at French's Forest for wounded soldiers. Thirty-five blocks were allotted by ballot last week, and the first farm containing a commodious four-roomed cottage, will be

occupied by one of the wounded soldiers during the coming week. Ten acres have already been cleared for additional farms and further areas are being opened up. There was a good muster of voluntary workers at the settlement on Saturday last.²⁷⁶

The scheme was criticised from the start; the soil was poor, access was difficult, water supply was unreliable and the soldiers were inexperienced as farmers. The naysayers proved to be correct and by 1919 the NSW Government was buying out many of the soldier settlers. Reactions to the scheme's failure varied. The Wingham Chronicle complained that 'men whose valour has been praised in the most striking terms by Foch and Haig are offered barren rocks, shingly hillsides and dense scrub'.²⁷⁷ A few years later the Daily Telegraph was brutal, describing the soldier settlement as:

²⁷⁴ *Barrier Daily Truth*, 16 June 1943, p.1.

²⁷⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 29 November 1953, p.5.

²⁷⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 February 1916, p.11.

²⁷⁷ *Wingham Chronicle*, 6 June 1919, p.6.



Collaroy Beach during World War II. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 41681)

an illustration of wasted effort ... Many of the 'pioneers' were quite impossible. They were good to-day and bad to-morrow; anxious to do something one minute, and ready the next to 'do' for anyone who came over the horizon.²⁷⁸

Defending the coastline

In 1941–1942 the Federal Government wanted to ensure that mainland Australia had adequate defences in place to help defend against such an invasion. The Northern Beaches area was seen to be particularly vulnerable to land invasion from Japanese forces. As a result, some transient but important fortifications and facilities were constructed for the armed forces and protection of the civilian forces. The coastline became dotted with pyramid-shaped concrete tank traps, barbed wire entanglements threaded through the sand, and search light stations and gun emplacements appeared on the headlands.

At Mona Vale Road, the 17th Battalion took up residence while Brock's former mansion

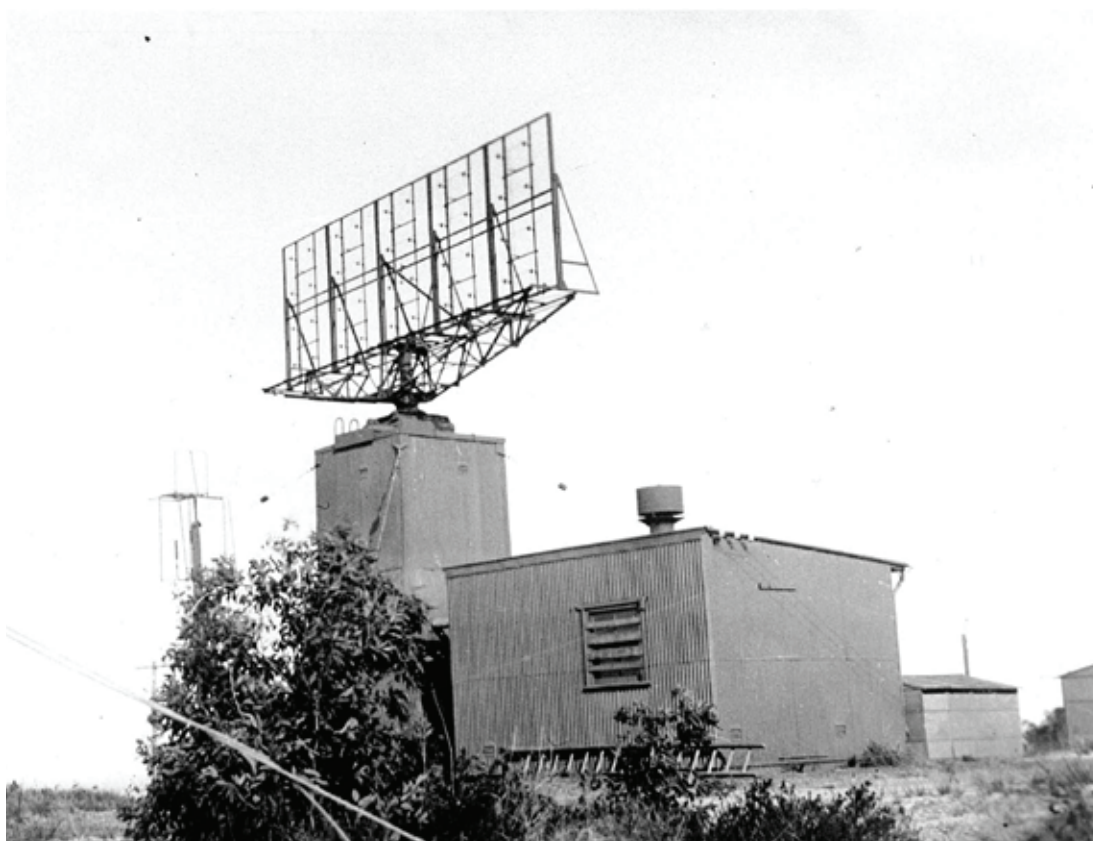
became an officer's training school. At Frenchs Forest an army camp was established. A RAAF radar station (54RS) was installed on Collaroy Plateau, and anti-aircraft emplacements at North Head. Narrabeen Lake, Collaroy, Mona Vale, Long Reef and Avalon Beach were also transformed into military training camps. After World War II, the Army School of Artillery opened at North Head. Gunners lived and trained there from 1946 until 1998, when the school relocated to Puckapunyal in Victoria.

Remnants of these landscapes remain today, with tank traps still visible at Dee Why – part of 300 tank traps strategically placed along the shoreline, with the first group of eight traps placed on Fairy Bower in Manly.²⁷⁹ Each trap was about 5 feet high and weighed approximately 2 tonnes. After the war, tank traps were re-used and placed along the beaches to prevent washaways of gardens and homes along the waterfront.

²⁷⁸ *Daily Telegraph*, 30 July 1925, p.4.

²⁷⁹ 'The History of the Pittwater Pyramids', Northern Beaches Library (<https://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/library/your-library/news/history-pittwater-pyramids>), accessed 30 May 2021.

R.A.A.F.
Radar Station
(No.101/54),
Collaroy
Plateau,
c.1943. Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
41678)



The Northern Beaches community were mobilised into a frenzy of new activities. Local councils took over emergency services, which were led by groups of wardens. The Warringah National Emergency Service led the charge, with a chief warden and divisional wardens appointed to administer the Shire's eight divisions. New roles proliferated, with civilians serving as control centre messengers and manning first aid posts, stretcher parties, ambulances, transport drivers and rescue squads. Other civilian groups like the Volunteer Defence Corps and Red Cross rolled up their sleeves and knotted camflage nets, knitted socks and scarves for soldiers, prepared bandages and dressings for medical supplies and hosted fundraising events – often run by the youngest generation, school children.

The look of civilian life radically altered with Buses camouflage, vehicle head lights asked and dimmed while people furnished suburban homes with trenches, taped

windows as a precaution against shattering from gunfire, and hung blackout curtains.

Discoveries in recent years have underlined how close the war came to the Northern Beaches. In 2006, a group of divers located the still intact Japanese midget submarine M24 off the coast of Bungan Head. The submarine was entangled in nets 54 metres below on the seabed. The site is the only known surviving in situ cultural relic of the attack on Sydney Harbour in 1942.²⁸⁰

Another enduring landscape is the Bantry Bay Explosives Depot within Garigal National Park. The depot was used to store explosives in case of enemy attack from 1908 until its closure in 1974. Fittings have been removed but the complex of buildings and magazines remain reasonably intact today.

280 M24 Japanese Midget Submarine wreck site, Office and Environment and Heritage (<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageItemDetails.aspx?ID=5060289>), accessed 28 February 2019.



Manly Cove, Wharf, Fun Pier, Baths and Smedley's Point, 1940. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, MML/1232)

Suburban sprawl

After the Second World War, the County of Cumberland Planning Scheme introduced land use zoning, suburban employment zones and attempted to create a 'green belt' for greater Sydney in anticipation of rapid postwar growth.²⁸¹ With population increases from both the baby boom and immigration, the green belt and ultimately the scheme were scrapped and replaced with the State Planning Authority. Thousands of hectares of farmland were released for housing. Earlier houses in the suburbs established here melded into the natural surroundings and much of it remained semi-rural until the boom of the 1960s and 1970s.

The land that had been part of the failed soldier settlement was renamed Forestville in 1947 and re-subdivided into residential blocks. Forestville's former soldier settlements of the First World War were also subsumed by the sprawl of the post-Second World War period. In 1924, the construction of the Roseville Bridge over Middle Harbour had

made inroads into the isolated suburb of Forestville, but it was still semi-rural until the 1950s when the large residential subdivisions began. Houses began to line both sides of the Warringah Road. Many street names in Forestville and Frenchs Forest reflect the suburbs' origins from forest land: Redwood Place, Bushland Avenue, Glentrees Avenue and Willow Way.²⁸² Other street names reflect the names of original settlers of the area, such as Arthur Street, Cannons Parade, Mavor Crescent, Pound Avenue and Currie Road.

The improvements in public transport and roads accelerated development of other suburbs like Newport and Avalon, which became appealing suburbs for families after the Second World War. Increased car ownership and modern amenities such as the village shopping centre and Avalon Picture Theatre, alongside affordable housing (a home could be purchased for £3,000), saw the suburb flourish. Meanwhile, Newport shifted from a beach escape destination to a viable suburb within reach of Sydney.

²⁸¹ Dictionary of Sydney staff writer, County of Cumberland Planning Scheme, Dictionary of Sydney, 2008 (http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/county_of_cumberland_planning_scheme), accessed 28 May 2021.

²⁸² Pollon, F 1988, *The Book of Sydney Suburbs*, Angus and Robertson, p.106.

Modern Manly

Modern Manly was heralded in the early twentieth century by the production of its own news outlet. Edward Lincoln started the Manly Daily in 1906 from a commercial printer in a laneway off the Corso. The first issue appeared on 28 July 1906. In 1907, he acquired offices in Henrietta Lane, Manly, which became the new base for the Daily. It is still produced today and is now owned by News Limited, but ceased printing its hard-copy edition in 2020.

The completion of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932, combined with The Spit and Roseville bridges, made it easier to travel to the Northern Beaches without spending time in Manly. From 1939 buses replaced the trams between The Spit, Manly and Narrabeen and it was possible to take a bus from Warringah direct to Wynyard, bypassing Manly completely.

