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Hornsby Thematic History



HORNSBY
SHIRE COUNCIL



Hornsby Thematic History

Report prepared for Hornsby Shire Council

September 2021

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Acknowledgement of Country

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Report Register

The following report register documents the development and issue of the report entitled Hornsby Thematic History—Thematic Framework, undertaken by GML Heritage Pty Ltd in accordance with its quality management system.

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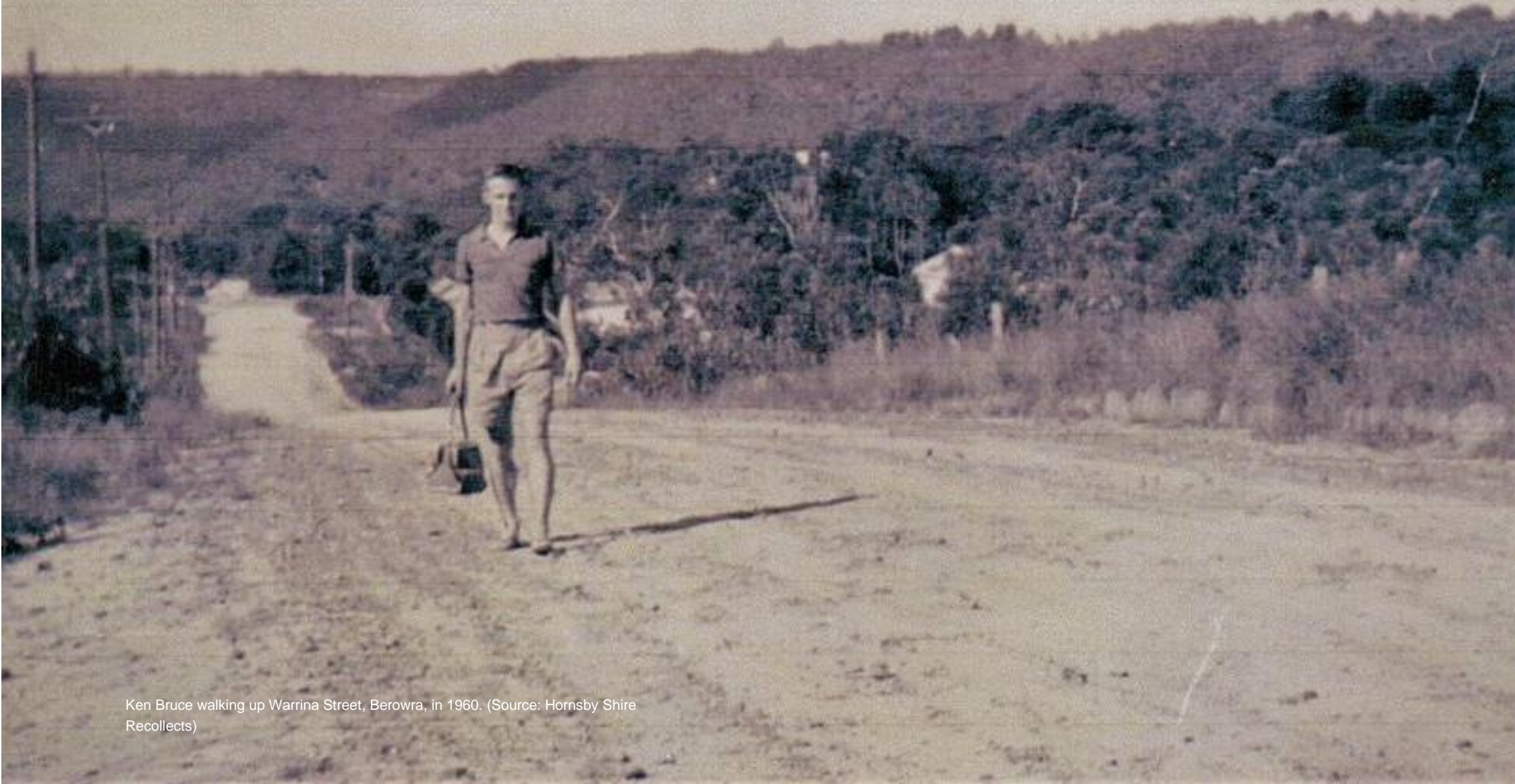
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Introduction



Ken Bruce walking up Warrina Street, Berowra, in 1960. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Introduction

Hornsby Shire Council commissioned GML Heritage Pty Ltd (GML) in October 2020 to update the Hornsby Thematic History. The new history replaces the original 1993 report.

As part of the project brief, consultation with the community was required to inform the development of the local historical themes and to identify relevant research materials.

This document provides an overarching thematic framework for Hornsby's Thematic History. It focuses on the local historical themes accompanied by a concise description and rationale for why they have been selected.

What is a Thematic History?

A thematic history provides broad historical context for understanding the patterns and forces that shaped an area over time. In NSW there are 36 State Themes. This history identifies locally distinctive themes to structure Hornsby's historical narrative. A theme can unite a variety of actions, events, functions, people and dates. It helps to prevent overemphasis on a particular type of item, period or event of history.

The thematic history is **not** intended to be a detailed account of all aspects of the history of an area, nor to replace local histories that provide historical accounts focused on specific subjects or that serve other purposes.

The history aims to help readers understand and appreciate why an area like the Hornsby Shire has developed into its current form. It identifies and explains a selection of locally distinctive themes that help us understand the area and its historic physical fabric.

What are the Objectives of the Thematic History?

Hornsby Shire Council has defined the objectives of the project as:

1. To prepare a new thematic history to reflect the course and pattern of Aboriginal occupation, land use and the development of Hornsby Shire as it exists today.
2. To specifically include Aboriginal occupation, history and heritage, landscape heritage, the impact of postwar and modern (post-1960) development and all other relevant aspects of environmental heritage.
3. To examine, identify and characterise what is unique about Hornsby Shire in a thematic context.
4. To create specific local themes relevant to contemporary communities that have regard to the 36 NSW State Themes.
5. To explain the major factors that have influenced the history and heritage of Hornsby Shire and shaped its distinctive character in an engaging, contemporary, and usable format.
6. To provide a thematic history that can ensure the historical development and unique character of Hornsby can be reflected in Council's subsequent studies to be completed under the Comprehensive Heritage Study program timeline and Action Plan 2019.

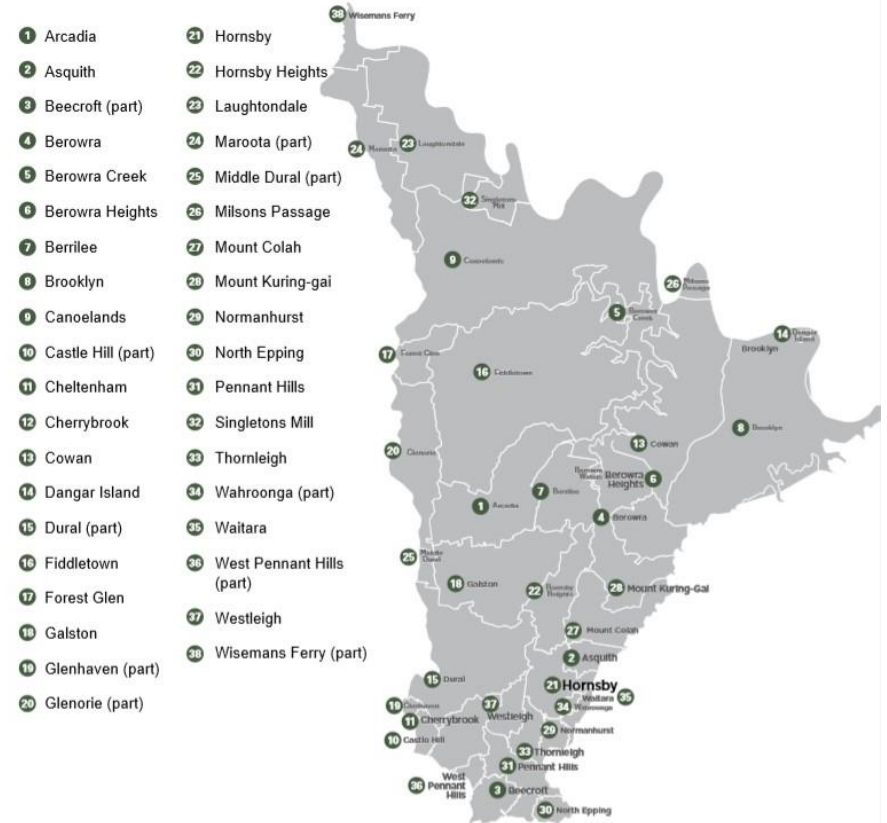
What is Unique about the Hornsby Shire Council Area?

The Thematic History is partly guided by the 36 NSW State Themes as defined by Heritage NSW. However, as noted by Heritage NSW, 'Not all themes are relevant throughout the state ... [and] local themes will not necessarily fit neatly into the state thematic framework.'

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The purpose of the Thematic History is to identify those key themes that capture the unique aspects of Hornsby Shire and its development through time.

While many local government areas can lay claim to themes such as convicts, agriculture, and pastoralism, this history aims to ask: what are the unique and distinguishing factors that shaped the Hornsby Shire?



Hornsby Shire Council boundaries and suburbs. (Source: Hornsby Shire Council Annual Report 2019–20)

Previous Thematic History

In 1993 Terry Kass completed a Thematic History for Hornsby Shire Council in conjunction with Perumal Murphy Wu as the basis for a Heritage Study of the Shire. Kass's readable and well-researched history identified the following themes which have helped form the basis of this 2021 updated Thematic History:

- The Natural Landscape – Topography and Vegetation;
- Early Settlement;
- Horticulture and Country Estates;
- Transport – The Advance of the City;
- Developing the Upland Suburbs 1886–1906;
- Manufacturing and Workers;
- Suburbanisation 1906 to Date; and
- Environmental Awareness.

Community Consultation

In preparing this thematic history GML has consulted local studies and specific heritage committee meetings online, via emails and in person (Hornsby Heritage Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee and Hornsby Heritage Advisory Committee) and responded to feedback following public exhibition. [See Appendix 1 for the Community Consultation Register.]

Some of the key themes that were of importance to community were:

- **Aboriginal history and heritage**—Strong community support for the inclusion of Aboriginal history, heritage and dual naming in language

was demonstrated. Including Aboriginal history as a distinct theme but also weaving it through the other proposed themes was supported.

- **Convict Life**- During public exhibition it became apparent one of the core themes to the heritage and identity of the Hornsby Shire was its connection to convicts; both the landscape they worked in and the individuals who rose to prominence from their success living here.
- **The Bushland Shire**—One of the most unique things about Hornsby is its role as the 'lungs of Sydney.' The Shire takes in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and Berowra Valley National Park. Residents are proud of the history of environmental conservation that has resulted in large areas of bushland being reserved and protected.
- **Transport**—For many the attraction to Hornsby area throughout its history has been the balance of seclusion with proximity to the city. As a 'gateway to the North' the history of transportation is a vital part of the Shire's development, from bridges over the Hawkesbury River, the convict-built Great North Road (Old Northern Road), rail and recent M1 and M2 highways.
- **Health and Wellbeing**—Hornsby's green environs, fresh air and elevated topography have long seen people seek health, wellness and respite in the area. As a result, an important history of health institutions and places of welfare have developed to care for those in need.

Research

GML has undertaken an extensive review of key research collections and resources including a literature review of books, reports, studies and select vertical files from the Hornsby Library Local Studies Collection. This included an inspection of all published secondary sources listed in the 1993 Thematic History, books published since 1993, and an extensive desktop survey including:

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- Trove (National Library of Australia);
- NSW Land Registry Services, Historic Land Records Viewer;
- Museum of Australia;
- State Library of NSW;
- State Records & Archives;
- NSW Spatial Portal;
- NSW Heritage Office Library;
- Royal Australian Historical Society online databases;
- Australian Bureau of Statistics archived reports; and
- Ancestry.com.au (directories and census collections).

GML has identified some further themes for inclusion based on an initial literature review. These themes were developed in consultation with the Hornsby Heritage Advisory Committee and the Hornsby Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee.

Aboriginal Country

- Deep time occupation.
- Traditional land management practices.
- Important places and connections: Dyarubbin (Hawkesbury River), Dowlaba (part of Wianamatta), Werriling, Sackville.
- Colonisation and resistance.
- Continuing on Country: language, culture and contemporary identity.

Convict Life

- Convicts at Government Farm Castle Hill.
 - Subdivision of Government Farm, grants to emancipated convicts.
 - Convict road, iron and bridge gangs form Great North Road to Wisemans Ferry and New Line Road; Solomon Wiseman's involvement.
-

-
- Pennant Hills Timbergetting Establishment, bullocks stationed at Pennant Hills.
 - Former convict farmers take up grants in the Shire; descendants continue to live in the area.
-

The Bushland Shire

- Environmental preservation/conservation: how residents relate to the environment, and its susceptibility to bushfire.
 - Volunteer bushfire brigades.
 - Muogamarra Nature Reserve grant to JD Tipper to assist in the conservation of native bird, animal and plant life.
 - Berowra Valley National Park and Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park.
 - The Hawkesbury River and waterways.
 - Koala Park Sanctuary and the Kangaroo Protection Co-operative Wildlife Orphanage Sanctuary at Dural.
 - Cumberland State Forest, West Pennant Hills (adjoins the Shire).
-

Transport

- Exploration, settlement and travel on the Hawkesbury River and tributaries.
 - Convict construction of the Great North Road (Old Northern Road).
 - Building of 1848 Peats Ferry Road and advancing settlement.
 - Construction of Main Northern Railway Line, bridging the Hawkesbury River (Brooklyn Bridge), providing for improved communication and means of travel from Sydney to Newcastle, towns springing up along the railway line for transporting people and goods and greater urbanisation.
 - Construction of North Shore line, commuter travel to the city via North Sydney.
 - Gateway to the north: Pacific Highway, M1 and M2 motorways.
 - Secondary crossings such as Galston Gorge and Berowra Waters ferry.
 - The advent of widespread car ownership and use.
-

Agriculture and Horticulture

- Aboriginal yam agriculture, aquaculture and fishing.
 - Early farms established following the timber getters.
 - Early European land grants, widespread land clearing, subsistence farming.
 - Wheat and maize grown in the district.
 - Proliferation of orchards, sending goods to Sydney market and the importance of Pennant Hills Railway Station as a central goods depot.
-

-
- Poultry farms.
 - Plant nurseries.
 - Hobby farms.
-

Industrial Enterprises

- Timber getters, especially Pennant Hills Timbergetting Establishment.
 - Industry centred at Thornleigh, including Fowlers Pottery, National Brickworks, Maltworks, Australian School of Cement Arts and railway siding/zigzag line.
 - Quarrying, including Hornsby Quarries Ltd (Old Mans Valley), sandstone quarries at Thornleigh and Dural, sandmining at Maroota.
 - Hawkesbury River industries, namely woolwash at the junction of Hornsby and Asquith creeks and Singletons Mill.
 - Importance of the railway line to industry at Thornleigh, Beecroft and Pennant Hills siding for fruit transport to Sydney markets.
 - Oyster farming, oyster middens for lime, commercial fishing, and boatbuilding on the Hawkesbury River including at Brooklyn and Berowra Creek.
 - Retail Industry, especially at Hornsby
-

Belief and Faith

- Aboriginal creation stories—Gungahy.
 - Church of England (Wahroonga), Roman Catholicism (Loreto Normanhurst).
 - Wesleyan Methodism (Hawkesbury River).
 - Cemeteries in rural and remote areas ie Bar Island, Brooklyn, Wisemans Ferry.
 - Contemporary faith: Pentecostalism, Hinduism, secularism.
-

Leisure and Recreation

- Life on the river: weekends, fishing and boating.
 - Bushwalking and walking trails.
 - Camps such as Vision Valley, Arcadia.
 - Tourist roads to the Hawkesbury River and road trips through the Shire.
 - Picnicking grounds such as Crosslands.
-

Health and Wellness

- Recuperative power of Hornsby Plateau's fresh cool air and elevation.
 - Hornsby Hospital.
 - Adventist Church establishes Sydney Sanitorium (The San).
-

-
- Private hospital such as Malahide (Pennant Hills).
 - Our Lady of Mercy Home and Waitara Foundling Home.
 - Nurses, community organisations and welfare societies such as the Red Cross (after World War I), Nurse Starkey, St Johns Ambulance & First Aid ran classes and welfare programs.
 - Mental and psychiatric health facilities, Chelmsford Private Hospital, Milson and Peat Islands on Hawkesbury River.
-

Settlement and Suburbanisation

- Suburban migration from the city in search of fresh air and good health.
 - Home typologies, including interwar/postwar housing.
 - Orchards transformed and subdivided (at Pennant Hills, Beecroft, Cheltenham, and Wahroonga).
 - Current development trends: medium to high density.
-

Changing Face of the Shire

- Growing population, increasing densification.
 - Ageing population, transitioning generations.
 - Educational attainment, professional employment.
 - Entrepreneurship for small and home-based businesses.
 - Property ownership and investment growth.
 - Stable workforce, lower unemployment.
 - Mobile lifestyle enabled though public transport and cars.
 - A home for families and the next generations.
 - A place of cultural and language diversity.
 - The lifestyle shire.
-

Aboriginal Country

A photograph of two women standing in a rock shelter, looking at ancient Aboriginal rock art. The woman on the left has long, wavy brown hair and is wearing a purple long-sleeved top. The woman on the right has dark hair pulled back, is wearing a black t-shirt and a long, patterned blue and white skirt, and is touching a handprint on the rock wall. The rock wall is covered in numerous handprints and other markings in various colors, including red, white, and ochre. The scene is lit with soft, natural light, highlighting the textures of the rock and the clothing.

Darug women Jasmine Seymour and Rhiannon Wright visit a painted rock shelter.
(Source: Joy Lai, *The Conversation*)

Aboriginal Country

The ancient Hornsby Shire landscape is connected to one of the world's oldest continuous living cultures. Aboriginal people have lived close to Dyarubbin or the Hawkesbury River for at least 50,000 years, and their ancestors have occupied Country before the last Ice Age. This landscape and the culture of its first peoples can be read not only through the archaeological evidence—including middens, stone tools, grinding grooves and rock art on the prevalent Hawkesbury Sandstone—but also the traditions of song, ceremony and language that knitted together a deep understanding of the land and how to care for it.

The harvest of land and water sustained lifeways, especially the yam culture along riverbeds. The Darug word *dyirraban* for yam is synonymous with the Hawkesbury River.¹ This is a landscape of everyday and special places and practices, connected through pathways, camp sites, shelters, tool making, seasonal foods, ceremony and belief. Used by people for physical and spiritual nourishment according to traditions and responsibilities over millennia, the river, creeks and waterways were artfully fished (Berowra and Cowan creeks) and navigated aboard *nawi* or canoes. Later these were crucial places of refuge and survival during and following colonisation as Aboriginal people used their knowledge and sophistication to adapt and survive.

Now known as the Hawkesbury and Nepean Wars, a series of bloody conflicts took place from 1794 triggered by the theft of Country along the river and the ever-increasing number of settlers arriving. As Grace Karskens notes:

although good relations and mutual assistance were common between settlers and Aboriginal people, violence also almost always flared as a result of dispossession, the loss of food sources, the taking of Aboriginal women and children, assaults and shootings.²

Conflict escalated further in the Hawkesbury region in 1803. In that year, a petition signed by settlers at Portland Head was forwarded to Governor King, requesting that settlers be allowed to shoot Aboriginal people found on their farms. This document turned out to be a forgery, and the forger was gaoled for several days.³ Despite the fact that the letter was a forgery, disquiet in the area bothered Governor King, who in 1804 interviewed 'three of the natives from that part of the river' (Portland Head) about conflict with the settlers. They stated 'that they did not like to be driven from the few places that were left on the banks of the river, where they alone could procure food'.⁴ As Aboriginal people were increasingly deprived of access to Country, they were allegedly found wearing stolen settlers' clothes, and there was reported to be evidence that they had stolen corn.



Marramarra Creek, 2006. (Source: Environmental Branch, Hornsby Shire Council, Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Sporadic attacks and raids on settler farms continued throughout the next decade. In 1816, after several years of intensive development in the Hawkesbury area in conjunction with drought and renewed conflict (including major attacks at South Creek), Governor Macquarie ordered three punitive expeditions against Aboriginal people. He instructed that the bodies of those slain be hung up in the trees 'in order to strike the greater terror into the survivors'. Women and children were not excluded—any who were killed were to be buried 'where they fell'.⁵ Raids on farms discontinued along the Hawkesbury River, possibly as a result of the Appin massacre. In April 1817 Governor Macquarie advised the government in London that 'all Hostility on both Sides has long since Ceased'.⁶

In 1883, a Board for the Protection of Aborigines was established by the State Premier and the Colonial Secretary to manage Aboriginal affairs.⁷ This signalled the beginning of successive waves of intervention into Aboriginal lives. Paternalism, control, segregation and assimilation increasingly characterised government policies towards Aboriginal people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The NSW Aborigines Protection (later Welfare) Board created several reserves across the state in the following decade. In 1889, two Aboriginal reserves were proclaimed on the Hawkesbury River on Cumberland Reach (150 acres) and Kent Reach (50 acres).

Theft of and alienation from Country, restricted access to resources, disease, violence and marginalisation had severe and long-lasting impacts on the Aboriginal people of the region. Oral histories preserve memories of this dispossession, while documentary sources provide detailed accounts of the encroachment on Aboriginal Country and early cross-cultural encounters largely from a colonial perspective. These encounters were complex and varied, at times based on economic and social interactions as well as personal friendships. They often took place against the violent backdrop of the frontier. One of the earliest recorded examples of this type of encounter in the area can be seen in the history of Tedbury. Son of the warrior Pemulwuy, he was on amicable terms with John Macarthur, who allowed him to frequent

Elizabeth Farm.⁸ However, Tedbury also waged a war of resistance. He was captured by colonists during a raid in the forests of Pennant Hills and forced to reveal caches of stolen goods and weapons hidden in the North Rocks area.⁹ Tedbury was shot dead by Edward Lutterell in 1811.

As settlement spread and land was cleared, fenced and 'improved', Aboriginal people used their intricate cultural knowledge of land to adapt and survive, moving around Country. Aboriginal people worked within the colonial economy as domestic staff, labourers, fishermen or gardeners for settlers, and were often employed in seasonal labour.

Explorer George Caley relied on the friendship of young Aboriginal man Daniel Moowattin as his guide, translator and travelling companion. Together they identified and documented dozens of plant and animal specimens, including several species of eucalypts, such as Calang'ora (Sydney blue gum), Tarunde'a (blackbutt) and Nandan'gora (rough-barked apple). Their earliest journey together was recorded in 1805 when they travelled to present-day Wahroonga and then down to the coast near Brookvale and back. Caley praised Moowattin's talents and loyalty, writing to Banks in 1808:

*I can place that confidence in him which I cannot in any other – all except him are afraid to go beyond the limits of the space which they inhabit with me (or indeed with any other) and I know this one would stand by me until I fell, if attacked by any strangers. His name is Moowattin.*¹⁰

Moowattin travelled to England with Caley. On his return he found work as a labourer on William Bellamy's farm around present-day Aiken Road, West Pennant Hills. In 1816, it was alleged that Moowattin raped a white woman at Parramatta. He became the first Aboriginal man to be tried in a British court, and was found guilty and hanged that year.¹¹ The story of Moowattin and Caley typifies the complexity of connections between Aboriginal people and Europeans. While the written historical record was produced by non-Aboriginal people, loaded with their own perspectives or prejudices, these small glimpses highlight the familiarity and trust that developed in some cross-cultural relationships.¹²

Billy Faulkner worked independently selling oysters and fish at Dural during the 1860s and 1870s. Bidy, also known as Sarah Wallace (an Aboriginal woman connected to Bungaree's Aboriginal group at Broken Bay), settled with John Lewis at Marramarra Creek where John worked as a limeburner. Their descendants remain connected to the area.¹³ Much later, Aunty Edna Watson lived with her family in tents along the railway lines at Mount Colah where her father worked as a train driver. The threat of being taken from her family was vividly remembered as the Aboriginal Protection Board inspected her home for hygiene and cleanliness.¹⁴ Additional research into individual Aboriginal lives in the Hornsby Shire will show genealogical links among families, and relationships bound by institutions, labour and friendship.



Members of the Lewis family on their property on Marramarra Creek. (Source: Tom Richmond, 'Australian Aborigines Hornsby Shire', 'Granny Lewis and her descendants')

Some of the Aboriginal people living and working in the Hornsby Shire did so under conditions of indentured labour, revealing the legacy of colonialism within local and suburban histories and the workings of racial discrimination in

everyday domestic settings. Aboriginal activist and writer Margaret (Lilardia) Tucker was part of the Stolen Generations, taken from near Deniliquin, and sent to the Cootamundra Domestic Training Home for Aboriginal Girls. In 1919, at the age of 16, Tucker was placed as a servant in a home in Beecroft Road, Cheltenham. Later, in her autobiography *If Everyone Cared* (1977),¹⁵ she wrote of the abuse she experienced while at Cheltenham, including starvation, allocation of a hessian sugar bag singlet as clothing and being hosed down in the backyard. The pain of being part of the Stolen Generations stayed with Tucker, who said, 'I cannot forget the detail of that moment. It stands out as if it were yesterday. It broke our hearts — tearing us apart — by taking us away to learn domestic work.'¹⁶

In the past few years Darug (also spelt as Dharug) knowledge holders, artists and educators have worked with historians, linguists and archaeologists to map Aboriginal place names along the Hawkesbury. Place names are crucial to understanding Dreaming tracks reaching across Country. As Leanne Watson, Grace Karskens and their co-authors noted: 'Singular names can also embed the stories of important events and landmarks involving Ancestral Beings in places and memory.'¹⁷

**It makes me feel connected to our ancestors and Country to actually stand where they stood, to know that they were there and they are still there within us.¹⁸
Aunty Edna Watson, Darug Elder**

Despite the government intervention into Aboriginal lives and their relocation to reserves, families today remain connected to the Hornsby Shire, their ancestors bound to this Country, and the language and traditions revitalised and renewed through today's generations.



Made by Annie Markim/Annie Markham, a Dharug woman who lived at the Aboriginal Reserve at Sackville North. Made from local bullrushes for Mr and Mrs Tom Books (Tom Books and Ivy Johnson of Webbs Creek) as a wedding present in 1924. (Source: Hawkesbury Regional Museum)

Warretya, Warang, Warradé, Warrakia

[words for lagoon]

Dugga

[thick brush/rainforest Country]

Dorumbolooa

[the zone where the rainbow passes through]

Gunanday

[words for a rainbow, signalling sacred country]

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- 10 Parramatta Heritage Centre, 'Men of Parramatta – George Caley and Daniel Moowattin', viewed 31 August 2021 <<https://historyandheritage.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/research-topics/aboriginal/men-of-parramatta-george-caley-and-daniel-moowattin>>.
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- 17 Karskens, G, Seymour, J, Watson, L, Wilkins, E, Wright, R, 'Friday essay: how a long-lost list is helping us remap Darug place names and culture on Dyarubbin, the Hawkesbury River', *The Conversation*, 18 December 2020, viewed 12 January 2021 <<https://theconversation.com/friday-essay-how-a-long-lost-list-is-helping-us-remap-darug-place-names-and-culture-on-dyarubbin-the-hawkesbury-river-148004>>.
- 18 Aunty Edna Watson as quoted by Grace Karskens in Karskens, G 2020, *People of the River: Lost worlds of early Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, p 525.

Convict Life



'The Costume of the Australasians', 1817. (Source: Edward Charles Close, State Library NSW)

Convict Life

In January 1788 the First Fleet—made up of 11 British ships carrying just over 1000 people, including about 752 convicts—sailed into a sheltered harbour which was called Port Jackson. The ships anchored in a small cove on the south side of the harbour, which Governor Phillip named Sydney Cove. On these shores the British established a colony. Upon landing, the convicts were put to work clearing trees, setting up tents for shelter, and erecting rudimentary buildings to house the soldiers and officials, as well as stores and workshops to house supplies brought with them from Britain.

A great part of the Troops & Convicts were landed, & the latter was immediately sett to work clearing away the ground, ready for the encampment. The Place on which the settlement is to be made is at the head of a Cove at the head of which a small rivulet empties itself. The Shore on each side is bounded by rocks, within which there is a very fine soil & full of trees which will require some time & labour to clear away, the Marines & Convicts are to be encamped on the West side & the Governor, & staff with his guard & a small part of the convicts on the East side of the Rivulet. Philip Gidley King, 27 January 1788¹

Once the most immediate needs were met, exploration parties set out from Sydney Cove to locate fresh water and possible food, timber and building supplies, and land suited to growing crops to sustain life in the new colony. The British established a second settlement at Rose Hill, now present-day Parramatta, and the town was formally laid out in 1790. Throughout these early years the convict workforce was critical to the progress and development of the settlement of New South Wales.

Between 1788 and 1868 over 162,000 convicts were transported to Australia to serve out terms ranging from seven to 14 years for crimes committed in Britain and Ireland. Of that number approximately 80,440 were transported to New South Wales. Convicts came from varying backgrounds and had skills

across a multiplicity of trades. Collectively they had worked at thousands of different jobs across the spectrum of skilled and unskilled labour. Some even came from educated, professional backgrounds. There was a predominance of labourers, farm labourers and farm servants, ploughmen, grooms, shoemakers, tailors, butchers, cooks and housemaids.²

Governor Phillip established a system where convicts were allocated work according to their skills and the needs of the settlement. They worked hard six days a week from sunrise to sunset. Gangs of convicts were engaged in felling trees, making bricks, building walls, carving stone and constructing permanent buildings for the fledgling colony. At the government lumber yard, convicts turned logs into timber planks for buildings and made the doors, window frames, shutters and roof shingles. Other convicts cleared land, ploughed fields, harvested crops and worked in vegetable gardens or built fences on government or private farms. Major construction work undertaken by convict gangs intensified from 1810 to 1821 under Governor Macquarie when he embarked on an ambitious plan to rebuild Sydney town. Some convicts were employed, often at the end of a whip, on public construction projects such as road and bridge building.

One of the pillars of Macquarie's civil construction program was the Pennant Hills Timbergetting Establishment. It was relocated from Lane Cove to Pennant Hills in 1816 to log the rich timber resources of the Hornsby Plateau around the Pennant Hills area. Skilled convicts were employed at the establishment on a site near the intersection of present-day Hull Road and Pennant Hills Road. According to local historian Ralph Hawkins, convicts at the Pennant Hills establishment felled the trees and split the timber for slabs, posts, laths and shingles. Timber was also sawn for beams, floorboards and scantling, with the leftover material burnt for the blacksmiths in the lumber yard. There were also on-site basket makers who made standard sized baskets to carry the charcoal. Some convicts were employed as stockkeepers, looking after the bullocks, and others worked as bullockies driving the bullock jinkers and carts down to Parramatta River. The establishment had a full

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complement of service trades including a blacksmith, wheelwright, hutkeeper, sawpit clearer, tailor, shoemaker and barber. It also had its own chapel where divine service was performed by the convict school teacher, who taught the convicts to read and write in their own time after work.³

At its peak in 1820 there were up to 100 workers based at the Pennant Hills Timbergetting Establishment. A short distance away was a stockade where bullocks were penned. These bullocks transported the logs along Pennant Hills Road to the wharf on Parramatta River at Ermington. There were 105 bullocks at Pennant Hills in 1820. Commissioner Bigge reported in 1822:

*At Pennant Hills ... an establishment has been made for the purpose of supplying the different works at Sydney with sawn timber and shingles for roofing ... seventy-three men are employed at this station; and they are chiefly sawyers, shingle-splitters and basket-makers. They work under cover, and are lodged in cottages or barracks of different dimensions, which are simply but substantially constructed of wood; but the floors ought to have been elevated above the surface of the ground, instead of being depressed somewhat below it. Some of the cottages are boarded, but all are substantial, and provided with chimneys, built either of large logs and rough stone, with an iron bar and hooks laid across for culinary purposes. An overseer by the name of Kelly, who is now free by expiration of his term of service, superintends the establishment...*⁴

The establishment was enlarged in 1819 and relocated to the Field of Mars Common near the waterhole on Devlins Creek, closer to Epping. It closed in 1831.

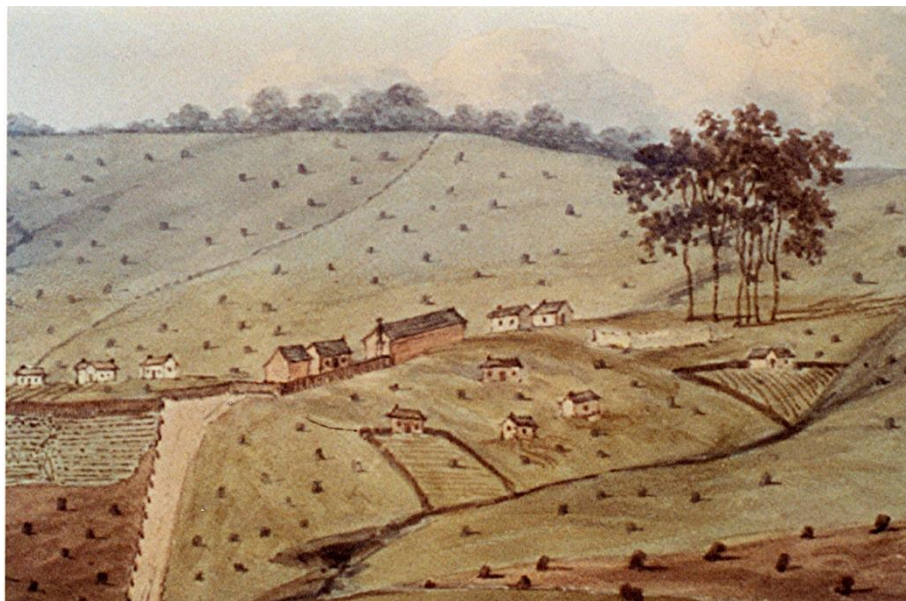
An even earlier government enterprise employing convict labour was the Government Farm Castle Hill, part of which extended into the southwest portion of the present Hornsby Shire. The farm was established in 1801 by Governor King with convicts and livestock transferred from the government farm at Toongabbie. King wrote to the Duke of Portland on 21 August 1801 informing him that he had found a 'situation to employ the convicts at public labor in cultivation', which was a site intended by Governor Phillip as a stock farm for the Government, 'the soil being of the best and most productive kind'.⁵



Example of a convict grinding wheel, which was used to sharpen and smooth hundreds of implements used in everyday work, including axes and saws, to fell trees, and scythes to clear scrub. (Source: Sydney Living Museums <https://hydeparkbarracks.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/period/control/>)

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The Castle Hill Reserve covered an area of 34,539 acres (13,977 hectares). Fifty convicts were immediately set to work clearing the ground and preparing it for livestock and crops. By October 1802 there were 300 convicts employed at the farm. A stone barracks was erected in 1803. By the end of 1804, 700 acres had been cleared, various stone buildings erected, and 16,000 bushels of wheat had been produced at the farm. Viscount Castlereagh gave final instructions to Governor Macquarie on 14 May 1809 before his departure to New South Wales. In his letter Castlereagh believed there was no longer a need to maintain a government farm and government cattle, stating 'the distribution of the convicts employed on the Government farms among the settlers may be more useful and conducive to productive industry'.⁶ In October 1811 Macquarie abolished the Government Farm Castle Hill, which had proved 'totally inadequate to its object, and very expensive to Government'. The convicts were assigned to private settlers.⁷



Government Farm Castle Hill, 1806, by JW Lewin. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Undoubtedly the most iconic and enduring symbol of Hornsby Shire's convict past is the Great North Road. It extends the length of the Shire's western boundary. It is also one of the most significant examples of major public infrastructure built by convict labour in New South Wales. Construction of the Great North Road commenced in May 1826 to connect Sydney to Newcastle, crossing the Hawkesbury River. William Dumaesq, the Inspector of Roads and Bridges, was tasked with the 'general superintendence of 22 road parties (convict iron gangs) and about 750 men distributed over a space of 250 to 300 miles',⁸ including the Great North Road project.

