

# The River Foreshore Parramatta



CITY OF  
PARRAMATTA



Front cover image: *Windmill of Parramatta* by Fleury, 1853.  
(Source: City of Parramatta, Cultural Collection object no. 2012.10.1)

## COMPILED BY:

Neera Sahni, Research Services Leader  
&  
Caroline Finlay, Research Facilitator

Research & Collection Services  
Parramatta Heritage Visitor & Information Centre  
346A Church Street, Parramatta NSW 2150

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More information and stories on Parramatta's history can be found on our website <https://historyandheritage.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/>

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# INTRODUCTION

*Neera Sahni*

This historic precinct of Parramatta includes the section of the river from the Gasworks Bridge to the Marsden Street. It was once the heart of the township where industry, commerce and agriculture all met for trade and exchange. Prior to European arrival in 1788 it was the tidal meeting place of fresh and salt water, and the Darug meeting place which gave Parramatta its name, the place 'where eels lie down'.



[Plan of the town of Parramatta and the adjacent properties showing the river foreshore 1844.](#)

Source: State Library of New South Wales

This stretch of river foreshore, particularly the southern bank, was arguably the most significant piece of land during the early European settlement of the area. It was here that Governor Phillip landed his boats on 2 November 1788, six months after first discovering the site, and it was from here that they set about building Australia's second European settlement.

Between 1788 and 1840 this section of river was also of great importance for the feeding of the Sydney region. Australia's agricultural and farming industries were born in the Parramatta district and the services to support them sprang up along these riverbanks.

Before this the foreshore was of immense significance to the local Darug People as it was the meeting place of the salt water from Sydney Harbour and the fresh water from the Parramatta River. The tides and extremes in climate meant that this section of river could range from being virtually empty of water to a raging torrent.

This changeability was also the source of the local Burrumatta name 'Parramatta' meaning 'where eels lie down'. This phrase referred to the period when the eels travelled up the river to spawn and many were caught in the open at low tide.

In this book articles cover the how the early township of Parramatta developed along the foreshore. All this started to change around 1860 with the opening of the

railroad line which ran from Sydney to Parramatta. This saw the movement of goods and services to the southern side of Parramatta and the movement of the centre of the city towards Centenary Square.

# First European Exploration of Parramatta, 22 to 28 April 1788

*Neera Sahni*



[The residence of John McArthur Esqr, near Parramatta, New South Wales circa 1822.](#)

Source: J. Lycett State Library of New South Wales FL3541311

The town of Parramatta may have been established on the 2 November 1788, but this proclamation was made on Phillip's second visit to Parramatta, or Rose Hill as it was first named.

Earlier in the same year the first visit to the site was made by Phillip, Surgeon John White, Lieutenant Ball, Lieutenant George Johnston, Lieutenant Cresswell, the judge advocate, and nine soldiers and two seaman. On the 22 April this group left Sydney Cove to continue their survey the limits of the harbour and to see if they could locate the large river they thought would run from the foot of the Blue Mountains.

John White, the First Fleet surgeon, who was also a keen naturalist, in 1790 published an account of this journey in a book with the rather long winded title, '*Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales, with sixty-five plates of non descript animals, birds, lizards, serpents, curious cones of trees and other natural productions*'. What follows is his full account of their journey and the discovery of Parramatta.





Great Brown Kings Fisher, 1790. Source: *Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales*

**22 April 1788:** On the morning of this day the governor, accompanied by the same party, with the addition of Lieutenant Cresswell of the marines and six privates, landed at the head of the harbour, with an intention of penetrating into the country westward, as far as seven days provisions would admit of; every individual carrying his own allowance of bread, beef, rum, and water.

The soldiers, beside their own provisions, carried a camp kettle and two tents, with their poles, &c. Thus equipped, with the additional weight of spare shoes, shirts, trowsers [sic.], together with a great coat, or Scotch plaid, for the purpose of sleeping in, as the nights were cold, we proceeded on our destination. We likewise took with us a small hand hatchet in order to mark the trees as we went on, those marks (called in America blazing) being the only guide to direct us in our return. The country was so rugged as to render it almost impossible to explore our way by the assistance of the compass.

In this manner we proceeded for a mile or two, through a part well covered with enormous trees, free from underwood. We then reached a thicket of brush-wood, which we found so impervious as to oblige us to return nearly to the place from whence we had set out in the morning. Here we encamped, near some stagnant water, for the night, during which it thundered, lightened, and rained. About eleven o'clock the governor was suddenly attacked with a most violent complaint in his side and loins, brought on by cold and fatigue, not having perfectly gotten the better of the last expedition.

**23 April 1788:** The next morning being fine, his excellency, who was rather better, though still in pain, would not relinquish the object of his pursuit; and therefore we

proceeded, and soon got round the wood or thicket which had harassed us so much the day before. After we had passed it, we fell in with an hitherto unperceived branch of Port Jackson harbour, along the bank of which the grass was tolerably rich and succulent, and in height nearly up to the middle, interspersed with a plant much resembling the indigo. We followed this branch westward for a few miles, until we came to a small fresh-water stream that emptied itself into it. Here we took up our quarters for the night, [the Lycett painting at the top of this article shows the entrance to this spot where the Parramatta River meets Clay Cliff Creek] as our halts were always regulated by fresh water, an essential point by no means to be dispensed with, and not very abundant or frequently to be met with, in this country. We made a kettle of excellent soup out of a white cockatoo and two crows, which I had shot, as we came along. The land all around us was similar to that which we had passed. At night we had thunder, lightning, and rain. The governor, though not free from pain, was rather recovering.

**24 April 1788:** As soon as the dew, which is remarkably heavy in this country, was off the ground, we proceeded to trace the river, or small arm of the sea. The banks of it were now pleasant, the trees immensely large, and at a considerable distance from each other; and the land around us flat and rather low, but well covered with the kind of grass just mentioned. Here the tide ceased to flow; and all further progress for boats was stopped by a flat space of large broad stones, over which a fresh-water stream ran. Just above this flat, close to the water-side, we discovered a quarry of slates, from which we expected to derive great advantage in respect to covering our houses, stores, &c., it being a material beyond conception difficult to be procured in this country; but on trial it was found of no use, as it proved to be of a crumbling and rotten nature.

On this fresh-water stream, as well as on the salt, we saw a great many ducks and teal, three of which we shot in the course of the day, besides two crows and some loraquets. About four in the afternoon, being near the head of the stream, and somewhat apprehensive of rain, we pitched our tents before the grass became wet, a circumstance which would have proved very uncomfortable during the night. Here we had our ducks picked, stuffed with some slices of salt beef, and roasted, and never did a repast seem more delicious; the salt beef, serving as a palatable substitute for the want of salt, gave it an agreeable relish. The evening cleared up, and the night proved dry. During the latter, we heard a noise which not a little surprised us, on account of its resemblance to the human voice. What it proceeded from we could not discover, but I am of opinion that it was made by a bird, or some animal. The country round us was by no means so good, or the grass so abundant, as that which we had passed. The water, though neither clear nor in any great quantity, was neither of a bad quality nor ill-tasted.

**25 April 1788:** The next day, after having sowed some seeds, we pursued our route for three or four miles west, where we met with a mean hut belonging to some of the natives, but could not perceive the smallest trace of their having been there lately. Close to this hut we saw a kangaroo, which had come to drink at an

adjacent pool of stagnated water, but we could not get within shot of it. A little farther on we fell in with three huts, as deserted as the former, and a swamp, not unlike the American rice grounds. Near this we, saw a tree in flames, without the least appearance of any natives; from which we suspected that it had been set on fire by lightning.

This circumstance was first suggested by Lieutenant Ball, who had remarked, as well as myself, that every part of the country, though the most inaccessible and rocky, appeared as if, at certain times of the year, it had been all on fire. Indeed in many parts we met with very large trees the trunks of which and branches were evidently rent, and demolished by lightning. Close by the burning tree we saw three kangaroos.

Though by this time very much fatigued, we proceeded about two miles farther on, in hopes of finding some good water, but without effect; and about half past four o'clock we took up our quarters near a stagnant pool. The ground was so very dry and parched that it was with some difficulty we could drive either our tent pegs or poles into it. The country about this spot was much clearer of underwood than that which we had passed during the day. The trees around us were immensely large, and the tops of them filled with loraquets and paroquets of exquisite beauty, which chattered to such a degree that we could scarcely hear each other speak. We fired several times at them, but the trees were so very high that we killed but few.

**26 April 1788.** We still directed our course westward, and passed another tree on fire, and others which were hollow and perforated by a small hole at the bottom, in which the natives seemed to have snared some animal. It was certainly done by the natives, as the trees where these holes or perforations were, had in general many notches [sic.] cut for the purpose of getting to the top of them.

After this we crossed a water-course, which shews [sic.] that at some seasons the rain is very heavy here, notwithstanding that there was, at present, but little water in it. Beyond the chasm we came to a pleasant hill, the top of which was tolerably clear of trees and perfectly free from underwood. His excellency gave it the name of Belle Veüe [now called Prospect Hill].

From the top of this hill we saw a chain of hills or mountains, which appeared to be thirty or forty miles distant, running in a north and south direction. The northernmost being conspicuously higher than any of the rest, the governor called it Richmond Hill; the next, or those in the centre, Lansdown Hills; and those to the southward, which are by much the lowest, Carmarthen Hills. In a valley below Belle Veüe we saw a fire, and by it found some chewed root of a saline taste, which shewed that the natives had recently been there. The country hereabout was pleasant to the eye, well wooded, and covered with long sour grass, growing in tufts. At the bottom of this valley, or flat, we crossed another water-course and ascended a hill, where the wood was so very thick as to obstruct our view.

Here, finding our provisions to run short, our return was concluded on, though with great reluctance, as it was our wish, and had been our determination, to reach the hills before us if it had been possible. In our way back, which we easily discovered by the marks made in the trees, we saw a hollow tree on fire, the smoke issuing out of the top part as through a chimney. On coming near, and minutely examining it, we found that it had been set on fire by the natives; for there was some dry grass lighted and put into the hole wherein we had supposed they used to snare or take the animal before alluded to. In the evening, where we pitched our tents we shot two crows and some loraquets, for supper. The night was fine and clear, during which we often heard, as before, a sound like the human voice, and, from its continuance on one spot, we concluded it to proceed from a bird perched on some of the trees near us.

**27 April 1788:** We now found ourselves obliged to make a forced march back, as our provisions were quite exhausted, a circumstance rather alarming in case of losing our way, which, however, we met with no difficulty in discovering by the marked trees. By our calculation we had penetrated into the country, to the westward, not less than thirty-two or thirty-three miles. This day we saw the dung of an animal as large as that of a horse, but it was more like the excrement of a hog, intermixed with grass.

When we got as far back as the arm or branch of the sea which forms the upper part of Port Jackson harbour, we saw many ducks, but could not get within shot of any of them. It was now growing late, and the governor being apprehensive that the boats, which he had ordered to attend daily, might be, for that day, returning before we could reach them, he sent Lieutenants Johnston and Cresswell, with a marine, ahead, in order to secure such provisions as might have been sent up, and to give directions for the boats to come for us the next morning, as it then appeared very unlikely that all the party, who were, without exception, much fatigued, could be there soon enough to save the tide down.

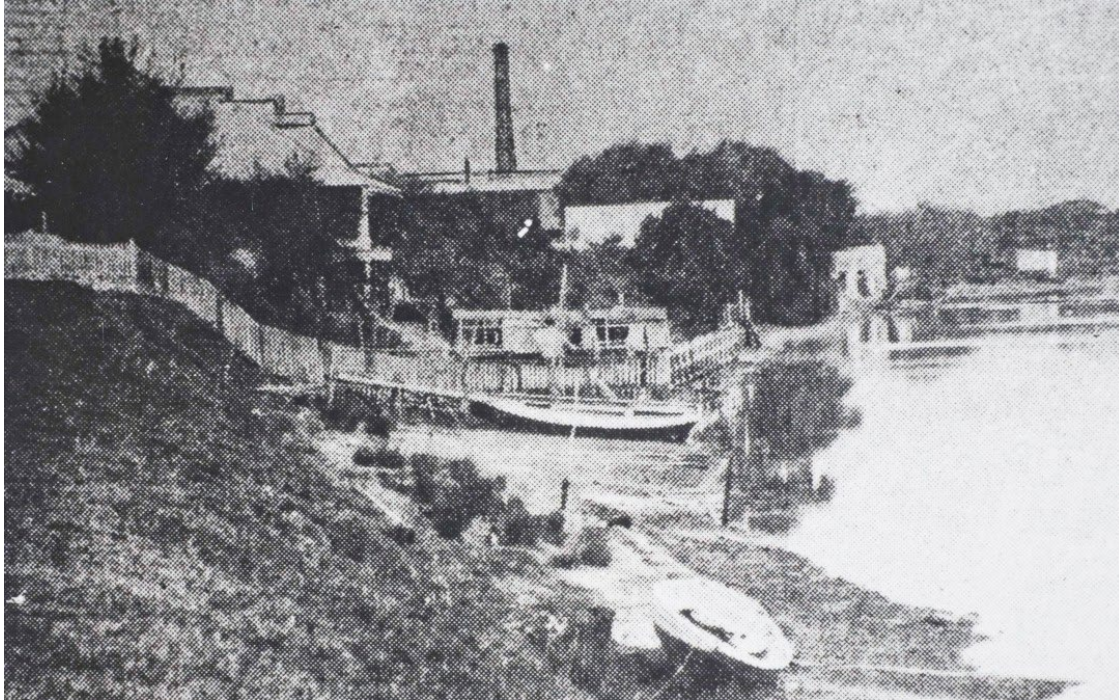
Those gentlemen accordingly went forward, and were so fortunate as to be just in time; and they returned to us with a seasonable supply of bread, beef, rum, and wine. As soon as they had joined us, we encamped for the night, on a spot about the distance of a mile from the place where the boats were to take us up in the morning.

**28 April 1788:** His excellency was again indisposed, occasioned by a return of his complaint, which had been brought on by a fall into a hollow place in the ground that, being concealed by the long grass, he was unable to discern. We passed the next day in examining different inlets in the upper part of the harbour. We saw there some of the natives, who, in their canoes, came along-side of the boat, to receive some trifles which the governor held out to them. In the evening we returned to Sydney Cove.



## Governor Phillip and the 'Kings Wharf', 1788

*Research & Collection Team*



[Queen's Wharf, Parramatta, view includes south bank of the Parramatta River and adjacent buildings, circa 1890s.](#)

*Source: Parramatta Local Studies Library Photographic Collection, LSP 00334*

The first colonists under Governor Arthur Phillip arrived at the foreshore a little further south near Duck Creek on the 23 April 1788. After making their way on foot to this site Phillip recognised the agricultural potential of the surrounding land and access to fresh water. As a result, he returned to Sydney with a desire to set up Australia's second settlement at this site which he named at the time Rose Hill [not to be confused with the current suburb of Rose Hill]. On the 2 November 1788, the colonists returned landing at this site just east of the current Gasworks Bridge. They had arrived to prepare the ground at Rose Hill further up the river but they had to land their goods here and carry them overland to the site in Parramatta Park; this was because at this time the river was too shallow for boats. One of the early priorities for these early settlers was to build a wharf and this was first known as the 'Landing Place', then 'The King's Wharf'.

This was a fairly rudimentary structure made by laying logs along the river's sandy edge to allow ship's boats to load and unload. The high sandy bank was later cut away to allow stores to be carried firstly along the riverbank then a westerly track, cut through the bush, to the fortification and store at Rose Hill (The Crescent). This track was later to be laid out as High Street. This original log wharf was later unable to accommodate the growth of river traffic and so a new wharf slightly east was

built. This wharf was named 'Queen's Wharf'. The dredging of the river for the new Rivercat Ferry Wharf has altered the banks of the river and removed the small beach-like areas and gradual slopes into the river.



*Kings Wharf, approximate landing site of Governor Phillip in 1788, photographed 200 years later in 1988. Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre Collection*

The river was much more tidal before the dredging and this view looking up the river would have looked quite different before the works. In the image below of Howell's Mill we can see an idealised version of the site but even given the artistic license the landscape of the river is clearly different. The mill in this image would have been slightly behind the place where the photographer took the picture above.



[Howell's Mill, Parramatta –watercolour drawing.](#)  
Source: State Library of New South Wales FL1640247



# Governor Arthur Phillip

*Research & Collection Team*



[Vice-admiral Arthur Phillip.](#)

Source: LSP 00669

## Phillip's Parents

On 29 November 1728, Elizabeth Beach aged about 21 years, married 23 year old seaman John Herbert in London. John swore a will in favour of his wife, a mandatory task that, in the event of his death during his naval service, would enable his wife to claim his pay and effects without problem. They lived on the north bank of the Thames in the Parish of St Botolph-without-Aldgate, a poor area where life expectancy was short. One in three children were expected to die in their first two years of life while their parents were fortunate to live beyond 50 years. Disease was rife in an unsanitary world. The Thames was an open sewer and typhoid, smallpox, tuberculosis and dysentery were rife. John Herbert escaped this world periodically while he was at sea in the Royal Navy although the couple do not appear to have had any children during their short span of marriage.

John's ship, HMS *Tartar*, was on duty on the Jamaica station and before it returned to England he died at Port Royal in 1831. Elizabeth Herbert would not have learned

of this until *Tartar* returned in the following year. She would have borne the grief that many a sailor's wife suffered, claimed his meagre effects and pay and continued her life.