The Port Jackson Steamship Company understood the Bridge would significantly reduce patronage of its Manly ferries. It was no coincidence that 1932 also saw the opening of a vast new swimming enclosure and boardwalk at Manly Cove west of the ferry wharf, financed by the ferry company:

The war of the beaches is on again. Manly fired the first broadside last night, when council was informed of plans for a huge new swimming pool on the harbour beach, 400 yards long. The pool will extend westwards from the Manly passenger wharf to a point adjacent to Fairlight Pool, and the scheme provides for the erection of a platform 12 feet wide around the enclosure – which will be shark proof – providing accommodation for 20,000 spectators ... There will be numerous springboards, diving towers, pontoons and continental devices for the amusement of patrons, and a special system of flood lights will permit of night bathing ... 'Unless we do something to liven up the place ... Coogee and Bondi will put it all over us.'²⁸³

²⁸³ Sun, 9 September 1931, p.1.

The ferry company had already leased the cargo wharf, built in 1886 to the east of the ferry wharf, and converted it into an amusement pier (the Manly Fun Pier), which opened in 1930. The Spit Bridge removed the need for the cargo wharf; in its new life it featured attractions such as a 'FINE FLOATING DANCE FLOOR – FIRST-CLASS ORCHESTRA. Golf, Sideshows, Shark Aquarium, Canoe Rides, Speed Boat Thrills, etc.'²⁸⁴ The new aquarium was a popular success. An incident in 1930 generated wide publicity:

A savage tiger shark 15ft long, which was captured at North Head yesterday, caused disaster when it was placed in Manly Aquarium last night. It attacked another shark – a ten footer grey nurse – and killed it after a desperate fight.²⁸⁵

By 1933, Manly Council could claim that the new pool and pier were responsible for a 'revival of building near the enclosure, and it looks as though the popular seaside resort will have a bumper season next summer'.²⁸⁶ The easing of the Depression no doubt also played a part in resuming the 'craze for residential flats now pervading Manly building' as early as 1914.²⁸⁷

Manly was one of the first Sydney suburbs to host significant numbers of apartment buildings. By 1921, 640 – almost a quarter – of Manly Municipality's 2,636 residences were located in 'tenements or flats'. Only the Sydney, North Sydney, Randwick and Waverley municipalities had more flats, as apartment living flourished in harbour and beachside suburbs. One of the first notable Manly apartments was Montreaux, a seven-floor Chicago-style tower at Commonwealth Parade overlooking the western side of Manly Cove. Designed by Douglas Esplin shortly

²⁸⁴ Sun, 7 March 1931, p.5.

²⁸⁵ Riverine Herald, 22 May 1930, p.3.

²⁸⁶ Daily Telegraph, 7 July 1933, p.11.

²⁸⁷ Sun, 6 July 1914, p.4.



The Odeon,
1981. (Source:
Northern
Beaches
Council Library
Local Studies,
LH010010)

before he co-designed the Astor at Macquarie Street, Montreaux featured similarly spacious three-bedroom apartments, as did Dungowan, completed facing South Steyne in 1919:

This 'block' of flats supplies the want of people with means for temporary seaside homes favourably situated in a popular suburb. The high rentals charged ensure that the above class will find here a place which satisfies their requirements. The building is dignified in its architecture, being of symmetrical design with some Classical features introduced, and a heavy overhanging cornice which lends distinction. The wide openings and balconies are a feature which would be appreciated by the flat dwellers.²⁸⁸

Designed by prominent practice Ross and Rowe, Dungowan like many early 'mansion flats' included a restaurant and dining room for its tenants, and was named after the country property of its pastoralist owner Leslie Sprague, who gained both a holiday address and an excellent source of rental income.

This was common practice among the owners of Manly's largest apartment buildings:

Reputed to be a very rich man is Mr. W. Matchett, owner of Borambil Station, Condobolin. The building of an almost palatial assemblage of flats on the eminence of Manly, almost directly above the surf shed, to his order, must have reduced his bank balance by many, many thousands ... For some weeks splash advertisements in the city press have invited tenants.²⁸⁹

Comprising 34 two-bedroom flats, Borambil was designed by James Peddle's firm Peddle, Thorp & Walker to include 'separate entrances, with shower and change rooms for lady and gentleman surfers ... on the lower ground floor'.²⁹⁰ The Matchett family owned Borambil until 1962.

²⁸⁹ *West Wyalong Advocate*, 4 April 1930, p.6.

²⁹⁰ *Sunday Pictorial*, 23 February 1930, p.23.

²⁸⁸ *Construction and Local Government Journal*, March 1922, p.13.



Rialto Cinema, Corso, 1930. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, MML/4974)



Interior of the Rialto Cinema. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, MML/4972)



Municipal Gardens and Hotel Manly, c.1940s–1950s. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, LH010009)

Many of the new apartment buildings replaced the mansions of the 1870s and 1880s built when Manly first became a rich man's retreat. These included Henry Gilbert Smith's residence Fairlight House,

which, with an earlier structure on the same site, revives memories of the very early history of the suburb, and Dalley's Castle on its prominent position overlooking the harbour and ocean beach ... The intention in both instances is to subdivide for flats.²⁹¹

The change did not indicate a decline in Manly's wealth, but rather a change in the residential preferences of the wealthy, who by then often found it difficult to employ live-in servants; new opportunities in the retail and manufacturing industries beckoned for working-class women.

At the 1933 census Manly boasted 1,739 flats, which made up 30 per cent of its 5,763 residences. Not everyone was happy with the new Manly:

"Flats are the curse of civilisation. I have known women who tried to rear children in flats, but

they became nervous wrecks." With these remarks, Mrs. Ruby Duncan, Vice President of the Housewives' Association, supported the Mayor of Manly (Alderman Nolan), who told the Health Inspectors' Conference that flats prevented the population from increasing at a normal rate. People who lived in flats wanted motor cars, dancing and picture shows, rather than children, he said.²⁹²

In the 1930s, Manly was a mecca for the fast-living folk decried by its mayor. The flats were let to a mixture of commuters and holidaymakers, well serviced with opportunities for entertainment; by then Manly boasted five cinemas, the Rialto on the Corso, the New Manly in Belgrave Street, the Arcadia next to the Steyne Hotel, the Olympic on Sydney Road, and the Odeon facing Manly Cove.

Manly's hotels did not lag behind and most were renovated or rebuilt during the 1930s, including the New Brighton, the Pacific and the Steyne, by then owned by Tooth & Co, NSW's major brewing and hotel company. In most of Tooth & Co's hundreds of hotels, bars

²⁹¹ Sydney Morning Herald, 5 April 1939, p.3.

²⁹² Northern Miner, 2 October 1936, p.4.

were the focus rather than accommodation but the Manly location dictated otherwise and the new Hotel Steyne, designed by hotel specialists Copeman, Lemont and Keesing, offered 33 guest rooms: 'The new Hotel Steyne will certainly prove itself a popular resort for holidaymakers whilst its attractive Cocktail Lounge will undoubtedly become one of the important rendezvous of Manly'.²⁹³

Another major hotel project was the Hotel Manly at the opposite end of the Corso. The Manly had replaced the Pier Hotel in 1923 and in 1935 it was expanded to a design by Emil Sodersten, architect of Sydney's leading hostelry, the Hotel Australia. The Hotel Manly gained a nine-floor tower, including five floors of flats:

an innovation for Australia, if not for the world – self-contained flats within licensed premises. Of these there will be 30 ... There will be family flats, and bachelor flats. One floor will be entirely devoted to lounges and an expansive ball-room.²⁹⁴

As property values rose in Manly, suburban development moved elsewhere:

The development of the flat area in Manly has driven building development to Balgowlah and the outer areas of the municipality and into the Warringah Shire. There is much building activity at Balgowlah ...²⁹⁵

In 1947, Manly was home to 33,455 people, a few hundred more than Warringah Shire; 3,726 (46 per cent) of Manly and Warringah's 8,112 dwellings were flats.

The mid-twentieth century decades marked Manly's peak as a resort and playground, self-sufficient for entertainment and pleasure. The war brought blackouts, shortages, barbed wire and tank traps along the beaches. It

also brought US soldiers, jobs for women, black markets and nightlife. On New Year's Eve 1945, 'ferries carried 11,000 people to Manly ... More than 15,000 thronged the Corso'.²⁹⁶ Social hierarchies and niceties were under threat and not everyone was happy. Novelist Roger Millis grew up in Manly and remembered a changing town:

Manly's not the same, the hotel's overrun by troops, Americans and ours, the spivs and racketeers are drinking in the bars, the lounge is full of good-time girls with pyramidal heels and chewing gum ... those tranquil carefree times we realise will not return.²⁹⁷

Ferry passenger numbers to Manly peaked during the 1930s and 1940s, before beginning a steady decline until the 1980s, as did all modes of public transport across Sydney.²⁹⁸ The 1950s saw both home and car ownership become a majority status for the first time; Manly, long dependent on easy access by ferry, lost visitors as cars radically increased leisure choices. The blow was less pronounced for the Warringah beach suburbs, as a new four-lane Spit Bridge, built on the improved road access created by the Wakehurst Parkway, opened in 1946 to create a direct link between The Spit and Narrabeen.

Manly's historic streets struggled to provide adequate parking for the influx of cars, and throughout the 1960s Manly Council tried unsuccessfully to build a parking station. Yet the new mobility still made an impact on the suburb: 'Manly has become the battleground for a Rockers v Surfies war ... On successive Sundays in the past fortnight youths have been beaten up in gang attacks'.²⁹⁹ The phenomenon of teenagers travelling by car and motorcycle was a new form of 'tourism', one based on conflicts of class and style:

²⁹³ *Building*, May 1936, p.18.

²⁹⁴ *Nowra Leader*, 16 March 1934, p.7.

²⁹⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 November 1938, p.8.

²⁹⁶ *Daily Telegraph*, 1 January 1945, p.5.

²⁹⁷ Roger Millis, *Serpent's Tooth*, Penguin, 1984, p.86.

²⁹⁸ Paul Ashton, *Heritage Study Municipality of Manly*, Manly Municipal Council, 1986, p.156.

²⁹⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 March 1963, p.9.



Brookvale House,
Pittwater Road,
Brookvale, 1910.
(Source: Northern
Beaches Council
Library Local Studies,
60513)

The Rockers – youths who favour leather jackets and slicked-down hair and old time cars and motorcycles have shown antagonism to Manly Surfies recently. Surf club members have also been jostled and abused although Surfies are mostly younger youths and girls who wear bleached hair and casual clothing, and spend most of their days on the beach. Yesterday's Roker visitors to Manly are believed to have travelled from the Bankstown area.³⁰⁰

The Rockers were met by police cordons and escorts back to The Spit Bridge, but not all young visitors were unwelcome. The advent of Malibu surfboards during the 1950s sparked an unprecedented boom in surf riding, acceptable to Manly officialdom despite tensions with the established surf clubs and body surfers. Manly's mayor declared that 'the new boards are most spectacular and thrilling. Last Sunday between 40 and 50 were off the point at Manly and the promenade was packed with spectators'.³⁰¹ Manly hosted the first official World Surfing Championship in 1964 and took pride in the success of local surfers Bernard 'Midget' Farrelly and Phyllis O'Donnell.