Construction commenced with two gangs totalling 67 convicts at Castle Hill North. *The Australian* reported on 20 September 1826 that 'a gang of prisoners ... who are not ... of the most orderly class or prisoners' were set to the back-breaking work with 'chains attached to one leg, of each man'.⁹ Between 1826 and 1830 up to 700 convicts worked in iron gangs, road parties (also called road gangs) or bridge parties. The first task was to clear the ground by felling trees, splitting, grubbing up and removing stumps to form a rough track. Rock cutting was required at various parts of the route to form the necessary gradient. Some sections of the road required excavations which were undertaken by convicts by hand using rock-picks, chisels and gads. Some of the larger cuttings such as the descent to Wisemans Ferry and Devine's Hill were blasted out with gunpowder. Substantial sandstone retaining walls and some bridges were also built at points along the Great North Road.

The Convict Trail follows the route of the Great North Road and is protected, preserved and promoted by The Convict Trail Project Inc, a volunteer based not for profit organisation which protects, preserves and promotes the Great North Road.¹⁰

At the same time, the 'New Line Road' was also constructed by convict road and iron gangs. This section of the Great North Road was marked out by Surveyor-General TL Mitchell in 1828. Some construction was undertaken between 1829 and 1831. Two gangs were reportedly stationed on the new

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road to Dural in 1830, including No. 34 Road Party and a Bridge Party. The 'New Road to Dural' (now Beecroft Road and New Line Road) was formed as a branch of the Great North Road between Abbotsford and Dural.¹¹

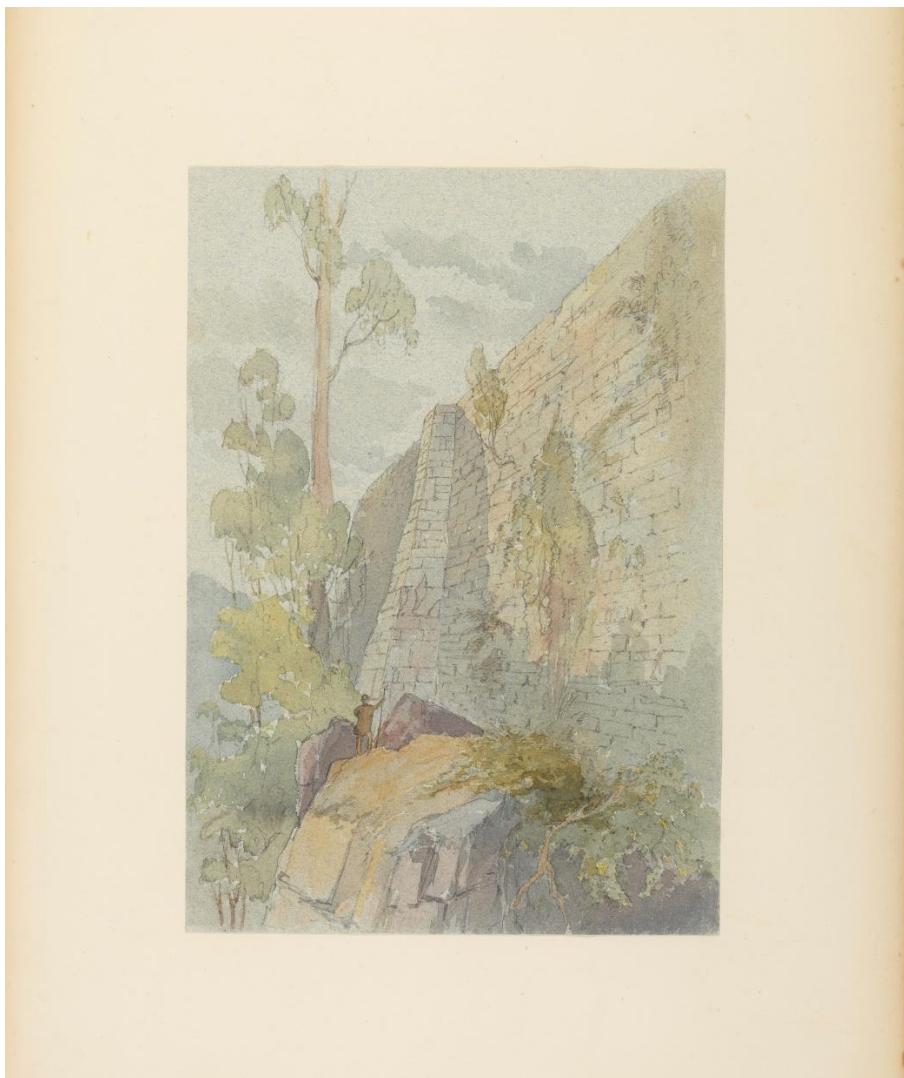
The length of the Great North Road was completed in 1832, including the descent into Wisemans Ferry, the Devine's Hill ascent and the section near the Mount Manning Group north of the Hawkesbury River. The road was in use well before its completion and some of the travellers mentioned gangs of convicts labouring along the route.

Of the treatment of convicts, following a trip along the partly formed road to Wisemans Ferry in January 1828, an unnamed correspondent wrote in *The Australian*:

*I enquired, on our return home, what ration the road gangs received, and was told by several of them, that each of them got 7lbs beef, 8 ¾ lbs of flour, and a small portion of sugar; they complained of the meat and flour being of bad quality. I would suggest to the Government, that if the gangs had a sufficient ration, it would prevent them from running away and committing robberies.*¹²



Undated stereographic photograph of an old convict camp, Wisemans Ferry. (Source: Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, 435167)



Revetment of the Great North Road south of Wisemans Ferry, Hawkesbury River, 1882. (Source: State Library of NSW, e08338_0016_m)

One of the central figures of the Great North Road construction project was Solomon Wiseman. A former convict, he was transported for life to New South Wales and arrived in August 1806 on the *Alexander* with his wife and two children. He received his ticket of leave in 1810 and was pardoned two years later. From 1811 he transported goods along the New South Wales coast using two vessels he had constructed. Wiseman and his family settled in 1816 on a 200-acre lease on the Hawkesbury River at Lower Portland Head (later renamed Wisemans Ferry). Here he built an inn in 1821. By 1828 Wiseman had amassed 1100 acres (450 hectares).

An astute man, Wiseman was aware the government planned to build a road between Sydney and the Hunter Valley. He convinced the authorities to route the road through his property. After construction commenced in 1826, Wiseman secured a contract to supply all provisions to the convict road gangs and the soldiers guarding them. The following year he was awarded the licence to operate the ferry to transport people, goods and stock across the Hawkesbury River.

Wiseman himself was assigned convict servants. The Colonial Secretary's Papers record that in 1825 he, his wife, six children and two servants were to be victualled for six months from the Government Stores at Sydney.¹³

Emancipated convicts such as Solomon Wiseman figure largely in the history of Hornsby Shire, dating back to the earliest years of the new British colony. Settlement followed the clearing of trees, with settlers taking up landholdings in the wake of the early explorers, surveyors and finally timbergetters. Former convicts took to life on the land, establishing farms where they grew crops and raised stock.



Portrait of Solomon Wiseman from between 1820 and 1838. (Source: State Library of NSW, a928080h)

One of the first land grants within the Shire was made in 1794 to emancipated convict David Kilpack. He received a 30-acre grant of land lying in the far southwestern corner of the Shire alongside Devlins Creek, bordering what became the Field of Mars.

On 26 February 1783 Kilpack had been tried at the Old Bailey, Middlesex, and found guilty of stealing some fowls. He was sentenced to transportation to the American colonies. However, the American transportees mutinied on route to America and returned to England. Kilpack was then sentenced to death, but this was commuted to transportation for life to New South Wales. He arrived in the colony on the *Scarborough*, a First Fleet vessel, in 1788. He received a conditional pardon in 1794 and it was in October that same year that he was granted 25 acres of land along present-day Pennant Hills Road.

Following the subdivision of the Government Farm Castle Hill, between 1818 and 1819 several land grants in the area now known as Cherrybrook were given to emancipated convicts. Very few of these grantees occupied their farms for very long. For instance James Hankinson, who had received a conditional pardon in September 1817, was granted 100 acres on the subdivision of the Government Farm Castle Hill in 1819 and purchased two adjoining allotments soon after. He named the property Hastings Farm. Yet the farm was sold the following year to satisfy the verdict of a legal case. The property was advertised for auction sale on 1 September 1820 as:

James Hankinson's valuable Farm of 200 Acres of Land (of which 100 Acres are cleared), with a capital Stock-yard and Premises erected at a very considerable Expence [sic], and possessing peculiar Advantages, situated at Castle Hill. 14

Another convict to receive land (50 acres) at the former Government Farm Castle Hill was Irishman Thomas Garraty, who by 1822 had erected fencing, a barn and a house. He had 28 head of cattle, five pigs, 10 bushels of wheat and 10 of maize in his barn. By November 1828 he had moved to Parramatta. Similarly, Irishman and former convict Francis Murphy was granted 50 acres

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adjoining Garraty's grant in 1818. He was assigned a convict in July 1822 and lived on the farm with his wife and three children. According to the 1822 Muster, Murphy had 30 acres cleared, 2 acres of wheat, 6 acres of maize, 1 acre of potatoes, 1 acre set aside for an orchard and garden, 12 bushels of maize, and two hogs on hand. He sold his farm soon after and moved away from the area.

Today, many residents of the Shire lay claim to convict ancestry. Some are the descendants of settlers who were given land in the area from as early as the 1790s.



Descendants of convicts gathered at a meeting of the Hornsby Shire Family History Group, 2017. (Source: <https://hornsbyshfgh.wordpress.com/tag/australian-royalty/>)

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- ¹ *The Journal of Philip Gidley King, Lieutenant, RN 1787-1790*, University of Sydney Library, viewed 1 September 2021 <<https://adc.library.usyd.edu.au/data-2/kinjour.pdf>>
 - ² Meredith, David and Deborah Oxley, 'The convict economy', in Simon Ville and Glenn Withers (eds.) 2015, *The Cambridge Economic History of Australia*, Cambridge University Press.
 - ³ Hawkins, Ralph 2019, 'The Convict Timbergetters of Pennant Hills – Classic Reprint', The Traditional Tools Group Inc, viewed 1 September 2021 <<https://tttg.org.au/php/DocView.php?DocId=152>>.

- ⁴ New South Wales. Report of the commissioner of inquiry into the state of the colony of New South Wales, 1822, p 26.
- ⁵ Bladen, F. M, Britton, Alexander and Cook, James, *Historical records of New South Wales*, Sydney: Government Printer, 1892, Trove, National Library of Australia, viewed. 2 September 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-359771272>>
- ⁶ Bladen, F. M, Britton, Alexander and Cook, James, *Historical records of New South Wales*, Sydney: Government Printer, 1892, Trove, National Library of Australia, viewed 2 September 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-374737890>>

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- ⁷ Bladen, F. M, Britton, Alexander and Cook, James, *Historical records of New South Wales*, Sydney: Government Printer, 1892, Trove, National Library of Australia, viewed 2 September 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-374737890>>
- ⁸ Karskens, Grace 2006, *The Grandest Improvement in the Country: An Historical and Archaeological Study of the Great North Road, NSW, 1825-1836*, p 52, University of Sydney Library, viewed 2 September 2021, ><https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/403?show=full>>.
- ⁹ No title, *The Australian*, 20 September 1826, p 3, Trove, National Library of Australia, viewed 2 September 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article37074053>>.
- ¹⁰ Convict Trail Project website, viewed 6 September 2021 <<https://www.convicttrail.com.au/>>
- ¹¹ Karskens, Grace 2006, *The Grandest Improvement in the Country: An Historical and Archaeological Study of the Great North Road, NSW, 1825-1836*, p 52, University of Sydney Library, viewed 2 September 2021, ><https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/403?show=full>>.
- ¹² 'A Trip to Wiseman's', *The Australian*, 18 January 1828, p 2, Trove, National Library of Australia, viewed 2 September 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article37071744>>.
- ¹³ Ancestry.com, *New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 2010.
- ¹⁴ 'Eagar v. Hankinson and another;', *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 26 August 1820, p 2, Trove, National Library of Australia, viewed 3 September 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article2179696>>.

The Bushland Shire



Old Mans Valley. (Source: Harrington Collection: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

The Bushland Shire

Hornsby Shire is known as the Bushland Shire. This nickname recognises the urban forests, national parks, bushland reserves and waterways that swathe much of the Shire, and are highly prized by residents and visitors. The Bushland Shire is also viewed as the ‘lungs’ for Sydney—a sanctuary on its northwestern edges away from the inner city.

Topography and soils helped dictate the location and pattern of settlement in the Shire. Transport routes traversed the tops of the ridges of the Hornsby Plateau. The major roads had already taken shape throughout the area in the early nineteenth century, generally following the ridge tops along paths likely trodden by Aboriginal people for time immemorial. The railway line came next in the 1890s, with Homebush to Waratah (Newcastle) trains closely following and overlapping the Peats Ferry Road (Pacific Highway).

The Shire is located on the Hornsby Plateau, which peaks at 281 metres above sea level at Cowan. The plateau is dissected by steep gullies and has a number of drowned valleys, such as those surrounding Berowra and Cowan creeks. Gorges, floodplains, estuaries, stepped hill slopes, cliffs and steep hills with narrow ridgetops and broad plateau tops—some now home to urban development—are other common landforms and landscapes within the Shire. It is bounded on the east by Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and on the west by the Berowra Valley Regional Park. These large areas of natural parkland form a green belt running from the south to the Hawkesbury River at the Shire’s northern end. The Marramarra National Park bounds the Hornsby Shore to the north.

The area is dominated by Hawkesbury Sandstone and underlain by Wianamatta Group Ashfield Shale formations. A central ridge runs on a north to south orientation and forms the ‘spine’ of the Shire. The ridge was later chosen as the route of Peats Ferry Road and the Homebush to Waratah (Newcastle) railway line. Settlement also developed along this ridgeline.



Cave on Berowra Creek, c1880–1934, by John Henry Harvey. (Source: State Library of Victoria, FL15975387)

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Hawkesbury Sandstone is exposed in many parts of the Shire, particularly in the deep river valleys such as Berowra Valley, Galston Gorge and the foreshore cliffs. Large, exposed rock shelves and platforms are also found throughout the Shire, particularly in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, Berowra Valley National and Regional Park and the Muogamarra Nature Reserve. Pigment art is found within rock shelters used for habitation. These sites are usually close to drinking water sources, and are often found deep within river channels and valleys in the Hawkesbury Sandstone plateau. These art sites are not scattered randomly across the landscape, but are rather part of a 'web' of art, occupation and ceremonial sites and are integral to Aboriginal cultural landscapes embedded within the Shire.¹

In 1829, surveyor William Romaine Govett travelled overland along the ridge separating Cowan Creek from Berowra Creek and likened the landscape he encountered to a fortress, writing:

The ridge, which the blacks [sic] call "Carracyanya" is the whole way covered with an intolerable scrub, and is bedded with the common sandstone and iron-stone. It runs much upon a level until you draw nigh to the river, where it rises to exceeding high rocky points and is joined by very low connections.

Some of these ridges exhibit an endless variety of rugged forms and in some instances they appear like castellated ruins of a fortress, with its dilapidated walls and shattered battlements—perpendicular in some places—sloping others—receding into eaves overhung by huge and massive canopies which, may be taken for the workmanship of man.

These caves or hollows are called by the natives [sic], "Gibba Gunyas" or houses of rick, under which they may occasionally pass a night, but there are found generally damp.²

The Shire is geologically diverse. Around the Hawkesbury River and other riparian areas, Narrabeen shales and alluvial flats occur.³ Sand deposits are found at Maroota, and at least 10 volcanic diatremes have been identified around the Shire, including at Hornsby and Westleigh.

Peats Crater, at the Muogamarra Nature Reserve, is one such diatrema. Another passes through the Hornsby Quarry site in Old Mans Valley west of Hornsby Station. The Hornsby diatrema is approximately 200 million years old and the largest of about 95 diatremes in the Sydney area. The blue metal, dolerite and breccia at the base of Old Mans Valley was quarried for road-making from the early 1900s to 2002. The Higgins family settled in the valley in the 1820s, cutting down trees for timber, and planting orchards and market gardens in the rich volcanic soil of the diatrema.

Bushland makes up more than 69 per cent of the Shire's 51,000-hectare area. The close proximity of the Shire's residential population to extensive areas of high-quality bushland is what sets the Shire apart in the Sydney region. From Beecroft to Hornsby and farther north to the Hawkesbury River, locals and visitors alike can alight from a train and soon be immersed in the bush. There are a plethora of walking trails and bushland reserves readily accessible from all parts of the Shire.

One regional park (Berowra Valley) and several large national parks (Berowra Valley, Ku-ring-gai Chase and Marramarra) account for a significant area of bushland, featuring vegetation growing on infertile soils and deeply dissected sandstone terrain. Hornsby Shire Council manages 276 natural areas totalling approximately 5950 hectares of bushland and reserves including natural wetlands. The Council also jointly manages the 3830-hectare Berowra Valley Regional Park with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. More than 1000 plant species, 340 vertebrate animals and 30 ecological communities today call the Shire home.

Thirty-four native vegetation communities have been identified in the Hornsby Shire, 28 of which are considered significant at national, state or regional/local level. Turpentine-Ironbark Forest, Blue Gum Shale Forest and Blue Gum Diatrema Forest are especially significant as rare and critically endangered vegetation communities. The Wianamatta Shale landscapes, combined with high rainfall, originally supported Blue Gum High Forest. These forests

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supported a wide range of fauna of various species, such as frogs, birds, insects and mammals including kangaroos and wallabies. In turn, the wildlife provided a rich resource that Aboriginal people hunted and consumed. Animal skin, fur and teeth were repurposed in textiles and clothing (eg possum-skin and bark cloaks, animal-bone needles, bedding), and in decoration (teeth, bone, wood, feather and flowers were all used as body ornaments).⁴

Eucalypts, scribbly gum, red bloodwood, snappy gum and brown stringybark are characteristic trees and bushes which grow in the sandy, infertile soils on Hawkesbury Sandstone. Dense canopy trees including blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*), smooth barked apple (*Angophora costata*) and Sydney blue gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*) flourish in the wetter shales and more fertile soils of the Wianamatta Shale or diatremes (volcanic necks), or enriched soils on Hawkesbury Sandstone, along with mountain ash and Sydney peppermint. The Hawkesbury River and its major tributaries are associated with intertidal and floodplain communities and steep slopes adjacent. The forests were important places to Aboriginal people for both cultural and practical reasons. Wood and bark were used in a variety of ways, for fishing and hunting (eg canoes, shields, nets, fishing lines, baskets, bowls, animal-teeth barbs, axe hafts, spear-throwers, hunting spears, clubs, twine, and paddles).⁵ Trees scarred where bark was removed for the production of canoes and shields are recorded throughout the Hawkesbury, and more have the potential to be recorded where there are old-growth trees, such as Sydney peppermint (*Eucalyptus piperita*), and ironbark (*Eucalyptus paniculata*).

The principal high native forests grew around Epping, Beecroft, Cheltenham, Pennant Hills, Normanhurst, Dural and parts of Hornsby and Galston. Teams of convict woodcutters travelled north from the Pennant Hills Sawing Establishment seeking out blue gum, blackbutt, forest oak and cedar to supply timber for the colony such as the roofing of the Hyde Park Barracks. The deforested land was later developed for orchards and horticulture. Stands of remnant and critically endangered Blue Gum High Forest remain today in isolated pockets of the locality; however, Ralph Hawkins argued in his book

The Convict Timbergetters of Pennant Hills that many trees in the Epping to Pennant Hills area are second-growth trees.

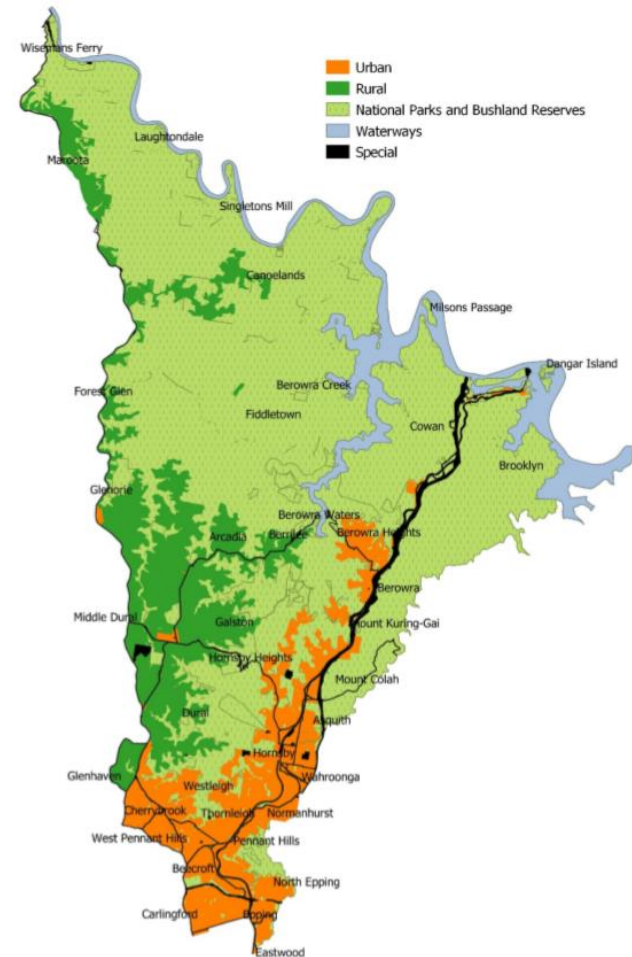


Figure 3: Boundaries between urban, rural and national park/bushland reserve for Hornsby Shire

The Shire also adjoins the home of Australia's only metropolitan state forest, Cumberland State Forest. The area now covered by the Cumberland State

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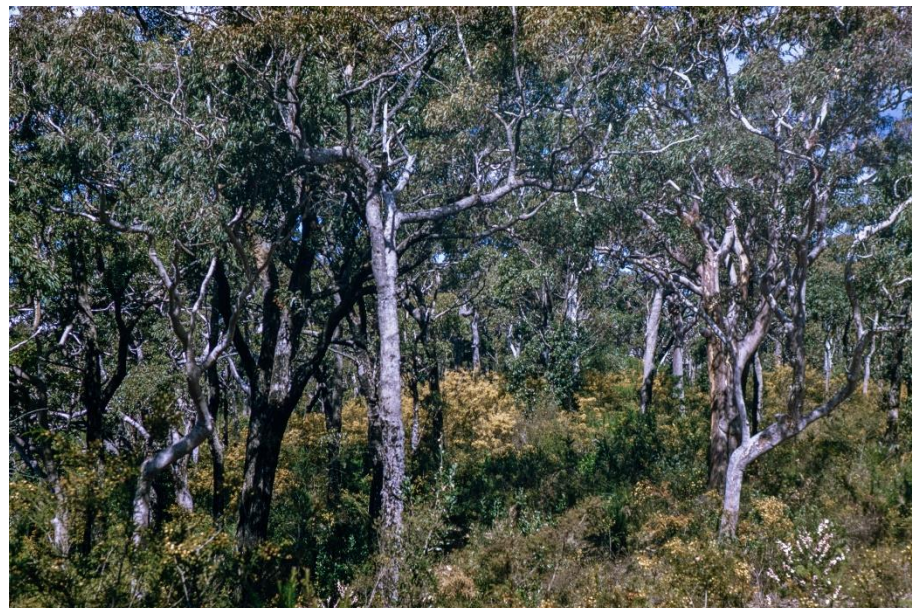
Forest adjoining Castle Hill Road was where colonist Francis White established an early saw mill. In 1908 the land was cleared for an orange orchard and horse paddock. This land was acquired by the state government in 1938 and set aside as a state forest. One-third of the land was planted as an arboretum while the rest was allowed to regenerate naturally. There are more than 150 different types of plants in the arboretum, with the remainder of the park comprising species native to the Sydney Basin such as blueberry ash (*Elaeocarpus reticulatus*), cheese tree (*Glochidion ferdinandi*), sweet pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*), Sydney blue gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*), blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*), turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*), smooth barked apple (*Angophora costata*) and various eucalypts.

In recent decades Hornsby Shire Council and National Parks and Wildlife Service, alongside community groups and individuals, have made dedicated efforts to manage, restore and protect the Shire's natural landscapes, bushland, fauna and flora resources.

Throughout the Shire's history there are many instances of individual and group endeavours in promoting environmental awareness. They include JD Tipper, who was granted Crown land at Cowan in the 1930s to establish the Muogamarra Sanctuary for the conservation of native bird, animal and plant life. Frederick Eccleston Du Faur advocated for the government to establish a national park for North Sydney, leading to the dedication of Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park in 1894, second only to Royal National Park. Noel Burnet was the first person in the state to be granted permission to keep koalas in captivity, establishing the Koala Park Sanctuary at Pennant Hills in 1931. Forty acres of Crown land was made available in 1976 at Dural for a kangaroo orphanage, hospital and reserve under the management of the Kangaroo Protection Co-Operative (KPC) led by Marjorie Wilson (OAM).

The Byles family donated 5 acres of bushland at Beecroft as a fauna and flora reserve in 1938. Chilworth Reserve was handed over to Hornsby Shire Council in 1942. In 1970 Marie Byles gave her 3.5-acre bushland property at Cheltenham, named Ahimsa, to the National Trust of Australia (Ahimsa

Sanctuary). Byles was a passionate advocate for the environment in the Shire and elsewhere. She was a founding member of the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust and an early bush regeneration volunteer.



Muogamarra Sanctuary, 1956. (Source: Australian National University)

Bushfires have posed one of the greatest threats to life and property in the Shire since Europeans first arrived in the nineteenth century. In 1911 a bushfire swept through a large area of country between Peat's Ferry and Glenorie and inflicted considerable damage to property including Mr Stubbs' orchard at Glenorie and Mr Thomas's resident at Galston. As an article in *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate* reported at the time:

The town of Hornsby appears to be partly surrounded by bush-fires, the worst of which are in the north and north-east.⁶



Fire destroys Hornsby Home Science School, 1957. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

In November 1957 a significant bushfire event occurred when a fire climbed out of Hornsby Valley, destroying the Hornsby Scout Hall, two houses, a timber yard, the School of Arts and the Public School, and damaging St Peter’s Anglican Church.⁷ The susceptibility of the Shire’s extensive bushland to fire, combined with its numerous valleys and gullies, presents an ongoing danger for the over one-third of the district’s residents living close to bushland reserves and national parks in the Shire.⁸ Bushfire management in the mid to late twentieth century has involved the formation of volunteer bushfire brigades such as the Galston Rural Fire Brigade, which was established following the devastating Black Saturday fires that swept through the Hills District in January 1939. The Berowra Rural Fire Brigade was established in 1943. Others were formed at Cowan, Glenorie and Hornsby Heights.



Bushfire at Mount Colah, c1950. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects, *Sydney Morning Herald* photograph)

Fire trails have been formed and spotting towers erected in the district, including at Tumbledown Dick, Bungaroo and the tower of Mt Wilga Rehabilitation Centre. The *Bush Fire Bulletin* reported in Spring 1963 on the ‘Outer Sydney Scheme’ that was established following the disastrous fire of 1957–58. During the scheme’s first four and a half years operating, 83 miles of trails were constructed, 46 miles of trails maintained, four lookout towers, five concrete causeways and one dam built and over a dozen creeks required pipes. As the *Bush Fire Bulletin* reported:

Fire trails have basically altered the whole approach to fire fighting and prevention in most fringe areas around Sydney.⁹

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Council is also a key driver in the management and prevention of bushfires in partnership with National Parks and Wildlife Service, NSW Rural Fire Service and residents. There are now policies around the location of development in relation to bushfire zones and maps identifying bushfire-prone land.

Preservation of the Shire's extensive bushland and waterways has been achieved, and continues to be pursued, by the concerted efforts of a raft of community-based organisations and resident action groups.

The Hawkesbury River Environment Protection Society (THREPS) and Save the Hawkesbury's Unique River Environment (SHURE) are two groups of knowledgeable and passionate locals formed to protect the Hawkesbury River and its tributaries. They are just two of many such groups active in the Shire today.

The Hornsby Conservation Society has its roots in the Asquith District Flora and Fauna Society, which was formed after World War II by a group of conservation-minded people. The society sought to preserve bushland in Old Mans Valley around the quarry. It then campaigned to preserve bushland in the southern portion of Berowra Valley to protect the lyrebird populations in the area.

In the 1980s the former Union of Lane Cove Valley Conservationists (ULCVC) was formed to protect the now gazetted Lane Cove National Park. The ULCVC consisted of an amalgamation of community associations that surrounded the Lane Cove Valley, including Thornleigh Area Bushland Society, Hornsby Bushland Society, South Turrumurra Environment Protection (STEP), Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust, Willoughby Environmental Protection Association (WEPA) and Hunters Hill Nature Society.

The efforts of dedicated individuals and groups are supported by numerous official and volunteer programs in sustainability, bushcare, environmental awareness, and other nature-based topics. Environmental awareness within the Shire extends to the design and location of housing alongside management of bushland.



Scientists at the radio astronomy field station, Hornsby, c1950. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

The elevation, topography and climate of the Shire was also a key driver for scientific endeavours such as the Red Hill Observatory (Pennant Hills), AZA Short-Wave Broadcasting Station 2ME and Hornsby Radio Astronomy Field Station. From 1947 to 1955 Old Mans Valley was home to the Hornsby Radio Astronomy Field Station. The site was selected because the valley was shielded from terrestrial interference and Sydney's latitude meant that the

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galactic plane and the centre of the galaxy passed directly overhead. Some 30 different experiments in radar astronomy were conducted from this location using an array of telescopes. From late 1947 Ruby Payne-Scott spent a year at the field station, and used the equipment for independent studies of solar bursts, assisted by Marie Coutts Clark.

The Bushland Shire was also key to defence activities in World War II. The area's distance from Sydney Harbour, hilly terrain, extensive and dense bushland, coupled with a multitude of bays and creeks along the Hawkesbury River, made it an ideal locale for defence purposes.

¹ Karskens, G 2020, *People of the River: Lost worlds of early Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, p 65.

² 'Old Peat's Ferry Road', *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*, 6 November 1925, p 1, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 22 March 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85903806>>.

³ Hornsby Shire Council 2006, Hornsby Shire Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2006, Hornsby Shire Council, p 22.

⁴ Attenbrow, V 2010, *Sydney's Aboriginal Past: Investigating the archaeological and historical records*, second edition, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, p 92.

⁵ Attenbrow, V 2010, *Sydney's Aboriginal Past: Investigating the archaeological and historical records*, second edition, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, p 78.

⁶ 'Bush Fires', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 23 December 1911, p 6, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 13 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85987916>>.

⁷ 'Hornsby, Our Bushland Shire: the Story of Hornsby Shire 2020', unpublished manuscript, p 16.

⁸ 'Bushfire Management', Hornsby Shire Council, viewed 13 January 2021 <<https://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/environment/flora-and-fauna/fire-management2/bushfire-management>>.

⁹ New South Wales Bush Fire Committee and Bush Fire Council of New South Wales, *Bush fire bulletin* [Sydney]: Bush Fire Committee, New South Wales, 1952, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 10 March 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-285342325>>

Transport



1950s–1960s upgrades to the Pacific Highway in the Berowra area. (Source: Nathan Tilbury Collection)

Transport

Hornsby Shire, by nature of its location, developed as the northern gateway to Sydney. The construction of roads, bridges, railway lines, railway stations and sidings posed considerable challenges given the rugged sandstone terrain and landforms of the Hornsby Plateau. This factor alone influenced the siting and form of development in the Shire. Key to the history of development in the district, the Main North railway line forms the spine of the Shire traversing the central ridge of the Hornsby Plateau north from Beecroft and Epping in the south, moving north through the Shire towards the Hawkesbury River and the Central Coast. Trains supplanted more traditional river travel and early roads as the Shire developed into the twentieth century.