### **Arthur Phillip 1738 – 1814**

Elizabeth does not appear again in our history until 1737, and then as the wife of Jacob Phillip, 'a native of Frankfort' but it is suggested that they married in 1836. Little is known of Jacob other than the fact that he was a teacher of languages and that he and Elizabeth lived in Bread Street, London. Their first child was baptised Arthur at the parish church of All Hallows in mid-1737 and a daughter Rebecca was born in October of that year. There are no records of children. The family appears to have lived in reasonably comfortable circumstances in a rented house in the late thirties. The family's history following these meagre facts is unclear. It could be assumed that Jacob joined the navy as a purser's steward and one parent died before 1851, leaving the family to live under difficult circumstances. This is gathered from the fact that when Arthur Phillip was admitted to the Greenwich Hospital School, a charity school for the sons of seamen, he was registered as being the son of a steward.

### **Education**

The Greenwich Hospital School, founded in 1694, was on the south bank of the Thames downstream from the London Bridge. The London Observatory was established on the hill overlooking the Georgian complex below, and the river. Here, in the early 1600s the Stuart kings built a summer residence and between 1696 and 1745, William and Mary, Anne, George I and George II raised four matching hospitals, surrounding a large square. The occupants of these buildings had grand view of all the passing river traffic coming and going to the docks and to refit at the Thames yards. In this magnificent precinct, Phillip was able to absorb the feeling of the sea, for which he was to devote his life. Here he would have met sailors who told stories of the high seas and the 'Spanish Main'.

Phillip was enrolled to the Greenwich Hospital School on 22 June 1751. The school had two purposes, to admit boys who were 'the Sons of disabled Seamen, or whose fathers were slain, kill'd or drown'd in the Service' and 'to provide for the Sons of poor Seamen by training them up to a seafaring life'. On admission, they were between eleven and thirteen years old, in good health and able to read. At the age of fourteen they were apprenticed in a branch of the merchant navy where they followed their nautical education.

Issued with clothing, a Bible and Common Prayer Book Phillip was also provided with the books and instruments required during his studies. He was only allowed out of the hospital grounds to attend school where he learned writing, mathematics, navigation and drawing. On 1 December 1753, Phillip left the school, 'with his voluntary and free consent', the governors having apprenticed him for seven years to William Redhead, mariner, to train him in the ways of the sea, to make him an able seaman.



## **Greenland and the Arctic Ocean, 1754**

Redhead was the master of the *Fortune*, a 210 ton vessel built for the 'Greenland whale fisheries', meaning that he fished the Arctic Sea east of Greenland, on the edge of the pack-ice where the Right Whale (*Balaena mysticetus*) flourished. This animal was most prized for its oil, the demand for which was increasing for lighting. During July, the *Fortune* joined the fleet of whalers that hunted in the bays or islands off Spitsbergen after having called at Lerwick in the Shetland Islands for the last provisions, warm clothing and extra men. Whaling was dangerous and arduous work, the crews suffering from drowning, broken and lost limbs and frostbite. The fleet returned to London with their catch of whale-blubber from the unfortunate creatures four months later.

So during the spring and summer of 1754 Arthur Phillip, now fifteen years old, learned the business of whaling in the Arctic Ocean. Of the experience, his thoughts are not known, although, many years later in New South Wales, he wrote of the possibility of the whaling industry commencing in the country.

## **The Mediterranean, 1754**

With the cargo unloaded, the crew were paid off and they looked for work on the European coastal trade. Redhead signed on a crew of twelve for a trading venture to the Mediterranean and so Phillip experienced a voyage in sunny climes to Barcelona in Spain, Leghorn in Italy, returning to London via Rotterdam. The master may have delivered say, herring at Leghorn, taken on currants at Barcelona and perhaps salt and grain and citrus fruit, which he unloaded at Rotterdam. *Fortune* reached London in April 1755, in time for the whaling season, Redhead signed on 30 men for Greenland again, returning almost immediately with the whaling fleet to the Arctic seas.

Phillip for the first time had visited Mediterranean Spain, Portugal, France and Italy, countries that he would visit numerous times in the future, countries whose languages he would learn to speak. He was beginning to discover the wide world.

## **Europe at War 1755-60 – 'captain's servant' to midshipman 1755**

France and Britain were moving steadily towards war in 1755, the immediate cause being in the French endeavouring to secure Canada. In October 1755, shortly after his seventeenth birthday, Phillip was posted to, and joined, HMS *Buckingham*, a 70 gun battleship as a 'captain's servant'. The captain was Michael Everett whose two sons, Robert and George, were cousins and were also under his care to be trained as officers, a common occurrence in those days. In this situation Phillip progressed to 'able bodied' and then to 'corporal'. In November they captured a French 74-gun ship but had to burn it to the waterline. Phillip had seen his first action.

In 1756 the *Buckingham* was ordered to join the Mediterranean squadron under Admiral Byng and participated in the unsuccessful sea Battle of Minorca when they

were beaten by the French, resulting in Byng being court-martialled for cowardice. Phillip was transferred to the 60 gun *Princess Louisa* as a captain's clerk and cruised the Mediterranean on station. In December, at Gibraltar he was transferred to the 90 gun ship *Ramilles* and, in the following year to Michael Everett's 90 gun ship *Neptune*. [Interestingly John Hunter, Australia's second Governor also served on board this vessel]

Between August 1757 and November 1758, he was again with Everett on *Union*, possibly pending his appointment as a midshipman, then on *Jason*, a ship captured from the French, he was posted as a supernumerary aged 20. By June 1759, aged 21, he had progressed to the rank of midshipman on *Aurora*, a 36-gun frigate whose task was to escort merchant fleets until the winter of early 1760. In his progression he would have learned the elements of navigation, learned how to draw coastal profiles, calculate latitude and longitude and the techniques of battle. However, this learning process was just the first steps to becoming a competent naval officer.

### **The War of 1760-1763 – to the West Indies**

Antigua – Phillip was posted then to the 64 gun ship, HMS *Stirling Castle*, under the command of Captain Everett and in October they reached Antigua, where they had been stationed to guard British trade interests in the West Indies. Cargoes of sugar, rum, ginger and mahogany were carried to England and North America while American shipments of flour, timber, Portuguese wine and African slaves had to be protected from plundering French privateers operating out of Martinique.

Another reason was to further the British war efforts against the French. In 1758 first Louisbourg and then in 1759, Quebec was captured from the French and gave the British command of Canada, which had to be protected. The islands of the Caribbean, -The Bahamas, Cuba, San Domingo, Puerto Rico, the Virgin, Leeward Antigua, Guadeloupe, Dominica and St Lucia) and the Windward Islands (Barbados, St Vincent, Grenada and Tobago) – were really unknown to most Europeans. It was the British Navy's task to protect their islands and possibly gain French Islands such as Minorca (which they did) and the rich Martinique (where they failed). Planters used slaves to cultivate the rich tropical fruits such as pineapples, bananas, coffee, coconuts and melons. Sugar, for which Europeans hungered, was also produced here.

### **Cuba and the Siege of Havana 1761 – promotion to lieutenant**

Phillip learned a lot during the Seven Years War. As a sailor he learned the principles of navigation, the ways of war and surviving in battle, the beginnings of man-management and discipline, experience that 'opened the career he desired in the Royal Navy'. As a man he had experienced the horrors of the brutal slave trade, he was to state later that 'there can be no Slavery in a Free Land - & consequently, no Slaves'.

Also, he had learned how to adjust to shipboard and service life, 'of guarding his inner self closely'. In 1761, the fleet of eighteen line-of-battle ships, including *Stirling Castle* with the recently promoted fourth lieutenant Arthur Phillip, began a successful offensive to capture or regain the French islands.

In 1762 the *Stirling Castle* was part of the fleet and a force of over 6000 soldiers that gallantly conducted the siege of Havana harbour in Cuba, then a Spanish possession. The British won the siege at a huge cost of lives but captured 22 ships of the Spanish fleet. However, the *Stirling Castle* was so in need of repair that it was decided to scuttle it and transfer the crew to one of the prize ships, *Infant*. The war seasoned Phillip sailed with *Infant* back to England, having come under the notice of Augustus Hervey, the naval divisional commander who later became one of Phillip's patrons. Hervey was of the patrician family, the Earls of Bristol while Phillip, the poor boy from inner London, was educated in a charity school.

Phillip, now 24 years of age, had gained experience in an officer's authority over men. The Records of punishment on *Stirling Castle* ordered by the captain were commonplace, frequent and severe but at the time thought necessary to maintain the strict discipline required on shipboard. Records of 200 lashes were common and hanging for desertion – or 600 lashes – were little deterrent to the motley naval crews. As a junior officer, Phillip often had to oversee these punishments.

### **Peace and half pay**

In 1763 Phillip was placed on the half-pay list where his rank entitled him to two shillings per day added to the £130 prize money he made from his squadron's share of the capture of the Spanish fleet at Havana. However, this was not enough to maintain a young man making his way in the world as naval officer and gentleman so marriage to a 'rich widow' seemed an obvious solution for some of his problems.

### **Married life**

Charlotte Denison had been born Margaret Charlotte Tybott, daughter of a farming family from the north of Wales. In 1759 she had married John Denison, an affluent cloth and wine merchant who also owned property in Lambeth and farming property in Dorset. Unfortunately, Denison died in 1760 leaving Charlotte a considerable estate including a £120,000 trust in the Bank of England.

There are no details as to how the couple met and married. Contemporary paintings show Phillip as a rather grim, young man at 25 and Charlotte, 'a handsome woman simple yet elegant taste' of 41.

Although it was unusual in those days, Phillip signed an indenture, release and settlement whereby he gave up any claim to the farming lands in Dorset, and any control of the trust fund. Nevertheless, he was now on the edge of society, living at Hampden Court, about fifteen miles west of London. Little is known of how he

spent the next few years, but they did acquire a farm at Lyndhurst, in the New Forest.

No doubt Arthur acquiesced to playing the country gentleman of means, and after all, it was close to Portsmouth where Michael Everett lived. It is thought they took up residence about 1766 and whether Phillip became a serious farmer is unknown, but what is known is that he spent £2000 of his wife's money 'principally on domestic disbursements', or what we would call, improvements.

### **Vernals, the farm at Lyndhurst circa 1766**

The farm lay on the southern edge of the town of Vernals, in the New Forest, not far distant from Portsmouth. An 1840s description of the farm described it as 'a house, farm offices, garden and shrubbery on one- and three-quarter acres, with 22 acres of pasturage adjoining'. About a year later Phillip obtained by purchase or lease, 'Glass Hayes', the area where Lyndhurst Park Hotel now stands but which in the 1840s, 'consisted of a house, offices garden and pleasure ground on six acres and four acres of adjoining fields, three of which was pasture'. He also acquired Black Acres, a property that has yet to be identified. Here, Phillip had a Shropshire farm labourer, Henry Dodd, who became a valued servant years later.

Phillip had become the country gentleman, a respectable owner of the land, acquitting the post of an 'overseer of the parish charity from 1766-88'.

It is doubtful, given the nature of the soil of the district that Phillip went into large-scale farm production. He probably kept sheep, poultry and pigs, and he employed an experienced farm labourer Henry Dodd to conduct the day by day affairs. Phillip however was acute enough to observe and absorb the culture of farming, learning the rhythm of the seasons, of crop planting, of fertilising the land with animal dung and seaweed, all needful knowledge even for the gentleman farmer. It is also likely Phillip made periodic visits to Portsmouth to visit socially and discuss service days with Michael Everett at Portsmouth.

We are not privy to Phillip's thoughts about this charmed existence. Did he miss the adventure of the sea? Did country and married life pale? Did he miss the excitement and adventure of new countries and people in the world, the adventure of battle, the authority and respect due to an officer? Was he starved of the male companionship of the mess and the camaraderie of shipboard life? Did he yearn for promotion, to make his mark at sea? Did he want a return to the orderliness of service life?

Perhaps some instinct, some innate yearning tugged at him to return to profession for which he had trained. Perhaps he had simply wearied of the life of a married country gentleman.

However, some circumstance occurred which induced him to wish for a separation from his wife. They completed a formal 'Indenture of Separation' in April 1769. Phillip agreed in writing to allow Charlotte to retain all of their household possessions, their property at Hampden Court and Middlesex. This loss of everything but his own possessions and his Admiralty half-pay, threw Phillip back onto his own resources again. Excepting when Charlotte died, no record exists of his thoughts or contact with her again.

He must have taken the separation hard as he sought approval from the Admiralty to spend six months holiday overseas, 'for the benefit of his health'. He spent six months at Omers in the north of France, then sought extension for an additional six months.

### **Back to the sea 1770**

Phillip is next recorded joining *HMS Egmont*, a 74-gun line-of-ship, in November 1770. The *Egmont* was being fitted out as a part of the re-activation of the navy as a result of a quarrel with Spain over possession of the Falkland Islands. Perhaps the threat of war and action brought him back from France, but the conflict was resolved, and Phillip spent seven months of inaction as a fourth lieutenant undertaking routine tasks. He remained on *Egmont* until January 1775 when he elected to take half-pay, claiming illness. Again, he returned, with permission, to northern France to Lille to recover his health. Phillip was dogged by illness throughout his life.

It is thought that while Phillip was in France, he studied military engineering as he was known 'to be well up in fortification and every other branch of the military profession' and 'possessed an unusual "theoretical" knowledge of his profession'. He was known to be 'the oldest and most intimate friend of Isaac Landmann, a German who in 1770 was Professor of Artillery and Fortification at the Ecole Militaire in Paris and, in 1777, the holder of a similar post at Woolwich Arsenal. If Phillip did attend lectures in Paris, it was in his own time. By now of course, he had added a thorough knowledge of the French language to his German and English. Returning to England in 1774, richer in health, experience, and probably in pocket, Phillip was no doubt anxious to return to active naval service again.

Now aged 36 years, Phillip had experienced a poor boyhood but excellent schooling in his field. He had experienced the rough voyages in the bitter Arctic on a whaler and yet he had experienced the sunshine of the Mediterranean, the Caribbean and France. He had experienced some years as a junior officer in peace times and in the war-torn West Indies. On half pay he had been married, a gentleman farmer, studied military warfare, become proficient in another language and had been an 'observer' in France for the Admiralty. But, he had remained a mere lieutenant in the Royal Navy, a 'capable junior officer without definite prospects'.



By mid-1774, Phillip appears to have emerged as a person 'of considerable intelligence, experience and resourcefulness'. He was probably one of many officers suffering the problems of the peaceful years, deserving of promotion, anxious to return to active service but without the opportunity. However Phillip, who had come to Hervey's attention from the Havana battle and perhaps also his French reports, was about to ascend above his peers as a result of an unusual set of events whose outcomes would verify his potential.

### **Active service as a captain in the Portuguese Navy**

In 1774 the two nations of the Iberian Peninsula, Portugal and Spain, became locked in conflict. Their conflict began in 1773-74 over some land in South America, the ownership of which had not been resolved. Portugal, the smaller nation, turned to her traditional friend for help at sea. The Portuguese were lacking in experienced sea captains to man ships guarding a small province in South America on the river La Plata. Not wanting to engage in a war with Spain for which the English were not prepared, yet not wanting to offend an ally, a solution was arrived at where the Admiralty offered to 'loan' some experienced Navy officers to Portugal. A number of 'half-pay' lieutenants were available and the Admiralty was pleased for them to gain the work.

Augustus Hervey, Phillip's patron at the Admiralty, was in charge of negotiations with the Portuguese, and he suggested Phillip would be an ideal choice. He was well trained and war blooded in the Americas, he was available and keen to be involved in action again, he was experienced in theoretical military warfare and he spoke a number of European languages. What they did not say was that he was an intelligent and observant officer, already practised in 'discreetly' reporting on effective fortifications, utility of harbours and similar information back to the Admiralty.

Phillip's conditions of service and employment were suggested by Hervey who had been negotiating with the Portuguese ambassador and nominated that:

*"... he be appointed a Captain of the Fleet, that his pay be equivalent to the same pay as foreign officers receive when they are on foreign service and that he enjoy the same privileges as English officers if he is placed on half-pay".*

Other minor matters concerned 'table money' were agreed upon and the Court, in time, sent its approval.

Phillip, having received official Admiralty consent, left for Lisbon on or soon after 22 December 1774. On 14 January, King Dom Jose signed a warrant commissioning Phillip as a captain of the Portuguese Navy. Phillip saw the city of Lisbon in great disarray, still suffering from the devastating earthquake of November 1755. He saw however the impressive new city rising from the ruins. A magnificent Square of the Palace with three sides formed by extensive state buildings and the fourth side by

the River Targus. Almost 200 new houses, uniform in design had already been constructed. The streets were broad and the flag – stoned footpaths were raised above the streets.

### **To Brazil 1775**

Phillip departed on his ship *Belem*, in early February and reached Rio de Janeiro, apparently without incident. Phillip had to report to Commodore Robert M'Douall RN who was in charge of the squadron of Portuguese ships stationed at Rio. M'Douall was apparently a blustering, bombastic autocrat whose behaviour had not only offended the other English officers, but also the Marquis de Lavradio, the Viceroy of Rio de Janeiro.