³⁰⁰ Sydney Morning Herald, 4 March 1963, p.10.

³⁰¹ Sydney Morning Herald, 16 September 1958, p.19.

The Corso tilted away from the needs of holidaymakers towards those of young visitors, with coffee lounges, midnight movies, and Wimpy Bars. In 1972, the Sydney Morning Herald declared that Manly's

heyday as a holiday resort has passed. Australians prefer the more exotic attractions of Surfers, the Barrier Reef islands and the north coast of New South Wales. Somewhere Manly has got stuck.

Rental properties declined as a proportion of Manly's residences during the 1950s and 1960s and the Herald described an ageing, complacent population:

The aged ladies sat sipping shandies in the lounge of the Steyne Hotel, and talked of solo, a friend called Beryl and sundry ailments. They were content, even complacent, in their respectable comfort – the stained woodwork, the tiles, the tourist posters. For this was their Manly; the village that had changed little over the years ... an amalgam of crumbling stucco boarding houses and home units ... the handsome parks and decaying beachfront.³⁰²

³⁰² Sydney Morning Herald, 16 December 1972, p.17.

Baldwinson House, Narrabeen Plateau, 1954. (Source: National Archives of Australia, NAA: A1200, L16950)



Top Dog Men's Wear Production Centre, Dee Why, c.1951. (Source: Northern Beaches Council Library Local Studies, 40953)



Development of Warringah Shire

The Warringah Mall opened in April 1963. It was one of Australia's first and biggest shopping malls, with 50 stores including Grace Bros and David Jones. Hooker Investment Corporation (now LJ Hooker) had bought the site in 1961. The mall was partially built on the site of Brookvale House, a sandstone cottage built by Sydney Alexander Malcolm by Pittwater Road in 1884. The son of a wealthy seaman and businessman, Malcolm married into the Farrell family of Newport and Manly in 1881 and soon after purchased a few hectares of Brookvale land from William Frederick Parker. The first farmer and market gardener of the area, Parker purchased land in 1836 and eventually owned 158 acres (64 hectares) of the land he named Brookvale. Located at the junction of Pittwater Road and the road to the Forests district (now Beacon Hill Road), from 1907 Brookvale hosted the council chambers of the newly formed Warringah Shire Council.

Brookvale House was one of several properties purchased by LJ Hooker for the mall project. LJ Hooker, born Leslie Joseph Tingyou, had anglicised his name in 1925 to conceal his part-Chinese ancestry. By the 1950s, his real estate business claimed to be Australia's largest landowner, and included significant holdings in Warringah. By that time the LJ Hooker Investment Corporation also had interests in retail, hotels, home-buildings and other industries. For the Warringah Mall project it partnered with the British Hammerson Group.

Shopping mall developer Westfield opened the nearby Dee Why Square in 1963 shortly before Warringah Mall, although it struggled to compete with the larger complex. Brookvale was now the growth hotspot of the Northern Beaches, having been zoned as Warringah's main industrial area under the 1951 County of Cumberland Plan for Sydney's development. Unlike most of Warringah, Brookvale at least had some industrial history, primarily

in the form of the brickworks founded there in 1913 by the Manly Brick and Tile Works, which used clay quarried at Beacon Hill. The works was purchased by Austral Bricks in 1952, in operation until 1975.

Most of Brookvale was occupied by market gardens worked by Italian and other European families, but these were already under threat, beginning with the purchase of gardens for a new bus depot site in 1950.³⁰³ Cheap land and improved road access set off an industrial boom. Enterprises there included the Brookvale Weaving Mill, Brookvale Box Factory, Glazebrook Paints and the Brookvale Brewing Co, a short-lived attempt to take advantage of the postwar beer shortage.

The emblem of Warringah's industrial revolution was the Top Dog clothing factory, built in 1950 at south Dee Why. The building was designed for manufacturer and importer Sargood Gardiner by architect John Raymond Spencer of Spencer, Spencer and Bloomfield and won the 1950 Sulman Prize for best building in NSW. The factory's simple forms, open plan and use of natural light no doubt impressed the Sulman judges, although *Construction* commented that:

not only is it a building that is second to none in Australia in the spaciousness and completeness of its planning and layout and in the modernity of its bold design, but by selecting the Manly-Warringah district for this important venture they have broken new ground in the industrial expansion of this great city.³⁰⁴

In 1957 the factory was purchased by Bonds Industries and continued as a clothing manufactory until 1972, after which it was converted for a variety of uses.

By 1959, most of the Brookvale market gardens had been resumed by the NSW

³⁰³ Sun, 25 September 1950, p.11.

³⁰⁴ *Construction*, 21 March 1951, p.6.

Display village of Belrose, 1968. (Source: National Library of Australia, #PIC/3661/634)



Government and auctioned as industrial sites. The suburb became home to about 70 factories and warehouses, several accommodating household name companies including Mynor Cordials, Avon cosmetics and Hanimex Photographics. Most were smaller businesses, many of them servicing the motor trade. Pittwater Road, Brookvale, became an auto alley comparable to stretches of Parramatta Road, with high-profile dealers such as Col Crawford and Bill Buckle establishing car lots there during the 1960s. Meanwhile, from 1947, Brookvale Park became the home ground of the Manly-Warringah Rugby League Club, the same season that the club was admitted to the New South Wales premiership. The Sea Eagles have since been the main sporting face of the Northern Beaches.

The population of Brookvale and Warringah exploded during the 1950s and 1960s. The Warringah Shire's population multiplied almost five-fold from 33,176 in 1947 to 156,873

in 1971. By then Warringah was home to 27,781 people born in Europe, primarily in Italy or the Netherlands. Italian and Dutch migrants formed significant communities in Brookvale and Dee Why, although a Dutch social club was later built at Bantry Bay.

Warringah's housing stock also changed dramatically during this time. By 1971, for the first time, it approximated that of the rest of Sydney, with the majority of houses comprising five rooms or more while brick or brick veneer construction was as common as timber or fibro. Most houses were owned rather than rented, while a quarter of the 47,777 residences were flats. And most households owned a car, denoting a newly affluent community.

In some ways postwar Warringah was losing its distinctiveness, in other ways it was creating new identities.

Beachside Modern

In 1947 Warringah Shire Council ruled that the design of a new house at North Curl Curl include a false parapet 'to hide as far as possible what is in this Council's opinion the ugly view of a flat-roofed building'.³⁰⁵ The design was by Sydney Ancher, who had the year before been awarded the Sulman Prize for his own house at Killara. Sydney's leading practitioner of Modernist architecture, Ancher had already had house designs rejected by municipal authorities but in this case his client, engineer Mervyn Farley, took the Council to court and succeeded in establishing the principle 'that Councils have not the power to ban new styles of home design merely because they are unfamiliar'.³⁰⁶ The Warringah building inspector

cited about two dozen flat-roofed designs the council had rejected in recent years. He said Mr. Ancher's design was 'not pleasant, too stark, and very different.' He thought it looked more like a gun emplacement on North Head than a home.³⁰⁷

Ancher's design for Windy Drop Down at North Curl Curl proved a turning point for Modernism on the Northern Beaches. In 1949, Warringah Shire Council backed away from initial rejection of a flat-roof design by Harry Seidler at Newport.³⁰⁸ Although a newcomer to Sydney, Seidler had already demonstrated a willingness to contest council rulings, as well as an ability to use such controversies as a platform for his Modernist crusade.³⁰⁹

In 1938 Arthur Baldwinson, a young architect recently returned from Europe, designed one of Australia's first Modernist houses at Palm Beach, 'a delightful example of really modern design, combining a Sydney blue gum wood exterior with local stone, and a wide expanse

of retractable glass windows'.³¹⁰ At this time most Modernist houses were weekenders or style statements for the wealthy, following prototypes such as Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye. However, after the war, Baldwinson designed more homes at Collaroy, Narrabeen, Church Point, Mona Vale, Clareville and Whale Beach.

Designed for a variety of clients, these houses demonstrated the 1950s' unusual accommodation between professional and popular design. As a result of their ability to create pleasing structures from restricted budgets and simple materials, Modernist architects entered the suburban mainstream. Like the bungalows of the early century, Modernism brought a less structured, more open house to beachside and rural settings. With its rapidly growing suburbs, ample land and weekender heritage, the Northern Beaches was the perfect site:

MODERN architecture is becoming popular in Australia through the efforts of architects who have been trying for years to break down the barriers of tradition and conservatism. Homes which not long ago would have been laughed at, never have gone beyond the blueprint stage, are being built and accepted in Castlecrag, Palm Beach and other progressive Sydney areas. These modern homes suit Australian conditions ... flat roofs, sun decks, glass walls...³¹¹

Ancher, Baldwinson and Seidler were but three of the high-profile Modernists who found Northern Beaches clients. Others included Bryce Mortlock, Russell Jack, Keith Cottier, Ken Woolley, Bruce Rickard, Stan Symonds and Peter Muller. During the 1960s a range of project builders began to offer Modernist architect-designed houses at affordable prices; the most successful was Pettit & Sevvitt, which opened a display village at Belrose. A typically droll advertisement went:

³⁰⁵ Sydney Morning Herald, 2 March 1948, p.2.

³⁰⁶ Smith's Weekly, 20 March 1948, p.11.

³⁰⁷ Sydney Morning Herald, 2 March 1948, p.2.

³⁰⁸ Daily Telegraph, 29 May 1949, p.13.

³⁰⁹ Sydney Morning Herald, 22 March 1952, p.9.

³¹⁰ Sydney Morning Herald, 16 January 1940, p.8.

³¹¹ Pix, 29 August 1953, p.9.