Aboriginal people travelled across Country via foot and water, likely establishing some of the routes later followed by Europeans. Aboriginal place names reflect these networks, such as Maroota, believed to originate from the Darug word muru, meaning 'pathway'.¹ The waterways were deftly navigated by nawi or Aboriginal canoes. This knowledge of the Hawkesbury River and its tributaries also proved to be of tactical advantage during the Hawkesbury Nepean wars; although 'sporadic and opportunistic (the hallmarks of guerrilla warfare), the attacks on European vessels along the Hawkesbury were at times fierce.'² The river was used as the staging point for Aboriginal attacks on colonial vessels transporting corn, stolen to recompense loss of food resources on Country. Riverside crops were also raided and unsecured European vessels taken.³ Some colonists readily recognised the nawis' advantages for stealth. There were reports of Europeans stealing poultry and crops in the canoe, which was 'peculiarly adapted to the purposes of silent travel.'⁴

The European colonists were quick to find and use the Hawkesbury River and its tributaries to transport goods and people between Sydney Cove and the farms at Richmond and Windsor. Soon after the settlement was established

at Sydney Cove, Governor Phillip led a series of expeditions to locate agricultural land and fresh water for the newly formed colony. Phillip identified the river and named it in honour of Lord Hawkesbury. Settlement began in 1794 on the western extent of the Hawkesbury at 'Green Hills' near present-day Windsor and Richmond. The river became a vital transport route with a small fleet of privately owned boats, known as the 'Mosquito Fleet', transporting farm produce and goods between Windsor and Sydney. On the lower reaches of the river, the vessels picked up lime, shingle and timber collected by workers camped along the shores.



Punt at an unknown location on Hawkesbury River, undated. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

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The river highway preceded land-based exploration and facilitated European exploitation of the natural resources supporting the colony. Settlements sprang up at Kangaroo Point, Berowra, Wisemans Ferry and other points along the river where ferry crossings met the early roadways.



Wharf at Peats Ferry, Hawkesbury River, c1885, by Charles Bayliss. (Source: National Library of Australia, nla.pic-vn4218365)

Ex-convict Solomon Wiseman conducted the first regular crossing of the river at Wisemans Ferry in 1827, coinciding with the building of the Great North Road. The road between Wisemans Ferry and Wollombi became the principal route for travel between Sydney and the Hunter River, and Wiseman's Inn was a convenient stopping point for travellers. In about 1840 George Peat, a ship builder, commenced a second ferry crossing between his landholdings either

side of the river at Kangaroo Point and Mooney Point using his own sailing lugger.

We understand that a new punt is preparing, for the purpose of passing between Fairview (Mooney Point) and Kangaroo Point, and from Mr Peat's long practice we feel assured this somewhat lengthy and, in rough weather, boisterous passage will be rendered secure by a boat fit to live in any weather.⁵

The Peats Ferry crossing from Fairview Point (Mooney Mooney) to Kangaroo Point offered an alternative to Wisemans Ferry following the construction of Peats Ferry Road between 1847 and 1852. Peats Ferry operated until the railway bridge across the Hawkesbury River was opened in 1889.

Tracks and roads were forged by convict woodcutters from the Pennant Hills Timbergetting Establishment northwards into the heart of the present-day Shire. In 1817 a new route to the Hunter River, called the Great North Road, was surveyed as far as Dural. Two years later a survey was undertaken for a new route from Castle Hill and Dural to a point close to Wisemans Ferry.

The Great North Road (now Old Northern Road) forms the western boundary of the Shire and was built by convicts between 1826 and 1836 to connect Sydney to the settlements of the Hunter Valley. Construction of the road from Baulkham Hills north towards Wisemans Ferry commenced in September 1826 with two convict road gangs totalling 67 men posted at 'Castle Hill North'. Three months later another group of 35 convicts was stationed on 'The North Road to Wiseman's', believed to be near Dural. By April 1827 there were three convict road gangs working on various sections of the roadway, path-breaking, clearing, burning off and stumping the line.

Riding through the silent and thickly wooded forest of Dural, the sudden crash of an enormous tree (iron bark) notified our near approach to the iron gangs making the road. About fifty men, all with chains about their legs, were employed a little beyond the huts at the Chain of Ponds, under the Overseer from the Prisoners Barracks some in falling, some in

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*stumping and some in burning off; while others with large handspikes were rolling the trunks off the prostrate trees to the side of the road.*⁶

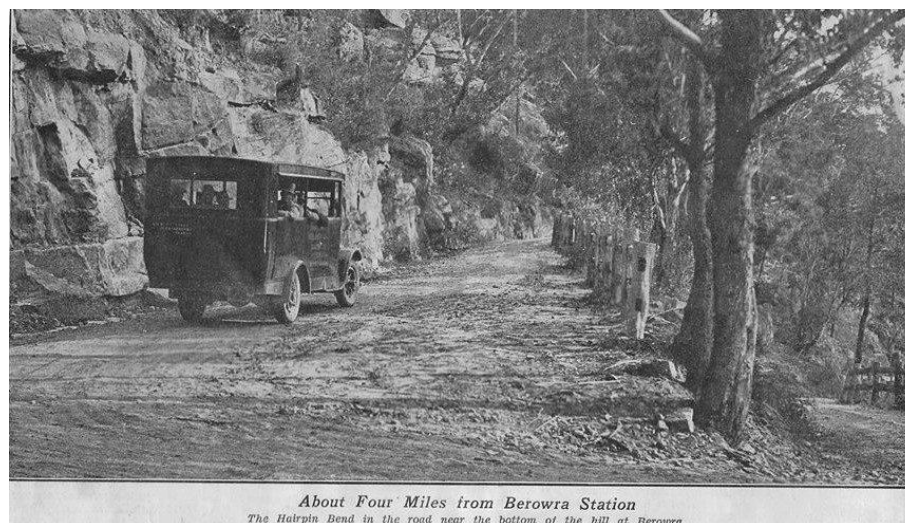
Convict construction of the Great North Road provided access to previously difficult, heavily forested terrain and facilitated greater agricultural development in the district with orchardists and farmers obtaining land along the route.

In the same period Surveyor General Sir Thomas Mitchell investigated more direct routes between Sydney and Hawkesbury River. One of the variations was a new road between Sydney and Dural intended to reduce the travel time between the two. Commenced in 1829, this became known as the New Line Road or New North Road and was built by two convict gangs during 1830 and 1831. It was intended to provide a shorter alternative route to Dural through Pennant Hills. The New Line Road from Mould's Corner to Thompsons Corner, Pennant Hills, was rebuilt in the late 1890s with new bridges and several loops excised.

Peats Ferry Road signalled the advancement of settlement in 1848, paving the way for the Pacific Highway (part of National Highway One) which supplanted the Great North Road as a direct link from Sydney to the north. Increasing demand for motor vehicles in the 1920s saw the establishment of the Main Roads Board in 1925. One of the board's first undertakings, in conjunction with Hornsby Shire Council, was the construction of a new sealed highway from Hookhams Corner at Hornsby to Peats Ferry. This major road building project used unemployed labour. The Pacific Highway was completed in 1930. A vehicular ferry operated between 1930 and 1945 during construction of the Peats Ferry Bridge. This road formed a vital section of the Pacific Highway between Sydney and Brisbane.

The Berowra Waters Road was constructed on both sides of Berowra Creek between 1900 and 1902 by unemployed labour. Sixty men were selected for the project, including 45 quarrymen, 10 pick and shovel men and five bush carpenters. The new road provided access via the Berowra Waters Ferry, which

commenced service in 1903 as a small punt. Hornsby Shire Council took over management of the service from 1906. This was a well-patronised service. During 1921, 4664 foot passengers, 38 cyclists, 29 horsemen, 186 four-wheeled vehicles, 1019 two-wheeled vehicles, 99 motor cyclists and 902 motor vehicles travelled via the ferry.



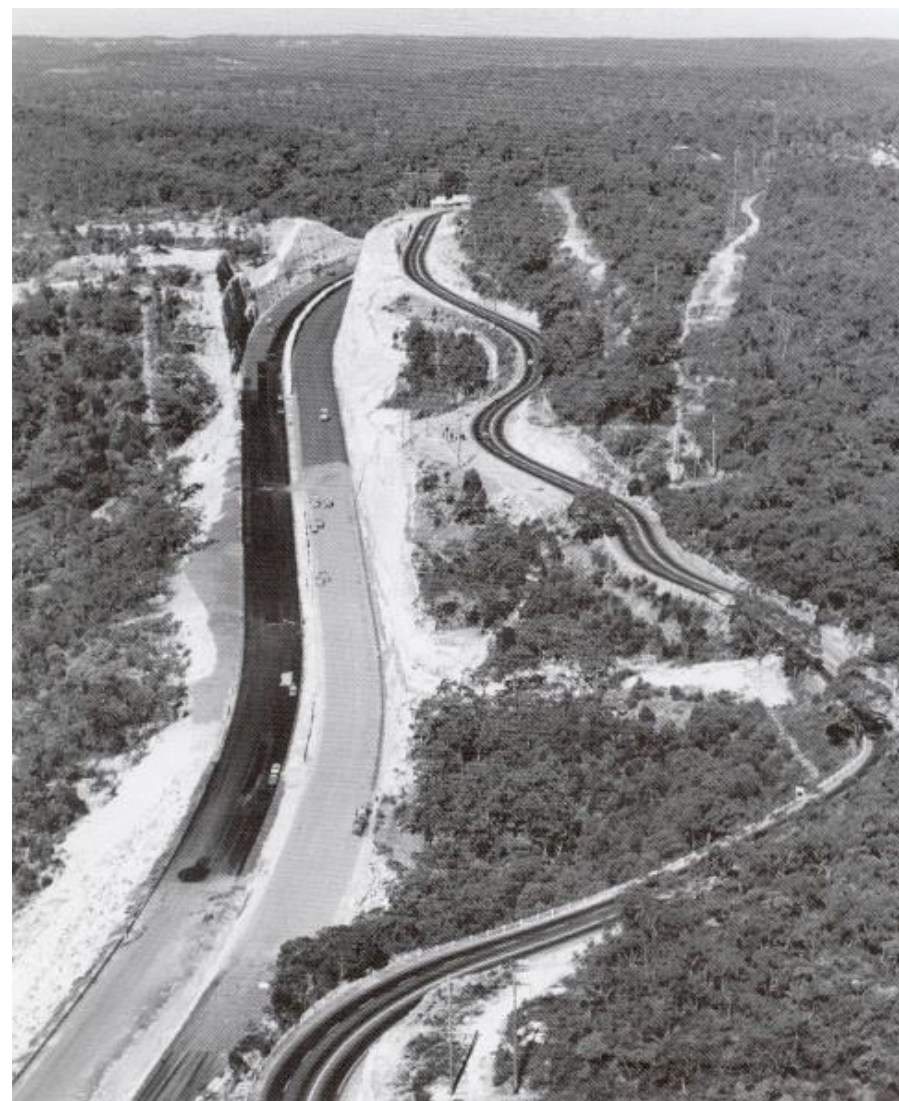
*About Four Miles from Berowra Station
The Hairpin Bend in the road near the bottom of the hill at Berowra.*

Bill Wall's truck, a converted bus, ascending Berowra Creek Road, c1930. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Structures built by relief labour document the impact of the Great Depression on the Shire as people eked out a living in public works. Those without acres to harvest, poultry or dairy sought short-term work. Depression-era works in the Shire include the Bobbin Inn, stone walls, shelter sheds and the grading of the roads from Mount Colah to North Turramurra. Elsewhere in the district, sandstone steps were formed throughout the Shire's valleys, many still enjoyed by bushwalkers today.⁷ Berowra Waters Road was repaired and reconstructed in 1929 when Hornsby Shire Council received a government grant for unemployed relief works.⁸



Construction of the Pacific Highway near Berowra, c1925. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



F3 Motorway under construction at Mt Kuring-gai, 1967. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

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In the 1960s a new Sydney–Newcastle Freeway (F3) was constructed to provide a high-speed replacement for the sections of the Pacific Highway built between 1920 and 1930 and to accommodate increasingly heavy traffic in the postwar years. The Berowra to Hawkesbury River section, which included toll booths and heavy vehicle checking stations at Berowra, was built from 1966 to 1968. Simultaneously the Pacific Highway was widened through Berowra and Mount Colah. The Hawkesbury River Bridge opened in 1973.

Today, goods, traffic and people continue to enter and exit Sydney through the Shire via road and rail. Recent development of the M1 (formerly F3), M2 and NorthConnex has enabled the bulk of through-road traffic to bypass the Shire, alleviating pressure on Pennant Hills Road and the Pacific Highway, particularly by diverting heavy goods traffic.

The southern end of the Shire has been impacted by major State Government Infrastructure projects constructed in recent decades. The M2 Hills Motorway links Artarmon in the northeast to Bella Vista in the northwest and was completed in 1997. It bisects the southern end of the Shire at Beecroft. At that time the community, along with the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust, fought to protect the adjoining bush corridor at Devlins Creek Reserve.

The Homebush to Waratah (Newcastle) and St Leonards to Hornsby railway lines opened in 1886 and 1890 respectively, changing the focus of transport and altering the existing travel corridors through the Shire. The pattern of residential development was heavily influenced by the location of railway platforms and sidings, with developers taking advantage of land alongside the route.

In 1883 railway contractor company Amos and Co was contracted to build the Strathfield to Hawkesbury River section of the railway. The company established its main camp at Halls Creek, Thornleigh, and a sandstone quarry next to it to supply ballast. The quarry lay 30 metres below track level and about 1 kilometre from the line, necessitating construction of a zigzag railway—the third one built in New South Wales.

The greatest engineering feats on the Main North railway line were the construction of the Cowan Bank and the railway bridge over the Hawkesbury River. The Sydney–Newcastle railway was originally constructed in two stages. John Whitton, Engineer in Chief of the New South Wales Railways, campaigned to connect the railway across the Hawkesbury by bridge as at this date the trains terminated at Brooklyn and Wondabyne respectively, forcing passengers to change to a ferry for part of the journey.

The bridge was designed and built by the Union Bridge Company of New York, USA. During construction of the railway bridge, Dangar Island was leased to the Union Bridge Company for three years. Bridge spans were constructed on the island and floated across the Hawkesbury River to the bridge site and placed in position. The American workers were also accommodated on Dangar Island.

The Hawkesbury River Railway Bridge was officially opened on 1 May 1889 by Sir Henry Parkes, who delivered what some people believe to be his first Federation speech.⁹ Dignitaries and guests attended a banquet on Dangar Island after the official opening. The bridge came to symbolise Federation as it formed the last link in a railway chain across Australia, providing a means of travel between states. Many of the railway workers involved in construction of the railway line and bridge stayed on and settled at Brooklyn and the residential islands on the river, becoming fishermen and oystermen.



Official opening of the Hawkesbury River Railway Bridge, 1 May 1889. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

A new railway bridge was built during the Second World War, replacing the old bridge which was beginning to fail. It was officially opened on 2 July 1946.

The coming of the railway brought about profound changes in the district. A major commercial centre formed at the Hornsby Junction railway hub. Hotels, shops, banks and a raft of services were established either side of the station, but primarily to the west adjoining Peats Ferry Road. Elsewhere in the Shire, landholders, speculators and auctioneers arrived en masse to acquire, subdivide and sell allotments to prospective buyers along the railway routes.



Second Hawkesbury River Railway Bridge alongside the pylons from the first railway bridge, 2012. Photograph by Robert Green. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

The railway made it much easier for people to move in and out of the area and for agriculturalists in the Shire to get their products to the city and beyond. It also initially made the Hornsby Plateau accessible to those who could afford such a move, such as at the government subdivision of the Field of Mars Common at Beecroft and Cheltenham. The subdivisions of the early twentieth century catalysed the area's transition from a rural to suburban community, at least along the railway corridors—a process which was later completed by suburban development in the second half of the twentieth century. Subdivisions of farming estates accelerated after the railway was built through the area, often becoming a selling point for the land which was put on offer.¹⁰ Later subdivisions in the district anticipated the commuter era, with smaller lots and more modest cottages.

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Industrial and horticultural enterprises also benefitted from the arrival of the railway, which facilitated the transport of goods and services to market and the harbour port. Sidings were constructed at key locations along the Main North line, including Beecroft, Pennant Hills, Thornleigh and Hornsby. Here orchardists lined up with their horses and carts to load their produce onto trains bound for Sydney and the markets.

National Brickworks built its own rail siding at Thornleigh in 1901. Nearby, Amos and Co constructed the zigzag track to its quarry deep in the gully of the Berowra Valley Regional Park. Proximity to the railway was also key to the success of the Maltworks near Thornleigh.¹¹

A private railway was constructed by Bennett and Simpson to serve residents in Sydney's northwest and provide better transport options for orchardists in the Baulkham Hills, Castle Hill and Dural areas. The *Simpson's Railway Act of 1893* authorised the private construction of a railway line in three sections from Bennett's Railway line (Rose Hill) to Dural. The first section was to terminate at Carlingford, the second at Castle Hill (Rogans Hill) and the third at Dural. The private railway was completed only as far as Carlingford in 1896 and was a financial failure for the operators. Instead of completing the other sections of the railway to Dural, in 1902 the government constructed a steam tramway from Parramatta Railway Station to Baulkham Hills, and later extended it to Castle Hill in 1910.

A branch railway line was built in the 1920s to replace the tramway. The section to Castle Hill opened in January 1923 and the section to Rogans Hill in November 1924. The railway was closed in February 1932, the early promise of extending the service to Dural long since abandoned by the government.

The North Shore Line was electrified in 1927 followed two years later by the line between Central and Hornsby via Strathfield, resulting in quieter, quicker and more efficient train services to the Shire. Electric trains extended from Hornsby as far north as Gosford in 1960.



Aerial view north over the suburb of Hornsby showing the railway junction and goods yard with a shopping centre and Old Pacific Highway to the west of the station, 1952. (Source: National Library of Australia, nla.obj-233951949-1)

The Epping to Thornleigh Third Track (ETTT) was built between 2013 and 2016 to improve freight train access through northern Sydney to the metropolitan freight network. It comprised six kilometres of new and upgraded track. While its construction benefited transport networks, some environmental concerns were raised by the community, who together with the

Save Beecroft and Cheltenham Alliance, advocated for protection of Devlins Creek and Byles Valley Creek.

- ¹ Powell, JP 1994, *Placenames of the Greater Hawkesbury Region*, Hawkesbury River Enterprises, Berowra Heights, p 76.
- ² Gapps, S 2018, 'Contested waterways – Aboriginal resistance in early colonial Sydney', Australian Maritime Museum Blog, viewed 14 January 2021 <<https://www.sea.museum/2018/06/19/contested-waterways>>.
- ³ Gapps, S 2018, 'Contested waterways – Aboriginal resistance in early colonial Sydney', Australian Maritime Museum Blog, viewed 14 January 2021 <<https://www.sea.museum/2018/06/19/contested-waterways>>.
- ⁴ Gapps, S 2018, 'Contested waterways – Aboriginal resistance in early colonial Sydney', Australian Maritime Museum Blog, viewed 14 January 2021 <<https://www.sea.museum/2018/06/19/contested-waterways>>.
- ⁵ 'Lower Hawkesbury', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 April 1844, p 2, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 13 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article12416662>>.
- ⁶ 'A visit to Wollombi and Cumnaroy', *The Australian*, 29 August 1827, p 2, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 13 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article37071983>>.
- ⁷ Webb, J 2006, *Prosperity around the corner: Hornsby during the Great Depression*, Hornsby Shire Council, p 55.
- ⁸ 'Unemployed Relief', *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 15 April 1929, p 3, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 11 March 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article104725799>>.
- ⁹ 'Brooklyn' in 'Our Bushland Shire: the Story of Hornsby Shire 2020', unpublished manuscript, p 68.
- ¹⁰ Graham Edds & Associates 1995, 'Baulkham Hills Heritage Study 1993–1994', Richmond, NSW, p 21.
- ¹¹ 'Hornsby Expansion', *Construction*, 17 October 1951, p 3, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article222887279>>.

Agriculture and Horticulture

Brierley's poultry farm, Cheltenham, 1913. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Agriculture and Horticulture

Soil and climatic conditions made large parts of the Shire suitable for the cultivation of fruit and other crops. Aboriginal people managed the land and water for tens of millennia. Rich yam beds lined the river banks and were harvested by women with digging sticks. Fish were caught from the rivers and streams using hooks made from spiral shells along the sandy riverbanks. The lines were made by women who wove the twisted fibres of the kurrajong tree.¹ The deep flooded valleys were fished via bark canoes.

Freshwater and saltwater crustaceans, mud oysters, rock oysters, cockles and mussels were consumed, with tangible evidence still in situ at places like Bar Island. In the upper reaches of Berowra Creek, an array of resources from yabbies, tortoises, eels and perch could be sourced. Well into the twentieth century, fishing was an important part of Aboriginal life in the area, providing a subsistence living and supplementing insufficient government rations as policies began to control Aboriginal movement and income.² Aboriginal labour in fruit and vine industries within the Shire needs to be further researched, yet it is well documented that across the Hawkesbury River in Ebenezer Dr Thomas Fiaschi employed Aboriginal people at his Tizzana vineyard at the turn of the century.³

The European occupation of the area would not have been possible without the Aboriginal shaping of these landscapes—the cleared spaces, pathways along the river and up in the ranges and cobbled rapids for river crossings.⁴

Early European settlement in the Shire was shaped by both government and private activities. Clusters of farms gathered along the early roads, while the reservation of stock reserves, including the Field of Mars Common, and the establishment of a public farm at Castle Hill restricted and repelled settlement in other areas. This included 5,830 acres laid out along the track to Castle Hill (Great North Road) leading to the government farm. King had established this farm in 1801 as part of a plan to revitalise public farming and provide food for

the colony. By 1802, 300 convicts were stationed there. This land covered where Rogans Hill, Glenhaven and Cherrybrook now stand and stretched as far as Glenorie in the Hornsby Shire.

The Field of Mars Common was set aside for public use by Governor King in August 1804. It was situated on the western bank of the Lane Cove River from the Hunters Hill peninsula to the Pennant Hills ridge, covering an area of approximately 5,050 acres. The common was initially used for timbergetting to supply lumber for the colonial building program, with both private operators and government (convict) timber gangs operating throughout the common area. By the 1830s–1840s, when the best timber for building had been removed, less useful timber was cut for use as fencing, firewood and charcoal. The trustees also granted licences to private timbergetters to cut timber for posts, rails, palings and shingles throughout the 1850s, 1860s and 1870s.⁵



Women's yam sticks, used for digging, fighting and ceremonial purposes, and a canoe paddle (at the bottom), Hawkesbury Regional Museum collection. (Source: Joy Lai as reproduced in Grace Karskens' *People of the River*)

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In turn the early incursion of emancipist farmers and convict iron gangs and timber getters into the district cleared the forests and built roads northwest of Pennant Hills, allowing for the next wave of settlers.

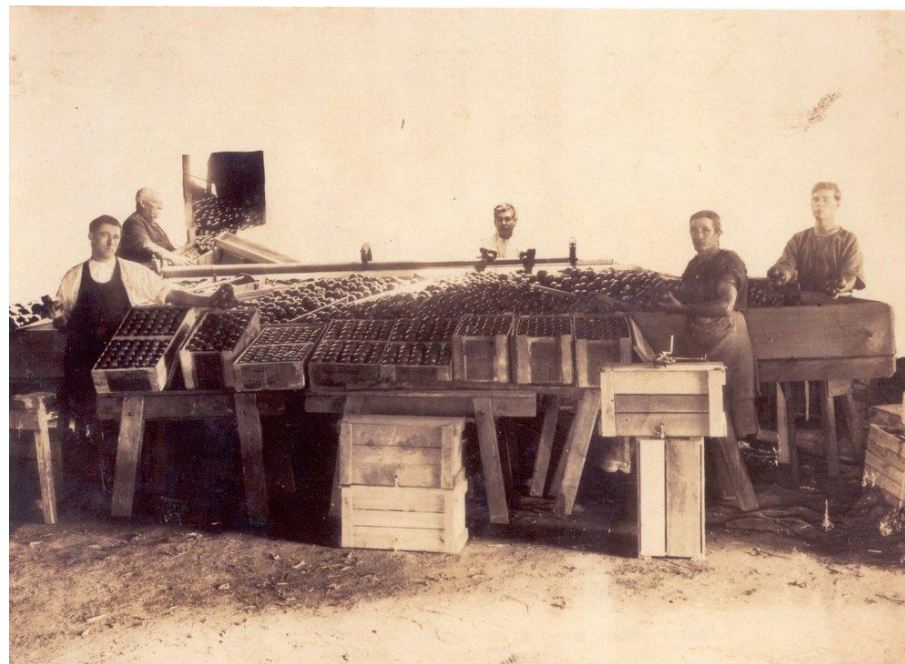
Several 100-acre grants were issued in April 1792 to missionaries or medical men. These grants straddled modern-day Pennant Hills Road, extending up to Thompsons Corner. Farms were established around this area by absentee owners such as Rowland Hassall, Samuel Marsden and Francis Oakes.

Families and communities of smallholders expanded from within as larger landholders bought up new land, or as younger ones moved onto landholdings divided up upon the deaths of their parents or moved onto available new land nearby. The Fagan family is one such example. William Fagan was a free settler who arrived in Sydney in 1848 and later purchased property at Arcadia. He was instrumental in establishing the citrus industry in the Arcadia, Dural and Galston area. The *Australian Town and Country* profiled him in December 1888 as a pioneer orange grower.

Tree after tree fell before the strokes of Mr Fagan's axe; acre after acre being cleared and planted to fruit trees. This good work went on year in and year out, until the present grand result has been accomplished. He has now an orange grove of fifty acres in extent, planted with the choicest varieties of trees, in a high state of cultivation and laden with fruit. In fact, there is no finer orchard in the country.⁶

He also settled his three sons on orchards in the district. William and Sam Fagan (Fagan Bros) grew the family business and expanded their orchards. Sam Fagan and his wife Emma built the property Netherby and a large packing shed in the early 1900s, planting orchards and running cattle on the land. This extensive property was donated to the Department of Lands and entrusted to Hornsby Shire Council to manage. Fagan Park, as it is known today, comprises 55 hectares. It was a Council Bicentennial project and was officially opened in November 1988.

This localised network of family landholders proved to be the framework in which the whole locality was developed during the nineteenth century. These communities lent a stability to the district which was only broken with the arrival of the railway and suburban development. The names of these families became synonymous with the orcharding industry, including the Thorns of Pennant Hills, the Mobbs of Epping and the Halls of Dural.



Fruit sorting at the Fagans' packing shed, Netherby, Galston, 1900s. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

There were early attempts at growing wheat, oats and maize at Castle Hill (Castle Hill Farm), Pennant Hills and Dural. For instance, in 1834 James Milson expected to 'reap thirty bushels an acre at Pennant Hills'.⁷ Six years later the *Sydney Herald* reported 'there are some beautiful patches of wheat and oats three inches high' at Castle Hill and Dural.⁸ Milsons Passage and

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Milson Island on the Hawkesbury River are two places recognising James Milson's contribution to the early history and development of the Shire.



A woodcut of orchards at Pennant Hills/Normanhurst, by George Collingridge, c1890s. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

By the mid-nineteenth century, the area had become synonymous with stone and citrus fruit. The *Cumberland Mercury* boasted in 1888 that the district had a 'soil and climate capable of producing fruits unsurpassed by any in the world'.⁹ Orchards later spread into Glenorie. Pioneer orchardists William Fagan and his sons William and Sam, and William Waddell and his son James, were the largest fruitgrowers in the Middle Dural and Arcadia area in this period.



Citrus orchards on the Hawkesbury River between Spencer and Wisemans Ferry, undated. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Beyond the more fertile lands of the Hornsby Plateau, orchards were planted alongside the river at settlements on the Hawkesbury River. One of these included a 40-acre orchard property known as Eblana, which was advertised for auction sale at Marramarra Creek in 1903. It comprised a wood brick cottage, outbuildings, pig and poultry yard and an orchard of 6 acres containing 2000 trees bearing summer and citrus fruits and apples.¹⁰ The

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property was later owned by George Higgins, who was reported to have 'earned considerable fame as a successful producer of different varieties of apples'.¹¹

Until the early 1900s, most of the subdivisions in the Shire were aimed at cutting up large grants into blocks with smaller acreages suitable for orchards or farmlets. This generally occurred away from residential areas, as in 1882 when Watkin & Watkin advertised orchard blocks at Dural for auction sale adjoining the Hall estate, and in 1890 when 17 orchard blocks were advertised for private sale at Hornsby Junction near the railway line.

Large quantities of fruit came from orchards at Pennant Hills, Dural, Glenorie and Kenthurst well into the twentieth century. The construction of the railway sidings at Beecroft, Pennant Hills and Thornleigh gave fruitgrowers easy access to transport their produce to Sydney.

*The summer fruit is now pouring into the Pennant Hills railway station for transit to Sydney markets, and the daily scene there now is one of great animation. As the business increases, the want of property accommodation at the siding becomes the more apparent. It is no uncommon thing to see two or three carts waiting for another to get away, so that they may have their turn.*¹²

Pennant Hills remained the biggest rail depot in the Shire into the 1920s. In 1921 the *Cumberland Argus* reported on a bumper season, with the Pennant Hills Station handling about 80 tons of fruit daily so that 'all through the day the loading of fruit continues, and in the late afternoon it is no uncommon thing to see 40 or 50 carts congregated in the yard'.¹³



Loading fruit, Pennant Hills goods yard, by Rex Hazlewood, c1900s. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Opening of the Galston Packing Shed, 1931. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Orcharding in Old Mans Valley, undated. (Source: Ralph Hawkins Collection, Hornsby Shire Recollects)

New and improved roads in the district streamlined the delivery of fruit from farm to market. For instance, prior to the construction of the Galston Gorge road and bridges between 1891 and 1893, Galston growers were required to transport their produce by horse and cart via Dural and West Pennant Hills to Thornleigh Railway Goods Yard. The Galston Gorge road facilitated shorter and more timely travel for growers and farmers in the Dural area eager to deliver their produce to Hornsby Station and onwards to markets and wharves in the city. Hornsby became a busy goods yard and transport centre in this period and the shopping centre on the western side of the station became a busy service centre for farmers and locals alike.

By 1899, 603 acres of fruit-bearing trees and 279 acres of non-bearing fruit (newly planted orchards) could be found in the Dural district. The Galston, Arcadia, Dural and Glenorie region had developed into one of the finest orchard areas in Australia. The Under-Secretary in the Department of Agriculture reported in 1907–1908:

*there is strong demand for the establishment of an Experiment or Demonstration orchard in the midst of the thousands of small orchardists who are getting a living, for the most part on small areas of land in the County of Cumberland.*¹⁴

The *Australian Town and Country Journal* noted in 1907 there were 8000 fruitgrowers and primary producers based in the Central Cumberland District (encompassing Hornsby Shire) and over 40,000 people were 'dependent or mainly dependent on the fruitgrowing industry for a livelihood'.¹⁵

For this reason, in 1909 the Department of Agriculture purchased a former 'old and neglected' orchard on 40 acres in Galston Road, Dural. The Government Orchard was operated until 1917 as an experimental and demonstration orchard providing training for the 'Dreadnought Boys'. Dreadnought Boys were British child migrants who voluntarily migrated to Australia between 1911 and 1939 and undertook farm training before working on rural properties across New South Wales.

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The advent of the motor car and improvements in road construction brought further change to the agricultural and horticultural industries of the Shire in the twentieth century. Railway transport of produce declined from the 1920s as farmers began to use carriers to transport goods from farm gate to the Sydney market or wharves. In addition, fruit production progressively declined in the Shire during the Great Depression and the Second World War, impacted by reduced manpower, rationing and housing shortages.

Rapid population growth and expansion of suburban development were key factors in the decline of orchards in the Shire, particularly along the railway corridor from Beecroft north to Hornsby and beyond. Former orchard estates and farm allotments in suburbs adjoining the new railway line were subdivided for residential development at Beecroft, Pennant Hills and Thornleigh from as early as the 1880s. In 1897 NA Cobb reported in the *Agricultural Gazette of New South Wales* there were 'no less than 10,000 acres of abandoned ... orchards within 25 miles of Sydney', including in the northern districts. Cobb questioned why growers had abandoned orchards and concluded that land values along the new railway line were inducing orchardists to sell their properties for a profit to speculators, who would resell them for building purposes.¹⁶

Poultry farming was also common throughout the Shire. Early settlers and orchardists frequently stocked chickens on their farms for eggs, profit and manure for fertiliser. As late as the 1940s Bevan and Bevan ran The Hills Poultry Farm and Hatchery at West Pennant Hills in conjunction with an orchard through which the fowls were given free rein to roam, a common practice at this time.¹⁷

There were many standalone poultry farms in the district, including that of GH Moulds and his two sons at Dural known as 'Grantham', which was well established in 1895.

*Business in poultry, Mr Moulds says, is very good, the demand for eggs, so far, exceeding the supply.*¹⁸

Les and Hilda Walker established a poultry farm at the end of Duffy Avenue, Thornleigh, in the 1940s. At this time there were several poultry farms in this area, including Berenbel (Eric Walker's farm) and A George and Son's Bungeree Stud Poultry Farm. There were yet more poultry farms in West Pennant Hills.



Allan James' dairy at Yardley and Clarke Roads, Waitara, after 1902. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Some orchardists in the Shire diversified into garden nurseries, supplying seeds and seedlings of ornamental and fruit-bearing plants. These centred on Dural and the northwestern areas of the Shire. One such business was the Beehive Nursery at Dural run by Fagan Bros which, according to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, was a large nursery comprising 150 acres of fruit:

But it cannot supply more than half of the orders received by the proprietors' and supplied lemons, plums, oranges and peaches.¹⁹



Ralph Hawkins' photograph of a 'For Sale' sign for a poultry farm in New Line Road, Dural, 2017. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Swane Bros Nursery opened at Ermington in 1919 stocking fruit trees (citrus and deciduous) and rose varieties. Swane's Nurseries, as the business is known today, acquired an 18-hectare site at Dural in the 1960s. In 1990 Swane's Nurseries produced more than 1 million plants annually at Dural and its larger nursery at Narromine.²⁰

Hazlewood Brothers commenced business at Epping, later relocating to Dural. In the 1950s John and Rosemary Hemphill established a plant nursery called Somerset Nursery in Dural. Camellia Grove Nursery, originally established at

St Ives by Professor EG Waterhouse, grew camellias at its production nursery in Moores Road, Glenorie, in the 1940s and 1950s, later moving the entire nursery to Cattai Ridge Road, Glenorie. There were other specialist camellia growers like Charles Kilgour at Swane's Nursery, Davidson Nursery at Galston and enthusiasts like Sim Rubensohn of Kelvin Grove, Dural.