Lavradio took an intense dislike to M'Douall and an equal liking to Phillip, whose record had preceded him from London in the form of a recommendation by the Ambassador in London. Phillip responded and a firm respect for each other grew between the two men. Phillip was respectful and tactful and as a result he became Lavradio's confidant. Lavradio was outfitting a merchant ship, the *Pilar*, to a frigate and he appointed Phillip as its captain. Within twelve months Phillip had become both fluent and literate in the language and had studied the background to the conflict. In his sorties along the coast, Phillip was able to gather intelligence about the Spanish strength, chart their positions on coastline and pass this information back to the Admiralty.

### **The Colonia de Sacramento**

A beleaguered Portuguese settlement at the southern shore of the mouth of the Rio de la Plata, known as the Colonia, was strategically located in relation to the Spanish controlled possessions of Montevideo and Buenos Aires. The Spanish had fortresses in both of these towns and wanted to expel the Portuguese from their commanding fortification commanding the straits and entrance to the river. To this end, the Spanish had blockaded the peninsular by land, forcing food and firewood supplies to be landed by sea. Portuguese supply ships were undependable and infrequently sent but politically, the home government was determined to uphold the garrison. To this end, Phillip was chosen by the Viceroy to command and guard the Colonia with the ship *Pilar*.

Phillip undertook his mission boldly and fearlessly. Even though there was no declared war between the two countries, he would not allow the Spanish ships to intimidate the colony from the sea. He fired his guns at any ship entering the straits which did not flying its country's flag, a naval custom which the Spanish ignored to intimidate and snub the Colonia. The Spanish soon came to heel.

Still attached to M'Douall's eight ship squadron, Phillip would return periodically to Rio for supplies and meet the fleet at Santa Catarina, a Portuguese held island midway between Rio and the Colonia. News came of a Spanish fleet sailing to the

la Plata estuary and M'Douall was expected to engage it. An indecisive and cowardly commander, he deliberately left his opportunity too late to attack and backed off.

Impatient for action, Phillip, on hearing that another two large 70-gun ships were sailing behind the Spanish fleet, in the small but speedy *Pilar* chased and succeeded in engaging and capturing the ship, the *San Augustin*. The ship, carrying 550 men, was a considerable prize. It was new, 'built of excellent wood' with 'first rate artillery ... and all munitions and accessories of the first class'. Viceroy Lavradio was greatly pleased and rewarded Phillip by giving him the command of the ship which became the most powerful in the Portuguese fleet.

### **Peace 1777**

With the death of the Portuguese monarch Jose, and the accession of Maria 1, in October 1777, the two countries agreed on a truce. As a result, Phillip lost command of the *San Augustin* that was returned to the Spanish. But still being favoured by the viceroy, enjoyed the next nine months at Rio where it is thought he may have continued his intelligence work inland by visiting an area, known as the 'Forbidden District'. This allowed him to report on the lucrative gold and diamond mining area, worked by some 5000 African slaves. Phillip's report was very revealing, describing how river courses were diverted to be able to mine the diamond bearing gravel beds, and the immense amount of slave labour required. He was able to estimate the wealth produced and included in his report, drawings of the various operations.

### **Phillip's Portuguese contract is completed 1778**

Phillip's service with the Portuguese Navy drew to a close in mid 1778. Learning that the French had supported the dissident American against England, he resolved to re-join the Royal Navy. Viceroy Lavradio gave him command of M'Douall's *Santa Antonio* and entrusted Phillip with a small convoy, carrying a valuable shipment of diamonds to Lisbon. His voyage was uneventful and he was greeted by a grateful monarch and court on his arrival toward the end of 1778.

For four years, Phillip had served the Portuguese faithfully and they were well aware of it. Lavradio advised Queen Maria that Phillip was:

*"...one of the officers of the most distinct merit that the Queen ... has in her service in the Navy, and I think that it will be a most fortunate acquisition to [retain him] in the Royal Service. As regards his disposition, he is somewhat distrustful; but he is an officer of education and principle, he gives way to reason ... is an officer of great truth and very brave ... is no flatterer, saying what he thinks, but without temper or want of respect. The length of the report on this officer implies that I regret his departure, and I confess that I do".*

Metropolitan officials were of the same opinion as Lavradio. The British Ambassador reported home that the Portuguese court 'is extremely satisfied with the conduct of this gentleman & ... "he has served in the Brazils with great Zeal & Honour." On his return to London in September, he carried a letter to the Portuguese Ambassador advising of these reports, adding that the Queen could not deny his patriotic object of returning to rejoin the British Navy. Partly in response to Maria's request, the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty promoted him to master and commander in September 1779.

Phillip's service in Brazil was a distinct turning point in his life, personally and professionally. Entering the Portuguese Navy as a capable junior officer with little prospect, he returned after distinguished service in coastal patrol, sea battle and as a commander of a line-of-battle ship. His knowledge of the South American coastline and harbours and his intelligence reports were well noted by his naval superiors. Personally, he was able to associate with members of the court and became a confidante of a viceroy. These years showed him how the colonisation of a foreign country proceeded the difficulties in sustaining supplies to local outposts such as at the Colonia di Sacramento and the importance of the main base and headquarters at Rio.

He had experience in dealing with the outpost at Colonia that had few local resources and gained experience in dealing with incompetent and difficult superiors. Personally he saw slavery at its worst, an experience which matured him to abhor slavery, seeing no place for it a civilised world. He saw the planning and building of two great cities, Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro. All combined, this experience was to add to his abilities when confronted with similar situations yet to come.

### **Phillip's rise to the rank of captain 1778**

Still ranked lieutenant, Phillip sought work, reminding the Admiralty that he had been promised the rank of captain. In October 1778, the 40 year old Phillip took up duties as first lieutenant on *Alexander*, a 74-gun, line-of-battle ship which carried a crew of 600. This was indeed a responsible move up the chain of command. At this period, the French were massing troops along their shores, opposite England and Phillip joined the fleet patrolling the Channel.

In September 1779, Phillip was promoted to commander and master of *Basilisk*, a channel fireship of eight guns and a crew of 45. Phillip selected Brewer to join him as captain's clerk and he remained in this position until July 1780. Whilst Phillip filled a number of local positions, Brewer apparently saw service aboard *Hinchinbroke* but when Phillip was appointed captain of the *Europe*, a 64 gun ship, one of the navy's large warships about a week later, he had Brewer assigned as his clerk.

## Background

There were a number of reasons for Captain Arthur Phillip being appointed as the governor of a colony to be founded at Botany Bay in New South Wales. Transportation to the American colonies had stopped when the colonists had rebelled between 1778-84 and alternatives, such as Africa, appeared to be impractical. The British Government instead resolved to develop an overseas colony that would have strategic benefits, would grow to become an outlet for British trade and provide raw materials to supply British manufacturers.

Members of the Pitt administration, in deciding to rationalise the transportation problem, by opening a colony, agreed that a naval base somewhere in the east should have 'naval strategic dimensions' linking it with India. A base was needed to provide a way to China and to the west coast of South America to not only gain trade but to keep abreast with their rivals Spain, France and Holland.

On investigation, Botany Bay looked a potential source of naval timber and flax (for sail canvas) and could provide a base from which to attack the French at Mauritius, the Dutch at Batavia and Spain in the Philippines. Also, it would prevent other nations, particularly the French from colonising the country and had more to recommend it than the other alternative, Das Voltas Bay in Africa. Campbell and Nepean had Treasury draw up costs which appeared to be satisfactory and on 21 August, Evan Nepean and Lord Sydney informed Treasury officially of the decision to colonise New South Wales. The Home Office informed the Admiralty and the East India Company and plans were made to outfit the First Fleet. The Navy Board became responsible for the logistics while the Home office, under Nepean, was responsible for appointing a governor.

Various people in the Home Office such as Lord Sydney and Nepean, wanted to reward Phillip for his past services at sea and in gathering 'intelligence'. Phillip too, was now looking for employment. Despite the fact that the Chief Lord of the Admiralty, Admiral Howe, when informed of Sydney's decision had replied, "*I cannot say the little knowledge I have of Captain Phillips (sic) would have led me to select him for a service of this complicated nature.*" Howe would have preferred Captain John Blankett but Lord Sydney had his choice and Phillip was appointed on 3 September 1786. Phillip was about to face the most daunting task in his career.

## The First Fleet 1786

Despite Howe's lack of enthusiasm for him, Phillip was well qualified for the task. He had sailed to the West Indies, Rio de Janeiro, Cape Town and India, he knew the perils both for the voyage and for founding a colony. He was fluent in the languages of the countries en route, knew their resources, and was welcome in the Canaries, Rio and Cape Town. As a land owner in the New Forest he even knew the rudiments of farming.



His experiences in Brazil during his years with the Portuguese had given him a confident and easy manner, which despite his humble beginnings, allowed him to mix freely with high officials. His experience with Portuguese colonies was important as he was aware of the difficulties faced by colonists in the far flung Colonia del Sacramento and Rio de Janeiro.

There was a close association between Phillip, the Admiralty, and Home Office officials which allowed for smooth communications. While his experience in gathering intelligence for them had proved him to be a discreet and intelligent officer. On top of this he had an impressive record in the equal and fair care of men aboard his ships, perhaps derived from his humble origins.

### **The Voyage of the First Fleet Departure from Portsmouth**

On 13 May 1787 Phillip's fleet of two naval vessels HMS's *Sirius* and *Supply*, and six transports: *Alexander*, *Charlotte*, *Friendship*, *Scarborough*, *Lady Penrhyn*, *Prince of Wales*, and three store ships – *Borrowdale*, *Fishburn* and *Golden Grove* were assembled for departure.

Phillip, as Commodore and senior ranking officer was nominal captain of *Sirius* although Captain John Hunter was the operative captain, his first mate being Lieutenant William Bradley. The *Supply* was commanded by Lieutenant Henry Lidgbird Ball. Major Ross was officer commanding of four companies of Royal Marines who totalled 174 (accompanied by 42 wives). Some nine surgeons under the charge of Surgeon John White were sent to care for all those who sailed. The Deputy Judge Advocate, David Collins was charged with conducting the courts with the assistance of a Provost Marshall. There was also a small Commissary staff under the charge of the *Sirius* purser, John Palmer. Phillip's personally chosen staff included Henry Edward Dodd (manservant), Midshipman Henry Brewer (clerk), John Livingstone (steward) and Thomas Daveney (servant). Phillip had also requested Lieutenant Philip Gidley King, as second lieutenant on *Sirius*; like Brewer, King had sailed with him on *Ariadne* and *Europe*.

The Fleet arrived off Teneriffe in the Canary Islands on 3 June, and although Phillip thought of travelling next to Trinidad, strong winds decided on a course to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. The fleet anchored in the harbour on 4 August, and because of his distinguished service there in the Portuguese navy, Phillip and his officers were received with great kindness. They 'wooded and watered' here and all hands were recommended to enjoy the bounty of inexpensive oranges and fresh food.

On 4 September the Fleet departed for Table Bay, Capetown, where the Dutch governor was polite but unhelpful. All goods, livestock and services were very expensive, considered to be about three times the normal price. When the Fleet sailed on 13 November, Phillip transferred to *Supply* with King to arrive earlier than the Fleet to choose and prepare the site. Phillip arrived on 18 January 1788 with the advance party at Botany Bay while Hunter and the rest of the Fleet arrived on the

following day. Dissatisfied with Botany Bay as a settlement site, Phillip reconnoitred Port Jackson and having found a suitable stream of fresh water at a deepwater anchorage that he named Sydney Cove, moved the Fleet there. The Union Flag was hoisted on 26 January and Collins read George the Third's Commission to the assembled Fleet, proclaiming Phillip, Governor in Chief of the Colony.

Although 750 convicts were to be transported, for various reasons such as deaths during the voyage (mainly the elderly), misspelling of names, late pardons and those convicts withdrawn from the ships because of old age and infirmity, an accurate number of convicts landed cannot be accurately given. Nor can the number of children be given as two died during the voyage while 22 were born during the journey. Also there were accidental deaths through misadventure. Molly Gillen, in the epic biography, *Founders of Australia*, identifies 1420 individuals in her book as having embarked, 69 persons having died or left the Fleet en route, and 22 births. This gives an aggregate of 1373 together with about 110 seamen on the other ships not identified by name. This would then account for some 1530 departing and 1483 arriving at Sydney Cove.

The transportation of almost 1500 passengers over 15 000 miles and eight months of time was a credit to Phillip's planning. No one died from scurvy as at every opportunity everybody had fresh food, vegetables and fruit and Phillip insisted on personal cleanliness, airing of bedding of all hands. The fact that the whole convoy arrived at Botany Bay within days of each other was another credit to Phillip's planning, experience and seamanship.

### **Problems encountered establishing the Colony**

Minor problems were to be expected on such a huge enterprise. For instance, the stores of women's clothing were left behind, as were the convict indents, the Great Seal and the marine's musket ammunition. Some problems were solved en route, others had to wait for the next transports.

A health problem which had to be dealt with on landing was scurvy. Surgeon White stressed to Phillip the need for growing fresh vegetables as the convoy's supplies were depleted. This was partially solved by making 'personal' gardening plots a priority and also helped to supplement the food supply. Many of the 'First Fleeters' on landing became ill with dysentery, causing an unexpected run on medical supplies. Additional supplies were picked up later at the Cape by Hunter.

Phillip's own health was a constant problem. Frost suggests that he suffered from 'kidney stones', caused by years of eating salt preserved food and which had caused a build-up of calcium carbonate in the kidneys [this is a still disputed].

## Immediate problems

Having overcome the chaos of landing convicts and stores Phillip was faced with antagonism from Major Ross, and his second in command, Captain Campbell. Ross declared that his marines were sent to guard the colony only and accordingly they refused to act as superintendents of convict work parties. Phillip was forced to employ men such as Dodd, Livingstone and Daveney in that capacity, the government having not considered special skilled people necessary. Henry Dodd became the man whom Phillip could trust to get necessary farming programme under way. Nevertheless, it would take almost two years before land could be cleared, crops planted and harvested. When it was apparent that the sandy soil at Farm Cove would not support the colony in cereal crops, foreseeing an emergency, Phillip sent Hunter in Sirius to get flour from the Cape.

## Solving the agricultural problems

By mid-February 1788, Phillip was able to concentrate on his most serious problem, the location of the settlement on a site with arable land and water. Despite exploring the 'head of the harbour' and the north side (Narrabeen and Pymble) it was not until April 24 that he discovered, accidentally, the ideal site for a farming settlement, which came to be settled on November and named Rose Hill (subsequently known as Parramatta).

Another major problem was the death of many of the transported stock and the loss of the cattle through the carelessness of a convict. The designing buildings was overcome by using Brewer, who already was acting as Provost Marshall, and he was fortunate to find a convict, James Bloodworth, with brick making and brick laying skills.

Although he didn't realise it Phillip's arrival corresponded with the land beginning a long drought. His street plan for Sydney had to be aborted because many of the population, by necessity, settled along the Tank Stream where fresh water was available. While the geography of Sydney Cove determined its street pattern at Rose Hill there were not the same problems. Phillip's commission allowed him to make land grants to emancipated convicts. In an experiment with James Ruse, who knew about agriculture, he had land cleared, a hut built, and provided assistance with tools and seeds and provision to draw food and clothing from the stores. But Phillip was also pragmatic in his approach and as an incentive withheld title of the land from Ruse until he had proved his worth.

The experiment worked and by April 1791 Ruse had title to his land. This had proved that others could do it and Phillip then proceeded to grant land to time expired convicts at Prospect, The Ponds, The Northern Boundary and The Eastern Farms. This resulted in many becoming self-sufficient with limited assistance from the stores. He also encouraged marines and sailors to remain and become settlers. By late 1792 he judged the programme to be successful.

## Norfolk Island

Charged with promptly founding a colony at Norfolk Island, he made King Lieutenant Governor and sent him there to establish a colony. When the *Sirius* was wrecked on the island, it left the colony with only one vessel, *HMS Supply*. All that Phillip could do was to hire another vessel, the *Waaksamheyd* from Batavia until a replacement for *Sirius* was eventually made.

## The Guardian and the Second Fleet 1791

To ease the critical lack of flour, Phillip had donated his private supply to the general store and placed all ranks, including himself, on the same rations, much to the chagrin of Major Ross. The next ship, *HMS Guardian* with stores, medical supplies and superintendents was expected daily, having left England soon after the others. Carrying 12 convict superintendents, 25 selected artisan convicts and 1003 tons of much needed food (including 2000 gallons of wine!) and medical supplies. It was a disaster that the ship was holed in a collision with an iceberg and all of the supplies and passengers were lost.

Survivors however included Philip Schaffer and his young daughter. Schaffer was a German officer who had fought for the British in America, had secured a position as a superintendent but his knowledge of English proved him unsuitable for the task. Phillip showed his kind nature by befriending the Schaeffers until he placed them as settlers on a grant of land on the river that became known as The Vineyard.

The ship *Lady Juliana*, carrying a cargo of women, and stores led the Second Fleet (*Surprize*, *Neptune* and *Scarborough*) which left England in late July 1789. Unfortunately, apart from *Lady Juliana*, the greedy contractors starved the convicts to the point that their landing at Port Jackson was a sight 'truly affecting and shocking'. They were filthy, lean and emaciated and many died even as they were landing. Phillip's problems were compounded in having to care for the ill, who had to spend months recuperating before they could join the work force. Phillip bitterly complained to the Home Office and his actions saw a Navy agent being placed on all future convict ships.