Over 1,000 people visited the new Pettit & Sevitt exhibition at Belrose last weekend. It opens today. From 10am you can inspect two new Pettit & Sevitt homes from the inside.³¹²

Designer display homes were a feature of several new subdivisions, the most high-profile being the Killarney Heights estate opened by LJ Hooker in 1963. Overlooking Middle Harbour, north of Forestville, the new estate featured a 'parade of homes' by several project builders, including Hooker Homes, as well as a 'Dream Home' designed for a Woman's Day competition by Ancher, Mortlock and Woolley: 'Despite wet weather, the display of 17 master-built homes already has attracted 100,000 visitors. Large crowds attended in yesterday's constant drizzle'.³¹³

Col Madigan was a distinguished local architect who in the 1950s lived in a modern flat-roofed house which he designed overlooking Narrabeen Lagoon. With Chris Kringas, he designed the brutalist Dee Why Public Library building in 1965. Designed by his firm Edwards, Madigan & Torzillo, the building was awarded the Sulman Medal in 1966 by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. It was the first purpose-built library on the Northern Beaches and one of the most modern local libraries of its time. Madigan also designed the adjacent Civic Centre in 1973, but is best known for his work on the National Gallery and adjacent High Court in Canberra (also in partnership with Chris Kringas).

During the 1970s and 1980s, the banks replaced building societies as the main source of home lending, increasing the size of home loans and of new houses. Modernism lost its appeal to the suburban mainstream yet Northern Beaches architecture became

associated with a new generation of architects, notably Glenn Murcutt, who lived at Narrabeen and nearby while growing up. Murcutt's father, who had managed a gold mine in Papua New Guinea, was forced to move to Sydney in 1942 following the outbreak of the Pacific War. There he built and sold houses on the Northern Beaches, while instructing Glenn and his brothers in practical skills and architecture. Murcutt started solo practice during the 1970s, primarily designing houses, often reduced to two horizontal planes of floor and roof plus an expressed frame.

These minimalist pavilions increased potential relationships to the site, views and climate. While Murcutt designed some Northern Beaches houses his work – and especially his artisanal approach to architectural practice – also gained a high profile through Richard Leplastrier, Peter Stutchbury and others:

There is a romantic mythology associated with this group of practitioners ... deep sensitivity to climate, topography and place; a pragmatic approach to tectonics, borrowing from agrarian and indigenous vernacular typologies; a righteous scepticism of all things 'digital'; and, most importantly, a design approach with sustainability and passive systems at its absolute core.³¹⁴

The work of Murcutt and Stutchbury has gained international acclaim, yet its impact depends on the availability of sites – increasingly rare even at the Northern Beaches. It signals the decline of Modernism as a mainstream architecture and its return to a wealthy niche market. Yet Northern Beaches Modernism remains a singular response to its distinctive setting, a testimony to the inspirational power of the peninsular landscape.

312 Sydney Morning Herald, 9 November 1968, p.9.

313 Sydney Morning Herald, 13 May 1963, p.5.

314 Maitui Ward, 'Under the Edge: the architecture of Peter Stutchbury', *Australian Design Review*, 20 October 2011.

Surf culture and design

By 1960, Brookvale was home to Sydney's surfboard industry, with most of the leading board shapers and manufacturers based there. Malibu boards were introduced to Australia in 1956 by a team of US life savers; local surfers Barry Bennett, Gordon Woods, Denny Keogh and Scott Dillon quickly adopted them before pioneering their Australian development and manufacture, setting up at Brookvale from around 1957.³¹⁵ They were joined by Scott McDonagh, Bill Wallace and others who during the 1960s made Brookvale surfboards famous internationally, pioneering the move from longboards to highly manoeuvrable short boards and a radically different surfing style. Several of these manufacturers later branched into other fields, including skateboards, sailing skiffs and surf wear, and the first Ugg boots, named and manufactured by surfboard maker Shane Stedman.³¹⁶

In 1962, surfer and former insurance salesman Bob Evans founded *Surfing World* magazine, designed to champion local surf culture rather than that of California and Hawaii. Based at Avalon, the magazine succeeded spectacularly. During the 1960s and 1970s surfing connected with other 'counterculture' phenomena including music, psychedelia and environmentalism. Surfing became a lifestyle rather than merely a sport, while surfboards became 'fantastic plastic machines', surrounded by a booming culture of magazines, movies and music:

Trying to sort out the Australian surfing scene today is like an exercise in the absurd. Everything is happening so fast that what is avant garde one month is old hat the next. In the course of a single season local surfboard riders have taken up psychedelicism, wide-tailed stubby boards, V bottoms – and then

dropped them again. Like most dynamic movements the surfing fraternity (fraternity?) is rent by faction fights, power conflicts – and a heavy dose of commercialism. With the Brookvale board factories turning out hundreds of boards a month, three surf magazines on the newsstands and promoters everywhere trying to sell to the affluent Beach Generation, it could hardly be any other way.³¹⁷

At this time the Northern Beaches could claim to be the world's surfing capital. As well as several world champions and thousands of surfers active between Manly and Palm Beach, the scene inspired a generation of writers, photographers, musicians and filmmakers including John and Paul Witzig, Albert Falzon, David Elfick and Albie Thoms:

PAUL WITZIG PRESENTS A TOTALLY NEW FORM OF SURFING ENTERTAINMENT.

Something different is happening ... A concert, a film and a light show are being rolled into one. EVOLUTION, the internationally acclaimed film, will be on the screen. On the stage will be one and a half tons of guitars, drums, amps and speakers throbbing to the acid sounds of TAMAM SHUD, created live as you watch the world's surfing greats – Young, Lynch, Spencer, McTavish, Farrelly and Greenough being tubed around the world and finding the ultimate waves. Supersonic Vibrations!³¹⁸

Tamam Shud was one of several Northern Beaches bands to achieve success during the 1970s and following decades. Led by guitarist Lindsay Bjerre, its members were surfers as well as musicians and its music embodied surf culture's contemporary immersion in psychedelia. The band's reputation was established by the use of its music in Paul Witzig's surf movies, notably *Hot Generation*

³¹⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 February 1967, p.77.

³¹⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 April 1976, p.11.

³¹⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 May 1968, p.18.

³¹⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 January 1970, p.77.

and Evolution, followed by numerous performances accompanying screenings of Evolution.

Yet Tamam Shud's bread and butter was hotel performance; the band was one of many to develop its skills and audience at Northern Beaches pubs during the 1970s and 1980s, including notably the Royal Antler, Narrabeen, Manly Vale and Dee Why hotels. Other bands included Midnight Oil, the Angels, Rose Tattoo, Celibate Rifles, Cold Chisel and the Radiators. Most did not originate from the Northern Beaches but several did, including Midnight Oil, INXS, Choirboys and Celibate Rifles. All agreed that the raucous and demanding crowds of the Northern Beaches pubs were an essential rite of passage:

Nowhere else in the world had a live scene like it ... It was a unique sort of training. By the time we went overseas we were a well-oiled machine on stage.³¹⁹

Nightlife

During the suburban boom of the 1950s and 1960s, as new hotels sprang up at Brookvale and Manly Vale, the character of Northern Beaches hotels was changing. 'For the sixth time in eight years the Dee Why Hotel sold more alcohol than any other venue to rank as the number one hotel in Sydney'.³²⁰

With discos and band rooms as well as bars and bistros, most other Northern Beaches hotels were not far behind in this

ranking, and its attendant reputation. In 1964 young artist Martin Sharp satirised Northern Beaches pubs and their clientele in his ribald cartoon 'The word flashed around the Arms': 'Oz reproduces below a replica of a fairly typical conversation anyone can overhear at the Newport Arms Hotel (nerve-centre of the party-crashing clique) on any Saturday night'.³²¹ Sharp's cartoon was a central exhibit when the Oz editors were charged (and sentenced to prison terms) for obscenity, yet his notorious monologue anticipated regular revelations of drug and alcohol misuse and abusive sex in the area.³²²

By the 1990s, a few Northern Beaches hotels were also high on annual rankings of violent hotel incidents; notably, Manly's venerable Hotel Steyne was a regular 'winner' of the unwanted title of most violent pub in NSW. At one time the hotel was responsible for almost half of all alcohol-related assaults in Manly. A policeman recalled: 'The Steyne had a reputation as the place to go if you wanted to get punched in the face or glassed'.³²³ In 1994, the Corso was described as:

a no-go area after dark ... prompting the council to hold a public forum about safety and the related issues of vandalism and violence, drug and alcohol abuse, some involving children as young as 11 years old.³²⁴

Soon after, the Corso and nearby streets were declared a dry zone. A decade later, 24-hour hotel trading also ceased in Manly.

319 Manly Daily, 27 July 2014.

320 Sydney Morning Herald, 12 January 1989, p.64.

321 Oz, February 1964, p.7.

322 Sydney Morning Herald, 29 January 2011, p.4.

323 Sydney Morning Herald, 25 April 2012, p.5.

324 Sydney Morning Herald, 30 May 1994, p.1.

Religion, ritual and remembrance

The architectural and built environment of the Northern Beaches have been shaped in no small part by the ways in which its communities have worshipped, celebrated and mourned. Much of the unique character of these places has been influenced by migration and the introduction of new traditions and rituals.

St Patrick's College in Manly was Australia's first national Catholic ecclesiastical seminary. When it was built between 1885 and 1889, at a cost of £70,000, it was the largest in the southern hemisphere. It was the official national residence for the Archbishop for almost a century. The Archbishop's residence (called the Cardinal's Palace) and Moran's Residence (now St Paul's Catholic College), are located on the other side of Darley Road from St Patrick's College. It was built at the time of Manly's first suburban boom and came to dominate the landscape as a landmark. Between 1900 and 1907, small residential lots adjacent to College Street, Reddall Street, Fairy Bower Road and Bower Street were purchased by the Church, reinforcing the presence of the institution in the area. In 1915, leaseholds on a subdivision of approximately 21 acres overlooking Shelly Beach and Fairy Bower were established as rentals for a period of 99 years.³²⁵ The Seminary vacated the St Patrick's estate site in 1995.

The Catholic Church was also instrumental in assisting Italian migrants to settle in Australia and in suburbs like Brookvale. Here new

traditions and places of ritual developed at St Augustine's Church and specific statues commissioned of San Rocco (St. Rocco), patron saint of Cirella in Calabria, and San Giovanni Battista (St. John the Baptist), patron saint of Gizzeria in Calabria.³²⁶

After the Second World War, increased numbers of migrants and refugees arrived in Australia. On the Northern Beaches, eastern European migrants and refugees in particular often found work in the market gardens and founded places to gather as a community. The St Sava Serbian Orthodox Church, founded in 1949, was the first Serbian Orthodox parish in Australia. It serviced the many Yugoslav migrants who worked in the market gardens and factories. The church opened its first building in Vineyard Street, Mona Vale, in 1954. In 1991, St Sava Serbian Orthodox Church opened its new church building on Wilson Street, Ingleside, on a site that was previously a market garden owned by a Serbian family who grew tomatoes in glasshouses.