In the mid-twentieth century the main agricultural industries in the Shire were said to be poultry farming, orcharding, flower growing and market gardening. One of the more obscure yet popular hobby industries operating in the Shire is beekeeping. W Abram of Beecroft was a pioneer in the bee farming industry prior to his death in 1918. He purchased the plant of the Italian bee farm at Parramatta and moved it to Beecroft in 1890. His son EE Abram moved the bee farm to Berrima in 1919 following a severe drought and increasing residential development at Beecroft. This was not the end of bee farming in the area, however; in 2000 a state government inquiry into beekeeping in urban areas reported there were 70 registered beekeepers in the Shire. Sawyer's Pure Honey at Normanhurst and High Acre Honey in Glenorie are two honey producers active today in the district.

A new wave of market gardeners and growers settled in the Dural, Galston and Glenorie area from the 1950s.

Rosemary and John Hemphill purchased 5 acres of a former citrus orchard at Round Corner, Dural, and established the Somerset Nursery, specialising in growing herbs and spices for Sydney's emerging food and restaurant industry. Their traditional walled herb garden was a notable feature of their property. According to *The Bulletin* on 29 March 1961:

We also saw the nursery where the Hemphills cultivate plants for sale, the little shop where they sell dried herbs, pot pourri and pot plants from the nursery.

By 1973 the family was marketing 53 varieties of herbs and spices and sending them interstate and to New Guinea. They were also selling bottled herbs and spices, plants and gifts in the shop alongside their home.

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Italian farmers moved to Glenorie in the 1960s when their farmland at Marsfield was resumed for Macquarie University. They purchased some of the old citrus orchards and commenced growing vegetables and flowers, especially chrysanthemums and roses. This phenomenon was noted in 2003 in a research report by Frances Parker and Sheryl Jarecki of the University of Western Sydney.²¹ Alongside the Italian farmers were the Lebanese growers who cultivated tomatoes and then cucumbers around Wisemans Ferry and Glenorie.

By the late 1990s there were over 70 plant nurseries, landscape suppliers and potting media producers in the Shire. Nurseries, fruit orchards, hobby farms and the 'Farmgate Trail' can be found at Galston, Dural and further north in the Shire. The Farmgate Trail provides itineraries for people to explore nurseries, orchards and farms supplying plants and fresh produce throughout the area.



John and Rosemary Hemphill outside the gates of their Somerset Nursery, Dural, 1950s. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

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Industrial Enterprises

A black and white photograph showing a man in a hat and work clothes pushing a large sack of flour on a wooden cart. The sack is labeled "WILLIAMSON'S" and "SUGAR". Other workers are visible in the background.

The Northern Milling Company, Thornleigh. (Source: Patricia Dewey collection, Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Industrial Enterprises

Though renowned today as the Bushland Shire, Hornsby has a significant industrial past dating back to Aboriginal occupation. A proliferation of artefact evidence dates from 2,000 years ago when the climate approached present-day conditions. New stone tool technology emerged and the hatchet became prevalent as stone was traded over wider networks and food was harvested more intensely across South East Australia.¹ In the Hawkesbury area, the availability of hornfels and basalt cobbles along the river saw a hive of tool-making workshops along creeks and lagoons elevated above floodwaters.² The quantity of volcanic material (ground pebbles) in remnant stone hatchets suggests this material was easily collected instead of having to quarry bedrock outcrops.³ Grindstones, pounders, anvils and bowls collected at Yarramundi in Western Sydney document the industry involved in the collection and production of food, including seeds, nuts, roots, fruits and sometimes the bones of small animals.⁴

Forestry was one of the first industrial activities in the Shire. Sydney blue gum, grey ironbark and blackbutt provided good timber that was rapidly harvested. According to Ralph Hawkins, the government commenced systematic felling of timber on the North Shore in 1805 following reports by botanist George Caley of 'the tract of forest land' in the vicinity of present-day Lane Cove and Pennant Hills. In 1816 Governor Macquarie located a government sawing establishment at 'Pennant Hills'. Government bullocks were confined in a paddock at Thornleigh and the northern fence of this government stockyard, roughly in line with Duffy Avenue, marked the southern boundary of Berry and Wollstonecraft's 1820 timber lease, which stretched north to Cowan Forest.⁵

In those days the convict pit-sawyers roamed the countryside and set up saw pits at various places close to forest areas. One of the great stands of cedar grew in the Pennant Hills area. The Barren Hills timber mill was established not far from today's Epping Railway Station, which was originally included in

the area generally known as Pennant Hills. Ralph Hawkins comments that little direct evidence remains 'linking timber from Pennant Hills with any building activity because the papers belonging to the Engineer's Department and the Public Works Department from this period have not survived'. Nonetheless, he makes a compelling case that buildings dating from the late Macquarie period are likely to contain timber cut at Pennant Hills, including the Mint Building and Hyde Park Barracks, which contain hardwood roof trusses and other timber elements.⁶



Detail of Aboriginal stone axe from 'Aboriginal Implements' by T Prattent, 1789, *The voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay*. (Source: State Library of Victoria)

In 1829 Major Lockyer's new road within the district of Castle Hill, six miles from the Parramatta River ferry, gave access to the 'inexhausted forests of Dural and North Rocks near Castle Hill'.⁷ Two years later the Pennant Hills Sawing Establishment closed. In the view of the *Colonist* in 1835, 'the heaviest, largest and best timber in the colony for house building and other purpose' was located in the forest of Pennant Hills.⁸ By this date, clearing of timber for sale was conducted by private timber getters and merchants such

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as Alexander Berry and Edward Wollstonecraft, who held a timber lease in Hornsby Valley.

Thomas Edward Higgins, son of Thomas and Eleanor Higgins, both Second Fleet convicts, was granted land in Old Mans Valley in 1824 which was formalised in 1836. Soon after, with his assigned convicts, Higgins commenced logging operations in the valley, harvesting blue gum, blackbutt, turpentine and cedar trees. He was the first permanent European colonist in the present-day suburb of Hornsby. For over a century, successive generations of the Higgins family logged and farmed in the valley. Other logging operations were located in the valley between the 1920s and early 1970s.

In the 1880s, the Hudson Brothers purchased forested land at Dural to supply timber for their business based at Redfern. Elsewhere in the Shire, landholders cleared timber to make way for orchards and farms. The *Cumberland Mercury* stated in 1886 that:

Timber is still the order of the day, though industry and cultivation have done much towards lending a civilised appearance, and the many orchard and snug little homesteads immediately below...(junction of Pennant Hills, Dural and Castle Hill roads).⁹



Cutting timber in Hornsby Valley, early 1900s. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

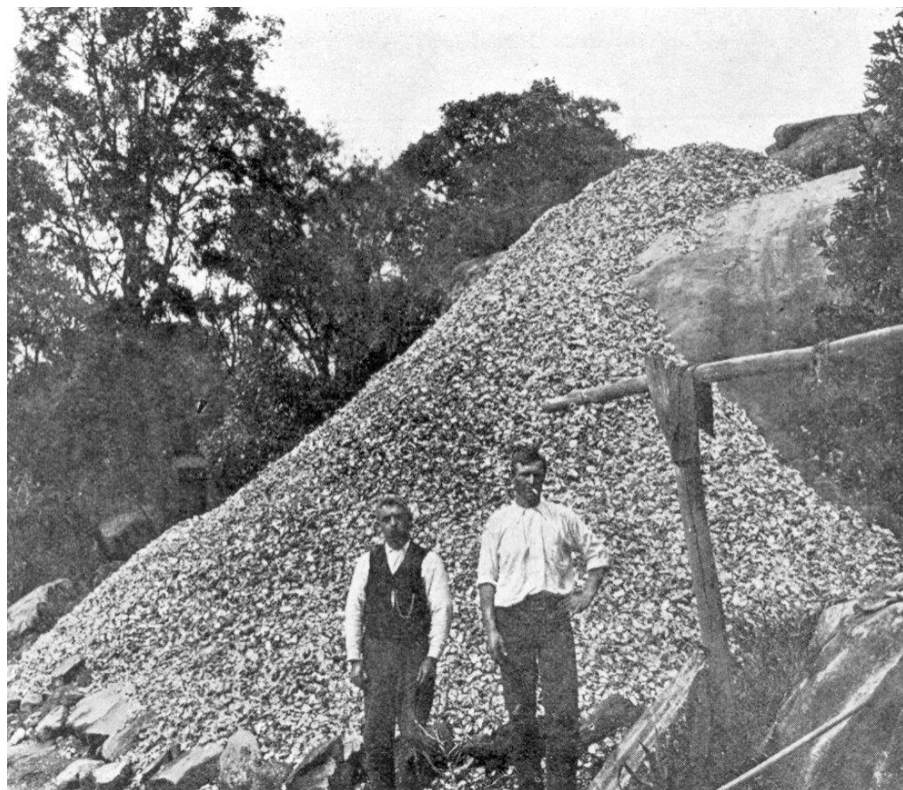
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Shortly after European settlement, large-scale gathering of Sydney rock oysters commenced along the Hawkesbury River where stocks were plentiful. Oyster farming became more commercialised by the 1860s for both food and as a source for lime in cement production. Overexploitation of the wild oyster beds between 1850 and 1870, and the growing importance of this industry, led to the regulation of the industry and the *Fisheries and Oyster Farms Act* was passed in 1884. Organised cultivation of oysters for human consumption began in earnest at this time. The following year oyster leases were granted to R Lloyd at Marramarra Creek, Mooney Point and Berowra Creek.

The oyster farming industry expanded between the 1910s and 1950, with the Hawkesbury River being one of the major oyster producing estuaries in NSW. Production peaked in the 1970s, but collapsed in 2004 when the Hawkesbury River was hit by QX (a parasitic disease originating in Queensland).¹⁰

The Hawkesbury River also provided a good living for commercial fishermen, many of whom were based at Brooklyn. By 1880 local fishermen were catching fish and transporting them to Sydney via steamers plying the river. There was also net fishing operating in the Hawkesbury River by 1887. In 1910 the main supply of prawns for the Sydney markets was located on the Hawkesbury River 'on the mud banks...from Berowra Creek to several miles beyond Mangrove Creek' where about 60 men were engaged in the prawning industry. In 1935 alone, 532,000lb of fish were caught in the river, classing it among one of the coastal districts in New South Wales that produced the greatest quantities of fish.¹¹ These high yields were not always possible, as in 1887 when a deputation of fisherman from the river accompanied by V Parkes and F Farnell, MPs, met with the Premier to obtain permission to place fish nets above the Hawkesbury Bridge.

*It was stated that about six months ago this portion of the river was closed for 18 months, and fishermen were now restricted to above seven miles, which contained very few fish now. If the restriction were removed 170 miles of fishing ground would be open to them.*¹²



Oystermen by a shell midden near Hawkesbury River, 1909. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

The Hawkesbury District Fishermen's Cooperative was established at Brooklyn in 1950 and continues to the present day. The Hawkesbury Trawl Association was founded after 1946 when otter trawling was first permitted in the Hawkesbury River and fishermen targeted prawns. The principal trawl catch included prawns, squid, trumpeter whiting, silver biddy and blue swimming crab.¹³



Singletons Mill on the Hawkesbury River, c1900. (Source: Australian National Maritime Museum, 00002335)

Other early European industrial activities related to pastoral industries, namely production and procession of meat, wool, oats and maize. There was the Barnes' Slaughtering Establishment at Pennant Hills in 1833, Cyrus Homersham's wool scouring establishment near Hornsby Junction in the 1890s and Singleton's Mill on Berowra Creek. The mill was established on Laybury's Creek in c1832 by James and Benjamin Singleton. The property was advertised for auction sale in 1841, comprising the house, a mill 'capable of housing two thousand bushels of grain, and of throwing out eight to ten bushels', an attached blacksmith's shop and a piggery. There was also 'spare land enough adjoining sufficient to run some fifty head of stock or such are the

minimum of this portion of the garden of New South Wales, as Singleton's Valley, on the Hawkesbury River'.¹⁴ The mill operated until 1867 when it was severely damaged in a flood.

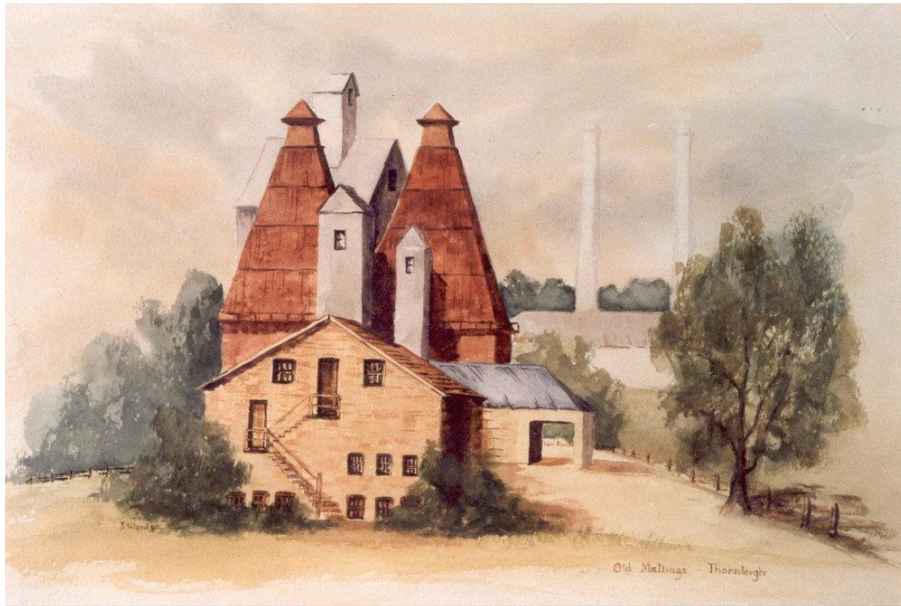
Heavy industry was located in pockets of the Shire, including notably at Thornleigh following the construction of the Main North Railway line. The *Sydney Morning Herald* predicted in 1913:

*The beautiful district of Thornleigh ... is likely to develop into a manufacturing centre. Only this week a very fine malting works erected on a large scale was officially opening by the Premier. Brickworks have been established and factories are likely to follow.*¹⁵

The National Brickworks was established first in 1901, serviced by its own rail siding adjoining the railway between Thornleigh and Normanhurst. The brickworks operated on the site until 1975.

*The land covers about seven acres, the subsoil consisting of shale and very suitable clay, on which are erected a large patent "Hardy" kiln...and two other kilns, altogether having a total capacity of about half a million bricks.*¹⁶

In 1912 the newly formed NSW Malting Company purchased Cheetham's 12-acre orchard at Thornleigh adjoining the Main North railway line. The company erected a large maltings and a private siding running into the works, which were completed by July 1913. The new maltings was opened on 28 August 1913 by the premier, WA Holman. The maltworks was built for around £15,000, and the company expected to produce between 90,000 and 100,000 bushels of malt per season, the equivalent of around one-fifth of the amount of malt still being purchased from other states.¹⁷



Watercolour painting by J Woods of Old Maltings, Thornleigh, undated. The National Brickworks can be seen in the background. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Further north along the railway line, the Hornsby Tile, Pottery and Brickworks Ltd commenced business in 1912 at Hornsby/Asquith. The company amalgamated with Fowlers Pottery in 1919. Local residents complained regularly about the smoke nuisance posed by the emissions from the stacks. Their hopes were realised during the Depression when the factory ceased operation.



Workers constructing one of the large chimney stacks at the Hornsby Tile, Pottery and Brickworks, 1915. (Source: Somerville Collection, Hornsby Shire Recollects)

West of Hornsby Junction lay Old Mans Valley and the Hornsby Quarry. Located in the Hornsby Diatreme, the quarry was operated privately from 1905, run by the Shire Council during the 1920s and taken over by CSR in 1959. It operated until 2003. There was also a major sandstone quarry at Thornleigh, necessitating the construction of a zigzag railway track. The other main quarry in the Shire was situated at Dural. From the 1970s a thriving sandmining industry was established at Maroota, east and west of the Old Northern Road. As recently as 2016 the State Government approved the expansion of the Roberts Road sand quarry, which lies in close proximity to the Maroota Public School.¹⁸

In the 1950s, in the wake of the County of Cumberland Planning Scheme, a secondary industrial zone was established along Asquith Creek east of Sherbrook and Salisbury Roads, Asquith. The Elastic Rail Spike (Aust) Pty Ltd

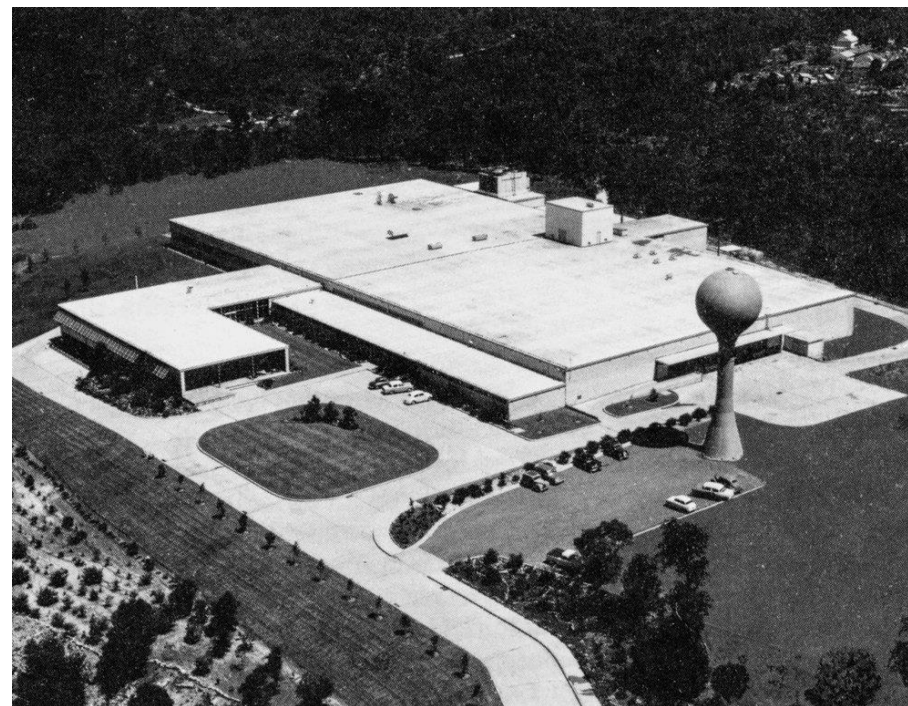
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was the first factory erected in this area, closely followed in 1951/1952 by the Australian Crane Co Pty Ltd. Wrigleys (Australasia) Pty Ltd erected a large factory at Asquith in 1957 for the manufacture of chewing gum. This was located on 39 acres east of the Asquith Railway Station.

Today the major industrial centres in the Shire are located at Waitara, Asquith, Thornleigh and Mount Kuring-gai, which are located on major transport corridors providing easy and quick access to the Sydney CBD, airport and port. In 2017, 110 hectares of industrial and urban services land—the largest such areas within the Shire—was located at Asquith and Mount Kur-ring-gai.¹⁹



Hornsby Shire Councillors and Shire Clerk at commencement of construction of the Wrigley's Factory in Asquith, 1957. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Wrigley's Chewing Gum Factory, Asquith, c1960. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Another significant employer and service sector within the Shire is the retail industry. The first stores in the district had appeared by the end of the 1870s. They functioned as general stores, offering a range of items from groceries to saddlery, hay and fodder, and often also served as the local post office. These early shops were usually located in the front room of the shopkeeper's residence, like James Ware's on Pennant Hills Road, Thornleigh.

Thomas Thompson opened a store at 'the Corner', Pennant Hills, about this time. The original store 'was a tumble-down weather-board building'.²⁰ He extended his store in 1886 to expand his stock so that he could 'supply the neighbourhood with almost anything they require'.²¹ The adjacent bakery baked bread for the district, whilst carts from Thompson's store delivered

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goods all over the district. Far from the railway line, general stores were opened at Galston and Dural in the 1880s to provide for the immediate grocery needs of the residents of the more rural areas.



James Ware's store, Pennant Hills Road, Thornleigh. c 1870. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

New general stores and shops sprang up around the new railway stations to service the needs of the new residents. Pennant Hills Station became a thriving shopping centre, beginning with Eaton's Hotel, a nursery, blacksmith and the Railway Stores. At Beecroft, Thomas Stobo opened the first general store in 1893 and was joined in 1905 by Samuel Higgins. In 1898 Thomas Thompson built a 'commodious shop and produce store' at Thornleigh and installed Lewis Thompson to run the business. Nearby a new hotel was

nearing completion and a short distance away lay Keegan's blacksmithing and shoeing forge. As the *Cumberland Argus* noted:

This portion of the district is beginning to gradually assume quite a business-like aspect.²²

The Shire's major service centre developed at Hornsby Railway Junction. The shops and businesses provided a raft of services for the local township and the surrounding rural areas of Galston and beyond. The Railway Hotel and the Hornsby Junction Emporium opened near the station and other businesses followed. By 1905 there was a bootmaker's shop, the Hornsby Butchery Company and James Miner's drapery store, which faced JG Edward's estate agency across the street. Farther on, there was another bootmaker, Mansell's fruit and refreshment rooms, and Carpenter's newsagency. Also located along Colah Street (now Coronation Street) were Smith & Co, a bakery, and hairdresser's salon, Hobson's pharmacy, Willington's grocery store, Webb's produce store and the drapery shop of Luce and Company.

A recent report by the Hornsby Shire Council names retail as one of the area's key employment sectors, accounting for about 8,000 jobs (2017–18) and close to 1000 registered businesses in the Shire. The retail industry is centred on Hornsby, where Westfield Shopping Centre has a floor space of nearly 100,000m². It was opened as Westfield Plaza in July 1961. The former Northgate Shopping Centre opened in November 1979. Westfield purchased Northgate in 1999 and undertook a major redevelopment of both sites, completing the new centre in 2001.

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- ¹¹ 'State Fisheries', *Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser*, 26 June 1936, p 4, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article141521020>>.
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- ¹⁴ Hawkins, R 2019, Singletons Mill Hawkesbury River, Hornsby Shire Council, Hornsby Shire Recollects.
- ¹⁵ 'Progress of the Suburbs XIII Strathfield to Hornsby', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 August 1913, p 8, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article15446560>>.
- ¹⁶ 'National Brickworks', *Evening News*, 27 August 1903, p 6, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article115857768>>.
- ¹⁷ 'Mr. Holman on the Beer', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 30 August 1913, p 8, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85968858>>.
- ¹⁸ NSW Government, Department of Planning and Environment, Media release, 'Department approves proposal to extend the life of sand quarry in Maroota, 21 March 2016', viewed 11 March 2021 <<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/News/2016/Department-approves-proposal-to-extend-the-life-of-sand-quarry-in-Maroota>>.
- ¹⁹ 'Retaining and managing industrial and urban services land', Greater Sydney Commission, viewed 14 January 2021 <<https://www.greater.sydney/north-district-plan/productivity/jobs-and-skills-city/retaining-and-managing-industrial-and-urban>>.
- ²⁰ 'A District Identity-Mr Thomas Thompson', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 17 April 1897, p 14, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 25 Aug 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85774364>>.
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Belief and Faith



Bill May's first Communion at St Mary's Church, Brooklyn, 1930s.
(Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Belief and Faith

The Hornsby Shire represents a multitude of faiths. Shire residents have observed and practised a diverse range of faiths and beliefs over generations. From ancient landscapes, to suburbs interwoven with an array of Christian places of congregation to a contemporary diversity of faiths, the Shire has evolved to reflect the community's spiritual values and beliefs.

Rites and sacred rituals were moulded in the Shire's unique landscape from deep time. Rock platforms were often depicted in a series of galleries, with Ancestral Beings or Sky Heroes at the centre of the story. Every distinctive landscape feature was riven with mythological meaning and had purpose in guiding spiritual and daily life. Aboriginal engravings or paintings on significant landforms, including outcrops beside the river, depict creator spirits like the giant eel-being Gurangatty who carved the river with his body (Gunderman rock shelter) or Daramulan, both a destroyer and creator figure, whose voice was thunder (Maroota rock shelter).

Aboriginal beliefs, storytelling and spiritual practice were gendered, with a network of sites related to specific rituals. Bora/burbung ceremonies were associated with the initiation of young men coming of age and understanding spiritual knowledge. While less documented, women's sacred rites and knowledge are linked to sites in the Hawkesbury River and depicted further north at Wollemi in charcoal drawings showing dance, pregnancy and birth. The complexity of imagery layered on Aboriginal rock art sites suggests they were added to with each ceremony.¹

Rituals associated with Baiame Waganna documented during the 1830s saw dance and songs created to purge smallpox. The disease was incorporated into the belief system as a product of an evil spirit, Darawiigal. It is thought the Baiame Waganna rituals also sought to 'reassert Aboriginal men's claim to women, and stop women consorting with white men.'²



Engravings of stingrays (daringyan) on the Hawkesbury River. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

The mutability of beliefs shows a culture changing in response not just to the landscape, but the influx of colonisation.

Just as the hidden valleys, creeks and scale of the Hawkesbury River shaped Aboriginal beliefs, the colonists' beliefs were quickly imprinted by this landscape. Places of worship along the river and inland were also subject to biblical-like forces of flood, bushfire and storms which left devastation in their wake. The ruin of St John's Church on Bar Island bears testament to a congregation long gone after the building was damaged in a violent storm. When the church was in operation, drawing worshippers to the island had

proved challenging, with a bell rung out across the river to signal services proving ineffective:

it was said if that, if the wind blew in one direction, those on Peat Island would not hear it, and if it blew in the other, those on Milson Island missed out, so a rifle used to be fired over the water, as its sound carried much better than that of the bell.³

In the early colonial period, without formal churches, ministers or burial grounds, people were buried beside the river at places like Laughtondale. Well into the twentieth century the bushland setting of the Shire provided an informal open-air setting for Christian groups to meet and worship, continuing the tradition of early Methodist preachers who toured the Hawkesbury–Nepean during the 1820s.

Later, the formation of Methodist chapels in scattered settlements provided not only the means of satisfying religious needs, but also the opportunity for pioneers who lived in relative isolation to make regular contact with other families. The Lower Hawkesbury circuit was created by division from Windsor circuit in 1838, yet reunited with Windsor in 1842, and split again in 1866; in 1886 it was divided to form a part of Gosford, renamed Sackville in 1898, and renamed Hawkesbury in 1899. Worshippers had to contend with not only shifting divisions, but also the shifting tides of the river itself. Methodist spiritual revivals were disrupted by two of the worst floods in the Hawkesbury Valley especially in 1867.



Ruins of the church on Bar Island, photographed by Jim Hatfield. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



St Jude's Anglican Church, Dural. (Source: Keren Eldershaw)

In small and remote settlements across all faiths, private homes often sufficed as the place of worship until money could be raised to construct a church (eg Mt Ku-ring-gai Holy Trinity Anglican Church). Tea meetings were also an opportunity for raising money and social interaction. The first formal church services were documented around 1822, with the earliest churches built at Ebenezer and Wisemans Ferry (St Mary Magdalene).⁴

By the early Victorian era, the foundations of places of worship began to take shape. The Wesleyan Chapel of hand-hewn sandstone and a shingle roof was built at New Line Road in 1845 (known today as Cherrybrook Uniting Church) in the tradition of English Country Churches, with the cemetery opened on the vacant land that surrounded the original chapel. The following year, St Jude's Anglican Church at Dural was built at the corner of Old Northern and Galston Roads to Edmund Blacket's designs. The small English Village style church,

with a timber shingle roof and main gable crowned with a bell turret, remains a beautiful early example of a sacred place within the Shire. The next oldest church in the Shire is thought to be St Paul's Anglican Church at Pearce's Corner, Wahroonga. It was built in c1865 as a wooden church, but replaced with stone in the Victorian Gothic style in 1881. Many of the later Anglican churches at Hornsby, Berowra, Waitara, Normanhurst, and St Andrew's, Wahroonga, grew from St Paul's Church. Strong links were also forged with Anglican schools Barker College (1890) and Abbotsleigh School (1885).⁵ The reach of Anglicanism into remote parts of the Shire was extended in the postwar period with the construction of St Luke's on Galston and Somerville Roads, Hornsby Heights, in 1951.

The Anglican and Protestant faiths of the Shire were also influenced by international movements such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), which began in the United States in 1873. The Sydney chapter was launched in 1882. Formed to stop the consumption of alcohol, it became a proponent of 'first wave' feminism, promoting suffrage and the protection of infants, and calling for the age of consent to be lowered. The Wahroonga-Hornsby branch was established. The Hornsby Women's League established the 6pm closing of hotels in the district. Beecroft and Cheltenham remained 'dry' suburbs until after the Second World War.⁶

The decline in small chapel congregations in the region was associated partly with the enormous increase in personal mobility. The arrival of the railway in the later nineteenth century brought new settlers and created demand for permanent, larger places of worship. St Peter's Church of England, Hornsby, opened to a large gathering on 18 April 1898. Yet the church was ill fated; a bushfire destroyed the building in 1913 and the organ and roof were destroyed again by bushfires in 1957.



Window of Cherrybrook Uniting Church. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

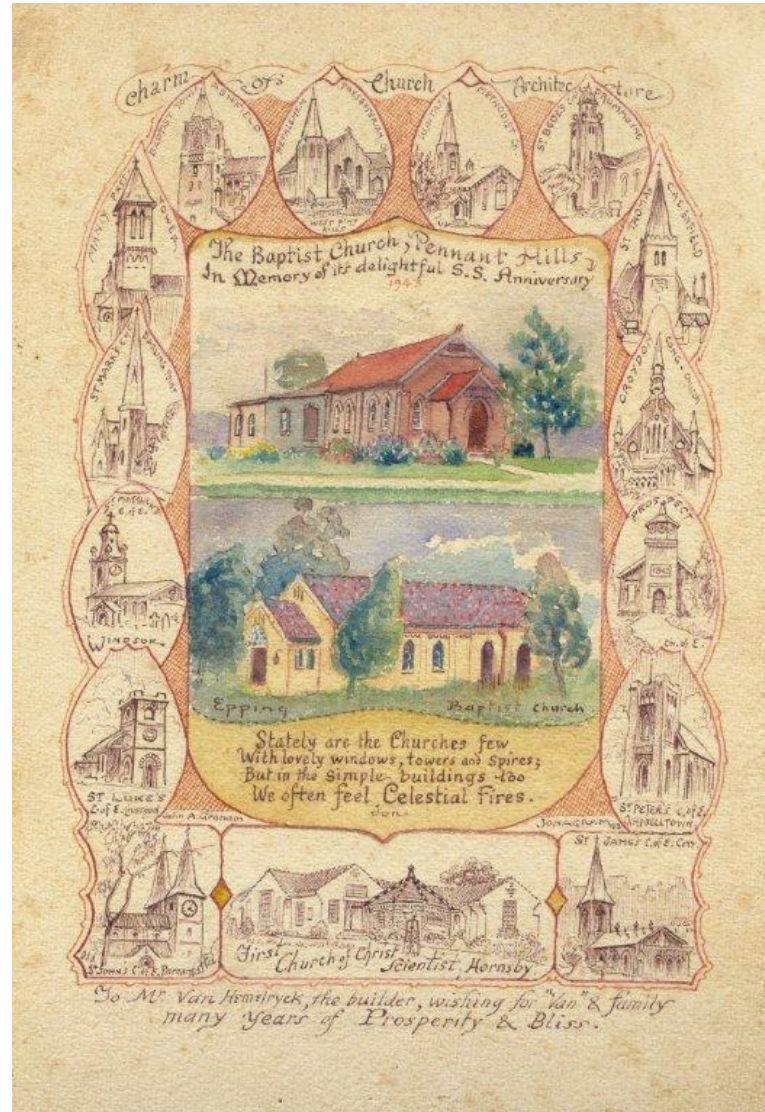


Illustration of Pennant Hills Baptist Church. (Source: Patricia Dewey Collection, Hornsby Shire Recollects)

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While Catholicism had been practised since the initiation of the colony, the Roman Catholic Parish of North Sydney was only formally established in 1856, extending to Brooklyn.⁷ St John's Church in Parramatta and later Dolphin Hall in Epping were the centres for Catholic service. St Patrick's Church in Asquith was built in 1938 and by 1967 boasted a large congregation. Significant Catholic institutions were also established for high school education. In 1897, Loreto Normanhurst was established by the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary or Sisters of Loreto. Mother Gonzaga Barry led the Loreto nuns to Sydney from Ballarat in 1892, initially establishing a school in Randwick before purchasing land for a convent at Hornsby. The Catholic De La Salle Brothers purchased the Oakhill property in 1932 and opened the school with just four students in 1936. Its then rural location saw the student population swell slowly before the site was expanded into a training college for the brothers. Later at Pennant Hills, the Sisters of the Good Samaritan of the Order of St Benedict established a training ground for Sisters before incorporating a Catholic girls school—Mount St Benedict College in 1987. The Diocese of Broken Bay was established in 1986 and today takes in Hornsby (combining parishes of Waitara Cathedral—Our Lady of the Rosary), Normanhurst, Asquith (St Patrick), Berowra (St Bernard), and Brooklyn (Peace Chapel).

At Thornleigh, St George Church, formally known as St Joachim, has been the spiritual home for Lebanese migrants in the area since the early 1900s. People from northern Lebanese villages including Bann migrated to Sydney and chose to live in the suburb of Thornleigh because the wide, open landscape reminded them of their hometowns in Lebanon.



Opening of the kitchen at Cherrybrook Uniting Church, 1980. (Source: Ralph Hawkins Collection, Hornsby Shire Recollects)

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In the twentieth century, small churches flourished in the upper North Shore and Hills District, which became known as 'Sydney's bible belt'. In Wahroonga the Seventh Day Adventists established a sanatorium to train medical missionaries. Later a Seventh Day Adventist Youth Camp was run at Crosslands Reserve. Hornsby Baptist Church materialised in 1903 on the corner of College Crescent and Pretoria Parade (now demolished), fulfilling a need at a time when the closest Baptist church was at Parramatta.

The post-Second World War population boom saw the growth of Pentecostal churches. Baptist congregations delivered Sunday School education and 'church planting', which supported purchase of land, with a provision of pastors and low interest loans for church buildings (such as Hornsby Heights Baptist Church). The global impact of American Southern Baptist Billy Graham's tours in 1959 was felt locally in Hornsby with the growth of Christian Education Associations, evangelical activities such as youth groups (Waitara Gospel Chapel) and new outreach programs (Brethren Assembly, Asquith Gospel Hall). At Arcadia the Wesley Vision Valley was established in 1972, offering space for a retreat in picturesque bushland as well as camps for disadvantaged children, young children and families.