A major task was to establish law and order, and to prevent petty crime and theft. Phillip made the colony aware that theft of food and clothing, because of their acute shortage, would be treated as a criminal offence, punishable by death, no matter what the station of the individual. He was forced to hang several marines who were caught thieving stores that they were supposed to be guarding.

To overcome the crime problem, because the marines would not act as police, Phillip instituted a 'night watch' comprised of recommended convicts and a nightly curfew. This brought instant results until some marines were apprehended and

gaoled overnight. Ross became very angry over the event and Phillip sensed an air of rebellion, a confrontation he could not afford. He solved the problem by sending Ross to Norfolk Island to replace King. However, the pervading problem remained the food supply.

## **The Second Fleet and the development of Parramatta**

Anticipating that the Second Fleet was on its way with more convicts, Phillip hastened the building of a permanent 'gaol town' at Rose Hill which Phillip renamed by its indigenous native name, Pa-ra-mat-ta. After having considered the farming here under Henry Dodd was successful he drew on his experience of the town planning of the cities of Lisbon and Rio Janeiro, with his Surveyor-General Augustus Alt, to plan a classic, but simple Georgian street plan. Complete with a grand square and vistas centering on two main streets.

The town now moved into a phase of planned streets, brick barracks and stores to replace the primitive temporary buildings on the lee of Rose Hill. Ever the visionary, he even planned in his grand square, a new Governor's 'Palace', a treasury, a library, a market place and town hall. He held a market and began the foundations of a Town Hall, but the need for a new hospital saw him re-direct labour in this direction. Watkin Tench in his account *Sydney's First Four years* stated:

*"December 2 1791: Went up to Rose Hill ... the storehouse and barrack have long been completed, also apartments for the chaplain of the regiment and the judge advocate ... we feel consequential enough already to talk of a treasury, an Admiralty, a public library and many other similar edifices, which are to form part of a magnificent square. The great road from near the landing place to the governor's house is finished, and a very noble one it is too..."*

Phillip always had a sense of what he had not accomplished – what he could have achieved had he been 'more fortunate in receiving the necessary supplies and a few intelligent men'. He had laboured under every possible disadvantage since landing, overcoming problems that could not have been anticipated. He admitted once that he was surprised that the settlement should have attained such a 'flourishing state' and at the end of 1792, he was able to leave with the knowledge that the struggle to establish it had been achieved.

## **To England on leave 1792**

Weary and ill, after almost five strenuous years in the colony, assured in his own mind that the little colony was progressing satisfactorily, Phillip decided to return to England on leave to seek medical help. David Collins wrote:

*"He was now taking leave of his own government... Governor Phillip quitted the charge with which he had been entrusted by his Sovereign, and in the execution of which he had manifested a zeal and perseverance that alone could have enabled him to surmount the*



*natural and artificial obstacles which the country and its inhabitants had thrown in his way."*

Returning on the transport *Atlantic*, via Norfolk Island, he arrived in London 11 December 1792, where he reported to the Home Office and advised them of the progress and state of the colony.

Now 54 years of age, recovery from his illness was slow and he determined, a day before his 55th birthday in 1793, to resign his commission as Governor of New South Wales. In February 1794, Phillip went onto the Navy's half-pay list while he recuperated and attended to his personal affairs; he had been granted a pension of £500 as governor, so his finances were satisfactory. His relief from New South Wales' responsibilities and the return trip had not greatly improved his health so he sought permission to live at Bath, 'to take the waters'.

On his return to England he also learned that his first wife Charlotte had died. Her will absolved him of any monies that he had 'borrowed' from her estate and she left him £100, on the condition that he did not contest the provisions of the will, which he didn't. Instead, he took a second wife, Isabella Whitehead, daughter of a prominent and affluent North Country family, involved in the cloth trade.

Phillip and his wife lived at the fashionable address of 19 Bennett Street, Bath, which they had purchased in December 1806 for £2200. It could have been described as a 'commodious and gentleman's dwelling' and was built in 1744, having been designed by John Wood the Younger. The dwelling would have been comfortable and with his admiral's half pay of £750 per annum in addition to his governor's pension, and Isabella's fortune, the couple were more than well provided for.

Unfortunately Phillip suffered from a stroke in February 1808, after which he hovered near death's door but then gradually recovered, only to be hit by another stroke. His tough will to win saw him retain his intellect, but a loss of the use of his right side. Phillip King visited him and later declared of his old patron and mentor:

*"He may linger on some years under his present infirmity, but from his age, a great reprieve cannot be expected."*

However, despite his affliction and his crippling arthritis, he saw another six years of life; he adjusted the staircases to suit his physical needs and received Henry Waterhouse and Phillip King in May and September 1808 and John Hunter saw him in July 1811. He holidayed on the coast with Isabella and he met Francis Greenway whom Macquarie was to later employ to continue Phillip's work into making the colony a permanent one.

It seemed that he was determined to live beyond his 76 years, but, on 31 August 1814, Arthur Phillip fell from the third floor balcony of his house to the pavement

below and was killed. He was buried in the Church of St Nicolas at Bathampton and later in a special chapel, called the Australia Chapel, in Phillip's honour. A commemorative church service is held there in October annually. His old home in the Bennett Street terrace is marked with a simple plaque that simply states that 'Admiral Arthur Phillip lived here'.

From the unpublished manuscripts of John McClymont

## John Irving – Australia's first emancipated convict

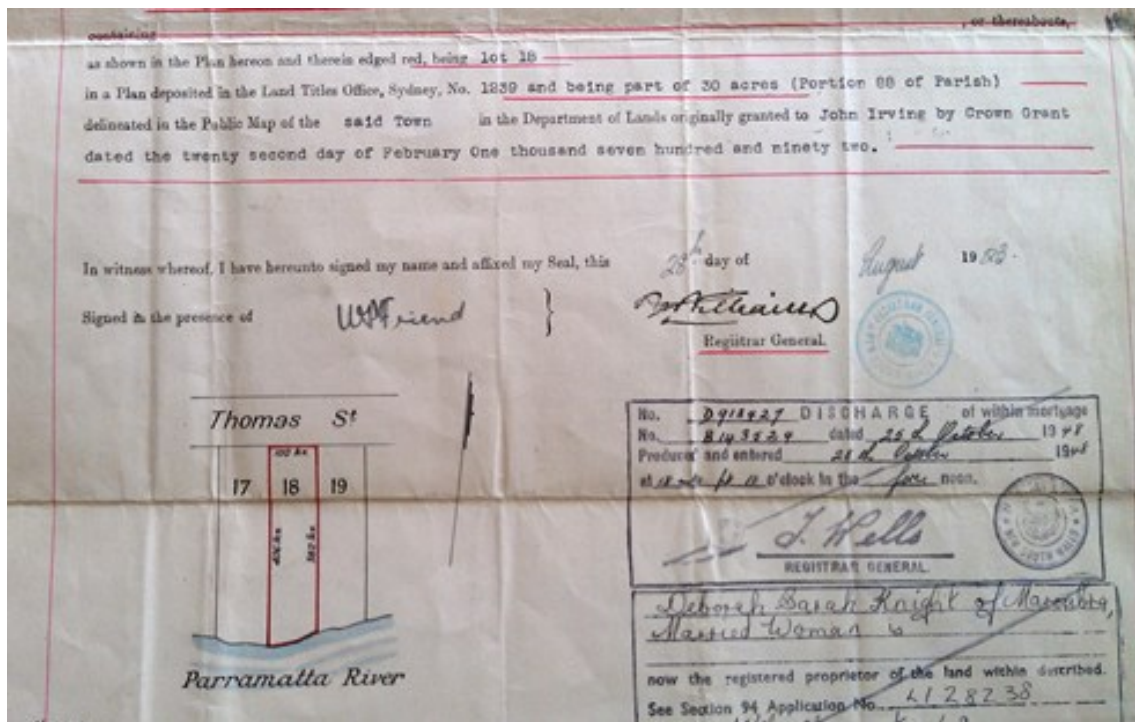
*Research & Collection Team*



[Parramatta River](#). Source: Community Archives Collection ACC199/001

John Irving was Australia's first emancipated convict who made his home in Parramatta. He was born in 1760 and arrived in Australia on the 26th January 1788, on the convict ship *Lady Penrhyn*. He was convicted of larceny at Lincoln, England in 1784 and sentenced to transportation for seven years. Apparently, Irving had medical training and the literature indicates that he had been recommended to assist the surgeons on his voyage to Australia. This seems to be supported by the fact that he was employed immediately upon his arrival to assist the hospital surgeon at Port Jackson. On 28th February 1790, Governor Arthur Phillip appointed him Assistant Surgeon on Norfolk Island. The remainder of his sentence was remitted resulting in John Irving being the first convict to be emancipated.

In 1791, Irving was posted to Parramatta where he assisted the surgeon Thomas Arndell. On 22nd February 1792, he was granted thirty acres of land on the north side of the Parramatta River. During this time, while assisting Surgeon Arndell, he was involved in the building of the new brick hospital. In addition to his medical interests, Irving also tried his hand at farming and by October 1792, he had nine acres of maize and two acres ready for more planting.



Certificate of Title showing original land grant to John Irving, 22 Feb 1792

According to a report in the Parramatta & Hills News, Irving had a troubled time in Parramatta. His life as a farmer was somewhat unsuccessful and the report states that although not a good farmer he had great plans to build a comfortable home on his 30 acre grant and settle down.

Irving apparently had plans to establish his own medical practice but this seems to have been somewhat thwarted by the emerging Rum Corps who controlled access to goods such as food, clothing, and labour through a complex bartering system using rum as payment. According to the newspaper report, Irving, like many honest settlers, could not afford the exorbitant prices set by those in power. And the report goes on to suggest that he could have had access to special prices if he agreed to take up the position of abortionist to cater for the needs of the Rum Corp.

It seems that Irving suffered a breakdown after being unsuccessful in establishing his own medical practice and found solace in alcohol which led to his demise, and eventual death in 1795. He is buried in an unmarked grave in St. John's Cemetery, Parramatta.

There are conflicting reports regarding his romantic life. The Parramatta & Hills News report states that Irving was involved with a local Catholic girl and they planned to marry, however the article claims she wanted to be married by a Catholic priest, and was happy to wait until one arrived in the colony. At the time, many of the local Catholics were happy to be married by the Anglican Reverends, either Samuel Marsden or Richard Johnson. Apparently, his fiancée attempted suicide after his death and left Parramatta 18 months later to marry another man

who had been a rural manager for James Ruse. They settled in the Hawkesbury and their first son was baptised John, after his mother's first love, John Irving. However, alternative reports suggest that John Irving was married to Anne Marsh, who later became a notable boat operator to Rose Hill.

His memory lives on in Parramatta through the naming of Irving Street, North Parramatta and the John Irving Park community garden in Harris Park. Irving's original land grant now houses suburban plots, sections of James Ruse Drive and Victoria Road, and possibly up to or near the border of the historic female orphan school which is in the grounds of the University of Western Sydney.

This post was initiated by Neil McGrath, a volunteer at the Parramatta Heritage Centre. Darlene and Neil McGrath generously donated the Certificate of Title, photographs and research notes on John Irving.



## Shale and Brick Quarry – River Foreshore Parramatta

*Research & Collection Team*



*Riverbank at the end of Sorrel Street looking North East, 2014. Source: Geoffrey Barker*

Surgeon John White in his Journal recounted his exploration of the Parramatta River in 1788. On the 24 April he records:

*"Just above this flat, close to the water-side, we discovered a quarry of slates, from which we expected to derive great advantage in respect to covering our houses, stores &c., it being a material beyond conception difficult to be procured in this country; but on trial it was found of no use, as it proved to be of a crumbling and rotten nature."*

It seems White mistook the soft shale on the riverbank for a deposit of much harder slate but there was an upside to this discovery. Shale crumbles when it is wet making it a reasonable material for brick making. By contrast when shale is heated, say by volcanic action, it is transformed into the more durable rock called slate. Because of the presence of the mineral mica, it cleaves well and is very suitable for the covering of roofs.

Historians and writers have often mistaken this 'quarry' of shale for the cliff of shale just west of the northern approaches to the Gasworks Bridge. This site was along the northern bank between the foot of Sorrell Street and the Lennox Bridge.

When Bradley was dispatched with Captain Hunter in May 1788 to examine the 'slate' deposit. He wrote:

*"A party went up the harbour to the lake or creek running to the north west above the flats. We went about three miles up to a very fine run of water; ... a little above the point where the fresh water meets the tide is the place supposed would produce slate, but had been found on examination not fit for working: We tried it as coal without success."*

This boat trip by Bradley was the first recorded exploration of the river beyond the Silverwater Junction. Assistant Surgeon George Worgan, surgeon of *Sirius*, was a member of the party on this day and he described it as a 'most delightful excursion'.

*"We landed quite up at the head of this branch where a fresh water river runs into it, but which at this time was dry in many places. We walked about two miles up the country in the direction of this river; ... Having extended our excursion as far as we wished, were turned to the place where we landed and after regaling ourselves with a cold kangaroo (sic) pie and a plum pudding, a bottle of wine etc, all which comforts we bought from the ship with us, we returned on board."*

The shale band at the foot of Sorrell Street seen by the explorers has long since disappeared as it was dug out and used for brick making in the earliest days of settlement. This area is now part of the reclaimed edge of the riverbank 'training wall', now called Riverside Park. There was possibly a stone quarry here also to service the building of the second gaol. On the site now occupied by the Parramatta Heritage Centre at the northern approach of Lennox Bridge, there was a workshop owned by the builder/architects James Houison and Nathaniel Payten.

Around the middle of the 1800s Peisley's Slaughter House appeared just to the east of this site on the north bank. Tom Little, a Parramatta printer recalls the building in the 1860s, jutting out over the river, discharging waste into it. It could be assumed that this became a job for the Inspector of Nuisances of the newly formed Borough Council.

From the unpublished manuscripts of John McClymont



## Thomas Halfpenny – George (High) Street – Parramatta Pioneers

*Research & Collection Team*



[Parramatta, New South Wales.](#)

Source: National Library of Australia 561015

A First Fleet private marine of the 35th Company, Halfpenny decided in October 1791 to settle in the country. He had married Catherine Wilmot (*Lady Juliana*-1790), and with their son Joseph, settled on a grant of 60 acres at Norfolk Island. They returned in 1796 and by mid-1800 he was renting a house in Parramatta and by 1804 Halfpenny was shown leasing an allotment at the foot of High Street, where he had built a house. This allotment was the last house on the northern side of the street before the Landing Place. He apparently conducted a business from here trading in grain and may have run an inn on the site, being so close to the barracks and the wharf. He lived opposite to Obadiah Iken.

In March 1809 he held a wine and spirit license in the town and also made a will in September of that year which stated that his house was 'next to Michael Murphy's (house)'. Halfpenny died shortly afterwards on 5 September 1809 leaving his property to his wife together with another house in Parramatta and with a property and house at the Hawkesbury. A *Gazette* Sale Notice described the house as

substantial and desirably situated close to the wharf. The house, from James Larra's auction notice, was advertised as 'A Commodious House, shingled and weatherboarded consisting of five rooms, well glazed: also a large bullock cart, and cow and calf'. After his father's death, his son Joseph apparently worked as a seaman on local vessels to help support his mother. Catherine sold her husband's property and as nothing more is recorded of her, it is assumed that she returned to England to contact the children who had been left behind when she was transported.

From the unpublished manuscripts of John McClymont

## Parramatta's Rangihou Reserve and its Maori History

*Research & Collection Team*



[Rangihu: The Reverend Samuel Marsden's Cottage at Parramatta sketched by the Reverend Richard Taylor, 1835.](#)

*Source: Life and Work of Samuel Marsden*

The Rangihou Reserve in Parramatta was central to Maori activity in Australia in the early 1800s. This was mainly due to the support and encouragement of Samuel Marsden who set up a school and farm to be used by his Maori visitors. The site he chose was in the area surrounding the Rangihou Reserve, originally the territory of the Burrumattagal clan of the Darug people.





*Rangihou Reserve and vicinity, Parramatta 2013.  
Source: Google maps*

In the 1790s this area was central to a number of grants which were eventually purchased by the Reverend Samuel Marsden. The original grants were made to the following: Thomas. Haddock, 25 acres, July 22, 1795; William Reid, 60 acres, March 30, 1791; Captain Townson, 4 acres, September 15, 1796; and John Piper, 6 acres. May 1, 1797. The last of these, Piper's grant, was land originally appropriated for use by the commanding officer of Parramatta troops and was furthest of the three from the present Macarthur street. M. Reid's grant was adjacent and lay in the vicinity of the present Broughton House. West of Piper's grant was Townsend's and next to this Haddock's.

The Reverend Samuel Marsden evidently purchased all of these grants and a consolidated grant covering 112 acres was issued to him on 1 November, 1822. Hassall's book *In Old Australia* refers to Marsden's interest in New Zealand Maori culture and in it he says Marsden:

*"bought some land close to Parramatta on the south side of the river, which he called Newlands, built a two story weatherboard house upon it, and laid out land for cultivation; so that they might be instructed in farming".*



*Rangihoua Bay, Bay of Islands, New Zealand 2013.  
Source: Google maps*

Newland's house was at this time probably the same property that was also known as Rangihou, Rangihu, Rangihoo or Rangutoo. This house was set up as a school to be used by Maoris he invited over from New Zealand. Marsden appears to have named Rangihou after Rangihoua Bay, in the Bay of Islands, near to where he preached the first Christian sermon in New Zealand in 1814. Rangihoua Bay was also the birthplace of the Ngapuhi chief Ruatara, with whom Marsden was friendly.