In 1955, 2.83 hectares at Ingleside just west of Waratah Farm were purchased by the Bahá'í community. This site was selected specifically because of its high elevation and visibility. Today the Bahá'í Temple dominates the skyline of the Northern Beaches and can be seen as far away as the Central Coast.

The Sydney Bahá'í Temple is the first and only house of worship for the Bahá'í faith in Australia and the third of only seven built worldwide. The Bahá'í faith, established in

³²⁵ St. Patrick's Estate (<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageltemDetails.aspx?ID=5051219>), accessed 28 February 2019.

³²⁶ MacRitchie, J., Toia S and Polito, G, *Italians On The Northern Beaches 1920–70s*, Migration Heritage Centre (<http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/sempreconte/italians-on-northern-beaches>), accessed 30 May 2021.



St Patrick's
College, Manly,
c.1900–1910.
(Source: State
Library of NSW,
PXE 711/276)

Persia in 1863, was brought to Australia in 1920, but the Ingleside site provided the faith's first house of worship in Australia. The building's initial concepts came from Charles Mason Remey, while the Sydney architect John R Brogan provided the design and the construction supervision. The temple was constructed between 1957 and 1961. The structure has nine sides and nine entrances, symbolising the gathering together of all mankind irrespective of race, religion, nation or class according to the beliefs of the Bahá'í faith. The importance of the number nine relates to it being the largest single digit number, which is said to represent comprehensiveness, oneness and unity.

The final resting places of community members on the Northern Beaches mark an important

part in ritual and remembrance in the district. Manly Cemetery was established in the 1860s amidst an agricultural setting, with cattle continuing to graze among the tombs as late as 1911.³²⁷ As one of the earliest cemeteries on the Northern Beaches, many important early settlers lie among the 6,000 burial plots of Manly Cemetery. At least 11 Manly mayors and 22 aldermen lay at rest here, as well as local characters like Ellen 'Sweet' Sullivan, the 1920s confectioner known for wheeling her cart along Ocean Beach, the Corso and Manly Wharf.

At Mona Vale Cemetery, originally known as Turimetta Cemetery, various religious sections have been allocated, including a Bahá'í burial

³²⁷ Lisa Murray, *Sydney Cemeteries: A Field Guide*, NewSouth Publishing, 2016, p.177.

section for the nearby temple. Cemeteries farther afield on the Northern Beaches speak to the peripheral experiences of people in isolation such as the Third Quarantine Cemetery, where victims of smallpox, the bubonic plague and influenza were buried from 1881 to 1925; or Church Point Cemetery where only nine memorials survive (erected between 1882 and 1918), some documenting the perils of travelling by water from Sydney for supplies.³²⁸

Today, the largest cemetery on the Northern Beaches is the Frenchs Forest Bushland Cemetery, which was gazetted in 1937. Since the first burial occurred here in 1940, it has provided a resting place for many Northern Beaches residents. It has some designated religious and cultural sections, including Italian, Chinese and Armenian sections. The cemetery has a particularly large and significant group of 600 Italian crypts and vaults, which have been erected since the 1960s.

³²⁸ Lisa Murray, *Sydney Cemeteries: A Field Guide*, NewSouth Publishing, 2016, p.188.

Northern beaches today

In the late twentieth century, the Corso's future was a central issue in Manly. The Corso was partially closed to traffic in 1979. By the 1980s, Manly was attracting more visitors, and ferry trips were increasing again, from 2.3 million in 1976 to 8 million in 1984 – the highest total since the 1940s. Fast hydrofoil ferries had been introduced on the Manly run in 1965, but lost favour after the NSW Government took over the ferry company and introduced new, faster ferries during the 1980s.³²⁹

At the same time Manly was divided by a development proposal from the Leighton Property group for:

a 14-storey hotel, an eight-level office block and three levels of shops and restaurants. A local group, the Residents and Friends of Manly, and the National Trust say the building is too high and in complete conflict with the character of the Corso.³³⁰

Manly politics became dominated by issues of urban renewal, new development versus local heritage, and visitors versus residents. The Hotel Manly, the Manly Fun Pier and other landmarks disappeared: 'Manly is showing all the symptoms of growing pains as locals resist developer's bids to bring high-rise sophistication to the quaint village'.³³¹

Trying to steer a path through these controversies was political independent Dr Peter Macdonald, a local general practitioner who was at various times a Manly alderman, Manly mayor and MP. He held the normally Liberal seat throughout the 1990s. Similar issues confronted Warringah Shire Council. During the 1950s and 1960s, near full employment brought greater prosperity, a large population and more home building throughout the Northern Beaches. Dee Why,

for instance, became densely developed with three-storey unit blocks. This was the background to the 'over development' movement led by Macdonald and others. It was also largely behind the two sackings of Warringah Shire Council in 1965 and 1985.

In 1963, Warringah Shire Council approved the construction of two apartment towers – Flight Deck and Shipmates – on the Collaroy beachfront, despite local opposition; eventually similar developments at Collaroy and Narrabeen were banned by the NSW Government.³³² Collaroy and Narrabeen beaches had a history of erosion during major storms; in 1944 and 1945, several houses were washed away and others were damaged and demolished. Similar events have occurred since, most recently in 2016.

In 1985, local estate agent and property developer Max Delmege proposed an eight-floor mixed use building at Mona Vale. Delmege was well known in the district, yet opposition to the development was strident, and became more so when irregularities were found in Warringah Shire Council's approval of the project. The Council was sacked by the NSW Government; however, its appointed administrator let the project proceed with six rather than eight floors.

Novelist Tom Keneally expressed local concerns: 'the basic question is going to be, 'Will there one day be a Barrenjoey Sheraton-casino?'³³³ Similar arguments were mounted for the Pittwater Council, which was formed in 1992 in part to protect the low-density residential character of the northern part of the peninsula. Yet by 2016, the balance of population and voter power had shifted towards the peninsula's north.³³⁴

³²⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 January 1985, p.33.

³³⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 May 1987, p.32.

³³¹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 April 1989, p.4.

³³² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 February 1964, p.2.

³³³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 March 1987, p.62.

³³⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 November 2016, p.27.

In 1989, Warringah was granted exemption from the new Sydney planning policy which opened residential areas to medium or high-density housing. Brookvale's postwar zoning as an industrial area was conceived in part to increase employment opportunities on the Northern Beaches, where residents often had to commute elsewhere for work. Given the continued limitations of transport to the Northern Beaches, the lack of local jobs was perceived as a brake on the area's population and housing growth. Yet by the 1980s, while urban consolidation was being formed as a development policy for most of Sydney, it was recognised that the Northern Beaches' poor transport connections meant that its population and density should remain below the Sydney mean.³³⁵

Since the 1800s, though numerous road and rail proposals have addressed the Northern Beaches' isolation, few have come to fruition. Little significant change has occurred since the completion of the second Spit Bridge in 1958 and the construction of the Warringah Freeway at North Sydney soon after. The Northern Beaches' comparatively small population has stymied public and private transport investment.³³⁶ One recent public transport improvement has been the introduction in 2018 of the B-Line bus, which provides a regular and fast bus service from Mona Vale to the city. Yet transport inadequacy continues to constrain population growth.

Since the 1980s, the population of the Northern Beaches has grown slowly relative to the preceding decades and to Sydney's spectacular growth in the same period. In 1986, 184,804 people lived at the Northern Beaches, occupying 68,788 private dwellings. Thirty years later that number had grown to 252,878 in 101,475 private dwellings with a population density of 1,048 people

per square kilometre, well below that of Sydney and many of its suburbs. However, this figure reflects the fact that much of the land area is unbuilt. With almost one-third of Northern Beaches dwellings being flats or apartments, the beach suburbs from Mona Vale to Manly and Balgowlah have densities similar to the 2,800 people per square kilometre across Sydney; these suburbs are the focus of development controversy.³³⁷ Tellingly, in 2016 only 18 per cent of residents' trips to work were made by public transport, reflecting the poor service to the area.

In 2015, a review of local government boundaries by the NSW Government Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal recommended that Manly, Pittwater and Warringah merge to form one single council. The NSW Government eventually considered three proposals. The first proposed a merger of Manly and Mosman councils and parts of Warringah to form a new council. A second proposal considered a merger with Pittwater and a third proposal submitted by Warringah Council on 23 February 2016 proposed the amalgamation of Pittwater, Manly and Warringah councils. Of submissions lodged to the Local Government Boundaries Commission statewide, 65 per cent came from the Northern Beaches, with 18,977 residents submitting for the third proposal. On 12 May 2016, the Northern Beaches Council was formed from Manly, Pittwater and Warringah councils with the release of the Local Government (Council Amalgamations) Proclamation 2016.³³⁸

For all of its successes, failures and human stories, the Northern Beaches retains its founding significance in its rock art, shell middens and related artefacts. Its landscape and history continue to inspire and amaze.

³³⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 'The parts of Sydney with the most development – and the least', 18 May 2018.

³³⁸ 'Page 25 Local Government (Council Amalgamations) Proclamation 2016 [NSW] - Schedule 13 - Provisions for Northern Beaches Council', Parliament of New South Wales, 2012, p.25.

³³⁵ Judy Wing, *Warringah Heritage Study: Historical context report*, Warringah Council, 1995, pp.13–14.

³³⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 June 2014, p.5.

Appendix A: selected timeline of events

Date	Detail
By 60,000 before present (BP)	Aboriginal people occupy Australia.
30,000 BP	Ice age causes sea level to lower by over 100 metres.
6000 BP	Present-day shoreline of Northern Beaches is established.
3000 BP	Barb-tipped fishing spears and shell fishing hooks are developed, as well as bark-stripped canoes.
1500 BP	Aboriginal trade networks extend north and south along the coastline rather than inland.
1788	Captain Phillip scouts Manly Cove, noting 'manly' behaviour of 20 Aboriginal men who wade out to meet them. Names area Manly. Lt. Dawes records name as Kay-ye-my.
1788	Phillip returns to Manly and Northern Beaches to complete expeditions to Pittwater, Frenchs Forest and Middle Harbour.
May 1788	Fire land management by Aboriginal people is observed on North Head.
August 1788	Phillip and surgeon John White return to Manly Cove and see 16 canoes filled with people; relationship between Aboriginal people and colonists remains amicable.
August 1788 onwards	Skirmishes between Aboriginal people and colonists begin in Sydney.
December 1788	Phillip orders abduction of two Aboriginal men, Colebee and Bennelong, after skirmishes become more frequent. Men are captured from Manly Cove.
1789	Smallpox epidemic begins, killing at least half of Sydney's Aboriginal people. Two additional Aboriginal men are abducted at Manly. Bennelong is one of the men captured.
1790	Bennelong is released.
July 1790	Phillip visits Manly Cove on the invitation of Bennelong to partake in a whale feast. Phillip is speared by a man known as Willemering, possibly as retribution for Bennelong's capture. The Second Fleet arrives.
December 1790	Bennelong visits Phillip to no enmity; relationship between colonists and Cammeraygal people is on good terms.
July 1805	Musquito is captured and exiled to Norfolk Island.
1809	Salt works are established on Scotland Island by Andrew Thompson.