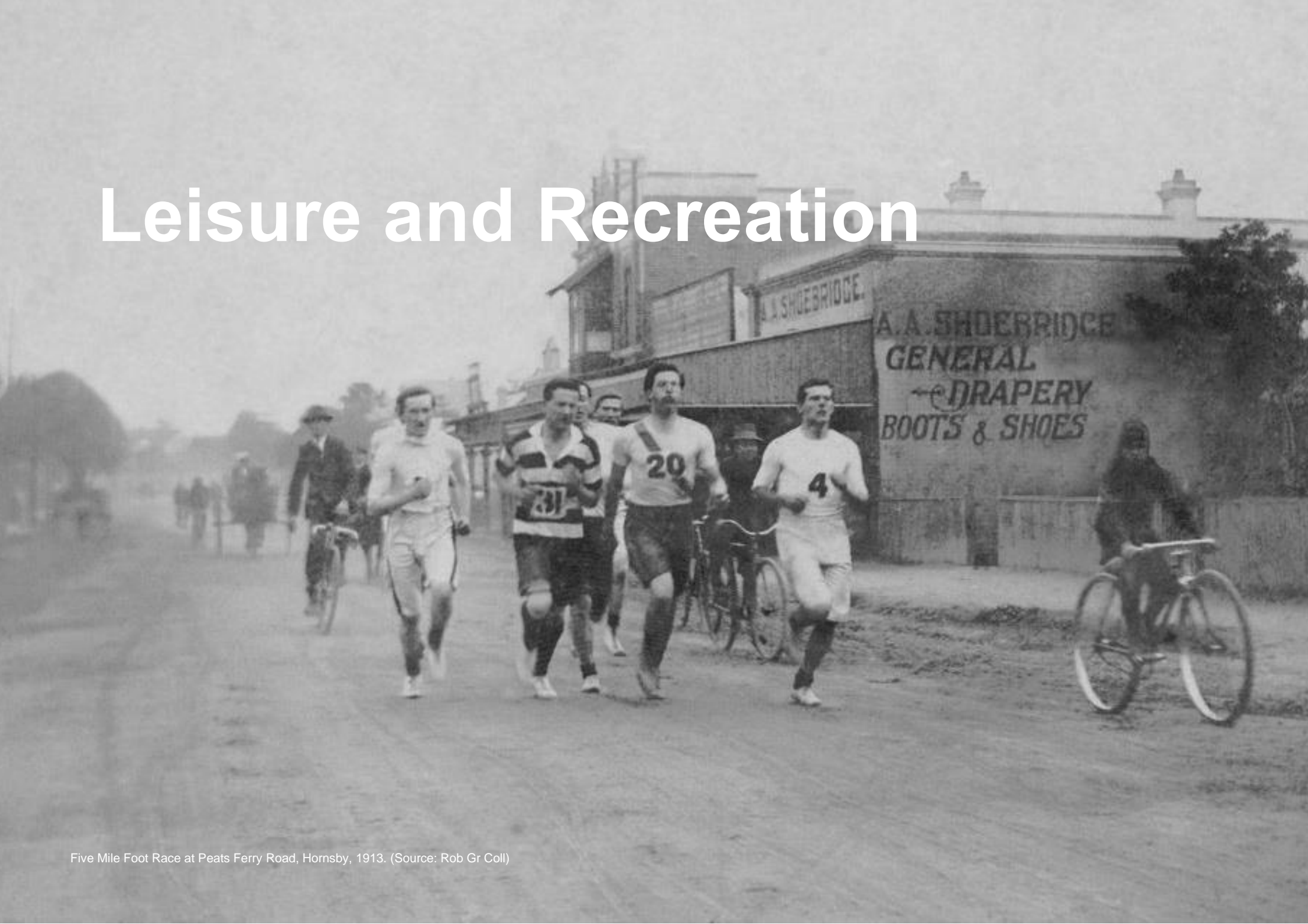
Today, while religion is generally in decline (a higher portion of the Hornsby Shire population nominated no religion compared with the Greater Sydney average) Christianity is still the largest religious group in the Shire (20.8% Catholic, 15.5% Anglican, 4% Uniting Church) reported overall in the 2016 census. Small but significant new faiths have emerged in the area, including Hinduism (4.6%), Buddhism (3.0%) and Islam (1.5%).⁸ Former places of Christian worship have been transformed—for example the former Uniting Church at Waitara now houses the Tibetan Buddhist Centre. Others have embraced multi-faith services, such as the Baha'i Centre at Hornsby. Multilingual services recognise the changing face of Hornsby, with the former Brethren Assembly Gospel Hall now the Australia Ling Liang Church conducting gatherings in English and Chinese. This reflects the broader trend of increasing diversity within metropolitan Sydney.



Loreto Normanhurst, 1897. (Source: Hornsby Shire Historical Society)

- ¹ Karskens, G 2020, *People of the River: Lost worlds of early Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, p 513.
- ² Karskens, G 2020, *People of the River: Lost worlds of early Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest , p 510.
- ³ Ollif, L 1975, *There must be a river: the history of the Shire of Hornsby*, Ollif Publishing Co., 1975, p 79.
- ⁴ Ollif, L 1975, *There must be a river: the history of the Shire of Hornsby*, Ollif Publishing Co., p 73.
- ⁵ St Paul's, Wahroonga, viewed 13 January 2021 <<http://stpaulswahroonga.com/about-st-pauls-wahroonga/>>.
- ⁶ 'Early Closing Economy', *The Sun*, 14 September 1930, p 35, Trove, National Library of Australia, viewed 3 September 2021 <<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/224233391>>; 'Temperance', *The Daily Telegraph*, 5 May 1905, p 8, Trove, National Library of Australia, viewed 3 September 2021 <<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/239507982>>; 'Social & Personal', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 December 1935, p 7, Trove, National Library of Australia, viewed 3 September 2021 <<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/17231478>>.
- ⁷ Ollif, L 1975, *There must be a river: the history of the Shire of Hornsby*, Ollif Publishing Co., p 84.
- ⁸ Hornsby Shire Religion, Hornsby Shire Council, id community, community profile, viewed 18 January 2021 <<https://profile.id.com.au/hornsby/religion>>.

Leisure and Recreation



Five Mile Foot Race at Peats Ferry Road, Hornsby, 1913. (Source: Rob Gr Coll)

Leisure and Recreation

The Hornsby Shire presents numerous opportunities for recreational, sporting, arts and leisure activities. Much of this activity pertains to the area's extensive tracts of bushland, parks, gardens and Hawkesbury River frontages.

Convict sawyers spent Sundays (Sabbath) carrying out mundane tasks that they were unable to perform during the week. Alexander Harris, when walking through the bush in the Pennant Hills district one Sunday morning in 1827, encountered large numbers of sawyers relaxing from their labours:

In many of the huts I found the men washing their shirts, some few, but very few, had had them washed by their mates' wives the week before and had them on. Many were sharpening their saws, a pit saw wanting an extra running down once a week. In other places, little knots were sitting on their piles of timber or under the shade of a tree smoking. Some again I met wandering twos and threes together through the bush looking for "good trees" for the coming week. The general style of dress was lace-up boots, duck trousers, check shirt, coloured silk neckerchief, and straw hat. One or two had got so far as white brown socks and pumps, with a stylish blue jacket and waistcoat and black hat for Sundays.¹

Bushland makes up a significant part of Hornsby Shire's character. The Shire is rich with sites of Aboriginal heritage significance, the natural landscapes of the Hornsby Plateau and various ecological communities. Ku-ring-gai Chase, Berowra Valley National and Regional Park, Bobbin Head and Marramarra National Park are all located in the Shire. Cumberland State Forest adjoins the Shire to the south of Pennant Hills Road.

Some of the earliest bushwalking clubs in Sydney include Myles Dunphy's Mountain Trails Club (1914), Coast and Mountain Walkers (1934), and Sydney Bush Walkers (1927). Bushwalking became popular in the 1930s, coinciding with the Great Depression. As average incomes shrank, people increasingly turned to bushwalking as an inexpensive, healthy form of recreation. Walkers

were increasingly attracted to the bushland areas between the Hawkesbury River and the urban areas of the district. The *Daily Telegraph* reported in 1931 'walking is becoming as characteristic of the 1930's [sic] as cycling was of the "nineties"'. The Sydney Bushwalkers and the Langridge Joy Club were two of the organised groups promoting bushwalking in Sydney at this time.

North of Sydney...there are charming byways in plenty' and the Bushwalkers have "done" all Kuring-gai Chase as well as Berowra and the Hawkesbury country generally.²

In 1932–1933 FJ Palmer & Son Ltd sponsored at least five 'Mystery Hike' events around Sydney in conjunction with NSW Railways in 1932 and 1933. The third Mystery Hike was run in the Hawkesbury region, from Cowan Station to Hawkesbury River on 24 July 1932. Twelve special trains carried almost 8,000 participants.³

Berowra Valley National and Regional Park, Marramarra National Park and Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park provided multiple opportunities for bushwalking. Some of the trails in the Berowra Valley National Park were more challenging than others, rewarding bushwalkers with unparalleled views and vistas of the Hawkesbury River. The *Labor Daily* wrote in July 1932:

The Hawkesbury Country, in particular that wide area between the river and Cowan and Berowra Creeks, is particularly adapted to a more ambitious and exacting type of rambling.⁴

The walking trails are now increasingly popular for mountain bikers. It was no accident that bushwalking and hiking boomed in this period as it was an inexpensive pastime open to people of all skills and fitness levels. During the Great Depression, Hornsby Shire Council directed manpower under the government unemployment relief schemes towards the formation of bush tracks in the area, including a flight of steps built at Hornsby Heights and today known as the Hornsby Heritage Steps. This stairway was built during the Great Depression and links walkers to the Great North Walk and Berowra Valley Regional Park.



Hilda Kelly documents a 15-mile walking trip from Rogans Hill to Hornsby, 1920. Here the group is pictured on a truss bridge in Galston Gorge. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Parts of the Shire fall along the route of the Great North Walk (GNW), the 250-kilometre path from Sydney to downtown Newcastle. The track was an Australian Bicentennial project opened in 1988 and named after the convict-built Great North Road. An estimated 40,000 people walk part of the trail each year.⁵ There are also many other bushland walks and trails throughout the Shire including Bar Island Walk, McKell Park Walk (Brooklyn), Carrs Bush Walk (Galston), Mambara Track (Pennant Hills), Dangar Island Walk, Callicoma Walk (Cherrybrook) and Beecroft–Cheltenham Link Track.

Life in colonial Australia was more heavily structured with sports, games, pastimes and social interactions deriving from eighteenth-century England. People worked long hard hours, usually six days a week, and communities—particularly in the settlements along the Hawkesbury River—made time for social events and gatherings, horse races, hunting, fishing, pubs and organised sporting competitions, the latter predominantly the preserve of men.⁶ The formation of churches offered alternative avenues for fun and

pleasure to the amusements of cockfighting, shooting, horseracing, gambling and drinking which prevailed in the colonial life of the Shire.

In 1838 the Rev Mr Aitchison, newly appointed Presbyterian Minister to Parramatta, was shocked and saddened to learn that the ‘decent and numerous congregation assembled...had all been swept away by the attraction of a Sunday’s boxing match at the Pennant Hills on a Sunday, the Sabbath’.⁷

Other organised events included a horse race meeting on the flat ground near Wisemans Ferry on 27 December 1857 over two days.⁸ Such local races attracted residents and visitors along the river and the Great North Road. Race meetings were reportedly held at Wisemans Ferry until the 1950s. By the 1890s popular sports in the Cumberland Direct (including the present-day Shire of Hornsby) included cricket, football, boxing, rowing, cycling and tennis. The *Cumberland Argus* devoted a column to reports on sporting matches and meetings throughout the wider district.

In 1878 a cricket match was played in the volcanic crater (diatreme) in Muogamarra between South Colah and Peats Ferry. Some of Hornsby’s other sporting clubs date back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, such as the Pennant Hills Cricket Club (c1885), Beecroft Croquet Club (c1913), Dural Tennis Club (1890), Thornleigh Bicycle Club (1900), Glenorie Cricket Club (by 1893) and Pennant Hills Tennis Club (1896).

Tennis was one of the more popular sports and pastimes enjoyed by both women and men. A multitude of clubs sprouted up across the breadth of the Shire ranging from public courts in Hornsby’s parks, next to churches and community halls, to private tennis courts in backyards and the extensive gardens of the Shire’s more elite residences. The Kennedya Tennis Club was a private tennis club at Beecroft formed by August 1896, when it was recorded as numbering over 40 members.⁹ New tennis courts were formed on the village green in 1898 for the Kennedya Tennis Club, ‘the whole of the required space has been entirely cleared of the heavy timber with which it was studded

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and the excavations have been commenced'.¹⁰ The tennis club survives as part of the Cheltenham Recreation Club.



Pennant Hills Cricket Team, 1885. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Population growth and increased sporting participation led to the formation of sportsgrounds, ovals and other recreational facilities for passive and active recreational pursuits throughout the district. Prior to formation of Hornsby Shire Council in 1906, parks and reserves were developed and maintained by trustees, with local residents applying to the state government for funds for development and maintenance works. Hence, some of Hornsby's sportsgrounds, parks and playgrounds were set aside as recreational reserves prior to 1906 including Hornsby Park (1896), Waitara Park (1903–1904) and Beecroft Village Green (1894). Cheltenham Oval/Park was not formed until

1907 and was initially managed by trustees until it was taken over by the Shire Council several years later.



Ryland & Morse company workers playing tennis on Dangar Island, c1887–1889. (Source: First Hawkesbury River Railway Bridge Collection, Ryland & Morse Series, Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Today the Shire's sporting and recreational needs are exceptionally well catered to, with more than 184 parks and 137 playgrounds. The sports facilities are extensive and include 40 sportsground complexes, 42 netball courts, 72 tennis courts, two BMX facilities, five skate parks, three aquatic centres, and one indoor recreation centre.



Waitara Sports Store, at Waitara Avenue, Waitara. Jack McDonnell, Hazel Dillon and Tom McDonnell are pictured at front, c1930s. (Source: Fay Donaldson [McDonnell], Hornsby Shire Recollects)

The picturesque Hawkesbury River forms the northern border of the Shire. Along the river are waterside towns, parks and reserves, and places to swim, fish and boat. The Hawkesbury was a recreational destination from the 1830s, though it was English novelist Anthony Trollope who popularised the river as a tourist destination after he accompanied ministers and the premier on a two-day trip on the river in December 1871. He later published an effusive description of the Hawkesbury in his 1873 book *Australia and New Zealand*. In it he compared the Hawkesbury to the Rhine, writing:

the headlands are higher, the bluffs are bolder and the turns and manoeuvres of the course which the waters have made for themselves are grander ... The lower part of the river, that between Wiseman's Ferry and Pittwater ... is very much finer than the upper reaches.

One of the more significant cruises in the Shire took place in Easter 1891 when the Australian Constitution was drafted onboard the Queensland government steamship *Lucinda* during a cruise on the Hawkesbury River. Other notable visits include those of the Duke and Duchess of York (1901) and the Prince of Wales (1920). Henry Dangar entertained numerous dignitaries between 1894 and 1917 on Mullet Island (now Dangar Island), yet another attraction on the Hawkesbury River.

From the early 1800s the Hawkesbury River had drawn artists from Sydney. Plein-air artists such as Arthur Streeton, Charles Conder, Sydney Long and Julian Ashton made painting expeditions to the region in the 1880s and 1890s. George Collingridge was so inspired by his love for the area that he purchased 88 acres on the foreshores of Berowra Creek in 1880 and lived here for several years. He and his brother Arthur painted the landscape of the district. Other artists were drawn to the Shire for its landscape qualities, healthy environment, cheap housing and proximity to transport. Jesse Jewhurst Hilder, Margaret Preston, Jimmy Bancks and George Lambert are just a few of the artists who lived in the area for varying periods of time. Hornsby Shire has also developed a robust arts and crafts community. The Hornsby Shire Foundation for the Arts operated from 1964 to 1992, Wheel 'N' Weft commenced in 1976, and the Valley Artists, Arcadian Artists and Hornsby Art Society are other organisations providing fellowship and facilities for locals to explore their creativity. The Council has an arts and culture program, promotes the Hornsby Shire Arts Network and runs an annual acquisitive art prize.

Houseboats, launches and motor boats could be hired at numerous boatsheds along the river, including Windybank's on Cowan Creek, Bujwa Point, Jerusalem Bay, Brooklyn (Barneys), Berowra (Jones and Son), Wisemans Ferry and Crosslands. From 1894 Edward Windybank hired 30 boats from a site in Cowan Creek (Waratah Bay). He later built houseboats to let as holiday homes. Halvorsens Marina at Bobbin Head was possibly the largest facility in the Shire from the end of World War II. By the early 1980s Halvorsens was operating about 60 hire boats at its Bobbin Head marina.



Brochure for Halvorsen Holidays, Hawkesbury River, 1950s.
(Source: National Maritime Museum)

At Melvys Wharf, Paul and Wendy Pigneguy established an ecotourism centre in 1979 and currently run the Riverboat Postman Cruises.¹¹



Two young boys boating in Merriman's Bay, Berowra Creek, c1900s. Photograph by John Henry Harvey. (Source: State Library of Victoria, FL16032607)

Many of the boats were hired to fishermen as the Hawkesbury was a prime fishing location where bream, jewfish, flathead and whiting could be readily caught. Some fishermen launched their own boats from ramps along the length of the river, notably at Mooney Mooney and Wisemans Ferry. The river

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was not the only local destination for fishermen; in 1916 the area known as the Fish Ponds near the rifle range at Hornsby (Hornsby Reserve) was stocked with bass fish to provide sport for anglers.¹² The fish ponds were still operating in 1920.



Boating area near Bobbin Head, c1970. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Beyond boating and fishing, the Shire's extensive waterways also catered to canoeists and swimmers. There were numerous water holes and swimming pools throughout the district. These included the Fish Ponds at Hornsby, the picnic grounds at Crosslands, pool in Bridge Gully near Mount Wilga, Devlins Creek at Berowra ('Blue Pool'), Linda Pool at Bobbin Head, bathing pool at Beecroft, Rex Jones Swimming Pool at Berowra Waters (March 1937) and Hornsby Olympic Swimming Pool (1962).



Sanatorium Hotel, Brooklyn, on the Hawkesbury River, c1890s. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

To accommodate the influx of visitors, hotels and guesthouses sprang up at popular tourist locations such as Brooklyn, Berowra and Cowan. The Sanatorium Hotel was built at Brooklyn in 1888. It occupied a site at the top of the hill above the present Wharf Street. The first proprietor, Jeremiah Murphy, boasted the new hotel was 'replete with all the requirement for tourists and visitors; including hot and cold water, salt water baths for visitors, gas throughout the house (a novelty)', boating and fishing, proximity to the railway station and 'choicest wines, liquors, spirits, beers, etc'.¹³



Riverview Guesthouse, Berowra Waters, c1930s. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

The 1906 Guesthouse, Tourist Hotel and Boarding House Directory listed places at Berowra ('Tawhinne' near the station and 'Hillcrest'), Thoulah and Wee-Me-Lan at Berowra Creek, and two hotels and three boarding houses at Brooklyn. Weemalah Holiday Flats were built in the 1930s. The Riverview Guesthouse at Berowra Waters was run by Mrs Dan Cullen in 1933 and offered 'water frontage, superior accommodation, boats, swimming, fishing'.¹⁴ It was described in 1952 as a 'fishing lodge'.¹⁵ Alternative accommodation was offered from 1922 in Henry Dangar's home on Dangar Island following its conversion to a guesthouse offering a taste of island life in the middle of the Hawkesbury.

From Edward Windybank's Fairyland Boatshed, people could rent one of his cottages and houseboats that bore delightful names such as Slumberland, Pleasureland, Promiseland, Wonderland, Fairyland, Happyland and Elysium.

Accommodation options today range from hotels, Airbnb lodgings, vacation homes, bed and breakfast establishments to camping and caravanning sites.

Marramarra Lodge is a new luxury retreat on the Hawkesbury River offering eight glamping tents and seven bungalows.¹⁶

Australia's first steam motor car was developed in 1896 and the first petrol driven car in 1901, but it was not until the 1920s that car ownership became more popular, albeit only for wealthier members of society who could afford to buy a motorcar. The sight of a motorcar arriving at Hawkesbury River Railway Station (Brooklyn) in December 1917 was a novelty to the locals.

*The startled population rubbed its eyes, and those who had never before seen such a fearsome machines gaped from a respectable distance and marvelled at the audacious inventive genius of man...What made this feat wonderful to people at the "Oxbrer" and gives it heroic significance generally was that it was performed over the public road leading to those parts.*¹⁷

With the advent of the motor car from the 1920s, all of the Hornsby Shire became even more accessible to residents and visitors. In the 1920s local businesses advertised organised pleasure trips by road.

Of all forms of sport or pleasure, motoring is perhaps the most exhilarating, the most joyous, the most unselfish.¹⁸

By 1928 every sixth adult in New South Wales was a car owner and every eighth resident a licensed driver.¹⁹ During this period the Shire and Hawkesbury River were promoted as ideal touring resorts close to Sydney for daytrips, featuring 'miles of glorious mountain and river scenery' as in a 1930s flyer from the Berowra Coach Service.

In J Pearson's 'Route Map of 27 Specially Selected Trips within a Radius of 50 Miles of Sydney', route 17 was a 48-mile trip commencing at Hornsby travelling via Castle Hill, Dural, and Galstons Creek before returning along

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Lane Cove Road to Milsons Point via the North Shore. Pearson's route 25 was a 47-mile trip to Wisemans Ferry via Hornsby, Galston and Glenorie.

By the 1950s, one in 10 households had a car. Car ownership also made recreation spots like Bobbin Head in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park readily accessible for daytrips and holidays.



Car travelling along Galston Gorge Road, 1920s. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Cycling was one of the more popular sports and pastimes from the 1890s. This was occasioned by the development of the 'safety' bicycle which provided a cheaper and more comfortable ride. Hornsby was a popular destination for cyclists from across the Sydney region, with various clubs visiting the area to compete in races and explore the scenic delights of the district. Bicycles and racing were very much the preserve of men at this time and so in 1896 the sight of 'several lady cyclists attracted much attention in the district on Sunday last'.²⁰ Joseph Pearson published the *Cyclists' touring guide of New South Wales* in 1896 which contained suggested itineraries ranging from short rides

around Sydney to longer touring holidays across the state. Tour No. 2 was a two-day trip covering 119 miles: 63 miles was travelled on the first day from Sydney to Wisemans Ferry, while 56 miles was ridden on the second day from Wisemans Ferry to Sydney via Dural, Eastwood and Ryde.

The Hornsby District Club was officially opened in October 1906. Later the Hornsby District Amateur Cycling Club was formed, which held road races from Jersey Street, Hornsby, to Peats Ferry. In the 1970s the club merged with the Northern Suburbs Amateur Cycling Club to form the Northern Sydney Cycling Club based at Thornleigh.



Perce Wood of Thornleigh, here pictured in his car towing a boat in Railway Parade, Thornleigh, 1950. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Laurie Tonkin, a member of the Hornsby District Amateur Cycling Club, with his 1938 cycling trophy. (Source: Tonkin Collection, Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Bobbin Head picnic grounds and marina, 1950s. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

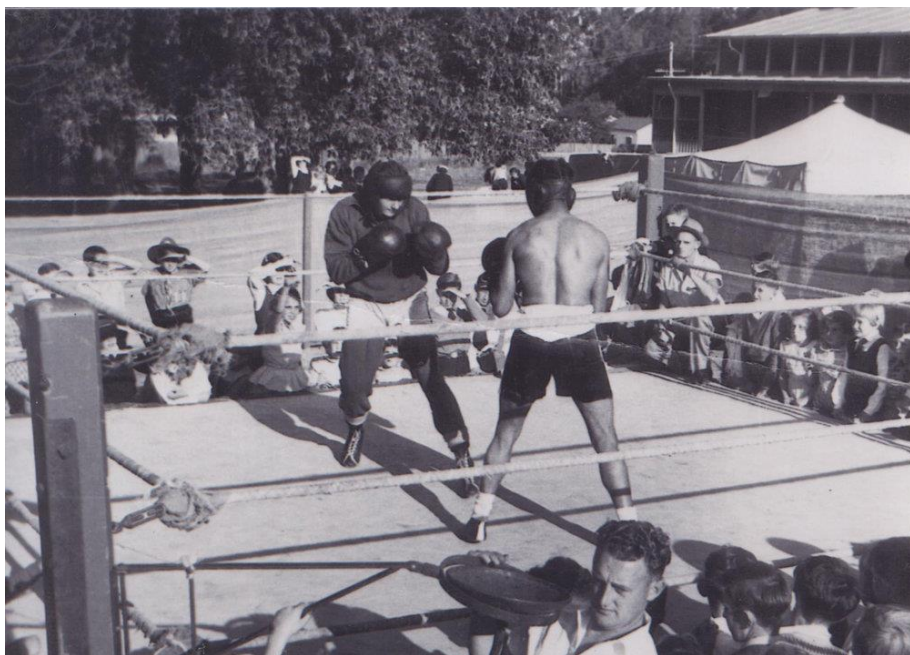
The Hornsby Shire also has 31 community centres and five libraries, facilitating the growth of arts and culture in the area. Schools of arts and literary institutes served an important function in the community, offering subscription libraries, halls for concerts, dances and other social events. The Hornsby School of Arts was founded in 1888 and the building opened in 1902. Beecroft School of Arts opened in 1904 and was extended in 1910 as the population grew. Other schools of arts were also located at Thornleigh and Galston.

Indoor pastimes were well catered for in the Shire. Young and old alike dressed to the nines flocked to venues such as the Pacific Cabaret in Hornsby

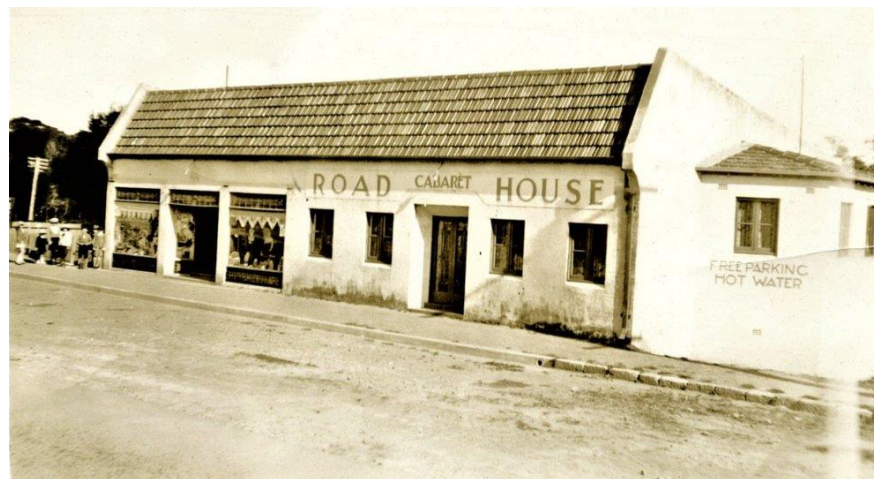
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and Berowra Roadhouse Cabaret to dance to live music. Both venues were built in the 1930s and hosted dances, concerts, picture shows and boxing.

Hornsby Cinema was originally built in 1912 and demolished in 1923 to make way for the present building. The new 'commodious picture theatre', with seating accommodation for over 2000 people, was erected by Mr Glover and was described by the *Cumberland Argus* as 'one of the best-appointed of its kind outside Sydney'.²¹ The Astra Theatre Thornleigh, formerly named Excelsior (c1924–c1928) then Prince of Wales (c1929–c1939), was owned by the Akhurst family. It was officially opened in 1924 and closed in September 1973 and later demolished. In more recent times, a cinema complex was opened in the Westfield Shopping Centre, Hornsby.



Boxing match between A Hamilton and H Godfrey, Mount Colah Public School, 1953. (Source: Somerville Collection, Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Berowra Road House Cabaret, 1930s. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Barrie Roache dancing with Carla Godfrey at the Pacific Cabaret, Hornsby, c1950s. (Source: Somerville Collection, Hornsby Shire Recollects)

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Shopping and dining out are also popular pastimes that make up part of the history of the Shire. In 1961 the Westfield Group built Hornsby Plaza, a shopping mall which marked a new era in the local retail experience. It proved an immediate success and expanded rapidly in 1968, 1976 and 1979. Northgate Shopping Centre opened in 1979 and was eventually purchased by Westfield. Westfield Hornsby opened in 2001, reflecting the significant growth and development of Hornsby as a retail centre.



Red Cross Ball, Old Hornsby Cinema, c1920. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

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- 1 'Beecroft and Cheltenham: The Shaping of a Sydney community to 1914', Beecroft Cheltenham History Group, 1995, p 27.
 - 2 'Walking Army Attracts Recruits', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10 October 1931, p 4, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article246572090>>.
 - 3 Palmers Mystery Hike at Hawkesbury River Railway Station 1932, Hornsby Shire Council, Hornsby Shire Recollects.
 - 4 'Younger Set For Each A.L.P. Branch', *The Labor Daily*, 20 July 1932, p 7, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article237054058>>.
 - 5 'How it all started', The Great North Walk Sydney to Newcastle, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://www.thegreatnorthwalk.com/history-of-great-north-walk/>>.
 - 6 Karskens, G 2020, *People of the River: Lost worlds of early Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, p 242.
 - 7 'Van Dieman's Land', *The Colonist*, 10 February 1838, p 3, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 15 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article31720425>>.
 - 8 'Advertising', *Bell's Life in Sydney and Sporting Reviewer*, 24 December 1858, p 1, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article59869842>>.
 - 9 'Lawn Tennis', *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 August 1896, p 7, Trove, National Library of Australia, viewed 3 September 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article238597137>>.
 - 10 'Beecroft', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 1 October 1898, p 12, Trove, National Library of Australia, viewed 3 September 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85836904>>.
 - 11 Melvys Wharf 2019, 'Our Bushland Shire', Part 2, p 84.
 - 12 'Hornsby', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 23 September 1916, p 8, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 15 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article86080949>>.
 - 13 'Advertising', *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 22 December 1888, p 42, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article71105752>>.
 - 14 'Advertising', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 January 1933, p 19, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article16947774>>.
 - 15 'Advertising', *Truth*, 6 July 1952, p 36, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 14 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article168012493>>.
 - 16 Billens, N 2020, 'Marramarra Lodge—a new luxury retreat on the Hawkesbury', Alquemie, viewed 15 January 2021 <<https://www.alquemie.com.au/marramarra-lodge/>>.
 - 17 'Motoring Feat', *The Daily Telegraph*, 7 December 1917, p 6, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 15 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article239237693>>.
 - 18 'Call of the Open Road', *The Triad*, 10 October 1924, p22, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 11 March 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1203867653>>.
 - 19 '1928 Figures', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 17 January 1929, p 12, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 15 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article104711165>>.
 - 20 'Along the Line', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 12 September 1896, p 10, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 12 March 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85765785>>.
 - 21 'Hornsby', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 20 January 1923, p 8, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 11 March 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article105918924>>.

Health and Wellness



Eileen Foster-Wall stands beside the entrance to the Hornsby and District Hospital.
(Source: Somerville Collection, Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Health and Wellness

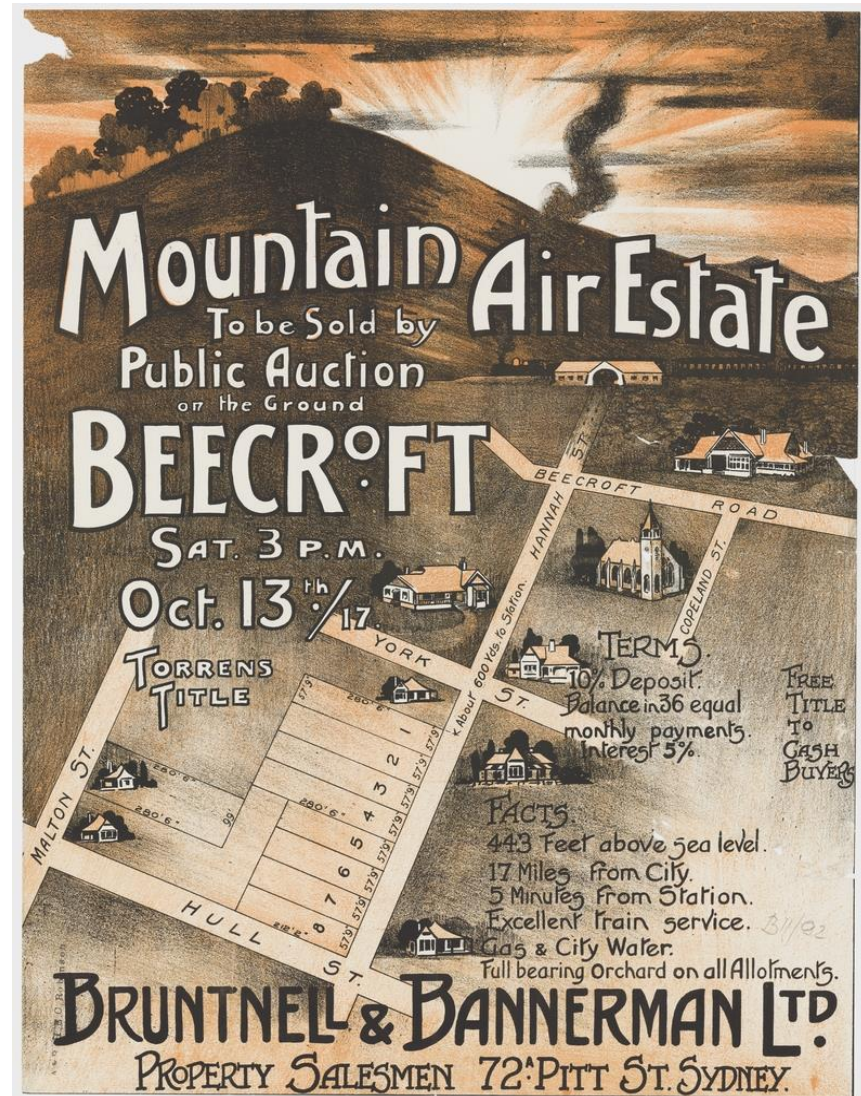
The Aboriginal connection to Country included an in-depth understanding of how to utilise the resources of the Shire for their health and medicinal properties. Remedies were crafted from bracken along creek beds to alleviate irritations such as ant bites, while nutrition was sought from Warrigal spinach (*Tetragonia tetragonioides*) found in estuarine areas and sarsaparilla harvested and used by Darug women for respiratory complaints. Incisions into the bark of turpentine trees to attract bees to the sap, and then trace the hives, were also deployed in the gathering of honey. After a child was born, tea tree bark was used to cosset and wrap the child. However, the devastation caused by smallpox and influenza irrevocably changed these traditional ways of life.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Australia like other parts of the world sought to remedy respiratory and other contagious illness with fresh air. The recuperative power of the Hornsby Plateau's fresh cool air engendered not only new residences, but also health and welfare institutions that have a continuing legacy today.