According to a biography written in 1858, Marsden met Ruatara on board ship while returning from England. Marsden was told that Ruatara had boarded a South Sea whaler the *Argo* in 1805 and then travelled to Port Jackson where he was left on shore without a friend and without the slightest remuneration. He then shipped himself on board the whaler *Albion*, where he was treated kindly by Captain Richardson, and after six months cruising on the fisheries, he returned to the Bay of Islands. This was not the end of his journeying however for he next shipped with the *Santa Anna* to hunt seal-skins on Norfolk Island where he and fourteen other sailors were left with a very scanty supply of water, bread, and salt provisions. The ship returned late and found the sealing party were in great distress. Three of his companions, two Europeans and one Tahitian, died before the ship had returned. He then sailed with the *Santa Anna* to London, arriving there in 1809. He found London trying before eventually managing to arrange passage on the *Ann*, a convict ship travelling to Australia, and it was here that he met Reverend Marsden.

Marsden's meeting with Ruatara and the arrival of some South Sea Missionaries from Tahiti seems to have inspired Marsden to set up a mission in New Zealand. And his friendship and fact that whalers had already travelled there appears to be

the main reasons Rangihoua Bay was selected as the first Christian mission in New Zealand. It was closed sometime around 1829.

However initially the missionaries seem to have been well received by the Maoris and when returning to Sydney, Marsden invited Maori Chiefs Ruatara, Hongi Hika, Korokoro and their families to come and live with him in Parramatta. The practical background to this invitation was to stimulate trade practices and relationships, as well as safe passage and protection for Europeans travelling to New Zealand. Hongi Hika visited in 1814 with Reverend Kendell and returned to New Zealand with Marsden, and TirangiTe Rangi a brother of Korokoro also visited in the same year although it is not recorded if he returned with Marsden. In 1818 Te Koki, chief of Kawakawa and Paihia sent his son Te Ahara to stay with Marsden at Parramatta where he died. According to Henry Williams Te Koki asked for a missionary in exchange for his son's death. In 1823 Reverend Kendall records that a Ngapuhi chief Uriohau also visited Marsden in Parramatta.



[Portrait of Reverend Marsden.](#)

Source: Community Archives Collection ACC002/074/099

Marsden clearly had a high opinion of the Maori and in a letter to his friend John Terry he wrote: *"They are a noble race, vastly superior in understanding to anything you can imagine."* One of the most famous of Marsden's Maori visitors was the chief Hongi Hika whose knowledge of European trade, commerce, shrewd business sense and ability to negotiate for principal articles from the missionaries such as; muskets, axes, spades and hoes made him a key player in New Zealand politics. In 1827 Reverend Henry Williams explained Marsden's thoughts on setting up a settlement in Sydney.

*"On the return of Mr. Marsden, the question of the education of the children was again brought forward, and in a short time concluded; when it was determined, that the children should be educated in N.Z. Mr. Marsden entered with much apparent interest, upon the idea of a New Zealand settlement in Port Jackson; that is to say, within the Colony. Our ideas corresponded generally, yet differed widely as to distance. He thinks that it should be situated between Sydney and*

*Parramatta; we that it should not be within one hundred miles of Sydney; that the natives should not be subject to visits from the curious intruders, nor have it in their power to retreat upon very slight pretence: but it was left open for further discussion, both here and in Port Jackson."*

However by 1827 Mr John Raine appears to have taken over the lease of the house at Rangihou and its adjacent lands as well as changing the house's name to West Grove. *The Australian* of August 27, 1830, announced the sale by auction of West Grove leasehold estate which had been divided into ten separate allotments, varying from half an acre to six acres. Nearly the whole of the allotment was said to be a rich garden in a high state of cultivation.

Lot 8 consisted of five acres which commanded 300 feet of river frontage, a substantial wharf at the eastern end and the comfortable and genteel dwelling house usually designated West Grove Cottage. This was probably the house also known as Rangihou. At this time the cottage comprised of two parlours, two bedrooms, an office and storeroom, and was situated on the top of a beautiful sloping hill. Adjacent to the cottage was a clothes-yard, stock-yard, and the poultry-yard used by Governor Brisbane as a pheasantry.

It is not clear if this sale was a success for nine years later, after Reverend Marsden's death, 100 acres of his land around Parramatta was put up for sale. It was divided into 52 separate lots and included both Newland's House (often referred to as Broughton House and Rangihu Cottage. The description for Lot 43 is as follows:

*"...includes Rangihu Cottage, garden etc. This is an extremely choice and valuable lot, a neat residence being already on it, having a back entrance to New Zealand Street and a full frontage to the River; it contains about three acres."*





*Original location of Rangihou, Macarthur and New Zealand Streets, Parramatta, 2013.*

*Source: Google maps*

Newland's House, said to have been built as a residence for Mrs. Marsden about 1835, and at the sale mentioned above, passed into the hands of Mr. Henry Harvey. He sold it just two years later in 1841. Mrs. Perrier announced in *The Herald* of 20 December 20 1841, that she had "*taken that spacious and beautifully situated premises known as Newland's to use as a school*". The name Newland's is said to have been transferred to the property known now as Broughton House, when the original Newlands was bought by Mr. Neil Stewart. Broughton House was erected apparently about 1839 or 1840.

## Howell's Wind and Water Mill – Parramatta

*Research & Collection Team*



[Howell's Mill, Parramatta –watercolour drawing.](#)

Source: State Library of New South Wales FL1640247

In 1828 George Howell and his son George Jnr. began work on what was to become one of the most distinctive landmarks for visitors coming to Parramatta by river. Howell was a 50 year old ex-convict who had settled down on 80 acres of land at Yarramundi, Richmond, but saw the need for a large mill to grind the growing number of crops being produced in the area. While there were a number of wind, water and steam mills dotted across the Sydney landscape Parramatta was still without a proper mill close to town and much of the grinding was still being done by small hand mills. Howell's new mill was on a scale larger than any previously built in the area being 100 feet tall and consisting of six separate floors.

Howell's Mill was situated on the banks of the river on the southern side of the Gaswork's Bridge and the site was chosen to ensure there was a continuous flow of water for the grinding as further up the river flow could be reduced to a trickle depending on the time of the year. To accomplish this Howell also needed to construct a dam across the river to build up the reservoir of water. The construction was not without problems, firstly there was the £3000 price tag, but the biggest

challenge for the Howells was their very public battle with John Raine who lived on a property on the other side of the river.

This property was part of a large plot of land owned by the Reverend Samuel Marsden. Locally known as Newlands or Rangihou it was at this time was leased by Raine, who had built Parramatta's first steam mill and managed the Darling Mill in North Parramatta. Concerned that the dam had become a thoroughfare for trespassers Raine took it upon himself to dig up the dam where it connected with his side of the riverbank. This resulted in a series of clashes between Raine's men who were bent on removing the dam and Howell's friends who were maintaining it. The ensuing battles were covered in detail by the local newspapers and garnered the Howells the support of their next door neighbour, John Macarthur, who not only actively supported the construction of the dam but ruled as magistrate when the case ended up in the local court.

By April 1828 the dispute had turned ugly with supporters and employees from both sides engaged in a 'riot' which led to John Raine being put on trial for the assault of Robert Parnel. He was later found not guilty.

The mill once completed proved to be both a landmark and major asset when it came to grinding the local grains. Clearly the mill was a good business for Howell but ten years later two fateful incidents would mar its success. The first occurred in 1837 when John Richard Barrett (architect and builder), a cousin of the Howell's, was killed in a fatal accident at the mill. George decided to move out of the mill which he was using as his residence and move to another mill he owned near the Female Factory. As fate would have it, in March 1838, soon after the first incident George Jnr. was killed when a large plank of wood being used in the renovations fell on him and one year later George Snr. died. The mill passed on to one of his sons, Thomas, but George Jnr.'s wife Elizabeth continued to manage the mill very successfully after his death. After Elizabeth died in 1866 the mill gradually fell into disrepair and was abandoned in 1868.

George Senior died in 1839 but their descendants continued to live in Parramatta for many more years and are recognised as one of the pioneer families of the region.



## The First King's School – Harrisford House Parramatta

*Research & Collection Team*



*Harrisford House, George Street, Parramatta, 2014. Source: Geoff Barker, Parramatta City Council*

The first lessons given by this famous Australian institution were in February 1832 in a house leased on two blocks in George Street, Parramatta. The King's School is Australia's oldest independent school and its alumni includes many of Australia's more famous names including: Former New South Wales Premier Mike Baird; director Bruce Beresford, and rugby player Stirling Mortlock.

When King's started in 1832 there were two schools, one in Pitt Street, Sydney, the other in Parramatta. However this first site was not at the current site in North Parramatta or the site of the current New South Wales Heritage Office. In fact the first school actually started life in a modest house on two blocks of land at the bottom of George Street Parramatta. Remarkably the building in which these first pupils started their lessons still stands on the same site, although it is now known as Harrisford.

The origins of the site date back to Governor Macquarie's realignment programme which saw Section 23 split into Lots 68 and 15 with the latter being the one on the banks of the river. In 1823 Joshua Abbot or Allot gained a lease of lot 15, and erected a hut on the site while William Carter leased lot 68 but both lots

were purchased by Reverend William Walker in September 1829. He purchased the Riverside lot for £15 and the George Street lot for £60 and after building a school on the site leased the block to the King's School. Walker also was forced to mortgage both blocks to Samuel Terry for £500 before finally being issued with the title on 13 October 1852.



[Harrisford House, 182 George Street, Parramatta, circa 1960s - 1970s.](#)

Source: LSP 00630

Unfortunately the death of the headmaster of the Pitt Street School in September 1832 led to its closure and the Parramatta school under Reverend Robert Forrest was left to establish the school's reputation as one of Australia's finest independent schools. By November 1832 the school had 41 borders, many the children of military officers and public servants and in 1836 moved to a new and larger site in North Parramatta, just above the weir.

After Forest left the school was let to a Mr Bradley who set up another school, the Parramatta Academy before in 1841 becoming a private school under the care of the schoolmaster and local botanist, William Woolls. After Woolls moved his school to Broughton House the title was passed to master mariner Michael Eury in 1853. In 1890 the property was sold to John Harris of Shane's Park, who was the nephew of Surgeon John Harris after whom Harris Park is named. John Harris Victorianised the building, and named the renovated building Harrisford.

Recently the house underwent some significant renovations and is worth a look if you are walking along the eastern end of George Street.



## Lennox Bridge, Parramatta, 1836-1839

*Research & Collection Team*



[Lennox Bridge, Parramatta, view of west side of bridge from street level position on north bank of river, 1928.](#) Source: LSP 00808

David Lennox arrived in Sydney in 1832. He was experienced in bridge building under the famous engineer Thomas Telford having worked on a stone bridge across the Severn in Gloucester and the Menai suspension bridge in north-west Wales. After the death of his wife, he sought employment in the colony arriving as an unassisted migrant in 1832. His talents were soon recognised and he was appointed as Superintendent of Bridges and became the first skilled bridge builder on the mainland. Any doubts about his ability were dispelled after his design and construction of a horseshoe shaped bridge at Lapstone (1833) and the 110 feet clear span bridge at Lansdowne over Prospect Creek (1834-1836).

Lennox prepared preliminary designs for the bridge at Parramatta for Surveyor General Thomas Mitchell to whom he was responsible. Ambrose Hallan, the recently appointed Colonial Architect, countered with a proposal for a prefabricated iron bridge be imported from England. Fortunately for Parramatta, Governor Bourke, finding Hallan's lack of ability as an architect intolerable, interceded and requested a plan for 'an ornate bridge'. Mitchell's assistant, Captain Perry, entered the fray with a plan shortening the arch from 90 feet [27.432 metres] to 60 feet [18.288 metres]. Lennox dismissed this plan claiming correctly that such a narrow spanned arch would restrict flood waters. Midst the inter-departmental controversy that existed apart from the bridge plans, Lennox



simply went ahead, and adapted the timber centering used on the Lansdowne project, declaring that as he had done so, he did not intend to alter his design.

All opposition collapsed and in May 1836 when Bourke, whose patience had been taxed over the whole proceedings, approved the Lennox plans and the bridge work was commenced on 22 October 1836. In July, Lennox applied for stonemasons and later arranged for the supply of lime and cartage of quarried stone. The governor laid the foundation stone on 23 November, 1836. Progress was slow because of labour problems but by September 1838 one side was open to limited traffic and it was completed in the following year at a final cost of £1,797.

The structure may be described as a sandstone bridge with a single semi elliptical arch of 90 feet [27.432 metres] in length and 30 feet [9.144 metres] wide. Even though the approaches show all the softly graded curves of his earlier bridges, Morton Herman described the main arch perhaps as 'coarse and heavy'. If not as elegant as some of his other designs, it was nonetheless a valuable and worthy addition to the Georgian architecture of the town. The bridge remained nameless until 1867 when a motion before the Parramatta District Council proposed that it be named after the current governor, Sir William Denison (1855-1861) but it lapsed. Alderman Birmingham then proposed the name Lennox Bridge and the motion was passed.

## Postscript

John McClymont's article written in 1994 also pointed out how the structure of the bridge had been altered over the years. The original gaol bridge had been built slightly to the north of the current Lennox Bridge but as early as 1802 a stone bridge at the current location on Church Street had replaced it. By the early 1830s it was in an 'insecure state', and around 1833 Lennox started planning to replace it with what is now known as the 'Lennox Bridge'.

In 1897 the *Cumberland Argus* recorded the reminiscences of long term resident Mr John Taylor who described the bridge around the late 1830s as being a low level wooden bridge, the approach to which ran down through the properties now occupied by Mrs. Houison (on the south side) and Mr L. A. Simpson (on the north side).

In 1885-86 the Department of Public Works removed the wall on the upstream side of the bridge to widen it, and put up a replacement concrete railing at the same time.

In 1912 it was widened for a tramway [to Castle Hill] and in 1930 *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported there was a proposal to demolish the bridge. Instead the Public Works Department widened the bridge on the western side between 1934 and 1935, removing the original curve and creating the strait line you can see in the image above.

This 1930 article also mentions how the passage of time had worn away the words "Lennox Bridge" on the inside of the parapet wall on the downstream side of the bridge.

In 2014 work on the construction of two new river foreshore access tunnels uncovered some of the early sandstone pier and timber girders of the old gaol bridge. In a *Sydney Morning Herald* article on the discovery the archaeologist on this project, Anne Bickford, said Lennox had decided to leave parts of the gaol bridge within his bridge rather than go to the trouble of removing them.

By April 2018, interpretive installations celebrating the history of Parramatta were unveiled in the two portals.

From the unpublished manuscripts of John McClymont

## Parramatta Gasworks and the Australian Gas Light Company

*Neera Sahni*



[Australian Gas Light Company building, George Street, Parramatta, view of front exterior of two storey building, circa 1890s - 1900s. Source: LSP 00834](#)

The Australian Gas Light Company was established by private interests in New South Wales on 7 September 1837 to light the streets of Sydney with coal gas. This was Australia's second oldest company to be listed on the Australian Stock Exchange. The Australian Gas Light Company had expanded businesses in all Australian states, as well as in Chile, China and Poland. The lights were turned on the 24 May 1841 to celebrate the birthday of Queen Victoria. Within the next two years there were 165 gas lamps in the city – 14 Government lights, 11 Corporation lamps, 106 Publicans' lights, and 34 Private lamps.

The Australian Gaslight Company was located in Pitt Street on land south from Campbell Street. In the 1850s gas lighting allowed for late night shopping in department stores. The first gasholder in a two story building was erected in 1855. By 1858 the company purchased another eight allotments in Pitt Street. By 1860 the Australian Gas Light Company was considering an extension of service to Newtown, Redfern and Glebe. Two new holders were constructed in 1861 and 1865; a fourth holder was built in 1874. The former Australian Gaslight Company Building at 479-487 Pitt Street, Sydney, was the company's head office. Coal was stored in a coal store from where it was delivered to the vertical retorts by overhead conveyor. Gas was produced in vertical retorts before being piped to the scrubbers

and purifiers to remove any impurities. It then passed through a meter room before being stored in gasholders under pressure.

Gas was manufactured from coal, which was shipped in by barges and ferries. Consequently, suburban gas companies established their plants at harbour side locations. With the growth of Sydney, the sites where these now-abandoned plants were built have become valuable real estate, being at key locations around the harbour. Some sites have been re-developed for other industry or housing, while a few have been reserved for public use in the form of harbour side park-lands.

The Australian Gas Light Company was an active member of the community and supported organisations like The Smith Family and provided energy advice to Mission Australia.

In June 1871 about 30 men met with Reverend Ralph Mansfield (Secretary of the Australian Gas Light Company) to form a local gas company. Parramatta gas works was established on the outskirts of Parramatta in 1872. The Parramatta Gas Company purchased land on the river in 1872 and immediately began the construction of the brick retort house. The gasworks opened in 1873, bringing coal along the river to the works where it was converted to gas. On the 29 March 1873, the first street light was turned on in Parramatta. George Street was lit by gas in 1876. In 1913, gas lights were replaced by electricity.