Date	Detail
1810s	Land grants begin on the Northern Beaches. Richard Cheers and Gilbert Baker are granted 100 acres and 30 acres in Manly in 1810. In 1810, Andrew Thompson is granted Scotland Island, where he establishes a salt works; 400 acres between Palm Beach, Whale Beach and Pittwater are granted to naval surgeon James Napper in 1816. 700 acres are granted to Robert Campbell at Mona Vale in 1814; 410 acres at Narrabeen are granted to John Ramsay in 1815; 50 acres at Freshwater are granted to Thomas Bruin at Freshwater in 1815; 500 acres are granted to William Cossar in 1815 at Long Reef; 200 acres at Bayview are granted to Robert McIntosh in 1817; and 380 acres to D'Arcy Wentworth at Manly Vale.
1815	James Meehan surveys the land from Palm Beach to Manly.
1823	Boin (Bowen), son of Bungaree, acting in same capacity as his father, travels with John Oxley on a voyage exploring the coast north of Port Macquarie. Creates first attributable artwork by an Indigenous Australian.
1823	James Jenkins acquires Cossar's grant and Ramsay's grant and begins amassing a large estate on the Northern Beaches, eventually covering all the coastal land from Dee Why to Mona Vale.
1826	Father John J Therry establishes 1200-acre farm between Palm Beach and Avalon/Clareville. Grant made official in 1833.
1826	James Jenkins, assisted by four convicts, constructs the first road from what is now North Harbour Reserve to Narrabeen known as the Jenkins Road.
1828	Surveyor-General Major Thomas L Mitchell draws plans for planned village called Balgowlah west of Manly Cove. First ship, the <i>Bussorah Merchant</i> , is quarantined at North Head.
1829	Aboriginal camps are recorded at Broken Bay, Barrenjoey and Cowan Creek.
1830	Bungaree dies.
1830	Barry Kearns runs first ferrying service across Middle Harbour from Shell Cove to Clontarf.
1832	Boin is living with family at Barrenjoey, working as tracker and boatman for the police. Area is frequently used for smuggling.
1836/37	William Frederick Parker purchases 158 acres on the Jenkins Road, which he names Brookvale Farm. Parker and his family live on and farm this land for almost 100 years.
1838	All of North Head is declared a quarantine reserve and necessary buildings are constructed.
1842	The names of some beaches in the area are established by now, including Narrabeen, 'Deewy' and Curl Curl.
1843	Customs house is built at Barrenjoey to address smuggling problem.
1848	There are 63 inhabitants scattered between Manly Cove and Narrabeen Lagoon.

Date	Detail
1849	Peter Ellery begins a ferry service across The Spit.
By 1850s	Four of the main families living between Manly and Pittwater are the Jenkins, Foleys, Farrells and Collins.
1850s	Land farther inland, in Oxford Falls, Frenchs Forest and Duffys Forest, begins to be granted.
1850s	A twice-a-week coach service from Manly to Newport begins, run by the Boulton family.
1853	Boin is possibly shot by a bushranger near Bushrangers Hill. Cannot be corroborated. Pearce brothers purchase 200 acres of land in Frenchs Forest.
1850/1860s	Pittwater area is known as a lawless area. Cattle-stealing, assaults and murders are occurring among colonists.
1853	Brothers Simon and James Pearce purchase 200 acres in what is now Frenchs Forest. The land becomes known as 'Pearce's 200 acres' and later as Rodborough.
1853	Henry Gilbert Smith begins buying and leasing land in Manly to create a marine resort.
1855	Smith draws his plan for a village to be called Ellensville after his first wife, but subsequently calls it Brighton.
1855	Smith is granted permission to build a private wharf at Manly Cove after amassing land there. Begins creating resort town, naming streets and promenades after locations in Europe; one is called the Corso.
1855	Manly's first hotel, The Pier Hotel, is built by Smith opposite Manly Wharf.
1856	Fairlight House is built as Smith's private residence, designed by former Colonial Architect Edmund Blacket.
1857–1858	Smith begins selling some of his resort town land, calling the town 'Brighton'.
1858	Manly National School, a government school, opens as the first public school on the Northern Beaches.
1858	Steyne Hotel in Manly opens, designed by Edmund Blacket.
1859	Manly National School opens its first purpose-built building at the corner of Carlton and Belgrave Street on land donated by Smith.
1859	Regular ferry service to Manly begins.
1861	Newport Road to Barrenjoey Road is gazetted.

Date	Detail
1861	Chinese-owned fishing huts, where fish are processed and packed for trading, are recorded in Barrenjoey.
1863	The Steyne Hotel is destroyed by fire and rebuilt again, designed by Edmund Blacket.
1863	Clontarf Pleasure Grounds is established by Isaac Moore.
1865	St Matthew's Church is built on the Corso.
1865	Manly Cemetery is consecrated.
1868	Attempted assassination of Queen Victoria's son, the Duke of Edinburgh, at Clontarf Pleasure Grounds.
1870s	James Harris French, after whom Frenchs Forest is named, acquires the 200 acres originally purchased by the Pearce brothers and establishes two sawmills, one where the Forest Business Park (site of the old drive-in theatre) is now situated. The large trees are cut and split by hand, and then hauled along Bantry Bay Road and down to Bantry Bay by bullocks. From a wharf at Bantry Bay the timber is shipped to various parts of the harbour shores, where settlers used it for building and fencing. Traces of the old road winding down to Bantry Bay can still be found in the bush, although it is closed in 1908 and the land resumed for the storage of explosives.
1870	First record for the name Ivanhoe Park, Manly.
1870	Sands directory lists 67 households at Manly Beach.
1871	All un-alienated land at Dobroyd and large swathes of land at North Head are declared a Defence Reserve.
1872	A small Methodist church is established at Church Point.
1876	Architect Thomas Rowe moves to Manly. Local Manly residents apply to form a municipality.
1877	Municipality of Manly is incorporated, the first local government in Northern Beaches area. Thomas Rowe is elected as first mayor.
1878	Swimming is banned at Manly Beach between 7am and 8pm.
1879	Construction of men's baths in Little Manly Cove begins.
1879	Newport Wharf opens on Pittwater as the 'new port' for coastal steamers to transport cargo and passengers between Pittwater and Sydney. The wharf is built by George Pile and Charles Edward Jeanneret, who also build the Newport Hotel the same year, encouraging visitors to the area.
1879	New Brighton Hotel in Manly opens.

Date	Detail
1879	Bantry Bay is set aside as a public reserve. Bantry Bay Pleasure Gardens is established.
1880	First Narrabeen Bridge opens.
1880	Newport Hotel is built.
1881	Barrenjoey Lighthouse is built, designed by Colonial Architect James Barnet.
1881	First subdivision of the Mount Ramsay Estate, which covered Collaroy to Narrabeen, for residential development.
1881	SS <i>Collaroy</i> runs aground on the beach close to Long Reef. This area then becomes known as Collaroy.
1882	Five hotels exist on the Corso.
1883	Ferry services to Manly increase after pressure from residents and Manly Council.
1884	Manly Land Company Ltd purchases and subdivides the Freshwater Estate.
1884	First subdivision of the Greendale Estate, which adjoins Brookvale Farm. The suburb of Brookvale is known for a short time as Greendale.
1884	The Narrabeen Inn/Hotel opens on Pittwater Road. First licence is issued in 1886.
1885	William Hews purchases 10 acres of land at French Forest from James French and transfers his brickworks there from Petersham, employing around 40 men.
1885	Construction of St Patrick's College and Seminary begins on North Head.
1885	Elizabeth Jenkins gifts land to the Salvation Army and £400 to build its Home of Rest in Dee Why.
1886	St Matthew's Church Grammar School opens in Manly.
1886	First subdivision of the Harbord Estate.
1886	Ladies' baths in Little Manly Cove are built.
1887	Bassett-Darley Estate (part of Wentworth family trust) on south side of the Corso is released by an Act of Parliament.

Date	Detail
1887	Brookvale Public School opens in the original St Luke's Hall in 1887 (moved to present site in 1902).
1887	The Rock Lily Hotel, Mona Vale, opens.
1888	Brookvale Post Office opens.
1888	Telegraph Office opens at Newport. Newport Public School opens.
1889	Narrabeen Public School opens.
1891	Population of Manly Council area is 3,236.
1892	Corporation Baths near eastern ferry wharf at Manly are constructed.
1892	Curl Curl Creek is dammed to create Manly Dam. On 4 February 1892 the water supply to Manly is turned on.
1893	Manly Cooperative Steam Ferry Company is founded to compete against Port Jackson Steamship Company.
1894	Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park is established as second national park in Australia.
1894	Building of La Corniche (Brock's Folly) commenced, with the land conveyed later in 1897
1895	Manly Cottage Hospital is built, mainly from philanthropic donations.
1896	Manly Cooperative Steam Ferry Company and Port Jackson Steamship Company merge.
1897	Manly Ladies' Baths are extended.
1899	The Manly–Narrabeen Tramway League is established.
1903	By-law is passed by Manly Council to legalise daytime bathing. Council hires the Sly brothers to patrol the beach between 6am and 9am.
1903	First tram runs from Manly Wharf along the Corso, North Steyne, Carlton Street, Pittwater Road to the terminus at the junction with Balgowlah Road.
1904	Henry Ferdinand Halloran, land developer, purchases land west of Balgowlah from the Macpherson family and names the estate Seaforth. Offers the NSW Government a strip of land through his property to build a tramway between Manly and The Spit.
1905	Amos and Ruth Randell move to Freshwater in 1905 and purchase land at the north end of Freshwater Beach. They set up holiday camps for rental, which rapidly gain popularity.