As trains connected the Beecroft and Cheltenham district to the rest of Sydney, the area transformed from productive agricultural lands into a desirable residential area especially for people with asthma or chronic lung problems seeking to protect their health.

On Sundays visitors frequently arrive in good numbers from the murky atmosphere of Sydney to enjoy the bracing breezes and lovely scenery hereabouts.¹

The Shire's potential as a sanatorium was realised with the Seventh Day Adventist Church establishment of Sydney Sanatorium (also known as the San) in 1903 at Wahroonga.



Mountain Air Estate subdivision, 1917. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

After the First World War, the Spanish Flu arrived on Australian shores with the return of troop ships. As a result of the epidemic, important health institutions were established in the Shire. The Red Cross worked with the Influenza Administrative Committee to establish convalescent hospitals and vaccine depots. One of the depots was at the School of Arts at Beecroft where vaccinations were administered. The Parents & Citizens Association of Beecroft Public School also raised money to install a spray room in which students sat for 10 minutes inhaling a fine spray of water and a sulphate of zinc, a practice discontinued when its efficacy in deterring the impact of the contagion was found to be nil and concerns of transmitting it within the room grew. A subsequent outbreak of tuberculosis among returning soldiers saw the re-establishment of the Red Cross in Beecroft and at Pennant Hills where the Malahide Private Hospital was acquired by the Australian Red Cross for use as a tuberculosis hospital (1925). Originally a timber house built on a 5-acre block on the corner of Bellamy Street and Boundary Road, it was used as cottage hospital. The Red Cross selected it as a rehabilitative hospital for its picturesque surroundings, ideal climate and proximity to the railway station. New weatherboard buildings with iron roofs or 'chalets' were erected, with a verandah allowing patients to spend the day in the fresh air.²

However, the area's sanitoriums were not welcomed by all residents. Some members of the Pennant Hills Citizens Association and other locals were against having so many people with tuberculosis in the suburb and requested that patients wear armbands when walking about the streets. Other citizens freely volunteered to provide entertainment for concert party groups or fundraising to support both patients and nurses. The matrons in charge had to manage not just the patients and staff, but also the farm attached to the site. By the 1950s the buildings were rundown. Only 15 patients were at the hospital when it closed in 1955.

Women played a remarkable role in the Shire's history as leaders within the health industry. In 1935, the former private home Pakenham was sold to the Misses Field, who established the St Kilda Private Hospital. It was run by

Matron Field with her sister as cook. The Malahide Hospital was run by Matron Rita Malcolm ran for 23 years. Malcom was awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal by the International Red Cross in 1950 for her work caring for patients of tuberculosis as well as the bubonic plague during the 1900 Sydney outbreak. She and Nurse Jane Starkey became emblems of the Shire's dedication to bettering its citizens' wellbeing.

Starkey founded the Hornsby branch of St John Ambulance & First Aid classes and set up welfare programs at Thornleigh to receive children from extreme poverty on the streets of Sydney. Starkey gave children from places like Woolloomooloo their first taste of fresh air and bush. In 1935, Starkey donated a building at Thornleigh, built through funding from her own savings, as a private hospital for ageing woman in receipt of their pension. The first public hospital established in the Shire, Hornsby and District Hospital opened in 1933 on the fundraising efforts of the local community and, for many years, of Starkey herself through her work with the Thornleigh Auxiliary Hospital Committee. It was to become the second largest hospital on the upper North Shore after the San, which had been operating for over 30 years.³

Through the generosity of Sister Starkey, a nine-roomed bungalow in Bellevue street, Thornleigh, has been given over to the Big Sister Movement as a home for old age pensioner women. And the peaceful countryside of this locality was roused from its somnolence one day last week by an invasion of energetic women getting it ready.⁴

Institutional care expanded in the Shire as agricultural and orchard lands were subdivided and sold at the turn of the century. The Sisters of Mercy established the Waitara Foundling Home (1897) in Charles Leek's former orchard. By 1902, the Foundling Home building accommodated babies and unmarried mothers, who were referred from hospitals throughout the eastern

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states of Australia. The home was granted 5 shillings per week by the NSW Government for every orphan under its care. Where possible, mothers remained with their children until weaned. A preschool for the resident children was opened in 1925. In 1928, the institution became the Our Lady of Mercy Home, housing unmarried mothers and children from birth to 15 years old.



Malahide Hospital at Pennant Hills. (Source: Hornsby Shire Historical Society)

For some, the legacy of these institutions represents an unwanted intervention into their lives that had devastating consequences. Aboriginal woman Lynda Yarnold was forced to give up her baby son at the Our Lady of Mercy Home, Waitara, in 1970. As an unmarried woman, Lynda had her son taken from her and put up for adoption after she gave birth.⁵ In 2013, then prime minister Julia Gillard apologised on behalf of the Australian Government to people affected

by forced adoption or removal policies and practices after a Senate committee estimated there had been 150,000 forced adoptions around Australia between 1951 and 1975. In 1977, the Our Lady of Mercy Home was replaced by the Mercy Family Life Centre, which evolved as a Catholic welfare program that included counselling, welfare, emergency accommodation, educational services to families, child care services and aged care services.

Other places in the Shire provide a stark reminder of how attitudes to mental health have changed. In Pennant Hills, Chelmsford Private Hospital became known for controversial treatment for psychiatric illnesses using deep sleep and electroconvulsive therapies. These 'therapies' resulted in the deaths of at least 24 people. Milson Island on the Hawkesbury River was set aside, along with Peat Island, for institutional use at the turn of the twentieth century. Asylums were established to treat alcoholism, with the view that isolation would remove them from the temptations of urban life.



Children at Waitara taken on outings. (Source: 'Looking Back: A Foundling Home at Waitara', Find and Connect)

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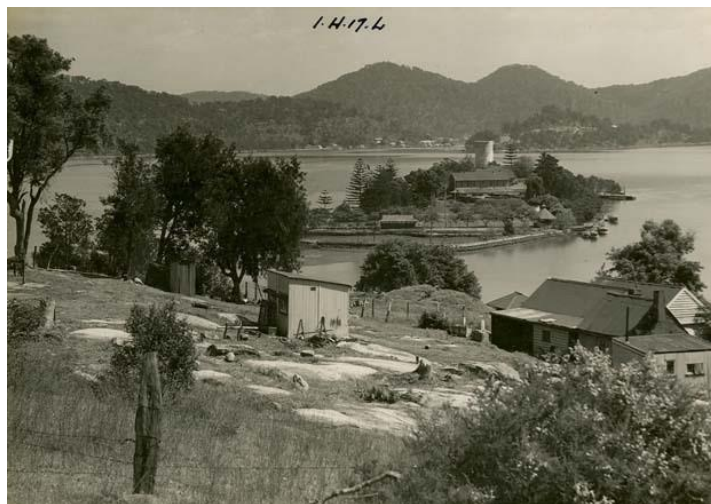
From 1900 to 1920, Milson Island was established as a bacteriological laboratory, a quarantine station and hospital for veterans returned from the First World War and suffering from sexually transmitted diseases. As Peat Island became overcrowded, Milson Island expanded as a hospital for people with intellectual disabilities.

Laila Ellmoos researched the grim fate of those admitted to care on the island:

There were 601 boys and men admitted to Rabbit [Peat] and Milson Islands between 1911 and 1930, 60 percent of whom were aged between 16 and 30. Of the overall population, over half died while in care, while a third of those who survived were transferred to other institutions. Only 48 were discharged. Most of those who died while in care had limited or no contact with their families.⁶

Professionalisation of nursing staff and greater understanding of mental health saw improvements to care during the 1960s, but the facility was closed in 1972 and transferred to the Department of Corrections to become a low security prison.

Today, Council recognises the need to support facilities and services in a Shire with an ageing population, where the percentage of residents in every age category over 40 years is statistically higher than the Sydney average. Hornsby has maintained care for the aged since 1959 when Mowll Memorial Village (now known as Lober House) opened, touted as the first retirement village in New South Wales.⁷ Recently Twilight Aged Care participated in a local initiative to temporarily repurpose Jamieson House (the 1898 Herring family house) as a home for displaced women over 55.



Peat Island in the foreground, and Milson Island in the background. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Castle Hill Mowll Memorial Village (Lober House). (Source: Tower Projects)

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Rofe Ward, Hornsby and District Hospital. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Painters outside of St Kilda Hospital, Hornsby (Pakenham), c1925. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Hornsby and District Hospital, between 1933 and 31 December 1939. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



The gardens of Jamieson House (now referred to as Beecroft House). (Source: Twilight Aged Care)

- ¹ CA 12 Sept 1896 – Beecroft and Cheltenham History Group, *The Shaping of Sydney Community*, 1995 [chapter 9 title page].
- ² Dewey, P 2019, 'Malahide Tuberculosis (TB) Hospital in Pennant Hills', *Local Colour*, Hornsby Shire Historical Society, Volume 8.
- ³ Chippendale, N, Hawkins, R and Richardson, K 2019, 'Jane Starkey of Thornleigh', *Local Colour*, Hornsby Shire Historical Society, Volume 8, p 28.
- ⁴ 'NEW HOME FOR WOMEN PENSIONERS', *The Sun*, 26 April 1936, p 37, Trove via National Library of Australia, viewed 15 January 2021 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article230826961>>.
- ⁵ Bibby, P, 'Alleged forced adoption: Sydney mother Lynda Yarnold sues St Vincent de Paul and Sisters of Mercy', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 May 2015, viewed 15 January 2021 <<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/alleged-forced-adoption-sydney-mother-lynda-yarnold-sues-st-vincent-de-paul-and-sisters-of-mercy-20150518-gh4e9s.html>>.
- ⁶ Peat and Milson Islands Mental Hospital (1936–1973), Find and Connect, viewed 14 January 2021 <<https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/nsw/biogs/NE01659b.htm>>.
- ⁷ Kass, T 1994, *Thematic History of Hornsby*, p 29.



The Florence
SHOPPING CONCOURSE

Settlement and Suburbanisation

Hunter Street near the junction with Burdett Street, Hornsby. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

Settlement and Suburbanisation

Emancipated convicts from the road gangs of the Great North Road and the Pennant Hills Timbergetting Establishment were among the Shire's earliest settlers. Some of their descendants are still living in the Shire.

The incursions of early Europeans have shaped the patterns of occupation in the Shire to this day. The draw of the Hawkesbury River saw entrepreneurs establish businesses in flour, fish and timber (such as Andre Thompson at Foul Weather Reach, the Laughon family and Solomon Wiseman). Twin land grants to Samuel Horne and John Thorn gave their names to the suburbs of Hornsby and Thornleigh, while Thomas Edward Higgins claimed the Old Mans Valley in 1824, with descendants continuously occupying the land for 150 years.

The mid-nineteenth century saw the subdivision of original land grants into small parcels of land, at first for descendants and then for the aspiring orchardists seeking profit from the Hornsby Plateau.

The arrival of the railway in 1886 intensified speculation and kept subdividers, surveyors and auctioneers busy. The layout of Cheltenham and Beecroft was established, followed by Waitara, Wahoonga and Hornsby as the network grew. The pure country air and elevated topography was now within commuter reach and proved a marketable asset. Though, as Terry Kass notes, other wiles were deployed to enhance the appeal; 'exaggerated topographical perspective and attractive lithography highlighted the salubrity and bracing climate of Beecroft [and] estate agents, Brutnell & Bannerman auctioned the Mountain Air Estate at the corner of Hull and Hannah Streets on 13 October 1917.'¹



Mount Errington, Rosemead Road, Hornsby. (Source: Neil Paton)

The new wave of homeowners was largely drawn from the city elite. New residents were often attracted to the Shire by the promise of the fresh air easing their personal health complaints or by the opportunity to realise a grand design. The aspiration to build big villas and mansions saw the rural farmhouses of the previous era radically transformed.² As a result, a more gracious style of home was built on substantial blocks. These fine homes typically had their own orchards, especially in the Beecroft and Cheltenham areas. Both suburbs became known for their quiet village atmosphere and fine gardens.

The impetus to build homes in areas that offered fresh, healthy air is integral to the Shire's heritage today. John Searle built the grand two-storey Victorian villa of Mundaribba at Beecroft in the hope his wife Maria's lung condition would improve. Similarly, Henry Marcus Clark planned Mount Wilga near Hornsby for his retirement as his health declined. John Horbury Hunt designed 'Highlands' at Wahoonga for Alfred Hordern in 1892. Architecturally modern for its time, Highlands included a 'gravel driveway bordered by hydrangeas, in 1931 the garden was said to contain 100 varieties. Another feature was a 21-

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foot-long bed of lily-of-the-valley.¹³ Another grand Federation house at Normanhurst, Gilligaloola, was built by the eponymous resident Norman Selfe in 1893. In the Federation period, the Mount Errington area was highly desirable and featured several grand residences, which stood in contrast to the working-class housing closer to the railway station. Mount Errington residents included businessmen, professionals, writers and artists.

Aesthetic appreciation of the Shire's highlands also influenced its design and architecture. Birklands in Dural Street, once the home of local architect Louis S Robertson, was oriented to enjoy specific views of Hornsby's remarkable bushland valleys on the spurs and ridges to the west. Smaller residential allotments were also able to take advantage of the landscape. Homes such as The Haven were built as part of the wave of subdivisions which occurred in the late nineteenth century to create smaller residential allotments. The former home of Barker College headmaster Thomas Watson, The Haven is an early weatherboard house of the Federation era. Its form, fabric and location are directly associated with the desire for bedrooms with open air verandahs, sited to appreciate the Old Mans Valley views. It is typical of other bungalows of this era designed for families and situated near the bushland on Hornsby's outskirts.



Birklands, Dural Street, Hornsby, Sydney (Source: Public Domain)

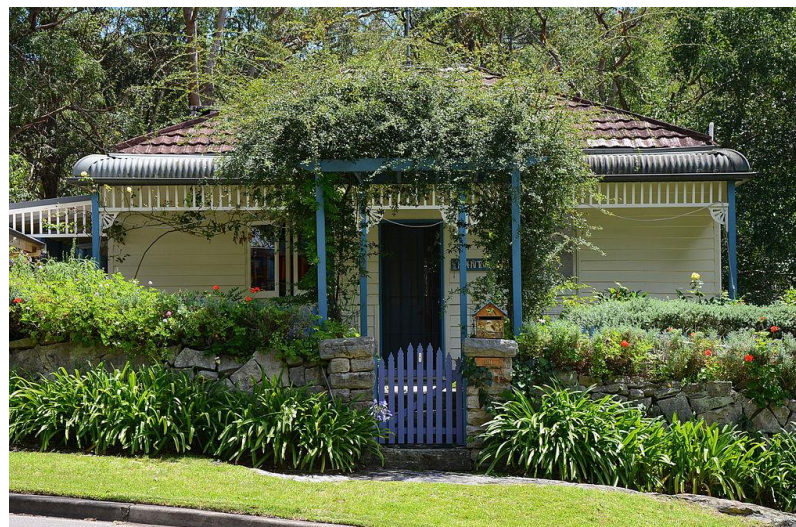


The main entrance to Mount Wilga, built by Marcus Clark, 1923. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

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Highlands, Wahroonga. (Source: Heritage NSW, Department of Premier and Cabinet)



Cottage, Hornsby, Sydney (Source: Public Domain)



Gilead, Federation house, Lisgar Road, Hornsby (Source: public domain)



William Street, Hornsby (Source: Public Domain)



Amber Cottage, William Street Hornsby (Source: Public Domain)

The course and pattern of each suburb's development was influenced by the geography, land use and proximity to rail. The earlier generation of 'country villas' of the 1880s gave way to smaller allotments for less wealthy purchasers. The grounds of Pomona Villa (1886) were subdivided into parcels in 1903, as was Ramona (1887–88) in Beecroft in 1911. Accelerating the pace of subdivision were bad seasons for fruitgrowers, who saw bigger profits in selling blocks near the railway land than in attempting to till the soil, because in some years 'when fruit was not dry and shrivelled from lack of moisture, it had been battered to the ground by heavy rainfalls.'⁴

While the city elite and institutional users sought the healthy locality, land near the railway platforms became characterised by service nodes to support an expanding population. Thompsons Corner on Pennant Hills Road, an existing

retail centre, was consolidated with a post office, blacksmith's forge and bakery. The new railway platform at Pennant Hills soon provided competition, while from 1910 onwards Epping became the thriving commercial centre on Beecroft Road. However, Hornsby secured its role as the centre of the district due to its location at the railway junction. Hornsby Junction serviced the new city elite who were by then taking over the orchards and farmlets, but also the influx of casual labourers who followed rail and construction work. Some of these workers had more makeshift accommodation at places like Hall's Camp, near Thornleigh, where contractors quarried ballast. Modest cottages were also built on William Street, Hornsby, by German emigre Conrad von Hagen to cater for workers in the area.

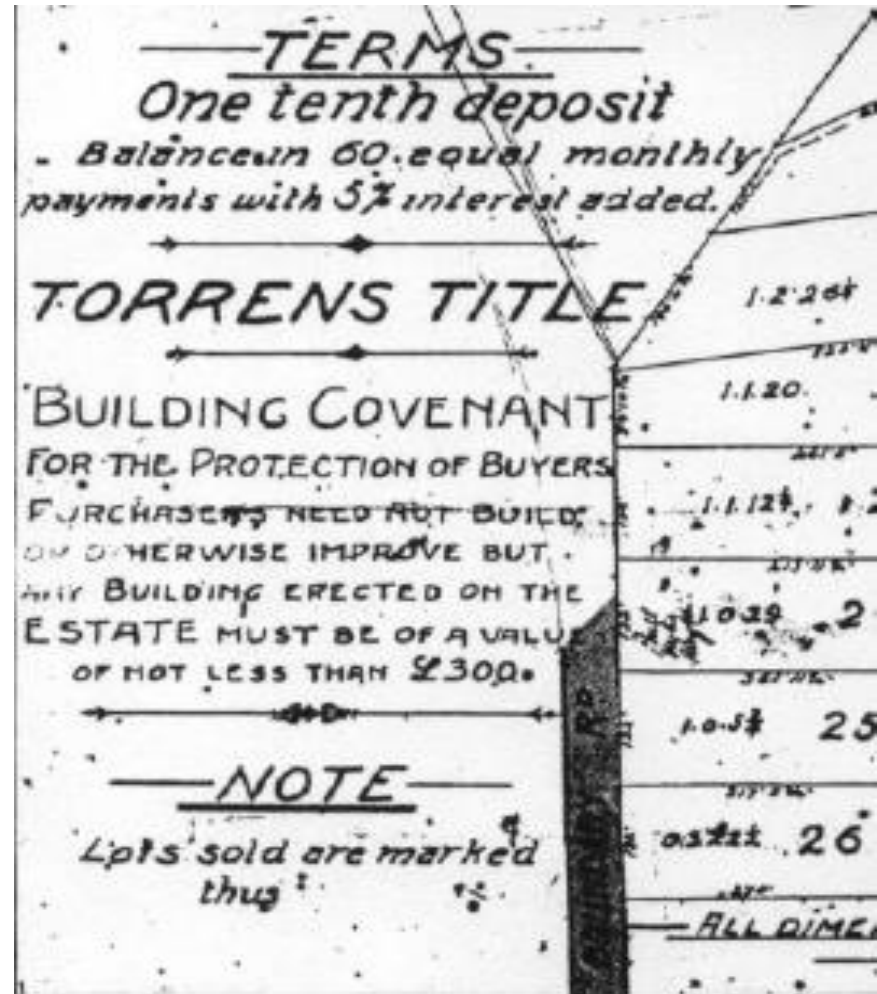
The subdividers carving up the land were made up of private individuals, syndicates and land building and investment companies. The Mutual Provident Land Investing and Building Society subdivided the 'Hornsby Township'—land that encompassed the new rail line to St Leonards. Amidst the land speculation and profits made there were corruption allegations. Politicians with prior knowledge of the rail network shrewdly bought land alongside the line then subdivided and sold allotments in association with auctioneers like Withers, Callaghan and Brown.

The arrival of the railway also transformed remote river communities like Brooklyn, which developed as an important railway town and a base for the tourist and fishing industries. Narrow, 20-foot-wide city style terrace houses were built on land subdivided after the construction of the rail bridge. The village style nature of Brooklyn has been retained as has its attraction as a tourist venue.

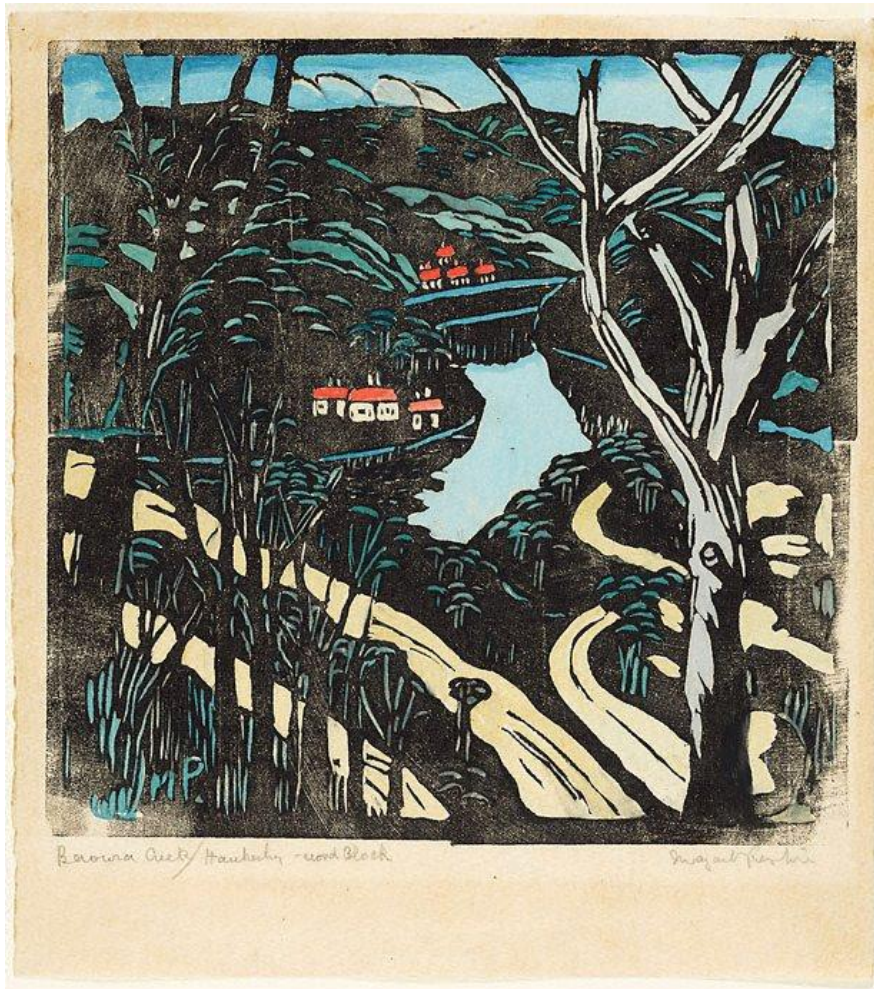
The quality and style of development at the turn of the century was subject to land title covenants devised by subdividers that nominated the minimum value of houses to be developed within a subdivision (thus excluding unwanted land uses such as commercial uses, like hotels or heavy industries). Hornsby Shire Council was only able to control the minimum building regulations with regards

to structural engineering, fire and basic health regulations. Subdividers and developers also used minimum building prices to target the type of buyer. The higher end of the price scale was the Blackacre Estate at Pennant Hills (minimum value of build £300 in 1904), Ennes Estate at Waitara (minimum value of build £150 in 1910) and Mount Wilga Estate at Hornsby (minimum value of build £1400 in 1928).⁵ Despite the covenants, the nature of and materials used in construction across the Shire varied as shown by census data between 1921 and 1961.

Hornsby Township... the best and most advantageously situated land...a magnificent opportunity to buy splendid cheap land.⁶

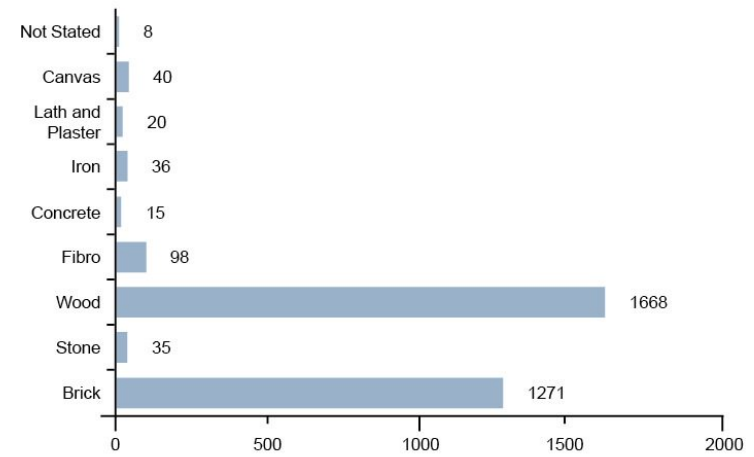


Detail of building covenant above from Hornsby torrens titles. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



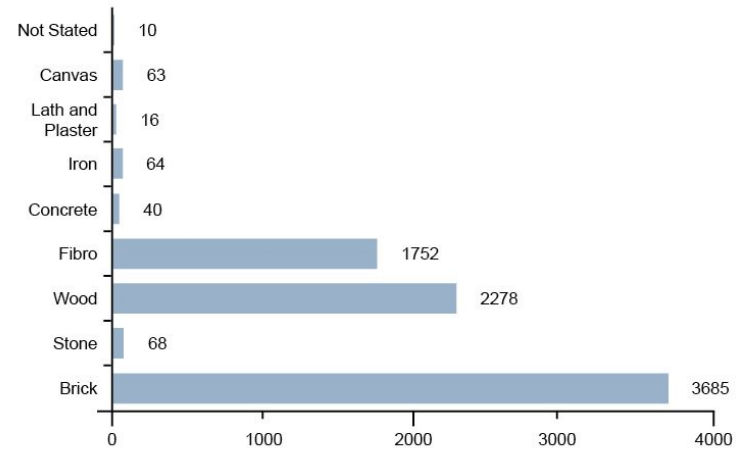
The winding road to Berowra Waters, Margaret Preston, circa 1939. (Source: Art Gallery of NSW)

Wall Materials - Dwellings Hornsby Shire (1921)



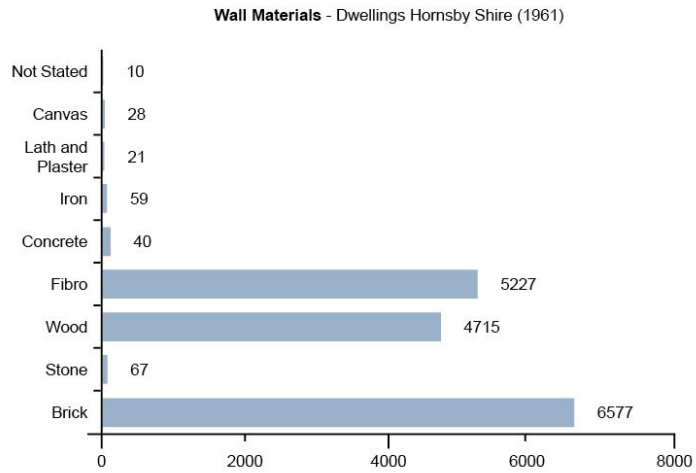
Dwelling materials in Hornsby Shire, 1921. (Source: Terry Kass, graphic by GML)

Wall Materials - Dwellings Hornsby Shire (1947)



Dwelling materials in Hornsby Shire, 1947. (Source: Terry Kass, graphic by GML)

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Dwelling materials in Hornsby Shire, 1961. (Source: Terry Kass, graphic by GML)

Beecroft Farmlets ESTATE
TO BE SOLD BY PUBLIC AUCTION
On the Ground, Beecroft,
SAT., JUNE 7th, 1919, at 3 p.m.

"NATURE'S CHOICE"

TERMS
 15% Deposit
 Balance in 60 equal monthly payments
 5% Interest - (5 Years terms)

To RETURNED SOLDIERS
10% REDUCTION

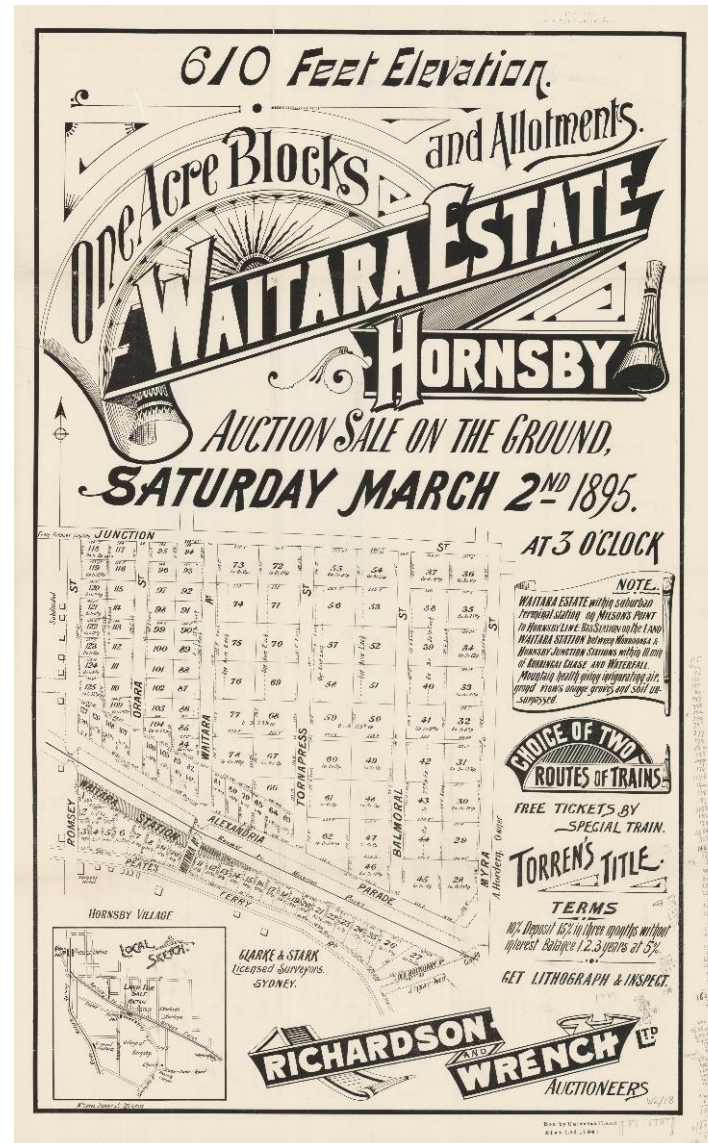
TORRENS TITLE
 Fertility of Soil: UNSURPASSED
 Clarity of Atmosphere: UNSURPASSED

Bruntnell & Bannerman, Ltd.
 Property Salesmen. 72 Pitt St. Sydney.
 A.S. COLWELL, Licensed Surveyor (R.P.A.), Post Office Chambers, Pitt St. W.C. PENFOLD & CO. LITHO, 84 1/2 PITT ST. SYDNEY.

Beecroft Farmlets, 1919. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Hornsby Junction, c1886. The proposed rail platform is shown adjacent to the subdivision. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)



Waitara Estate subdivision plan, 1895. (Source: State Library of New South Wales)

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Tighter development controls emerged during the interwar period. The Residential District Proclamations by the Department of Local Government prevented industrial or other unwanted activities in residential areas. Hornsby secured its first Residential District in 1926. By 1930 another 19 were proclaimed, along with two in 1945 and a final four in 1960–61.⁷

- 1928—Residential District No. 2 proclaimed at Thornleigh (west of railway line) and No. 3 at Thornleigh (east of the railway line);
- 1934—Residential District No. 7 proclaimed at Normanhurst, No. 8 at Wahroonga (central—Pearce’s Corner) and No. 9 at Wahroonga (south—Hewitt Avenue);
- 1945—Residential District No. 20 proclaimed at Beecroft (west of the railway line) and No. 21 at Beecroft (east of the railway line); and
- 1960—Residential District No. 22 proclaimed at Wahroonga (between Pearce’s Corner and Thornleigh).

The rise of the motor car from the 1920s opened the Shire to a wider market. The suburban bungalow began to characterise the streets of the Shire, mostly following the flatlands out from the railway line thinning to the north. Notable examples of the Californian Bungalow style are concentrated at Thornleigh in the area near the train station and the Comenarra Parkway. In 1945, 65 per cent of the Shire was identified as ‘unused’. Construction of new housing could not match demand and many temporary dwellings were built instead, reflecting an Australia-wide shortage of materials between 1945 and 1960. The Shire of Hornsby Valuation List (1945–1947) identified more than 2,000 temporary dwellings, including tents, sheds, shacks and garages. Roofs were built with whatever material was available including corrugated iron, fibro, cement or terracotta tiles, and reinforced concrete.⁸ Fibro housing increased under the Housing Commission of NSW, with single family dwellings (and some brick) built around Palmerston, Burdett and Innes Streets, Hornsby.⁹ The Commission also built cottages at Waitara in the late 1940s. The spread

of fibro also reached Dangar Island, with 72 houses of mostly fibro-cement built by 1951.¹⁰

After the Second World War, the first tranche of modern apartment blocks appeared. An early example is the block at 1709 Pacific Highway, Wahroonga. The 1948 rate notice described a two-storey block, double garage and two laundries on the property indicating the building was completed sometime between March 1947 and October 1948.¹¹ During the 1950s, eight multi-unit blocks of flats were built by the Housing Commission at Waitara Station. The Commission also built 265 dwellings spread across Thornleigh, Waitara, Hornsby, Pennant Hills, Normanhurst and Epping.¹²



1709 Pacific Highway, Wahroonga. (Source: Di Jones Real Estate)

The 1948 County Cumberland identified Hornsby as a District Centre, surrounded by ‘living area’, ‘open space’ and ‘green belt’; however, half of the

area was too steep to develop in any case. Development in the Pennant Hills and Castle Hill areas remained predominantly rural for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The suburbanisation of Beecroft and Cheltenham advanced in earnest from 1900 to the mid-1930s, changing the district from semi-rural to a more conventional suburban form. The development was largely concentrated within the original 1887 village allotment areas and in streets close to Beecroft and Cheltenham stations. Beyond the village centre, the streets and roads ran through rural plots, orchards to the west and remnant forest areas to the east of the railway.