The Australian Gas Light Company bought the Parramatta Gas Company property in 1890. It took one year to construct the new office and then the old works on the Parramatta River was dismantled. Mr J Finlayson was in charge of the Australian Gas Light Company (Parramatta Office) in 1890.

In 1933 gas was considered one of the most important public utilities in Parramatta. Another showroom and company office was opened in about 1935 in Parramatta. After housing at different temporary locations, the Australian Gas Light Company moved back to their new showroom at No 46 George Street, Parramatta.



[Gasworks Bridge, Parramatta, view of bridge from a low position on an adjacent river bank, circa 1928.](#)

Source: LSP 00813

The Gasworks Bridge over the Parramatta River is one of 32 lattice girder bridges built between 1870 and 1893 throughout NSW. 20 were road bridges, 12 were railway bridges. Meadowbank Railway Bridge is one of those lattice girder bridges. Gasworks Bridge is also known as Newlands Bridge.

The Gasworks Bridge was built around 1881. The bridge is supported on large sandstone piers. It has three main spans each 31m in length and two steel beam approach spans. The overall length is 110m and is still in use.

East of the Gasworks Bridge is the site of the first official landing place in Parramatta where Governor Phillip and a small party of Marines arrived in 1788 to establish the colony's second settlement. Gasworks Bridge is named after thriving industries such as flour and woollen mills at that time. Boatsheds and inns were located on the riverfront here to support the settlement.



## Byrnes Cloth Factory Parramatta

*Research & Collection Team*



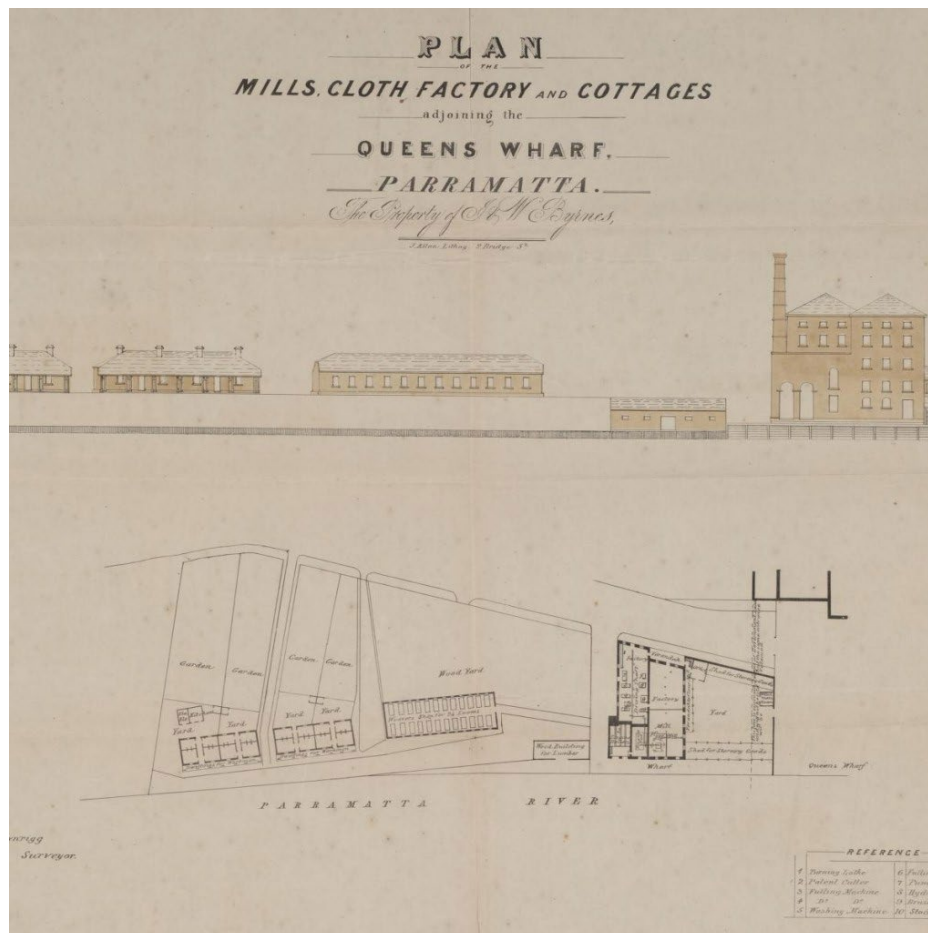
[Byrnes' Mill, the Parramatta cloth mill, on the left, with the original flour mill being the tall section on the right, date unknown.](#) Source: LSP 00186

On the lot to the south of the Rivercat Wharf on George Street and next to Harrisford House, James and William Byrnes had an allotment from which they conducted their river ferry and industrial interests and agencies in the 1840s and 50s. Their remarkable tale begins towards the end of 1841 when the two brothers built a steam flour mill on land leased from the Elizabeth Farm estate. They must have done well for five years later they built a five story cloth mill next to the first mill.

The new mill was located approximately between the modern Noller Parade and the Rivercat Wharf to the east of a line drawn to the river through modern Purchase Street. By January 1847 the cloth factory was manufacturing lama cloth, tweeds (and a durable cloth called 'Parramatta Tweed'), checks, doeskins and kerseymeres and for the first time tartans were woven in the colony. Using imported English machinery, the mill started with 39 employees and by 1849 had manufactured 32,882 yards of tweed.

James Byrnes was born in Edgeworthstown in Ireland and came to Sydney with his father James Snr. (a member of the New South Wales Corps) with his wife Francis (nee Moorhouse) in 1808. James Jnr. was initially apprenticed as a carpenter but in the 1830s he and his brother started one of the first steam ferries to run on the

Parramatta River. They then built on this success with the construction of the flour and tweed mill both of which were highly successful until the Gold Rush of the 1850s drained the area of workers and forced them to close the mills in 1857.



Plan of the mills, cloth factory and cottages adjoining the Queens Wharf, Parramatta – 1853. Source: National Library of Australia Map 248

The cloth mill was re-opened in 1862 as Charles F. Byrnes & Co. but was closed in the 1880s and the machinery was transferred to a new site at Granville. In 1908, the government bought the old mill for £2,300 and the site for £2,800 converting the buildings for use as part of the George Street Asylum for aged men.

James also had a successful political career becoming Parramatta's first effective mayor in 1861 while both he and his brother later became members of parliament. A memorial to his contribution to the construction of the Leigh Memorial Church can still be found on its wall on George Street.

From the unpublished manuscripts of John McClymont



## Harvey's Mill, The Cumberland Steam Mill, and Dares Mill, Parramatta

*Research & Collection Team*



[Cumberland Woollen Mills, circa 1900.](#)

Source: LSP 00105

At the foot of Smith Street Number 40 Smith Street on the eastern side, up from the riverbank, Henry Harvey, a baker, built a steam operated mill between 1840 and 1841 and commenced producing flour.

Substantially built, the building was originally four stories in height but was reduced to two stories at some later date. The brick walls, which were painted, were reported as having been over twelve inches thick indicating that they were built in English or Flemish bond, both styles being common at the time. Deep in plan with a hipped roof (later of corrugated iron), the building gave the appearance that it was solidly built. Window openings were considered small in proportion to the wall area. The building was known in turn as Harvey's Mill, Dare's Mill, French's Mill, The Cumberland Fruit Preserving Company's Works and finally The Parramatta Ice Works.

The mill stood originally on land leased to John Fullagher for 21 years in June 1823. Like most leases at the time, Fullagher had the right to convert it to a grant by erecting a building on it to the value of £1000 or more or by purchase for the payment of 21 years quit rent at a reasonably determined price. Evidently these

conditions were not fulfilled as a grant of the allotment was made to Harvey on 26 October 1840. The mill is shown on Brownrigg's Survey of 1844-45.

Harvey was originally from the Isle of Wight and a baker by trade. He was transported for seven years, arriving on the *Malabar* in 1819; he was assigned to George Palmer at Pemberton Grange. On receiving his ticket of leave in 1825, he built a shop and house in Church Street, North Parramatta and alongside it a bakery. Determined to become a man of property, he erected a 'neat row of houses' on land in George Street, acquired land in Smith Street and built the steam mill to process his own flour. In the late thirties, he purchased a number of lots in the Marsden Estate, including the lot on which Newlands stood.

Having extended his financial borrowings too far in the 1840s depression he was saved by his friends Houison and Payten who loaned him money by way of a mortgage over his properties. He successfully weathered the storm and continued dealing in real estate, particularly town allotments. He purchased MacDonald's farm in Ermington, eventually selling it to William Payten, his son-in-law. He owned Pemberton Grange also but finally settled at Morton House in East Parramatta for his remaining years.

Having no sons, he invited his nephew Henry Granger, also a baker, to operate the bakery business, eventually selling the property to him; the bakery was sold by Granger's descendants in the 1960s to Fielder's Flour and demolished in 1969. Harvey died in 1874, having become a substantial citizen of Parramatta, despite his convict past.

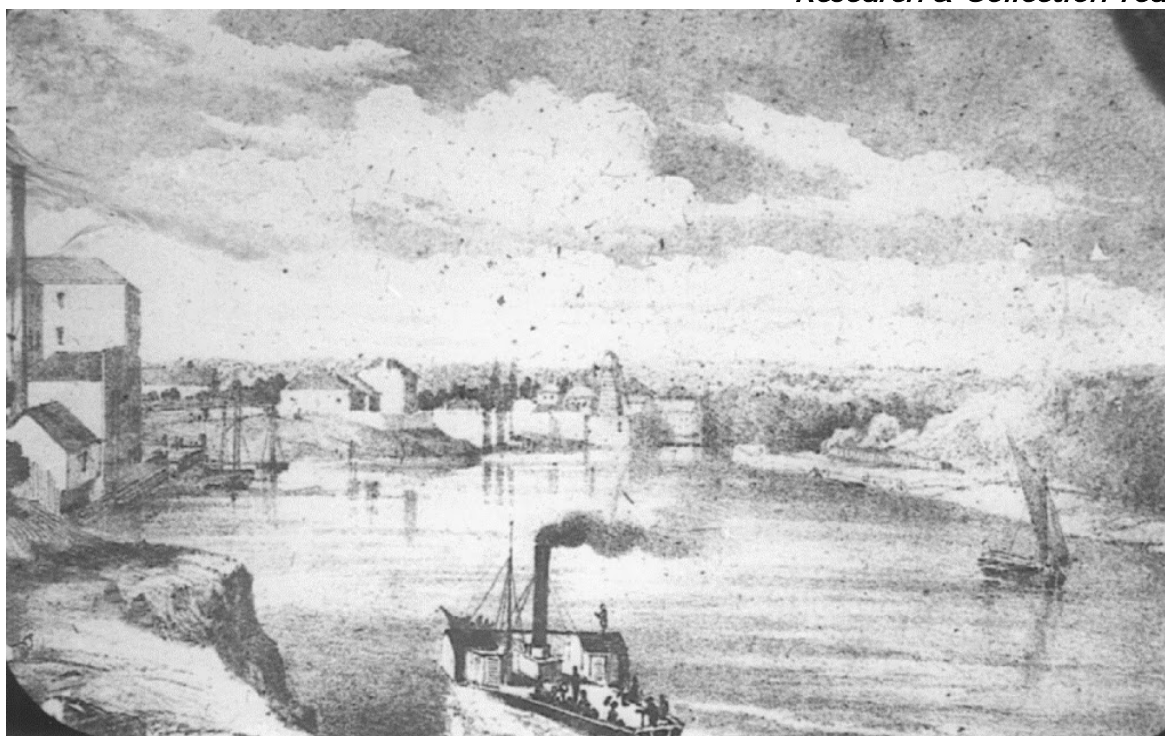
As indicated by the changes of name, the mill served a number of industrial purposes over its span of 130 years. Perhaps its most interesting phase was when it was bought in 1869 by John French, of Lithgow as a site to manufacture tweed cloth. Alfred, a son, assisted his father but branched out to manufacture tweed at the Cumberland Mill in 1870, having bought the property from Harvey. On the death of his father in 1876, Alfred carried on operations at both mills. The Cumberland Mill, an established landmark at the foot of Smith Street by the river, was demolished in 1974.

Behind this mill and along the riverbank was a quarry, one of the earliest in Parramatta. It was in this sandstone quarry in which Reverend Richard Johnston was reported to have held the first church services at Rose Hill.

From the unpublished manuscripts of John McClymont

## The Parramatta River 1848 to 1861 – Personal Observations by W S Campbell

*Research & Collection Team*



[Parramatta River, view of river looking towards Byrnes Brothers mill, 1840s - 1870s.](#)

Source: LSP 00782

In 1919 W. S. Campbell, a Parramatta resident for many years, gave a wonderful talk to the Royal Australian Historical Society recounting his early memories of life on the Parramatta River in the mid-1800s. The account begins with his first trip up the river in early 1848 with his father Dr. F. Campbell who at this time was in charge of the Lunatic Asylum at Tarban Creek, a small community made up of a few houses scattered around the asylum. Most of these were occupied by officials and the little hamlet close to Parramatta contained no more than 20 houses.

Between Tarban Creek and lunatic asylum was 18 acres owned by Mr Thomas Stubbs, a well known Sydney auctioneer. This property was later purchased and the house enlarged by the Marist Brothers as a place where South Sea Missionaries would be able to recuperate after spending time in the Pacific. Some 200 yards or so from the Asylum buildings, a ferry plied across the Parramatta River, which was then known as the Bedlam Ferry and which connected the ends of the Great North Road.

Campbell then goes on to describe the river and the life along it in great detail:

*"Along the center of the river hereabouts, for a mile or so, large mud oysters, about the size of a cheese plate were dredged up from the bottom of the river by one or two fishermen. They were known as mud oysters and were sold in Sydney. They were very coarse and no one, I think, about the river ever made use of them. They are now either extinct or very scarce.*

*About a quarter of mile back from the asylum and along road from Kissing Point on right side and at top of the hill stood the flagpole or semaphore, 30 to 40 feet high used to signal messages from Sydney to Parramatta, known as intermediate signal station.*

*Most of the country in the vicinity of the river was in its primeval state, or nearly so, in 1848 and for about five years afterwards, and was exceedingly beautiful. The only wharves where steamers went alongside, between the lower Parramatta wharf, known as Redbank, and Sydney, where Pennant Hills wharf and Kissing Point wharf. At Bedlam Ferry the steamers stopped in mid-stream, and passengers were taken to and from them by the punt man, who made a small charge."*

Two times a week considerable traffic could be seen along the river from early morning to late at night when orchardists from far and wide drove their fruit carts to be ferried to Sydney markets. The produce was then packed in gin cases or baskets and carried in a large number of sailing boats to the Sydney markets. Also plying their trade on the river were the large ballast boats which carried broken-up blue metal for Sydney streets from the quarries around Pennant Hills.

Beyond Homebush and about the river frontage were The Flats, which were reclaimed around 1920 and behind this was the Newington estate where Mr Blaxland erected a large residence. According to Campbell Blaxland:

*"...brought out his own ship from England and also skilled workmen, and built and started a saltworks in 1807. Salt was produced there long after Mr. Blaxland's death. This estate extended to Duck River. Beyond that small river lies the most interesting historic place in Australasia. This is the Elizabeth Farm, a grant to John MacArthur."*

He goes on to say that:

*"Along the river bank to the wharf at the foot of George Street, Parramatta, Elizabeth Farm extended, and the only occupied place was Silas Sheather's Camellia Grove nursery where Sheather raised many excellent varieties of camellias. Later on camellia flowers, anemones, and ranunculus, chiefly, were sent from this nursery to Mr. Searl, florist, Sydney, who had a place of business in the Sydney Markets. These flowers were sent by steamer, tied in bunches to long pieces of wood, and were hung up about the decks. I think Mr. Searl was the first to start the business of a florist in Sydney. This was afterwards carried on by his sons in King Street.*

*Along the water frontage of Elizabeth Farm were two wharves, one at Redbank and another opposite at Subiaco (Subeacca, as it was often termed). Here the steamers stopped according to the tide. If favourable, the steamer could pass to the George Street wharf, but if not the passengers had to land at one of the others.*

*John McArthur's old house was occupied by Mrs Allport, widow of the artist, when I went to Mr. Woolls' school, Parramatta, in 1856-57, and I often accompanied Mr Woolls to the house and garden chiefly to see the fine collection of exotic plants collected by Macarthur.*

*During this period boating was the activity more indulged in than any other activity for amusement or relaxation by those who lived in the vicinity. Australia Day, Jan 26, saw great numbers of persons collected about the foreshore of the harbour to witness something of the regatta ... About this time of the season the old Windsor pear was ripe and was always looked forward to on anniversary day, it is never seen now unfortunately superseded by other varieties."*

This article by Campbell also gives us a wonderful insight into the natural beauty of the river and its wildlife:

*"There were many beautiful, clean sandy beaches, now nearly all mud flats, where it was pleasant indeed to have a Bogey (this is the Aboriginal word for a swim or dive then in general use). ... the northern side of the river at time, especially when the season for gill birds, or wattle birds as they were sometimes called, came about. Then they appeared in their hundreds, and perhaps, thousands. There were always numbers visiting the bottle brush or honey-suckle trees for the honey of the flowers. Bronze wing pigeons were common. They used to build in the tea-tree, making rough nests with sticks.*

*Ducks and wallabies were obtainable about the head of Lane Cove ... Parrots sometimes visited the district and when the blackbut gums were in flower, they came about in their thousands. Residents used to erect tall poles covered with horsehair snares, about their houses and often caught, on these, numbers of parrots. Native bears were occasionally found but not molested. Opossums abounded, and on moonlight night shooting parties obtained numbers*

*Fishing was excellent, there nearly always being an abundance of many kinds of fish in the river. Snapper weighing from 16 to 18 pounds were common, indeed nothing then was considered to be a snapper under 15 to 16 pounds weight. Red and black bream abounded, and the latter now considered to be a very shy fish, could be easily caught, even occasionally with a bent pin and bread for bait, the line being nothing but seaming twine.*

*Flathead were numerous in certain places and some were very large. The small ones weighing from about 2 to 4 pounds were preferred for food. Black fish were plentiful*



*and were considered to be well worth obtaining; but mullet, which at times came up the river in shoals, were never appreciated. Gar-fish were occasionally caught by the line, but to obtain in quantity a new was necessary."*

## Captain Henry Mance – The Prince of Parramatta River

*Research & Collection Team*



*Captain Henry Mance. Source: State Library of NSW PXA 1036*

He was called the "Prince of the Parramatta River". Well known by many of the residents who lived along the Parramatta River, Mance had built a reputation as a cheerful, courteous and obliging man and had spent 74 years in Parramatta, fifty of those years working on the Parramatta River. Henry (or Harry) Mance, born 1837 in Newcastle, came with his parents to Parramatta aged three. He remained a resident of Parramatta until his death in 1913.