Date	Detail
1905	Mona Vale Cemetery is established.
1906	<i>Manly Daily</i> local newspaper is established by Edward Lincoln.
1906	Halloran purchases the Macpherson family's land holdings at Warriewood and creates the Warriewood Estate residential subdivision. Both the Warriewood Estate residential subdivision and the Seaforth Estate are first auctioned in 1906.
1906	Warringah Shire Council is established.
1907	South Steyne and North Steyne Surf Life Saving Clubs are established. Edward Eyre is hired as first paid life saver, patrolling Manly Beach.
1907	Warringah Council Chambers open in Brookvale.
1907	Narrabeen Hotel is rebuilt after fire.
1908	Freshwater and South Curl Curl Surf Life Saving Clubs are established (South Curl Curl Surf Life Saving Club is initially known as the Curl Curl Surf Brigade).
1909	Newport Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1910	Two Chinese groceries are established on the Corso. Beachgoers at Manly begin to experiment with surfboards.
1910	Tramline from Manly to Brookvale opens.
1910	North Narrabeen Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1911	Parish of Narrabeen census indicates 460 people living there. Freshwater's population is 250 people. Brookvale Park and Oval opens.
1911	Brookvale Oval is established.
1911	Spit to Manly tramway opens.
1911	First residential land subdivision in Dee Why. Many small holiday homes are built in the area.
1911	Manly and Collaroy Surf Life Saving Clubs are established.
1912	NSW Government resumes all of Long Reef Headland, creating Griffith Park in honour of Arthur Griffith, Minister for Works. Dee Why Rock Pool is built, the first of its kind on the Northern Beaches. Brookvale Brickworks opens.

Date	Detail
1912	Mona Vale Public School opens.
1912	Tram line is extended to Collaroy.
1912	Dee Why Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1912	Tommy Walker impresses onlookers with surfing demonstration in Manly. Warringah Shire Council becomes trustee of Griffith Park, Long Reef.
1913	Tramline is extended to Narrabeen.
1913	Manly Brick and Tile Works opens factory at Brookvale.
1914/1915	Duke Kahanamoku and Isabel Letham demonstrate surfing to a crowd of 4,000 at Freshwater Beach.
1915	Scheme to give returning World War I servicemen 5 acres in Frenchs Forest begins. This area is later called Forestville.
1916	Frenchs Forest Public School opens.
1918	Freshwater Literary Institute opens (now Harbord Literary Institute).
1919	Soldier settlement scheme fails. NSW Government begins buying out soldier settlers.
1920	First land subdivision at Avalon.
1921	Almost a quarter of Manly Council's residences are tenements or flats.
1921	First use of the name 'Avalon'.
1921	Palm Beach Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1922	Long Reef Golf Club opens on Griffith Park.
1922	Dee Why Ladies Amateur Swimming Club forms.
1922	South Narrabeen, Mona Vale and North Curl Curl Surf Life Saving Clubs are established.
1923	Suburb of Freshwater is renamed Harbord.
1924	Royal Far West, Manly, is founded by Reverend Stanly Drummond.

Date	Detail
1924	Spit and Roseville bridges open.
1924	Queenscliff Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1925	Construction of the first Ocean Street Bridge at Narrabeen.
1925	Avalon Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1926	Manly to Harbord tramline is constructed.
1928	St Matthew's Church and Victoria Hall are demolished for improvement to the Corso.
1930	Warriewood is said to be a 'crystal valley' owing to the amount of glass houses used for tomato growing in the area. Most of the growing is done by Southern European migrants.
1930	Sale of the Avalon Beach Estate by AJ Small.
1930	Manly Fun Pier opens on old cargo wharf, including the popular shark aquarium.
1931	Stewart House is established at South Curl Curl as a 'preventorium', which provides respite for public school children.
1932	Port Jackson Steamship Company funds and builds a new large swimming enclosure and boardwalk at Manly Cove.
1935	Hotel Manly (formerly Pier Hotel) is rebuilt with a nine-storey tower with five floors of flats.
1937	Whale Beach Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1937	Gazettal of Frenchs Forest Bushland Cemetery (first burial in 1940).
1938	Arthur Baldwinson designs one of Australia's first Modernist houses at Palm Beach.
1939	Trams cease to operate and buses replace trams between The Spit, Manly and Narrabeen.
1946	Wakehurst Parkway opens.
1946	North Palm Beach Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1947	Brookvale Park becomes home ground of Manly-Warringah Rugby League Club (Sea Eagles).

Date	Detail
1949	Bilgola Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1950s	Frank Hurley begins taking photographs of Northern Beaches area, showing houses are still generally beach shacks at this time.
1950	Long Reef Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1950	Top Dog factory (later Chesty Bonds) opens on Pittwater Road.
1951	Avalon Public School opens.
1951	Warriewood Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1952	Warringah Shire Council evicts long-term residents of Curl Curl Reserve. Bus depot moves from Manly to Brookvale.
1952	The Transport Department installs a flashing light at the intersection of Warringah Road and Wakehurst Parkway to try to slow motorists down as they approach the intersection. It becomes known as 'the blinking light'.
1953	Bungan Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1954	Brookvale is selected in the County of Cumberland Planning Scheme as the main area for industrial zoning in Warringah. These land use zoning changes bring some 70 factories to the area by the mid-1960s.
1955	Brookvale Hotel opens.
1956	Malibu surfboards are introduced in Australia by US life savers attending the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games, later resulting in a boom of surfing along the Northern Beaches.
1957	Surfboard manufacturers Barry Bennett, Gordon Woods, Denny Keogh and Scott Dillon adopt Malibu board styles and begin manufacturing them in Brookvale. They become known as the Brookvale Six, and as Australia's leading surfboard producers.
1957	Smoky Dawson Ranch is founded at Ingleside.
1958	New four-lane Spit Bridge opens.
1958	Manly Library opens.
1961	Totem Shopping Centre opens in Balgowlah with 32 shops.
1961	Sydney Bahá'í Temple opens in Ingleside.
1962	Surfing World magazine is founded in Avalon by Bob Evans.

Date	Detail
1962	Killarney Heights is developed by Hooker Rex Real Estate.
1963	Dee Why Square, built by Westfield, opens with a McDowell's Department Store (later Waltons).
1963	Warringah Mall opens on 3 April.
1963	Warringah Shire Council approves construction of two apartment blocks – Flight Deck and Shipmates – on Collaroy beachfront despite local opposition. Further developments are banned by NSW Government.
1964	<p>Manly hosts first official World Surfing Championship. Local surfers Bernard 'Midget' Farrelly and Phyllis O'Donnell are among the winners.</p> <p>Martin Sharp satirises Northern Beaches pubs and clientele with cartoon 'the word flashes around the Arms', which is later used as evidence in the obscenity court case faced by Oz editors.</p>
1964	Mona Vale Hospital opens.
1964	Narrabeen Beach Surf Life Saving Club is established.
1965	Fast hydrofoil ferries bring services to Manly.
1965	Warringah Shire Council is sacked.
1966	Dee Why Library opens.
1966	New Roseville Bridge opens.
1967	Waratah Park is established – filming site of TV series <i>Skippy</i> .
1970	Royal visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Manly.
1972	Mona Vale Library opens.
1977	The Corso is closed to traffic between Darley Road and the New Brighton Hotel.
1977	Forestville Library opens as a community library (taken over by Warringah Shire Council in 1981).
1979	Warringah Aquatic Centre opens in Allambie Heights.
1979	Belrose Library opens.

Date	Detail
1970s–1980s	Height of pub rock scene in Northern Beaches. Bands such as Midnight Oil, the Angels, Rose Tattoo, Celibate Rifles, Cold Chisel, INXS and the Radiators are regular performers.
1981	Warriewood Square shopping centre opens.
1983	Avalon Community Library opens.
1987	The Corso is closed to traffic between New Brighton Hotel and the Steyne Hotel.
1985	Warringah Shire Council is sacked for the second time by the NSW Government after irregularities found in the approval of a development proposed by Max Delmege.
1989	Warringah is granted exemption from new Sydney planning policy which opens residential areas to medium or high-density housing.
1990s	Northern Beaches hotels rank amongst the most violent in NSW. The Steyne is often the most violent pub in NSW.
1991	Garigal National Park is established (Davidson Park State Recreation Area added in 1992).
1992	Cessation of Pittwater Council from Warringah Shire Council.
1994	Bushfires in Ku-ring-gai and Garigal National Parks.
1994	The Corso is declared a dry zone after a public forum on safety.
1997	Development of Warriewood Valley begins. Staged land release commences.
2000	Warringah Mall Library opens.
2003	Freshwater High School becomes Northern Beaches Secondary College campus.
2003	Warringah Council is sacked for the third time and remains under administration until 2008.
2004	24-hour trading in hotels stops in Manly.
2016	Manly, Warringah and Pittwater councils merge to form the Northern Beaches Council.
2017	B-Line bus service begins operating from Wynyard to Mona Vale.
2018	Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals close.
2018	New Northern Beaches Hospital opens at Frenchs Forest.

Appendix B: Previous Thematic Histories

The previous thematic histories for the former local government areas of Manly, Warringah and Pittwater identify and summarise the historic themes as outlined below.

Heritage Study Municipality of Manly (1986) – This thematic history identified several themes in the history of Manly:

- Isolation
- Transient settlement
- Villas
- Installational infrastructure (civic and governmental facilities to service community needs)
- Service infrastructure (facilitation of community needs)
- Permanent settlement
- Flats and bungalows
- Philanthropic Manly
- Social structure
- Defence
- Speculation
- Public health
- Transport
- Recreation
- Suburbanisation and local employment
- Dispossession

Several of these are not so much themes as subject headings related to particular time periods, used as the framework of the historical narrative. The history is focused on the century following European settlement in Sydney, perhaps in part due to the availability of relevant sources such as memoirs, NSW government records, and records held by Manly Library and the local historical society. News media sources are less evident, somewhat diminishing the twentieth-century record.

Barrenjoey Peninsula and Pittwater Heritage Study (1988) – The authors identified the following historic themes:

- Topography
- Transportation
- Scenic Values
- Leisure and Tourism
- The Influence of the Real Estate Speculators and Developers
- Industry
- A Sense of History (this refers primarily to the growth of heritage and environmental consciousness).

Four 'Thematic Periods' are also listed:

1. 1788–1880 Settlement and Consolidation.
2. 1880–1920 The influence of the Real Estate Ventures – A Resort for the Wealthy.
3. 1920–1950 Holiday and Recreation.
4. 1950–1988 A Commuter Suburb – Exclusivity.

These periods are used to organise a relatively brief chronological history, sourced primarily from local histories and newspaper sources. The bulk of the study is devoted to a lengthy, visually focused analysis of Pittwater's natural and cultural landscapes. As well as Pittwater, this study covers northern parts of Warringah Shire.