The great suburban shift for the Shire arrived with the 1950s when the northwestern area of Sydney became the focal point of the NSW Government's plans to make residential land available in the expanding Sydney area. Ragged streets, gnarled orchards and fibro cottages gave way to suburban blocks, kerbs, gutters and sealed roads.

Trends in home ownership in the postwar period of the Shire reflect the bigger national patterns of the time, as home ownership in Sydney rose from 40% in 1947 to 60% in 1954 and to 71% in 1961.

*[The] familiar picture of suburban family life, with its focus on home and garden, and on a catalogue of family possessions such as refrigerators, washing machines, radiogrammes, television sets, and of course, the family car, was the basis of post-war affluence and the vast new consumer economy which the manufacturers and governments encouraged.*¹³

Beautiful **B**rick **B**ungalows **P**ositively the **P**ick of **P**ennant Hills



A Splendid Opportunity !
 Up-to-date Cottages and Bungalows, with every Modern Convenience. Large Areas, Good Soil, Elevated Positions. Prices ranging from **£450** to **£2,500**
 Also First-class Allotments, Big Frontages and Good Slope **From £2 per Foot**

ARTHUR J. DUFFY
 Epping 360 Epping 360
Real Estate Agent - PENNANT HILLS

Newspaper advertisement for cottages and bungalows in the Pennant Hills area. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

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However, as late as the 1960s, there were substantial areas that remained undeveloped in Beecroft and Cheltenham. The area was consolidated further between 1961 and 1970 following demolition of original houses or break-up of orchard remnants and dairy farms. Specific companies profited from the new land releases of the northern suburbs. In 1961 Brian Pettit and Ron Sevitt (formerly of Sun-Line Homes) founded one of the most influential, well-respected and successful project home companies in Australia. Pettit and Sevitt planned to oversee completion of all the houses that Sun-Line had taken deposits for and then use the profits to set up display homes in their target market of Sydney's northern suburbs.¹⁴ They also commissioned the talents of up-and-coming architect Harry Seidler, as well as Ken Woolley and Michael Dysart, who were both working for the State Government. At least two Seidler houses were built as display homes in Westleigh while today extant Woolley houses at Wahroonga, Thornleigh and Westleigh are emblematic of the unique way these dwellings:

*conform to the lay of the land using their modular components to nestle into the block: be it level or on a steep slope. The detailing of the exposed timbers, use of natural light, zoning of internal spaces with minimal corridors, introduction of ensuites, and the iconic flat and skillion roofs.*¹⁵

The Pettit and Sevitt homes captured a 'watershed era in Australian life and design'¹⁶ so much so that the 1976 film of the David Williamson play 'Don's Party' was shot at a 'Lowline' house in Westleigh.



Ken Woolley's c1967 design for Pettit and Sevitt, Wahroonga. (Source: Modern House)

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Between 1975 and 1985 the new suburb of Cherrybrook was established as part of the government's plan to make more residential land available. The name came from the 65-acre property of Joseph and Mary Ann Harrison known as Cherrybrook Farm. Joseph Harrison had settled in the eponymous Cherrybrook Farm in 1839 and planted peach, apricot, pear, plum, and citrus orchards on his land. Many years later the farm became a dairy but kept its name.

This land was subdivided in 1959 to become the first project home village in Sydney. The new development featured numerous cul-de-sacs and a variety of housing types to cater for all age groups. Touted as the largest model homes exhibition in the southern hemisphere, 'the Parade of Homes' at Cherrybrook signalled the expansion of suburbia to northwestern Sydney. The original bushland was bulldozed, and exhibition homes were built on cut and fill sites, then landscaped. A large number of building companies erected their home designs in the village, with the entire project being promoted through the *Australian Women's Weekly*. The exhibition also featured designs by Harry Seidler and Ken Woolley.

Thirty-five houses, fully furnished and set in landscaped gardens, are ready for inspection at Cherrybrook Gardens Estate, which six months ago was peaceful, picturesque pasture land, part of an old cherry orchard dating back to the early days of the colony.¹⁷

Eventually these homes were sold to the next generation of settlers in West Pennant Hills. More development followed and farms soon gave way to houses. The processes of suburban expansion continue to influence the northwestern area of Sydney, with new residential and commercial subdivisions.

TWO HOUSES FROM ONE PLAN

CONTEMPORARY



PERSPECTIVE SKETCH (above) of contemporary design shows humped roof, sloping pergola, an attractive stone-faced chimney, and hopper windows. Carport, left.

FLOOR PLAN (right): With the exception of the carport and fireplace this is the same for both houses featured on this page. The kitchen has its own meals section.



● These two versions of our Home Plan No. 695 are being built on lots 82 and 83 at the Cherrybrook Gardens Estate, on Sydney's North Shore. They are part of an exhibition of nearly 40 homes which will be on view to the public next January.

THE Master Builders' Association of N.S.W. is promoting the exhibition, which will be the biggest of its type ever held in the Southern Hemisphere. Each one of the houses will be fully furnished and will have a landscaped garden. They will all be for sale, and visitors to the exhibition can arrange to have identical houses built on their own blocks of land.

The two illustrations of our Home Plan No. 695 which we show on this page are an interesting comparison.

Inside the same plan is used and this can be bought for £30/0/- from any of our Home Planning Centres, whose addresses are given in the panel at right. If ordering by mail, please mention which home you require, the contemporary or the traditional.

The contemporary design above has a low-pitched roof, a sloping pergola, hopper windows, and a stone-faced chimney.

Ranch-style design

The traditional design featured below has simple ranch-style lines with a straight gable roof, a garage replacing the carport, and formal window treatment to blend with the general atmosphere.

These two homes are being built by Mr. H. Easty. The contemporary will be on Lot 82 and the traditional on Lot 83. They will be furnished in appropriate style.

The ground-plan layout is identical for both versions, with the exception of the carport and fireplace. There are three good-sized bedrooms, with the bathroom conveniently placed between bedrooms 2 and 3.

The spacious living-rooms are L-shaped, opening to the front terrace with double glass doors and extending through to the dining-rooms overlooking the rear garden.

A big open fireplace is featured across the corner of the living-rooms in the contemporary style, but this is omitted in the traditional.

Traffic from the back door does not cut across the compact working zone in the kitchen. In this room there is a wall of cupboards beside the refrigerator and a meals alcove under a window.

A laundry is included under the main roof of the house and a spacious linen cupboard is set into the

PERSPECTIVE sketch of traditional design shows a straight gable roof and simple ranch-style house. Double glass doors open from the living-room on to the front terrace.

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY - November 25, 1959

Estimated cost

Mr. Easty estimates that the traditional design would cost £1700 in brick veneer, and the contemporary style would cost £1800 in concrete blocks or only £2000 with raft floors. These prices do not include land.

For accurate costing in your own locality you are invited to consult the Home Planning Centre in your capital city.

For the lot of £1/1/- per square, with a minimum fee of £10/10/-, representatives at our Home Planning Centre will prepare individual plans to suit readers' own requirements.

If you feel you need some assistance in planning a home in suit your block of land, we will arrange for one of our representatives to meet you on the site to discuss designs for a fee of £5/5/- in the metropolitan area.

Readers can use any of our designs as the basis for their own individually prepared plans, and select features of several designs, adding ideas of their own.

For full particulars about the Parade of Homes, see pages 58 and 60.

Where to buy this plan

Our Home Plans are available in hundreds of designs suitable for all blocks of land. Plans cost £9/9/- per full set from any of our Home Planning Centres.

They are usually available from stock in any building material. Each set of plans contains five copies of plan and three copies of specification.

If you are ordering Home Plans by mail from our Home Planning Centres, give the number of the design and state the building materials to be used. Please include fee.

Our Home Planning Centres have been established in conjunction with the stores in which they are situated. Addresses are:

HOBART: Fitzcerald's.
CANBERRA: Anthony Hasler's.
BELMONT: The Myer Emporium.
GELBONG: Our representative attends the Myer Emporium every Friday and Saturday.
SYDNEY: Anthony Hasler's.
ADELAIDE: John Martin's.
BREISBANE: McWhirter's.
TOOWOOMBA: Plann's.

TRADITIONAL



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Home plans for Cherrybrook Gardens Estate, 1959. (Source: *Australian Women's Weekly*, 25 November 1959)

The Parade of Homes



VIEW of Parade from top of estate, showing the variety in designs of the houses.

FEATURE wall in N.Z. radiata pine at The Australian Women's Weekly house, Lot 55.

Display of 35 houses opens this week

● Thirty-five houses, fully furnished and set in landscaped gardens, are ready for inspection at Cherrybrook Gardens Estate, which six months ago was peaceful, picturesque pasture land, part of an old cherry orchard dating back to the early days of the colony.

To reach the Parade, turn off the main Pennant Hills Road at Boundary Road about 15 miles north-west of Sydney and proceed down the treeline road until you reach, on the left, Cherrybrook Road.

This is just one mile from Pennant Hills station. Turn up the road and come upon an archway beckoned with flags. You have arrived at the entrance to the Parade. Once through the archway you are in the exhibition, and the first house on the left, which is under great guns, is the Australian Women's Weekly All-Electric House.

Temporary-style house of black painted timbers, with white woodwork and large windows. Color plays an important part in this house. The overhanging eaves are painted underneath in soft apricot, which continues into the ceiling of the living-room.

Woodwork is white, walls are lime-green. Several shades of green have been used in the hangings to emphasize the outdoor feel of the house.

The bedrooms, in pale blue-grey, have a slight of coral tinted floorpan.

The kitchen has one lime-green wall and a feature wall in black-dark-green, and white-patterned wallpaper, treated with a glass for easy cleaning.

The Australian Women's Weekly - January 27, 1960

Display homes for Cherrybrook Gardens, 1960. (Source: *Australian Women's Weekly*, 27 January 1960)



Early house in Pennant Hills, c1880. (Source: Hornsby Shire Recollects)

During the 1980s, NSW State Government policies implemented increased density through policies around dual occupancies. In 1994 the Hornsby Shire Housing Strategy included a range of new housing initiatives to meet the State Government's urban consolidation requirements and local community expectations. Four years later a new Hornsby Shire Housing Strategy (1998) involved the rezoning of eight precincts from Berowra to Epping to allow medium to high-density multi-unit housing to accommodate the Shire's growing population.

Recently state and local government planning controls in the *Hornsby Local Environmental Plan* (LEP 2013) and *Hornsby Development Control Plan* (2013) specify higher density development in the vicinity of major rail corridors within the Shire including at Beecroft, Thornleigh, Waitara and Hornsby. With the Shire's population predicted to reach 179,582 by 2036, a new housing strategy has identified there will be a need for an additional 14,879 homes. The largest increases are expected in the small areas of Hornsby Town Centre

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(+3,095 dwellings), Asquith (+2,391 dwellings), Waitara (+1,577), Hornsby Balance (+1,519 dwellings), Cherrybrook (+1,335 dwellings) and Mount Colah–Mount Kuring-gai (+909 dwellings). The majority of new dwellings are expected to be medium and high-density apartments, small in size. At Waitara, the market has been dominated by young couples and families, yet the developments may also start to attract the ageing population seeking to downsize or find low-maintenance homes.¹⁸



Houses built after the Wearne Avenue subdivision had occurred, 1969. (Source: Hornsby Shire Historical Society)



Ken Bruce and Wendy McLennan's home at Berowra Waters Road, Berowra, 1975. (Source: Berowra Living History Collection)

Thinking back, I am not sure how it was my parents chose this part of Sydney in which to settle...I think they were motivated by desire to escape from the poverty of the inner city, not the trendy place it is now, and take the opportunity offered by wide open spaces to bring up a family.

Joan Webb¹⁹

- 1 Kass, T 1994, Thematic History of Hornsby, p 21.
- 2 Kass, T 1994, Thematic History of Hornsby, p 16.
- 3 'Highlands', State Heritage Inventory, Heritage NSW, Department of Premier and Cabinet.
- 4 Kass, T 1994, Thematic History of Hornsby, p 21.
- 5 Kass, T 1994, Thematic History of Hornsby, p 22.
- 6 Hornsby Township, Subdivision of the land held by the Mutual Provident Land Investing and Building Society as reproduced by Kass, T 1994, Thematic History of Hornsby, p17.
- 7 Kass, T 1994, Thematic History of Hornsby, p22.
- 8 Pullan, N, 'A Roof Over Their Heads: Temporary Dwellings in Post-war Suburban Sydney', in *Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand*: 32, Architecture, Institutions and Change, edited by Paul Hogben and Judith O'Callaghan, p 503.
- 9 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 April 1991.
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- 11 Hornsby Rate Notice 3192A, Pacific Highway, Wahroonga and Strata Title, Chief Building Surveyor's Report, 10 May 1976, as per comms Hornsby Shire Council, 25 February 2021.
- 12 Roberts, E, 'The Changing Face of Hornsby', Local Colour, Hornsby Shire Historical Society, Vol 8, p 5.
- 13 White, R 1981, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688–1980*, Allen & Unwin, p 165.
- 14 Debray, J 2019, 'Changes in Housing in Australia since 1788', Local Colour, Hornsby Shire Historical Society, Vol 8, p 21.
- 15 Debray, J 2019, 'Changes in Housing in Australia since 1788', Local Colour, Hornsby Shire Historical Society, Vol 8, p 21.
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The Changing Face of the Shire



The Changing Face of the Shire

In the past few decades, the recent development of the Hornsby Shire has faced the challenges of a growing and ageing population, and increased densification. Its cultural fabric has also been enriched and deepened with a growing South East Asian population shaping new traditions, cuisine and centres of faith.

In 2016, 36.9% of people in Hornsby Shire were born overseas, compared with 36.7% in Greater Sydney. More than half (59%) of Hornsby Shire residents have at least one parent who was born overseas compared to 46% of Australians nationally. The top five birth places in 2020 are China (6.1%), UK (4.9%), India (3.8%), South Korea (1.9%) and Hong Kong (1.6%). A total of 31% spoke a language other than English at home.¹

The shift in cultural profile has in turn seen new uses for old centres of faith, contributing a new layer of heritage and reflecting the ever-evolving beliefs the Shire is home to. In Asquith the Assembly Gospel Hall, formerly Scouts Hall, is now home to the Australia Ling Liang Church. The former Hornsby Christian Science Church on Dural Street has been the Hornsby Baha'i Centre since 2011.



Hornsby Baha'i Centre of Learning. (Source: © Google 2021)



Australia Ling Liang Church, Asquith. (Source: Cross Life Church)

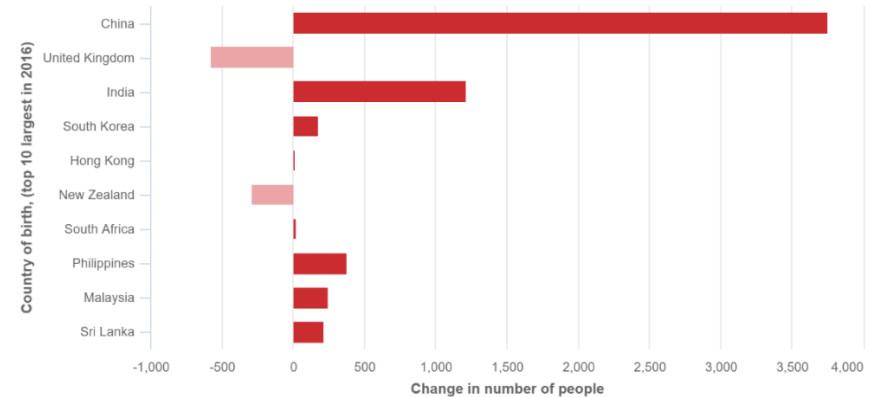
Hornsby Shire has experienced consistent growth in recent decades, with a population increase of 9.1% since 2003. The Shire’s population of older people is above the Sydney average, reflecting the growth of Hornsby as a major provider of aged care and seniors housing. State Government projections of the +85 age group are above Council’s projections.

Although it is home to an ageing population, the Hornsby Shire has a significantly higher proportion of family households, with nearly one in two households (44.4%) comprised of couples with children.² The age group with the largest forecasted increase from 2016 to 2036 is 30 to 34 years old, which is expected to increase by 2,622 and account for 6.2% of the total population.³

The Hornsby Shire has more people per household (2.9%) than Greater Sydney (2.7%), NSW (2.6%) and Australia (2.6%).

Change in birthplace, 2011 to 2016

Hornsby Shire



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2016 (Usual residence data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).



Change in birthplace, 2011 to 2016. (Source: ABS, Id)

Hornsby Shire has a higher proportion of home ownership than Greater Sydney and significantly lower rates of private renting. However, the lack of affordable rental properties for lower income residents including nurses, police and teachers provides a challenge for the Shire given these sectors underpin the local economy. Healthcare and social assistance represents 6,999 full-time equivalent workers (17.8%), education and training represents 5,038 full-time equivalent local workers (12.8%) and retail trade 4,649 full-time equivalent local workers (11.8%). Similarly, retention of young adults in the area is low as they move out of the Shire and into the inner city for tertiary education opportunities and affordable housing.

The Shire’s residents typically enjoy a mobile lifestyle enabled by the use of both public transport and personal vehicles. Over 70% of the resident workforce is employed outside of the Shire, adding to commute times and

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putting pressure on transport infrastructure. Part of this dependence on public transport is also offset by the significant number of home-based businesses which play an important role in the productivity of the area, supporting local centre businesses. Growth is forecast in this style of entrepreneurship and its links to emerging industries and the digital economy.

In 2019, a Metro Station was opened in Cherrybrook, delivering a direct connection with the Castle Hill, Norwest and Chatswood business and entertainment districts. Looking to the future, significant development in Cherrybrook is anticipated between 2021 and 2031, as government land around the Metro Station opens up. However, concerns about the risk of overdevelopment in the Cherrybrook area have been vocalised by community groups such as the Cherrybrook Residents Association.

In May 2016, the area south of the M2 Motorway was removed from Hornsby Shire by the State Government and transferred to the City of Parramatta Council. Hornsby Shire Council strongly protested the decision. The NSW Government's plan at the time was to merge Ku-ring-gai Council with the remainder of Hornsby Shire Council. However, the plan did not proceed.

Since the early part of this century, the type of housing stock in the Shire has been radically transformed. Medium and high-density dwellings such as units, apartments and semi-detached or terrace houses have increased (14.2% to 16.5% for units and 6.8% to 7.6% for semi-detached dwellings). While the knockdown and rebuild trend across Sydney has taken has strongly influenced the Shire. In 2011, Hornsby ranked among the suburbs with the highest rebuilds with 408 applications. While the energy efficiency of new builds is greater than older fibro or brick veneer builds, the use of land has been questioned where 700 square metre blocks have come to accommodate two homes.⁴

To complement development activity within housing strategy precincts, Council has identified key actions to address the recreation and open space to meet the needs of the Hornsby community. Just as it drew inner city

Sydneysiders over a century ago, the lifestyle offered by Bushland Shire remains one of the key attractors for the area. Many suburbs are still characterised by low-density R2 residential zoning. Some residents and advocacy groups have expressed concern about the changes in density in some areas. Amidst the built environment changes, demographic changes and population growth, community groups have continually advocated for the conservation and protection of the Shire's heritage values, including its natural beauty.



Advertisement for Knockdown and Rebuild Homes. (Source: McDonald Jones)

In 2020, Hornsby Shire Council released its Local Strategic Planning Statement, a 20-year vision for land use. This statement outlines the special character and values that are to be preserved, shared community values, and how Council will manage growth and change. The key priorities identified in the Strategy are underpinned by the unique historical and heritage values of the area, including:

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- the environmental qualities and character of the Bushland Shire—conserving and understanding human modification;
- the connectivity of place, including all modes of transport;
- protecting the character of low-density neighbourhoods; and
- enhancing the architectural design of new development.

As Hornsby looks to the future, understanding the patterns and forces that shaped its past will inform new directions, help ensure planning meets the needs of its changing community and strengthens our understanding and recognition of the heritage of the Shire.

¹ 'Hornsby Shire Council: a shire of opportunity', McCrindle Research report, p 14.

² Hornsby Shire Ancestry: Community Profile, Community Id, viewed 4 December 2020 <<http://profile.id.com.au/hornsby>>.

³ Hornsby Shire Council, Local Strategic Planning Statement, p 12.

⁴ West, A, 'Knockdown, rebuild is changing the face of Sydney', *The Domain, Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 May 2011, viewed 18 March 2021 <<https://www.domain.com.au/news/knockdown-rebuild-is-changing-the-face-of-sydney-20110527-1f8im/>>.

Recommendations

The 2021 Thematic History is intended to inform Council's subsequent Aboriginal, landscape and archaeology studies and the later Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) review, community engagement, promotion and interpretation studies outlined in the Action Plan 2019.

The following recommendations consider how the Thematic History could support the specific implementation of some of these actions and also build on existing studies and programs under way.

1. Specific Heritage Studies

The Thematic History has highlighted the important historical patterns and forces that shaped the Shire. Some key areas for further research are:

- Remote and Rural Heritage—identification of farming and agricultural buildings, structures.
- Postwar housing c1940–1960.
- Planning and suburbanisation.
- Aboriginal history heritage study (under way).
- Places of worship.

2. Update of the Heritage NSW State Inventory

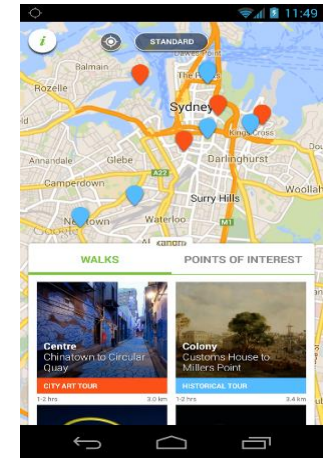
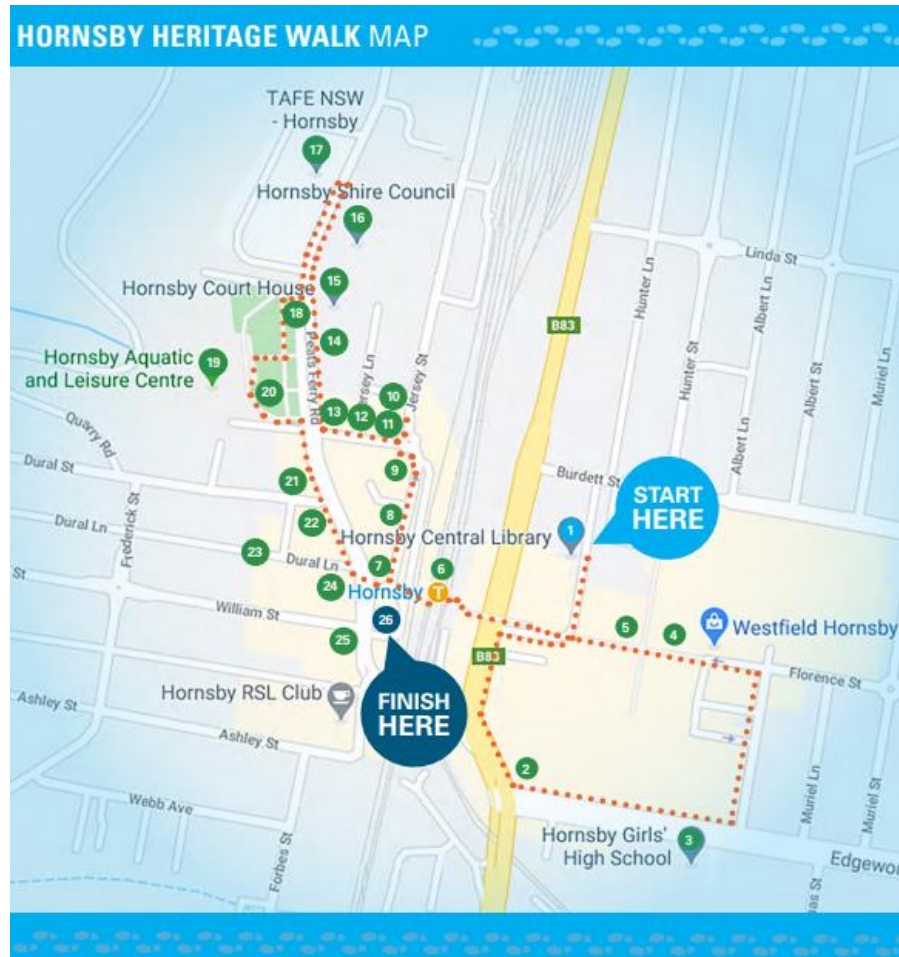
In reviewing prior heritage studies and specific items, it was noted that places of significance on the State Heritage Inventory are catalogued by previous themes. For instance, churches are currently aligned to the NSW state theme of creative endeavour (such as St Alban's).

Ensure new themes are aligned with LEP items as listed and reflect new amalgamation boundaries. As noted in the 2019 Action Plan there are 83 heritage items listed with the LEP, including three conservation areas that now fall within the City of Parramatta due to recent council amalgamations.

3. Promotion and Interpretation of Hornsby History and Heritage

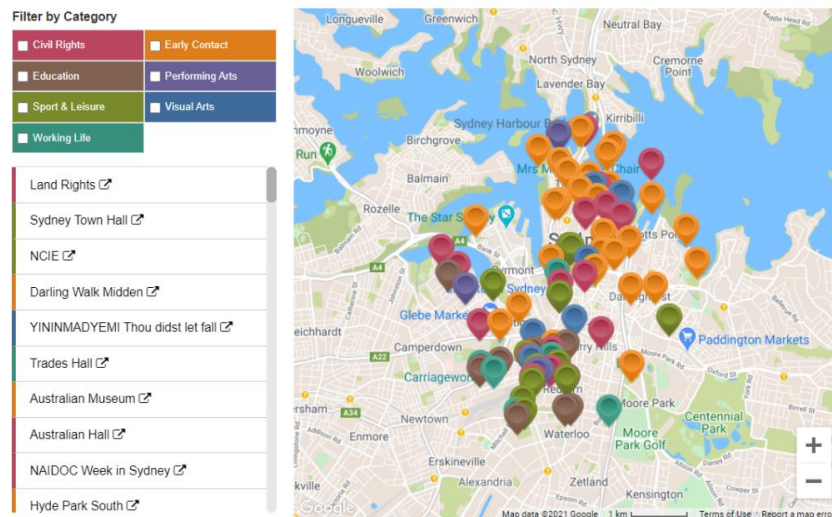
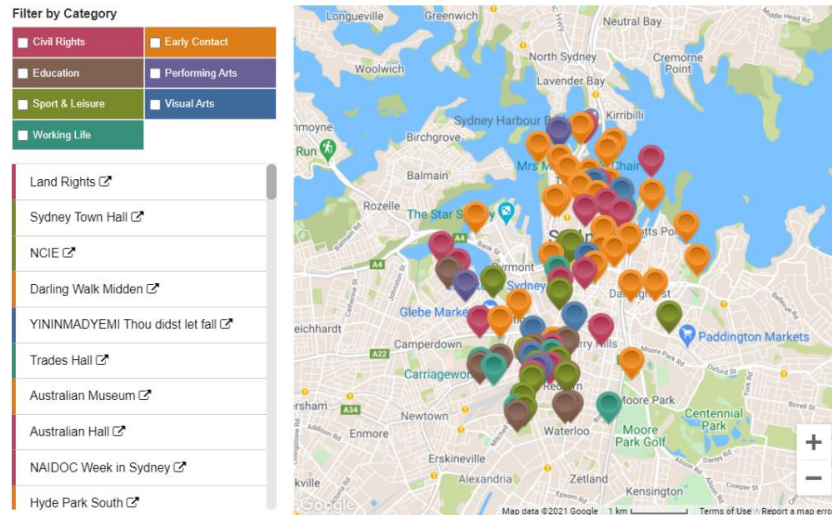
Using the Thematic History as a framework, a number of interpretive initiatives could be curated to highlight history and heritage in the Hornsby Shire. Some of these recommendations build on the existing work undertaken by the Shire's historical societies and local studies.

- **Self-guided tours:** Themed tours for walking, cycling or driving could be developed that link a trail by a specific theme. Good benchmarks are the City of Sydney and City of Melbourne. The City of Sydney has been overlaid with a smartphone app, Sydney Culture Walks, but a basic desktop version is also printable from the website (below). The current Hornsby Heritage Walk could be expanded or have themed variations to include Aboriginal heritage, key sites of belief and faith including their connection to diverse communities, or linked to key individuals of interest like Nurse Jane Starkey.



- Extend the Hornsby Shire Recollects Platform:** This invaluable platform could be extended to include a mapping resource that pins locations throughout the Shire and links them by theme. This would help raise awareness of the Shire’s heritage assets. The map or site could provide markers for cultural, linguistic and social history events that highlight the continuum of Aboriginal heritage and lived experiences based on the Heritage Study undertaken by Coast History and Heritage, including a dictionary of Aboriginal language. A useful example is the Barani website.

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- Programs and events:** Active local history organisations would be useful partners for promoting programs and events. The History Council of NSW promotes an annual History Week event for any local studies organisation or group to showcase its collections, research or exhibitions. Using the Thematic History as a framework, select collections could be displayed according to theme or specific stories.
- Thematic Interpretive Strategy and Plan:** A Heritage Interpretation Strategy could be prepared based on the Thematic History. After the specific studies being undertaken (namely the historical archaeological study, Aboriginal heritage study and landscape study) are completed, key items identified could form the basis for specific sites to be interpreted. The plan would:

 - build on municipal history to identify key sites, places and landscapes that should have on-site or online interpretation;
 - identify innovative examples of interpretive planning for local heritage items and recognise that local heritage could cover both tangible and intangible heritage;
 - develop a consistent look and feel for interpretive devices across the municipality so it is readily recognised and promoted (eg for signage, apps, web information, posters etc);
 - prepare interpretive materials, histories or other information suitable for use in local schools and relevant to school curricula;
 - prepare a Destination Management Plan for the Hornsby local government area covering key heritage places including Fagan Park, Galston Gorge, Brooklyn, Dangar Island, Wisemans Ferry; and
 - prepare an annual program of heritage events with specific celebrations, events or recognition activities for NAIDOC Week,

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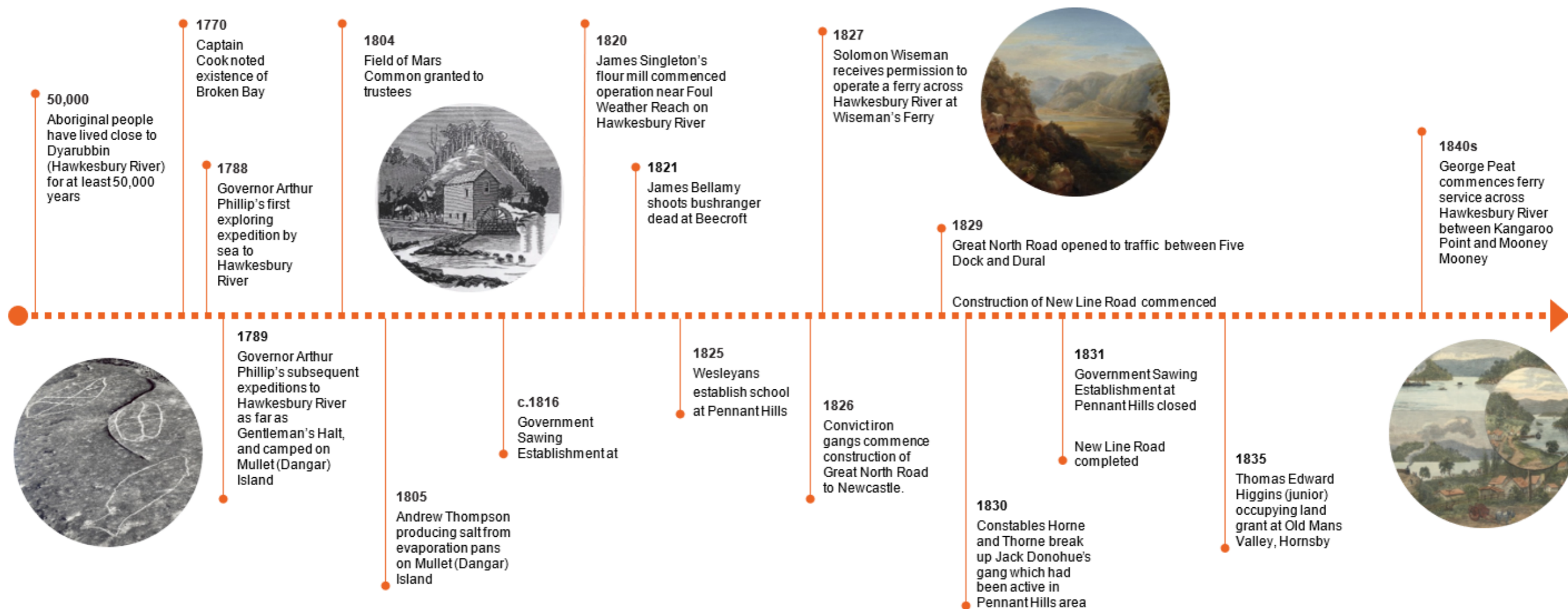
Heritage Week, Chinese New Year, Harmony Day and History Week, landscaping, signage or public art initiatives.