Perhaps no man understood the Parramatta River better than Mance. He began working with Parramatta ferries around 1856 just after the Sydney to Parramatta railway line was opened, and the ferry was a steam powered paddle boat. The ferry ride to Parramatta at that time was a long and tedious journey with passengers having to pack lunch for the journey. As well as being well known by communities along the river he was also familiar to the many rowers who raced on its waters. Captain Mance saw the first boat race on the river in 1858 when R. A. W. Green beat the great English oarsman James Candlish. Mance could recall many of the hundreds of amateur and professional boat races on the river and often his steamer, in support, would follow behind the races.

As a ferry captain he provided many years of incident free and reliable travel for his passengers. He did meet with a serious accident three years before his retirement in February 1903 when bringing his steamer up to the Hunter's Hill Wharf he somehow, with his hand on the wheel jammed his hand against a bolt and with the weight of the steamer swinging in the tide, crushed his hand, with the

result that the hand and wrist were seriously damaged. Being at Hunter's Hill Wharf he was not far from the residence of Dr. Lloyd who carried out an extensive operation to repair the captain's hand.

One of the most tragic events that Captain Mance had experienced as a ferry captain was the 1857 sinking of the Dunbar at Watson's Bay, in which 121 lives were lost. He was ordered by the government to take the ferry, Black Swan, to search for survivors. The Captain spoke of the awful site of dismembered bodies being washed up against the cliffs of the Gap, a site that would live forever in his memory.

**TESTIMONIAL TO CAPTAIN MANCE**

On his **RETIREMENT**,  
AFTER 50 YEARS' SERVICE ON THE PARRAMATTA RIVER.

**CAPTAIN MANCE** having **RESIGNED HIS POSITION**, it has been decided to suitably recognise his **LONG AND FAITHFUL SERVICE** in **CHARGE OF RIVER STEAMERS** extending over  
**HALF A CENTURY.**

The following **COMMITTEE** (with power to add to their number), has been empowered to carry out the above object, viz.:

<b>Sir Wm. Owen</b>	<b>C. L. Mackenzie</b>	<b>Ald. J. R. Thomson</b>	<b>C. R. Walsh</b>
<b>Langer Owen</b>	<b>S. Jeanneret</b>	<b>C. McClure</b>	<b>W. M. Fairland</b>
<b>E. M. Betts</b>	<b>H. Deane</b>	<b>T. Neely</b>	<b>C. A. Fairland</b>
<b>H. M. Makinson</b>	<b>W. Sewell</b>	<b>J. L. Watkins</b>	<b>V. Brereton</b>
<b>C. Pearson</b>	<b>Ald. B. McBride</b>	<b>H. M. Shelley</b>	<b>J. J. Fletcher</b>
			<b>R. L. Sutton, Mayor of Ryde.</b>

**This Committee is co-operating with the Committees elected in other Localities to carry out the Movement.**

**ALL FRIENDS** interested in **CAPTAIN MANCE'S** life-work are **CORDIALLY INVITED TO ASSIST THIS MOVEMENT.**

**CONTRIBUTIONS** will be received by any **MEMBER OF COMMITTEE**, by the **MASTERS OF THE STEAMERS**, also by the **OFFICE CLERKS.**

E. M. BETTS, Mayor of Hunter's Hill, Chairman of Committee, Tel. 92 Hunter's Hill.  
C. R. WALSH, Hon. Treasurer, Tel. 79 Hunter's Hill.  
W. M. FAIRLAND, Hon. Secretary, "Redcroft," Hunter's Hill, Tel. 1219 Sydney School of Arts.

S. D. TOWNSEND & CO., Printers, 292 Pitt-st., Sydney.

Poster – Testimonial to Captain Mance. Source: Community Archives Collection

On the afternoon of the 20 October 1906, employees of the Sydney Ferries Ltd. (Parramatta River service) gathered at the White Horse Hotel, Parramatta for a surprise presentation party for Captain Mance. After introductory speeches Captain Mance was presented with an illuminated and framed address that read as follows: —

*"To Captain Henry Mance. Dear Sir, — We, the employees of The Parramatta River Ferry Service, on the occasion of your retirement take the opportunity of testifying to your many valuable qualities. During your 50 years' connection with the Parramatta River ferry service, by your genial courtesy, honesty of purpose, and devotion to duty, you have won the respect and admiration of all with whom; you have been associated. Hoping that your future life will be one of happiness and prosperity, and that you will live long to enjoy the rest you so richly deserve...."*

Mr. Walshaw referred to Captain Mance's long and honorable service, and the affection all the employees had for him. He had heard, not only from the men who had worked with him from their boyhood, but passengers and the general public some of whom had known him for 30 and 40 years, speak in the highest terms of praise in regard to the Captain.

So popular and respected was Captain Mance a meeting was convened by the Mayor of Hunter's Hill, E. M. Betts, calling on residents who travelled by Parramatta River Steamers to consider the recognition of the "*valued and efficient services rendered for 50 years by Captain Mance...*" As a result of this meeting other committees were formed including one by Parramatta Council, formed on the 15 October 1906, to raise funds and prepare for an official retirement celebration for the "Old Captain." On 17 December 1906 at Hunter's Hill Town Hall, a presentation to Captain H. Mance, in recognition of his 50 years of service on the Parramatta River steamers was made.

The "Old Commodore" passed away in May 1913.

## James Houison's Bond House, Church Street, Parramatta

*Research & Collection Team*



[James Houison's cottage, Macquarie Street, Parramatta, view of rear exterior of two storey house, from a watercolour by Matthew Macnally, 1932.](#)

Source: LSP 00622

The local architect James Houison erected his shop and dwelling on Lot 1 on the south eastern corner of Lennox Bridge, Church Street. Called the Bond House it was erected in 1864 and joined a number of other shops and commercial buildings being built along the Street.

The Bond House stood against the abutment of the bridge and the footpath and was built of ashlar sandstone, the walls with the exception of the ground floor were plastered. Three stories high, the middle story was at street level. There were two large dormers in the roof storey, one facing east, the other west to Church Street. Sandstone chimneys stood centrally above the apex of each gable; the chimney tops were plain with a single stone string course below the top. At the north and south gable ends were small two paned casement windows. At the footpath level a door and two large windows were symmetrically placed, both covered with heavy shutters. In later years one of the windows was bricked up whilst the other was covered by a huge bookcase.

The windows on the first storey were twelve paned sashes. The whole appearance of the house from the river was solid, whilst from the street front it was iceberg like - one did not realise how much building was below the street surface. Entry to the



building in later years was from a side door at the end of a lane on the southern side at the head of which was a gas lamp standard.

Internally, plans show cellars at the ground level, shop at street level and living area above them. Each level was joined by steep stone stairs. In later years, the house was used for domestic purposes only and in its final years as a dwelling and accountant's offices by Keith Houison. A glass verandah was erected on the middle level, facing the river by Keith Houison and beneath it were erected offices for his accountancy practice. The building was occupied by James Houison's fourth son Alexander (1838-1888). He followed in his father's vocation becoming a carpenter and is listed later as Foreman of Works.

In 1864 he married Fanny Eliza Roberts, and they moved into the Bond House. They raised three children, James, Annie and Martha. James married Thyra Solling and they lived in Perth House in George Street, originally built by James Houison for politician George Oakes in the 1840s. Keith Houison, from an early age was a dedicated local historian and collector of historical memorabilia of old Parramatta including early books, maps, photographic glass slides, memorials and remains of early bridges. The collection almost turned the old house into a museum.

He became the Parramatta and District Historical Society's president, having become a foundation member when it was formed in 1913. Gwenda was the Society's secretary for many years. Keith became the President of the Royal Australian Historical Society and was a councillor of the Society of Australian Genealogists. For many years, the old Bond House was the home of the Parramatta Society, some older members of the Society still recall meeting there.

It was a condition of sale of the Bond House that two plaques were displayed in the wall of the David Jones' building. One described that the store was erected on the site of the old Bond House, for many years the home of the Parramatta and District Historical Society. The other, beneath the original foundation memorial stone of the Macquarie Street Convict Barracks erected by Governor Macquarie in 1820, explained its nature and that it had been presented to the Royal Australian Historical Society when the barracks were demolished.

These may be seen on the river patio of the building James Houison and Nathaniel Payten, his business partner, had a workshop on the first lot on the other side of the Lennox Bridge.

From the unpublished manuscripts of John McClymont

## The Centennial Baths of Parramatta

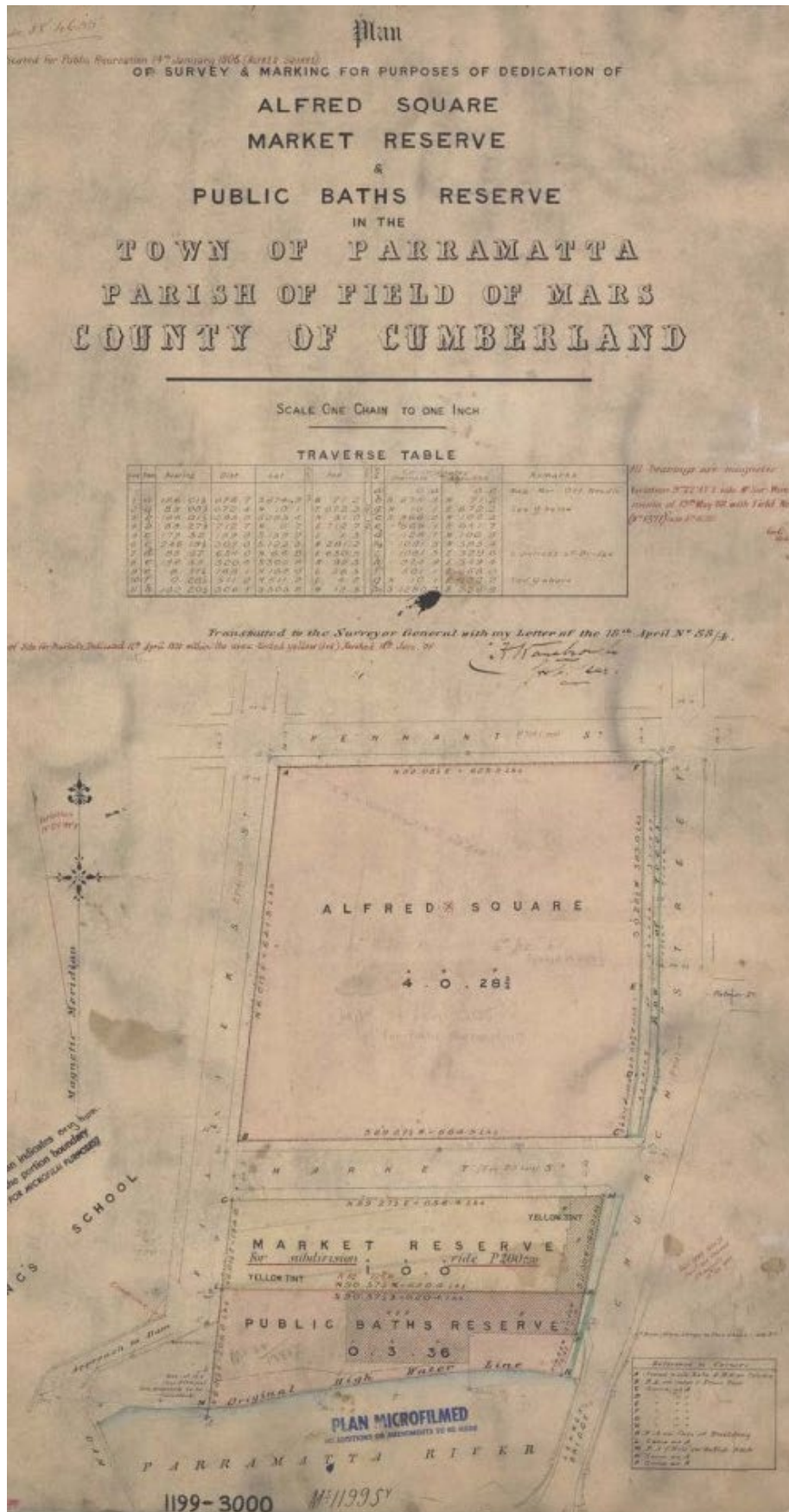
*Research & Collection Team*



*The Centennial Baths Building on the left of the Lennox Bridge. Source: State Library Victoria H91.300/394*

By the early 1880s the residents of Parramatta felt it was time they had facilities for bathing. The river was polluted and the youth of the town had little chance to "practice the noble art of swimming." Council felt it couldn't waste any time to have "these necessary adjuncts to cleanliness and health erected". A deputation led by Mayor Joseph Booth waited on the Colonial Secretary on 15 June 1883 to request that a Bill be introduced to release a portion of land originally set aside for use as a market. The land in question is the current site of the Riverside Theatre next to the Lennox Bridge.

While there was urgency on the part of Parramatta Council to have the baths erected the process of passing the Bill was slow. In 1886 Mr Hugh Taylor, M.L.A., moved to bring in a Bill that would allow the Council of the Borough of Parramatta to construct and maintain a public baths and to borrow money to do so.



Prince Alfred Square Crown Plan showing the location of the Baths.  
Source: City of Parramatta D03225440

The Bill was passed on the 10 September 1886 and the Council immediately invited competitive designs for the construction of the Baths and Market

Building. Architects Hill and Smith and contractor Gazzard and Lavors were appointed in March 1887. The cost of the project was just over £5000. Mayor C. J. Byrnes suggested that because such a large sum of money was being spent constructing the Baths it would be appropriate to christen it "The Jubilee Baths" as a way of celebrating the Queen's Jubilee. But by the time the Baths were completed in September 1888 the Jubilee had come and gone and a new name was required.

On the 15 September the "Centennial Baths" were officially opened on the same day as Parramatta Fire Brigade No. 2's opening of their new fire station, which was located in part of the new Market building. Ratepayers were presented with:

*"...the finest hot and cold and swimming baths in the colonies besides a block of handsome and readily let shops."*

The Church Street façade of the baths and market building presented *"a handsome appearance, there being eight roomy single storey shops, surmounted with bold ornamental cornices, parapets, etc. cemented. In each of the two pediments are casts of the municipal seal picked out in gold and colours."* There was also a further four shops in an arcade and a vestibule fitted with seats, marble topped tables, fountain and large flower stands. There were 12 hot and cold water baths beside a large swimming basin that measured approximately 36×18 metres with a depth of 1 and 3 metres. Some of the water was drawn from the river the rest from the reservoir. There were 50 dressing boxes and 4 large shower baths.

By all accounts it was a grand structure befitting Parramatta's Centenary. In 1927 Council began making arrangements to purchase the land the Baths building was situated on from the Department of Lands. In 1928 the Parramatta Public Baths (Repeal) Act was enacted which allowed Parramatta Council to purchase the land. The Baths and Market building served Council until 1933 when it was demolished and a new baths building constructed.





*The facade of the Parramatta Baths Building prior to it being demolished.  
Source: Research Library Parramatta Centennial Baths Vertical File 0779*



## River Foreshore Parramatta – Public Health Issues 1889-1940

*Research & Collection Team*



[Lennox Bridge and the Parramatta River, circa 1880.](#)

Source: LSP 00212

By 1889 there were many concerns about public health in Parramatta particularly the state of the river, near Lennox Bridge. Apparently the rock and stones trapped all manner of putrid matter which refused to be flushed out even at low tide. At a special meeting of the Council in April 1889 they decided to clean up the river bed, which locals felt was cause of all manner of diseases including typhoid fever. To accomplish this the Council voted to employ fifty locally unemployed men to pick up the refuse at low tide.