Historical Context Report: prepared for the Warringah Heritage Study (1995) – The Warringah study also overlaps with its neighbour, including Pittwater, since 'the history of Pittwater is an integral part of the history of Warringah'. From 'two hundred years of white settlement in Warringah' the author Judy Wing identified several themes 'which illustrate the process of the Shire's development':

- Aboriginal culture
- Exploration
- Isolation
- Land speculation and subdivision
- Transport
- Resident action
- Recreation and leisure
- Migration

These themes were merged with those identified in the Draft State Heritage Inventory (1990) to produce a history divided into the following chronological periods:

- 1788–1810 Aborigines and Exploration
- 1810–1900 Surveys and Settlement
- 1900–1930 Speculation, Subdivision and Transport
- 1930–1945 Depression and World War Two
- 1945–1991 Urban Warringah

The Warringah Heritage Study is the most comprehensively researched and detailed of these studies, using newspapers and local histories, as well as local and state government reports and the Australian Census to trace population and urban development.

Pittwater Community Based Heritage Study Review (2014) – This report assessed the local themes identified by the Barrenjoey Peninsula and Pittwater Heritage Study 'to bring them in line with the current state and national historic themes'. However, the review also lists new local themes for Pittwater as well as relating them to the state and national themes:

- Natural beauties of Pittwater. Natural and scenic appreciation of Pittwater.
- The Garigal. Valuing Indigenous places: retention of natural bushland, waterways and Indigenous heritage, art, habitation sites.

- Exploration of Pittwater. Early Surveys and Explorations.
- European Occupation. Early Land Grants.
- Isolation/Access. Problems and challenges of isolation, transport and communication difficulties.
- Making a Living. Early farming, orchards, pastoralism and the dairy farms in Pittwater.
- The Great Outdoors. Ku-ring-Gai Chase National Park and other reserves in Pittwater.
- Community and Civic Infrastructure. The evolution of a sense of community, the arts and community institutions.
- Leisure, Recreation and Tourism. From a healthy suburb to a weekender's heaven.
- Living in Pittwater. From holiday weekenders to award-winning residences.
- Architectural Modernism in Pittwater. Changing panorama of Pittwater – increase in architect-designed houses.
- Pittwater Community. Arts, Governance.

Common themes

These recurring themes have been used to help formulate the seven major local historic themes that have been explored within this consolidated Northern Beaches Thematic History.

Although devoted to different areas of the Northern Beaches, several themes recur throughout these studies and may be summarised as follows:

- Aboriginal culture and dispossession
- Isolation and transport
- Surveys and settlement
- Land speculation
- Leisure and tourism
- Suburbs and cultural landscapes

Appendix C: Historic Themes Comparison

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Northern Beaches	Notes	Examples
1 Tracing the natural evolution of Australia	Environment – naturally evolved	Natural Environment Aboriginal Culture and Dispossession Isolation and Transport	Features occurring naturally in the physical environment, which have shaped or influenced human life and cultures.	A geological formation, fossil site, ecological community, island, soil site, river flats, estuary, mountain range, reef, lake, woodland, seagrass bed, wetland, desert, alps, plain, valley, headland, evidence of flooding, earthquake, bushfire and other natural occurrences.
2 Peopling Australia	Aboriginal cultures and interactions with other cultures	Aboriginal Culture and Dispossession	Activities associated with maintaining, developing, experiencing and remembering Aboriginal cultural identities and practices, past and present; with demonstrating distinctive ways of life; and with interactions demonstrating race relations.	Place name, camp site, midden, fish trap, trade route, massacre site, shipwreck contact site, missions and institutions, whaling station, pastoral workers camp, timber mill settlement, removed children's home, town reserve, protest site, places relating to self-determination, keeping place, resistance & protest sites, places of segregation, places of indentured labour, places of reconciliation.
2 Peopling Australia	Ethnic influences	Surveys and Settlement Suburbs and Cultural Landscapes	Activities associated with common cultural traditions and peoples of shared descent, and with exchanges between such traditions and peoples.	Blessing-of-the-fleet site, ethnic community hall, Chinese store, place or object that exhibits an identifiable ethnic background, marriage register, olive grove, date palm plantation, citizenship ceremony site, POW camp, register of ship crews, folk festival site, ethnic quarter in a town.

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Northern Beaches	Notes	Examples
2 Peopling Australia	Migration	Isolation and Transport	Activities and processes associated with the resettling of people from one place to another (international, interstate, intrastate) and the impacts of such movements.	Migrant hostel, customs hall, border crossing, immigration papers, bus depot, emigrant shipwreck, Aboriginal mission, quarantine station, works based on migrant labour, detention centre.
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce	Leisure and Tourism New Suburbs and Cultural Landscapes	Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services.	Bank, shop, inn, stock exchange, market place, mall, coin collection, consumer wares, bond store, customs house, trade routes, mint, Aboriginal trading places, Aboriginal ration/blanket distribution points, Aboriginal tourism ventures.
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Environment – cultural landscape	Leisure and Tourism New Suburbs and Cultural Landscapes	Activities associated with the interactions between humans, human societies and the shaping of their physical surroundings.	A landscape type, bushfire fighting equipment, soil conservation structures, national park, nature reserve, market garden, land clearing tools, evidence of Aboriginal land management, avenue of trees, surf beach, fishing spot, plantation, place important in arguments for nature or cultural heritage conservation.
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Events	Aboriginal Culture and Dispossession New Suburbs and Cultural Landscapes	Activities and processes that mark the consequences of natural and cultural occurrences.	Monument, photographs, flood marks, memorial, ceremonial costume, honour board, blazed tree, obelisk, camp site, boundary, legislation, place of pilgrimage, places of protest, demonstration, congregation, celebration.

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Northern Beaches	Notes	Examples
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Fishing	Aboriginal Culture and Dispossession Surveys and Settlement	Activities associated with gathering, producing, distributing, and consuming resources from aquatic environments useful to humans.	Fishing boat, whaling station, marine reserve, fisher camp, seafood factory, fish shop, oyster lease, artificial reef, fishing boat wreck, mooring, dock, marina, wharf, fish farm, fish trap.
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Forestry	Surveys and Settlement	Activities associated with identifying and managing land covered in trees for commercial timber purposes.	Forested area, forest reserve, timber plantation, forestry equipment, saw mill, mill settlement, arboretum, charcoal kiln, coppiced trees, forest regrowth, timber tracks, whim.
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Transport	Isolation and Transport Surveys and Settlement Land Speculation, Creation of Towns and Suburbs	Activities associated with the moving of people and goods from one place to another, and systems for the provision of such movements.	Railway station, highway, lane, train, ferry, wharf, tickets, carriage, dray, stock route, canal, bridge, footpath, aerodrome, barge, harbour, lighthouse, shipwreck, canal, radar station, toll gate, horse yard, coach stop.
4 Building settlements, towns and cities	Towns, suburbs and villages	Land Speculation, Creation of Towns and Suburbs New Suburbs and Cultural Landscapes	Activities associated with creating, planning and managing urban functions, landscapes and lifestyles in towns, suburbs and villages.	Town plan, streetscape, village reserve, concentrations of urban functions, civic centre, subdivision pattern, abandoned town site, urban square, fire hydrant, market place, abandoned wharf, relocated civic centre, boundary feature.

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Northern Beaches	Notes	Examples
4 Building settlements, towns and cities	Accommodation	Land Speculation, Creation of Towns and Suburbs New Suburbs and Cultural Landscapes	Activities associated with the provision of accommodation, and particular types of accommodation – does not include architectural styles – use the theme of Creative Endeavour for such activities.	Terrace, apartment, semi-detached house, holiday house, hostel, bungalow, mansion, shack, house boat, caravan, cave, humpy, migrant hostel, homestead, cottage, house site (archaeological).
5 Working	Labour	Leisure and Tourism New Suburbs and Cultural Landscapes	Activities associated with work practices and organised and unorganised labour.	Trade union office, Bundy clock, time-and-motion study (document), union banner, union membership card, strike site, staff change rooms, servants quarters, shearing shed, green ban site, brothel, kitchen, nurses station, hotel with an occupational patronage.
6 Educating	Education	Land Speculation, Creation of Towns and Suburbs	Activities associated with teaching and learning by children and adults, formally and informally.	School, kindergarten, university campus, mechanics institute, playground, hall of residence, text book, teachers college, sail training boat wreck, sports field, seminary, field studies centre, library, physical evidence of academic achievement (e.g. a medal or certificate).
7 Governing	Defence	New Suburbs and Cultural Landscapes	Activities associated with defending places from hostile takeover and occupation.	Battle ground, fortification, RAAF base, barracks, uniforms, military maps and documents, war memorials, shipwreck lost to mines, scuttled naval vessel, POW camp, bomb practice ground, parade ground, massacre site, air raid shelter, drill hall.

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Northern Beaches	Notes	Examples
7 Governing	Government and administration	New Suburbs and Cultural Landscapes	Activities associated with the governance of local areas, regions, the State and the nation, and the administration of public programs – includes both principled and corrupt activities.	Municipal chamber, County Council offices, departmental office, legislative document, symbols of the Crown, State and municipal flags, ballot box, mayoral regalia, places acquired/disposed of by the state, customs boat, pilot boat, site of key event (eg federation, royal visit), protest site, physical evidence of corrupt practices.
8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Creative endeavour	New Suburbs and Cultural Landscapes	Activities associated with the production and performance of literary, artistic, architectural and other imaginative, interpretive or inventive works; and/or associated with the production and expression of cultural phenomena; and/or environments that have inspired such creative activities.	Opera house, theatre costume, film studio, writer's studio, parade tableau, manuscripts, sound recording, cinema, exemplar of an architectural style, work of art, craftwork, and/or public garden, bandstand, concert hall, rock art site, rotunda, library, public hall; and/or a particular place to which there has been a particular creative, stylistic or design response.

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Northern Beaches	Notes	Examples
8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Leisure	Leisure and Tourism	Activities associated with recreation and relaxation.	Resort, ski lodge, chalet, cruise ship, passenger rail carriage, swimming pool, dance hall, hotel, caravan park, tourist brochures, park, beach, clubhouse, lookout, common, bush walking track, Aboriginal Christmas camp site, fishing spot, picnic place, swimming hole.
8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Religion	New Suburbs and Cultural Landscapes	Activities associated with particular systems of faith and worship.	Church, monastery, convent, rectory, presbytery, manse, parsonage, hall, chapter house, graveyard, monument, church organ, synagogue, temple, mosque, madrassa, carved tree, burial ground.
9 Marking the phases of life	Persons	Leisure and Tourism	Activities of, and associations with, identifiable individuals, families and communal groups.	A monument to an individual, a family home, a dynastic estate, private chapel, a birthplace, a place of residence, a gendered site, statue, commemorative place name, place dedicated to memory of a person (e.g. hospital wing).

Appendix D: Select Bibliography

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