- **Local History Prize:** To encourage ongoing interest in research in the Hornsby Shire, a specific local history prize(s) could be reactivated ie the Owen Nannelli Memorial Award (Category C) could be awarded to a group or individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the education and promotion of the heritage of Hornsby Shire.

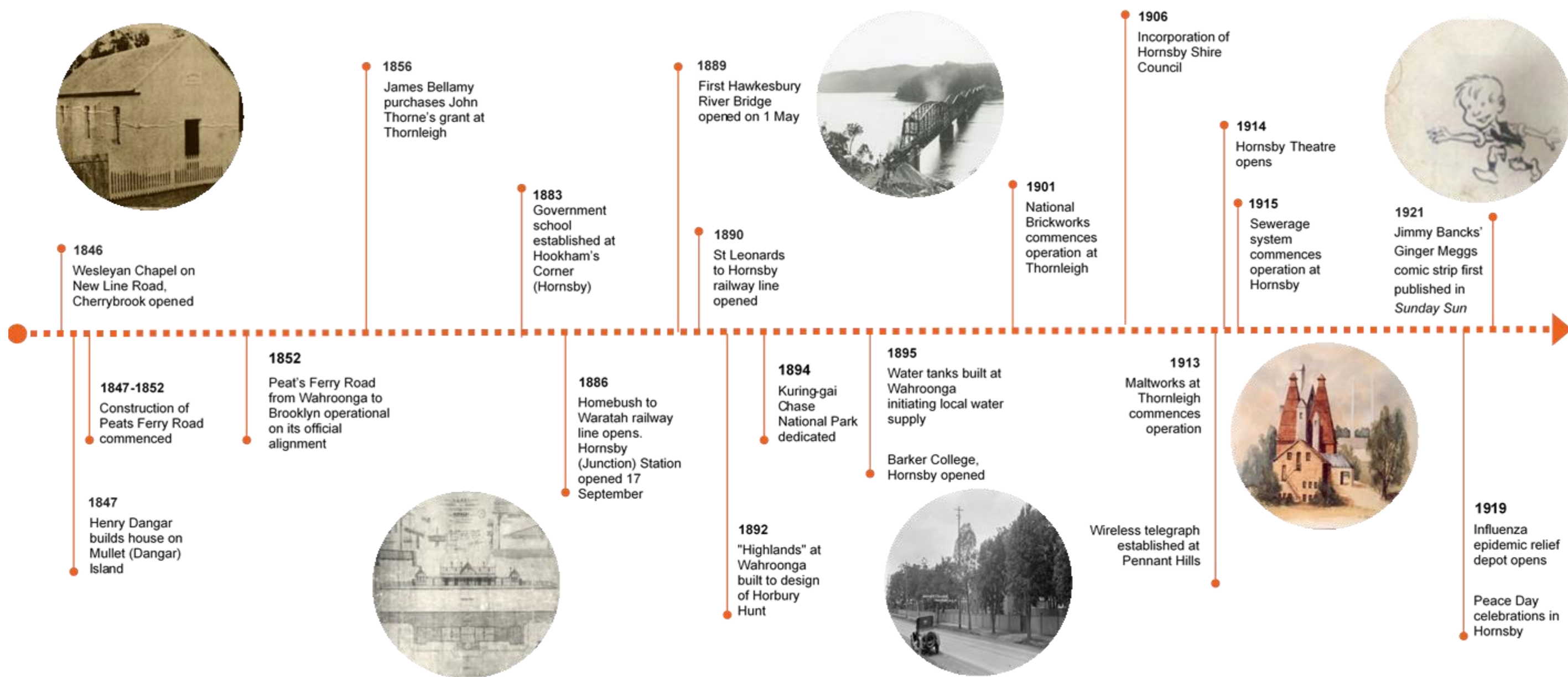
Other local examples include the Bayside City Council's Ron Rathbone Local History Prize, which engages primary and high school students in a competition, as well as historical scholars with a focus on local stories, collection and heritage.

- **Short Publications:** Using Hornsby Shire Recollects or the Local Studies portal, a series of short, themed publications or extracts from the Thematic History could be published online to highlight the Shire's history and broaden its audience reach.

Timeline



From Left to Right:
 Aboriginal carving, undated
 Singleton's Mill – woodcut by George Collingridge, undated
 Wiseman's Ferry by Conrad Martens, c1838
 Steamer leaving jetty, Peats Ferry. Engraving by Arthur Collingridge, 1880s



From Left to Right:

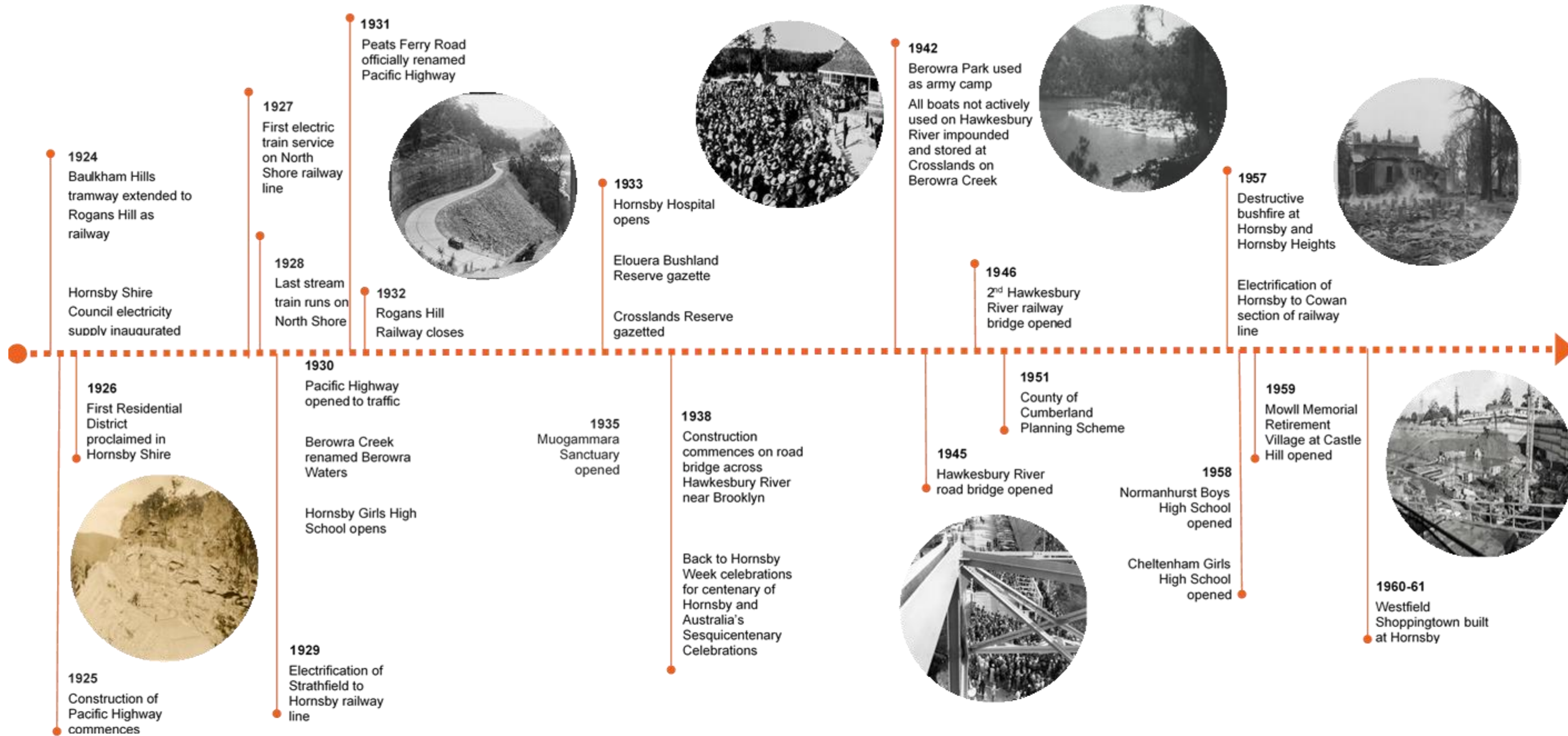
Wesleyan Chapel, New Line Road, Cherrybrook, undated

New South Wales Government Railways, Homebush to Waratah passenger station at Hornsby, 1885

Barker College, Hornsby, c1930

Old Matlings, Thornleigh by J Woods, undated

First iteration of Ginger Meggs in comic strip published in 1921



From Left to Right:
 Construction of Pacific Highway, c1925
 Car driving along the new Pacific Highway, c1930
 Official opening of Hornsby Hospital, 26 August 1933
 Boats moored at Crosslands on Berowra Creek in case of Japanese invasion, 1942
 Opening of the Hawkesbury River road bridge, 5 May 1945
 Hornsby Public School destroyed by bushfire, 1957
 Construction of Westfield Shoppingtown, 1960

1969
Berowra tollgates opened

1973
Hawkesbury River to Berowra Expressway opens

1979
Northgate Shopping Centre opened at Hornsby

1984
Construction of F3 (M1) at Wahroonga commenced

1987
Berowra Valley Bushland Park gazetted

1989
F3 opened between Wahroonga and Berowra

1991
Hornsby Council commissions Hornsby Shire Heritage Plan

1992
Cherrybrook Technology High School opened

1993
Water clock fountain opened in Hornsby Mall by Premier Nick Greiner
Hornsby Shire Heritage Plan completed

1994
Last houses in Berowra connected to sewer.
Bushfires threaten the Berowra district in January

1997
Proposed Landcom development of 174 house blocks in Berowra Heights stopped.

2000
Three times Olympian Matt Dunn carries Olympic flame into Pennant Hills Park during Hornsby Shire leg of torch relay for Sydney Olympic Games.

2001
Hornsby-Kuring-gai Hospital after a freak storm in early December caused over a quarter of a million dollars worth of damage

2002
Bushfires threaten Hornsby Shire including at Wisemans Ferry and Berowra Heights.

2005
Danish Crown Prince Frederick and Crown Princess Mary attend service at United Church, Pennant Hills

2006
A third platform opened at Berowra Station with pedestrian railway over-bridge and lift

2009
5th platform at Hornsby Station opened

2013
New Hornsby Aquatic and Leisure Centre opened

2015
The NSW Government proposed that Hornsby Shire Council merger with Ku-ring-gai Council.

2016
The area south of the M2 Motorway was removed from Hornsby Shire by the State Government and transferred to the City of Parramatta Council. Hornsby Shire Council protested the decision given that the proposed merger with Ku-ring-gai Council did not proceed

2017
Hornsby's new pedestrian bridge at Hornsby opened
Filling of Hornsby Quarry commenced using NorthConnex fill material

2020
NorthConnex opened

From Left to Right:
 Berowra tollgates, c1970
 Open day of Northgate Shopping Centre, 1979
 Opening day of F3, 1989
 Matt Dunn carrying Olympic torch, 2000
 Bushfires at Wisemans Ferry, 2002
 Crown Prince Frederick and Princess Mary at Pennant Hills, 2005
 New Hornsby Aquatic and Leisure Centre, 2013

Australian and NSW Heritage Themes Compared With New Local Themes for Hornsby Shire Council

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Hornsby	Notes	Examples	Hornsby Shire Local Examples (Hornsby Shire Historical Society)
1 Tracing the natural evolution of Australia	Environment – naturally evolved	The Bushland Shire	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.	<i>Hornsby quarry</i> <i>The many headlands and valleys that divide the Shire (i.e. the End of Quarter Sessions Road, Westleigh, is only a few hundred metres as the crow flies from Old Mans Valley but many kilometres by road)</i> <i>Hawkesbury River depth at Brooklyn</i> <i>Hawkesbury River Islands</i> <i>Wianamatta Shale</i> <i>Hawkesbury sandstone cliff faces</i> <i>Berowra Waters</i> <i>Maroota Sands</i> <i>Peats Crater.</i>
2 Peopling Australia	Aboriginal cultures and interactions with other cultures	Aboriginal Country	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.	<i>European contact Dangar Island, Governor Phillip</i> <i>Crossland Hornsby Height's Great North Walk middens</i> <i>Brooklyn's role in Federation [see Tom Richmond's books]</i> <i>Families of Old Mans Valley</i> <i>Aboriginal rock engravings (example end of Quarter Sessions Road).</i> <i>Aboriginal scarred trees/fire trees – many examples throughout the Shire.</i> <i>Tedbury Creek, Pennant Hills (named after Pemulwuy's son). Both father and son were resistance fighters against British colonisation and Tedbury was arrested at Pennant Hills in 1805.</i>
2 Peopling Australia	Convict	Convict Life Industrial Enterprise Transport	Activities relating to incarceration, transport, reform, accommodation and working during the convict period in NSW (1788-1850) – does not include activities associated with the conviction of persons in NSW that are unrelated to the imperial 'convict system': use the theme of Law & Order for such activities.	Prison, convict shipwreck, convict system document, ticket-of-leave and probationary living quarters, guards uniform, landscapes-of-control, lumber yard, quarry, gallows site, convict-built structure, convict ship arrival site, convict barracks, convict hospital, estate based on convict labour, place of secondary punishment.	<i>Timber-getting establishment; Hawkins, Ralph, The Convict Timber Getters of Pennant Hills</i> <i>Great North Road (Old Northern Road) Convict Trail Project CMP</i> <i>Baby Bridge remains opposite Hawkins lookout</i> <i>Devlin's Creek Crossing</i> <i>Wisemans Well.</i>
2 Peopling Australia	Ethnic influences	Belief and Faith Changing Face of the Shire.	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.	<i>Rebadging of surplus church buildings</i> <i>Buddhist Waitara</i> <i>Bahia Hornsby</i> <i>Chinese Pennant Hills Road</i> <i>Maronite Church Thornleigh</i> <i>Shop awning Hornsby Local Colour Article.</i>
2 Peopling Australia	Migration	Changing Face of the Shire	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.	<i>Asquith Balt Camp after WW2</i> <i>Sydney Social Atlas, published by the Australian Bureau of Statics.</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Agriculture	Agriculture and Horticulture	Activities relating to the cultivation and rearing of plant and animal species, usually for commercial purposes, can include aquaculture.	Hay barn, wheat harvester, silo, dairy, rural landscape, plantation, vineyard, farmstead, shelterbelt, silage pit, fencing, plough markings, shed, fish farm, orchard, market garden, piggery, common, irrigation ditch, Aboriginal seasonal picking camp.	

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Hornsby	Notes	Examples	Hornsby Shire Local Examples (Hornsby Shire Historical Society)
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce	Aboriginal Country Agriculture and Horticulture Settlement and Suburbanisation	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	<i>Packing shed Fagan Park</i> <i>Orchard subdivisions</i> <i>Ex Yates seed farm/ realignment of David Road</i> <i>Development of fowl breeds Thornleigh, Normanhurst and possibly Berowra</i> <i>Oyster farming</i> <i>Still existing orchards and market farms</i> <i>Farmland bought for large developments, NBHS; PHHS; Bowden Brae; Seven Day Adventist Aged care facility off Mt Pleasant Ave was The Sanitarian Hospital cow paddock</i> <i>Hornsby station yard; goods yards and sheds</i> <i>Hornsby funnel</i> <i>Strip shopping</i> <i>Brutalist style ex bank built old side of Hornsby</i> <i>Weekly markets on Hornsby mall</i> <i>Corner shops.</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Communication	Bushland Shire Settlement and Suburbanisation	Activities relating to the creation and conveyance of information.	Post office, telephone exchange, printery, radio studio, newspaper office, telegraph equipment, network of telegraph poles, mail boat shipwreck, track, airstrip, lighthouse, stamp collection.	<i>Telegraph line to Newcastle, along Old Northern Road</i> <i>Radio towers at Pennant Hills</i> <i>Hawkesbury River Mail boat</i> <i>Old Post offices if any exist</i> <i>Archaeological remains of footings for towers for telephone line across the Hawkesbury River.</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Environment – cultural landscape	Leisure and Recreation Bushland Shire	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.	<i>National parks</i> <i>Nature reserves</i> <i>Market gardens</i> <i>Middens</i> <i>RFS stations</i> <i>Oyster farming</i> <i>Aboriginal rock water holes</i> <i>Old Railway Bridge Piers in the Hawkesbury River.</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Events	Transport Leisure and Recreation	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.	<i>Saw Pit Epping/Browns water hole</i> <i>Governor Phillip's Hawkesbury river trip</i> <i>Monument Brooklyn</i> <i>Ferries that got away</i> <i>Old Railway Bridge Piers</i> <i>Boer War Memorial Beecroft</i> <i>World 1 and 2 War Memorials and Honour Boards (various collections; Thornleigh Community Centre; Hornsby Shire H.S. Hornsby RSL)</i> <i>Opening of Beecroft School of Arts by Governor of NSW, 1904.</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Exploration	Bushland Shire Convict Life Settlement and Suburbanisation	Activities associated with making places previously unknown to a cultural group known to them.	Explorers route, marked tree, camp site, explorer's journal, artefacts collected on an expedition, captain's log, surveyor's notebook, mountain pass, water source, Aboriginal trade route, landing site, map.	<i>Phillips and later exploration of Hawkesbury River</i> <i>Wiseman's Well</i> <i>George Caley's trip of exploration</i> <i>Joan Webb's Article in Warringah History</i> <i>Brooklyn as the inland port that services the Hawkesbury [not only postal but food supplies too].</i>

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Hornsby	Notes	Examples	Hornsby Shire Local Examples (Hornsby Shire Historical Society)
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Fishing	Aboriginal Country Leisure and Recreation	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	<i>Oyster farming</i> <i>Boatsheds; Berowra and Brooklyn (commercial and private and for hire)</i> <i>Oyster processing</i> <i>Brooklyn boat building area</i> <i>Aboriginal fish traps, Hawkesbury River.</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Forestry	Industrial Enterprises	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.	<i>Saw pit</i> <i>Convict campsite under Epping church now gone</i> <i>History of timber getting</i> <i>Original land use of much of Shire</i> <i>Pennant Hills Road developed as a track for timber getters</i> <i>Timber and families of Old Mans Valley.</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Health	Health and Wellness	Activities associated with preparing and providing medical assistance and/or promoting or maintaining the well being of humans	Hospital, sanatorium, asylum, surgical equipment, ambulance, nurses quarters, medical school, baby clinic, hospital therapy garden, landscaped grounds, herbalist shop, pharmacy, medical consulting rooms.	<i>Hornsby Hospital Nurses Quarters now flats</i> <i>Malahide</i> <i>Epileptic home</i> <i>Any original pharmacies</i> <i>Rehabilitation places</i> <i>Mt Wilga</i> <i>Mt Owen</i> <i>Maternity Hospital Lions</i> <i>Baby Health centre</i> <i>Waitara Foundling Home</i> <i>Northern Clinical School (University of Sydney), Hornsby Hospital (Medical School).</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Industry	Transport	Activities associated with the manufacture, production and distribution of goods	Factory, workshop, depot, industrial machinery, timber mill, quarry, private railway or wharf, shipbuilding yard, slipway, blacksmithy, cannery, foundry, kiln, smelter, tannery, brewery, factory office, company records.	<i>Archaeology</i> <i>Crosslands Boat building</i> <i>Singletons tide mill</i> <i>Woolwash (wool scouring)</i> <i>Maltings</i> <i>Wrigleys</i> <i>Hornsby Quarry and associated buildings</i> <i>Mellolite</i> <i>Thornleigh and Pennant Hills railway sidings</i> <i>Thornleigh Quarry</i> <i>Hanson Australia (ready mix concrete) Thornleigh (formerly Pioneer Concrete).</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Mining	Industrial Enterprises	Activities associated with the identification, extraction, processing and distribution of mineral ores, precious stones and other such inorganic substances.	Mine, quarry, race, mining field or landscape, processing plant, manager's office, mineral specimen, mining equipment, mining license, ore laden shipwreck, collier, mine shaft, sluice gate, mineral deposit, slag heap, assay office, water race.	<i>Hornsby Quarry and associated buildings</i> <i>Thornleigh Zig Zag</i> <i>Clovelly Road Quarry [Allan Rost] LC 7.2: 47</i> <i>Quarrying in Hornsby Shire [Patricia Dewey] LC 7.2: 4</i> <i>Maroota sandmining.</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Pastoralism	Industrial Enterprises	Activities associated with the breeding, raising, processing and distribution of livestock for human use.	Pastoral station, shearing shed, slaughter yard, stud book, photos of prizewinning stock, homestead, pastoral landscape, common, fencing, grassland, well, water trough, freezer boat shipwreck, wool store.	<i>Hornsby Wool wash (wool scouring) operated by Cyrus Horsham.</i>

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Hornsby	Notes	Examples	Hornsby Shire Local Examples (Hornsby Shire Historical Society)
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Science	Bushland Shire Agriculture and Horticulture	Activities associated with systematic observations, experiments and processes for the explanation of observable phenomena.	Laboratory, experimental equipment, text book, observatory, botanical garden, arboretum, research station, university research reserve, weather station, soil conservation area, fossil site, archaeological research site.	<i>Old Mans Valley observations; Radio Astronomy research Beecroft Observatory Park Muogamarra Lisgar Gardens Lilian Fraser Garden.</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Technology	Transport Convict Life	Activities and processes associated with the knowledge or use of mechanical arts and applied sciences.	Computer, telegraph equipment, electric domestic appliances, underwater concrete footings, museum collection, office equipment, Aboriginal places evidencing changes in tool types.	<i>Old Railway Bridge; Hawkesbury River Electricity Substation Galston high voltage split HSHS Museum Collection domestic electrical appliances Hornsby railway signal box, only 1 of 2 in the state so big, last surviving one Baby Bridge remains opposite Hawkins lookout; Delvin's Creek Crossing; Wisemans Well.</i>
3 Developing local, regional and national economies	Transport	Transport Convict Life	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.	<i>Great North Road New Line Road Hornsby Shire Funnel – all transport and everything else North/South passes through Hornsby Shire Original Peats Ferry road in Muogamarra 1927 concrete road to Kangaroo Point Ferry Pennant Hills Road; Pacific Highway; Freeway; NorthConnex Hawkesbury River bridges Main North Railway Line North Shore Railway Line Hornsby Station Yard railway carriage sheds Pennant Hills Station Thornleigh Station Railway wharf Brooklyn on Long Island Abandoned tunnel Brooklyn Boats stored at Crosslands in WW2 that washed down Berowra Creek and out into the Hawkesbury.</i>
4 Building settlements, towns and cities	Towns, suburbs and villages	Settlement and Suburbanisation	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.	<i>Old side Hornsby Civic Centre Hornsby Layering of development Conservation areas Green Belt areas Westleigh Realignment of David Road, Castle Hill Subdivision patterns School opening dates Subdivision patterns and infill.</i>
4 Building settlements, towns and cities	Land tenure	Aboriginal Country	Activities and processes for identifying forms of ownership and occupancy of land and water, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal	Fence, survey mark, subdivision pattern, land title document, boundary hedge, , stone wall, shelterbelt, cliff, river, seawall, rock engravings, shelters & habitation sites, cairn, survey mark, trig station, colonial/state border markers.	<i>Devils Rock (just outside shire) Aboriginal art between highway and railway line at Mt Kuring-Gai Subdivision patterns Marked tree burnt in 2002 bushfires Wisemans Ferry Various trig stations [Geoff B wrote about them].</i>

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Hornsby	Notes	Examples	Hornsby Shire Local Examples (Hornsby Shire Historical Society)
4 Building settlements, towns and cities	Utilities	Settlement and Suburbanisation Industrial Enterprises	Activities associated with the provision of services, especially on a communal basis	Water pipeline, sewage tunnel, gas retort, powerhouse, County Council office, garbage dump, windmill, radio tower, bridge, culvert, weir, well, cess pit, reservoir, dam, places demonstrating absence of utilities at Aboriginal fringe camps.	<i>Night soil dump Quarter Session Road, Westleigh</i> <i>Tip parks</i> <i>High voltage power lines</i> <i>Water tanks (Hornsby North, Berowra; Westleigh)</i> <i>Wooden water pipes some still in ground</i> <i>Horse drinking trough (HSHS).</i>
4 Building settlements, towns and cities	Accommodation	Settlement and Suburbanisation Changing Face of the Shire	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).	<i>Brooklyn Caves; Brooklyn; off Hornsby Heights</i> <i>Public housing many periods and styles</i> <i>Land re-used for town-housing and units, different planning codes</i> <i>Different building materials</i> <i>Nurses quarters Hornsby hospital</i> <i>Train drivers accommodation</i> <i>Retirement villages</i> <i>Fretar Ruins Calabash Bay commonly known as Fretus ruins</i> <i>Lutanda Children's Home in Boundary Road PH</i> <i>New medium density apartments.</i>
5 Working	Labour	Industrial Enterprises Convict Life	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.	<i>Railway:- sheds, railway yards, accommodation quarters, signal box</i> <i>Servant quarters attached to various large houses i.e. Mowell village, Highlands House</i> <i>Brothel on old side of Hornsby, upstairs, been there about 40 years.</i> <i>Great North Road.</i> <i>New Line Road.</i>
6 Educating	Education	Belief and Faith Health and Wellness Settlement and Suburbanisation	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).	<i>Norwood Dural Street Hornsby (earliest purpose-built early childhood Building in NSW)</i> <i>Tent School Site; Nurses Home</i> <i>TAFE</i> <i>Various schools</i> <i>Education Medals in HSHS</i> <i>Field Studies Centres Muogamarra and Bobbin Head</i> <i>Blind School at Pearces Corner LC 7.7: 24</i> <i>School sports ovals</i> <i>Various libraries</i> <i>Gibberagong Environmental Education Centre, Bobbin Head.</i>
7 Governing	Defence	Bushland Shire Transport	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.	<i>Scuttled naval vessel in Hawkesbury River</i> <i>HSHS building: ex Drill Hall</i> <i>Evidence of Air-raid shelters</i> <i>Devil's elbow bridge Brooklyn</i> <i>Boer War memorial Beecroft</i> <i>Various war memorials</i> <i>Air raid slit-trenches – see SIX Maps of Hornsby Girls HS.</i>
7 Governing	Government and administration	Changing Face of the Shire	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.	<i>Current Council Chambers</i> <i>Hornsby civic precinct</i> <i>Jersey Street House altered to be original council chambers</i> <i>Brooklyn and Federation</i> <i>Hornsby Public School now TAFE</i> <i>Ventilators in ex Commonwealth Bank Building old side Hornsby.</i>

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Hornsby	Notes	Examples	Hornsby Shire Local Examples (Hornsby Shire Historical Society)
7 Governing	Law and order	Settlement and Suburbanisation	Activities associated with maintaining, promoting and implementing criminal and civil law and legal processes	Courthouse, police station, lock-up, protest site, law chambers, handcuffs, legal document, gaol complex, water police boat, police vehicle, jail, prison complex (archaeological), detention centre, judicial symbols	<i>Hornsby Courthouse is part of the “governance” precinct of Hornsby. One of only three courthouses north of the harbour. From around 1910 Hornsby Courthouse handled motor car registrations for car owners all over the North Shore.</i>
7 Governing	Welfare	Health and Wellness	Activities and process associated with the provision of social services by the state or philanthropic organisations.	Orphanage, retirement home, public housing, special school, trades training institution, employment agency,	<i>Dr. Banardos Bowden Brae Mowell village complex The Grange etc Jewish housing, Waitara Public housing all over; Waitara flats first Clarke road SSP Ormond TAFE Railway institute Waitara unmarried mothers' home Blind School at Pearces Corner LC 7.7: 24.</i>
8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Domestic Life	Settlement and Suburbanisation Health and Wellness	Activities associated with creating, maintaining, living in and working around houses and institutions.	Domestic artefact scatter, kitchen furnishings, bed, clothing, garden tools, shed, arrangement of interior rooms, kitchen garden, pet grave, chicken coop, home office, road camp, barrack, asylum.	<i>HSHS collection and museum Fagan Park Mowell village large house House with shop front Normanhurst Shops with accommodation over or behind Photos of building Mt Wilga Railway Barracks Community Garden Edgeworth David Garden.</i>
8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Creative endeavour	Leisure and Recreation.	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.	<i>Number of current or recently current artists living in or near/next to bushland Wheel and Weft Valley Artists Fountain Rock art; Mundowies and man at Mt Kuring-Gai amongst others Architectural houses in Houses of Hornsby Shire Vol 1 and 2; Pettit and Sevitt houses Mt Errington Margaret Preston's house Across the Black Soil Plains J.J. Hilder Hornsby Shire bushland.</i>

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Hornsby	Notes	Examples	Hornsby Shire Local Examples (Hornsby Shire Historical Society)
8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Leisure	Bushland Shire Leisure and Recreation	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.	<i>Great North Walk</i> <i>Fish Ponds</i> <i>Hawkesbury River</i> <i>Muogamarra</i> <i>Browns Water Hole</i> <i>Pennant Hills Park</i> <i>Golf Club</i> <i>Asquith Golf Club</i> <i>Parsley Bay Brooklyn</i> <i>Fagan Park</i> <i>Pacific Cabaret, Hornsby (now demolished)</i> <i>Odeon Cinema, Hornsby</i> <i>Devlin's Creek water holes.</i>
8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Religion	Belief and Faith	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.	<i>Reuse of redundant churches for other religions; i.e. opposite Waitara primary school Buddhist; Dural Street Hornsby Baha'i; Chinese Australian Baptist Church Thornleigh, Korean Sydney Northside Gospel Chapel in Beecroft Scout Hall</i> <i>Monasteries and convents Pennant Hills or thereabout</i> <i>Convents attached to schools etc; Loreto; Waitara; Brooklyn; Mount St Benedict, Pennant Hills Rd</i> <i>Higgins cemetery; Brooklyn Cemetery; Laughtondale Cemetery; St Judes Anglican Church Dural Old Northern Rd</i> <i>St Pauls Wahroonga</i> <i>Maronite Church Thornleigh</i> <i>Galston Library.</i>
8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Social institutions	Leisure and Recreation	Activities and organisational arrangements for the provision of social activities	CWA Room, Masonic hall, School of Arts, Mechanic's Institute, museum, art gallery, RSL Club, public hall, historical society collection, public library, community centre, Aboriginal mission hall or school room.	<i>HSHS Museum and Museum collection</i> <i>Fagan Park</i> <i>Beecroft School of Arts</i> <i>CWA building now demolished</i> <i>Norwood 6 Dural Street as Children's Library 1950s</i> <i>Hornsby RSL</i> <i>Various Schools of Arts demolished</i> <i>Shire Libraries</i> <i>Wallarobba Home of Hornsby Art Society.</i>
8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Sport	Leisure and Recreation	Activities associated with organised recreational and health promotional activities.	Oval, race course, swimming pool, bowling club, bowling green, trophies, calendar of fixtures, cricket set, yacht pens, tennis court, rugby field, speedway, sporting equipment, bocce court.	<i>Many examples within the Shire</i> <i>Tip Parks</i> <i>Normanhurst Park Kenley Rd</i> <i>Pennant Hills Park</i> <i>Thornleigh Baseball, Oakleigh Oval.</i>
9 Marking the phases of life	Birth and Death	Health and Wellness.	Activities associated with the initial stages of human life and the bearing of children, and with the final stages of human life and disposal of the dead.	Birth control clinic, maternity hospital, nursery, baby clinic, baptism register, circumcision equipment, and Hospice, nursing home, funeral parlour, grave furnishings, cremation site, cemetery, burial register, disaster site, memorial plantings, shipwreck with loss of life.	<i>Higgins Cemetery</i> <i>Brooklyn Cemetery and Anglican burial register at HSC</i> <i>Laughtondale Cemetery</i> <i>Hornsby Baby Clinic building about 45 years old</i> <i>Court house place of birth and death registration</i> <i>Funeral parlour, Hornsby and White Ladies Pennant Hills</i> <i>Hornsby Hospital Maternity Wing Lions.</i>

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Local Theme for Hornsby	Notes	Examples	Hornsby Shire Local Examples (Hornsby Shire Historical Society)
9 Marking the phases of life	Persons	Health and Wellness Bushland Shire.	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).	<i>Edgeworth David Family home and park</i> <i>Lisgar gardens</i> <i>Lillian Frazer garden</i> <i>Lumby building Hornsby Hospital</i> <i>Rolfe Park</i> <i>Margret Preston's house Berowra</i> <i>Fagan Park</i> <i>Florence Cotton Recreation Reserve</i> <i>Hunt Park</i> <i>Jimmy Bancks Creek</i> <i>Higgins Cemetery</i> <i>Rita Young (modelled for both Max Dupain and Norman Lindsay) lived in Nicholson Avenue, Thornleigh (house no longer there). Portrait of Rita in HSHS museum</i> <i>Private chapels at schools and retirement villages.</i>

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Appendix 1: Community Consultation Register

The table below documents the submissions received by GML and GML's attendance at community meetings.

Community Group/Individual	Place/Date
Tom Richmond	Via email, 5 November 2020
Local Studies: Neil Chippendale	In person, 18 November 2020
Mari Metzke and Elizabeth Roberts, Hornsby Shire Historical Society	In person, 20 November 2020, Hornsby Shire Historical Society, Thornleigh
Michael Bell	Via phone, 18 November 2020
Tom Richmond	Via phone, 18 November 2020
Hornsby Shire Historical Society	Via email, 18 November 2020
Arcadia & Galston Resident's Association (AGRA)	Via Social Pinpoint, 22 November 2020
Annie Crowe, President, Berowra Waters Progress Association	Via email, 23 November 2020
Berowra Waters Progress Association	Via email, 23 November 2020
Christopher Russell	Via email, 23 November 2020
Sonja Cameron, President – Arcadia & Galston Resident's Association (AGRA)	Via email 26 November 2020
Hornsby Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee	Via Zoom, 26 November 2020
Heritage Advisory Committee	Via Zoom, 1 December 2020
Ross Walker, President Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust	Via email, 1 December 2020
Jenny Hart and Sandra Neale, descendants of William George Chilvers	Via email, 12 December 2020
Rosemary Curtis, Dangar Island Historical Society	Via email, 13 December 2020

GML HERITAGE

Community Group/Individual	Place/Date
Stewart McLennan	Via email, 13 December 2020
David White, David White Architects Pty Ltd	Via email, 22 December 2020
Anne Conway, Hornsby Council Heritage Advisory Committee	Via email, 22 December 20220
Heritage Advisory Committee Presentation of Draft Thematic History	Via Zoom, 2 February 2021

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German

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Hindi

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Korean

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