One of main causes for the congregation of filth around the bridge was the installation some years earlier of drains from many of large government institutions (the hospital, gaol, asylum and others) which emptied directly into the river at Lennox Bridge. Another problem was the floodgates installed in the weir further downstream which were hard to operate and ended up creating a backlog of filth. An article in the Argus describes one attempt to drain the backlog:

*"... about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, the mass of fetid waters was drained off, a most abominable and intolerant stench arose, enough to sicken anyone crossing*

*the Lennox Bridge. This arose from the foul deposits left by the receding waters and harboured by the loose stones and other obstructions in the bed of the river."*

Locally the area was referred to as 'Death's Hole'.

In 1891 a plan was put forward by the Government Architect to redirect the drains emptying into the Parramatta River. The solution put forward at this time was to create a series of 18 inch cast iron pipes mounted on concrete which would intercept the drains of the institutions along the river bank (the Hospital for the Insane, Reformatory for Girls, the Gaol, the Macquarie Street Benevolent Asylum and the Police Barracks) and redirect it below the floodgates. This they hoped would leave it up to the harbour's tidal movements to remove the filth previously deposited in the river.

Sometime before 1900 a channel was cut into the river and concrete walls put up along each side. Unfortunately these, and the flood gates, were not only expensive they seem to have caused as many problems as they fixed. As a result by the time the Council met to discuss the matter in 1900 the walls had already been broken up and used for making roads. A new proposal put forward at this meeting by Major Ferris was to construct a channel starting at Lennox Bridge which was four feet deep and 80 feet wide.

By September 1907 a new sewage works and system of pipes was being worked on with help from the Government. These sewer lines were to follow the creeks and lines of natural drainage systems. The pumping station from which all the lines of sewage radiate was to be on the river frontage near the George Street Asylum. Here two concrete wells were to receive the sewage and pumped it through a main sewage pipe to the treatment works which were to be erected at the junction of the Parramatta River and Clay Cliff Creek. After purification the effluent was then dumped straight into the river.

Works were still being discussed in 1941 when the Minister for Labour and Industry announced approval had been given to extend the concrete sides of river drain on the eastern side of Lennox Bridge further towards the Gas Works Bridge and concreting the center of the works.

## Where the Riverside Theatres Stand

*Research & Collections Team*



*From Baths to Box Office – Riverside Theatres in Parramatta, 1993.*

*Source: City of Parramatta Archives Photograph Collection*

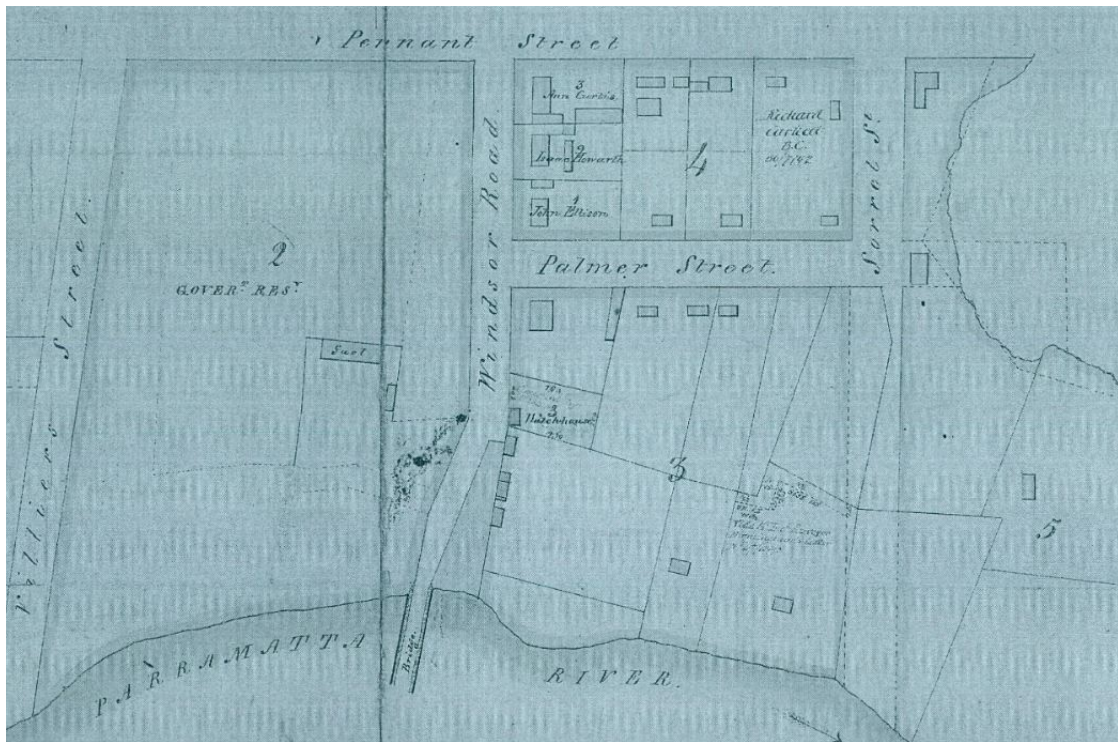
In 2018, Riverside Theatres will celebrate 30 years of sharing stories on stage and screen. The popular and successful multi-venue performing arts centre will, over the next few years, undergo a process of redevelopment resulting in a revitalized and fit-for-the-future venue. Reflecting the ongoing expansion of our city, this transformation will form the next interesting step in the history of where Riverside stands, a space long associated with gathering and recreation.

### **A space for gathering and recreation**

The traditional custodians of the land on which Riverside Theatres now stand are the Burramattagal people. The surrounding area contains evidence of early Aboriginal occupation indicating the place has been a source of food and fresh water, as well as a gathering and recreational space, for tens of thousands of years.

Following the arrival of the European colonists in Parramatta in 1788, the Burramattagal people were displaced from the area. On the land extending north from the river to where the State Heritage Listed Prince Alfred Square now stands, a Government Reserve was established.





Land where Riverside Theatres and Prince Alfred Square now stand – mapped as a Government Reserve, 1831. Source: Research Library Vertical File 0779



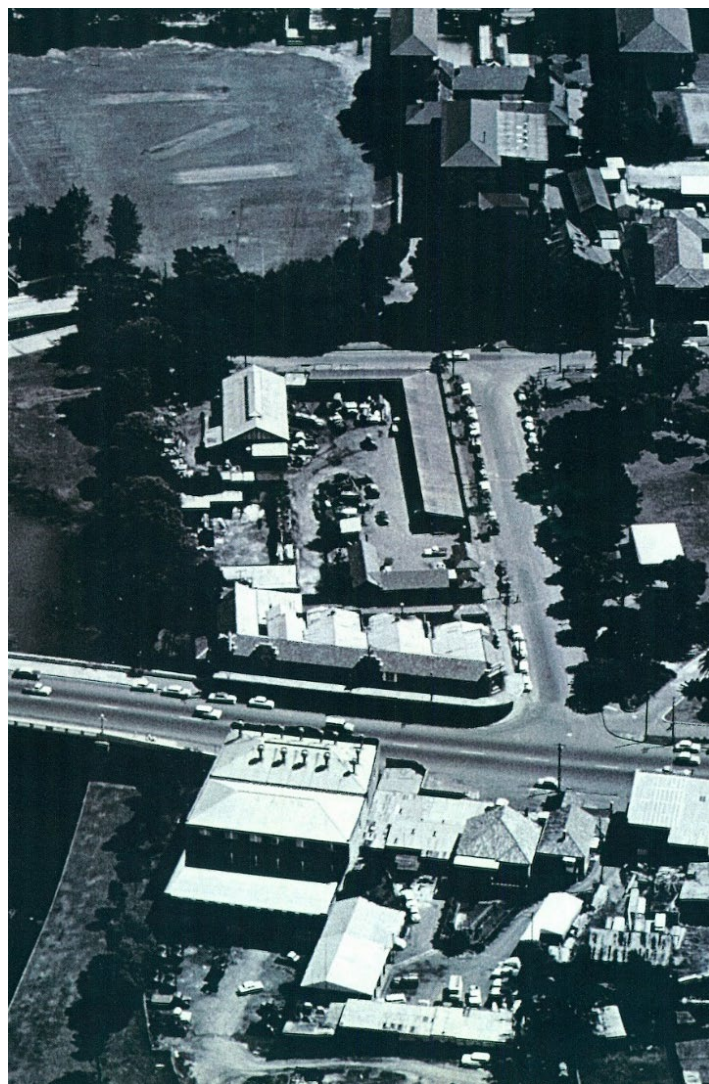
The site of Riverside Theatres, to the left of Lennox Bridge, circa 1840s (cropped). Source: Waddy, L. (1981). *The King's School Parramatta, 1831-1981*

By the time of the construction of Lennox Bridge in the mid-1830s, the stretch of Parramatta River running northwards had been recognised by the European settlers as an ideal place for bathing. In 1837, a small bathing house was constructed on the riverbank nearby.



In 1888, a large public baths facility was opened on the north bank of the river just west of Lennox Bridge, where the Riverside Theatres now stand. The Baths provided hot and cold bathing and dressing boxes beside a large swimming basin, using water drawn from the river, along with an arcade of shops facing Church Street.

In the 1920s, a stretch of water further up the Parramatta River, known as Little Coogee, became the dedicated site for public bathing, and the Baths by Lennox Bridge were closed. In 1934, the old Baths and arcade buildings were substantially refurbished and opened as repurposed retail premises. The rear of the property began to function as a Parramatta City Council vehicle depot.



[Aerial view of Parramatta, showing shops and the Council depot on the old Baths site, circa 1950s \(cropped\).](#)

*Source: LSP 00420*

### **A cultural space**

From the 1970s onwards, the need for a public cultural performance space in Western Sydney was increasingly recognised and discussed. Finally, in 1983 it was



announced that, as part of the joint State/Commonwealth Bicentenary Program, funding had been awarded for a Cultural Centre to be constructed in Parramatta.

54802      Proposed Cultural Centre for Parramatta

Resolved on the motion of Alderman Elliott, seconded by Alderman Haines - "That:-

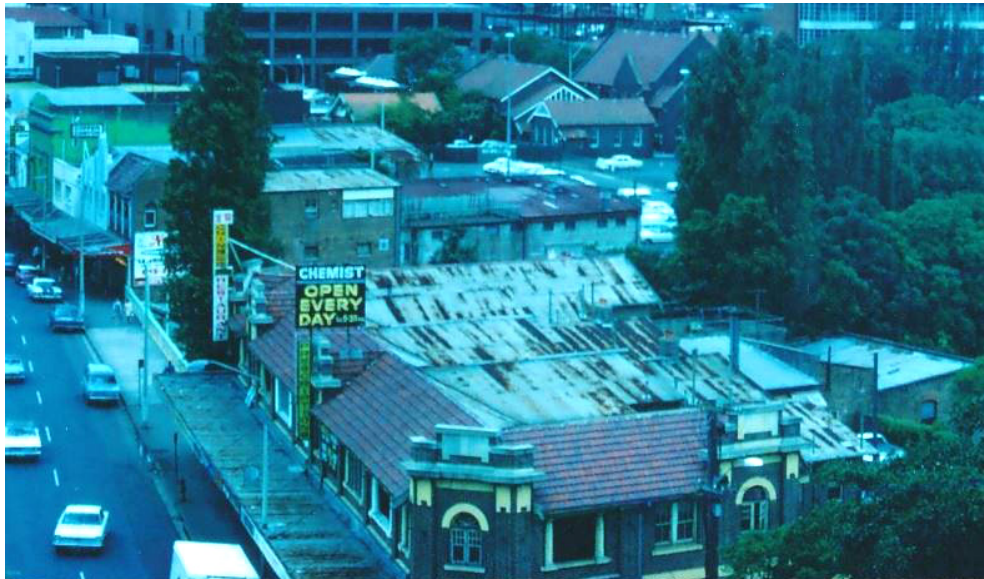
- (a) Parramatta City Council congratulate the State Government, particularly the Acting Premier, The Hon. L.J. Ferguson, M.P., on the announcement of the \$6 million Cultural Centre for Parramatta, as part of a Joint State/Commonwealth Bicentenary Programme.

*The development of Cultural Centre in Parramatta was first formally proposed in 1983.*

*Source: Minutes of the meeting of Parramatta City Council, 14 June 1983*

Six million dollars of Government funding was earmarked to cover the costs of building of the Cultural Centre, though the land on which it would stand was to be donated by Parramatta City Council. Various sites were given consideration, and it was ultimately decided that the 'Baths' shops and Council depot site was the most suitable.

In 1986, the 100 year-old Baths building was demolished and construction of the new centre commenced. The construction period was not without controversy, as the original budget rapidly escalated, and there were concerns the quality of the facilities to be delivered would be diminished as a result.



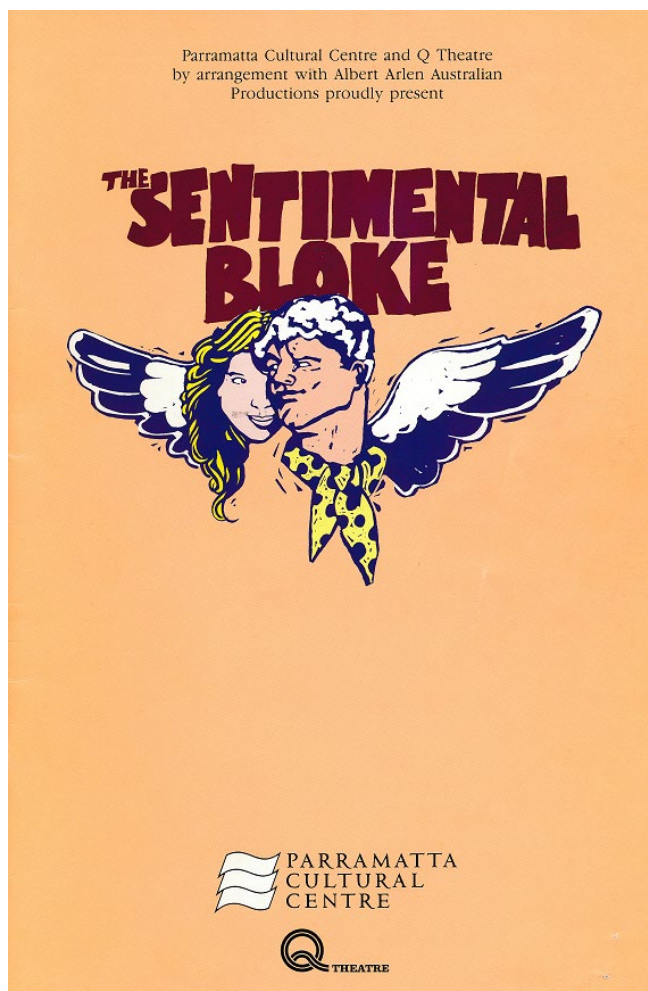
*The old Baths buildings shops and depot, circa 1970s (cropped).*

*Source: City of Parramatta Cultural Collections ACC156.001.005*

Although some complications were experienced during construction, the centre was completed in time for the Bicentenary year as planned. The Parramatta Cultural Centre was officially opened on 27 February 1988 by State Premier Mr Barry Unsworth, at an event attended by politicians (including Prime Minister Bob Hawke), heads of local organisations and "a host of celebrities from the arts world".

The facilities, comprising "a 700 seat theatre, 200 seat performance space, 100 seat recital room, an open-air courtyard, and a fully licenced foyer/function space", were proclaimed as a wonderful addition to the cultural landscape of Western Sydney.

One year after opening, a new name for the centre, which more accurately reflected its position and purpose, was announced – the Riverside Theatres.



*Program for The Sentimental Bloke, which opened at Parramatta Cultural Centre on 12 March 1988. Source: City of Parramatta Cultural Archives Collection (Riley donation)*

There was considerable excitement and momentum following the opening of the Cultural Centre, and a number of well-received and popular productions were staged.

However, as the 1990s progressed, the centre underwent a period of uncertainty, with newspapers at the time reporting concern with regard to declining attendances and increasing debts. In response, an Arts consultancy review and report was commissioned by Parramatta City Council in 1997.

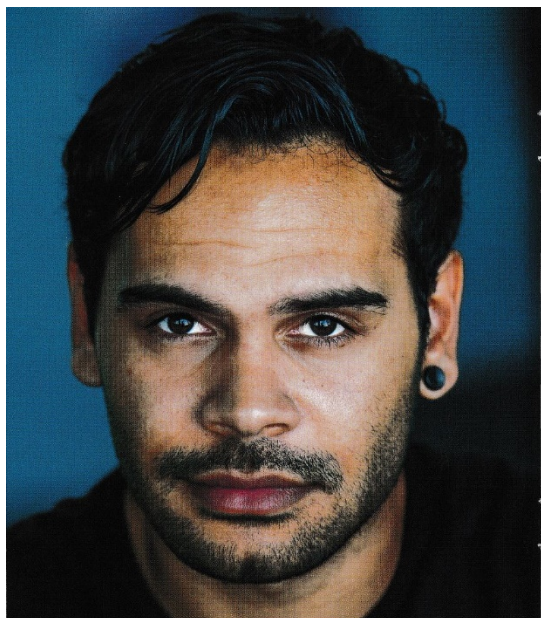
### **Western Sydney's premier performing arts centre**

The start of the new Millennium saw a successful resurgence of the Riverside Theatres, and in November 2000 the well-respected performing arts professional

Robert Love was appointed Director. The introduction of new programming and the establishment of successful partnerships, most notably with the Sydney Festival, saw a revival in the popularity and reputation of the centre. By 2003, Riverside Theatres was being proclaimed as the place to be "for theatre goers wanting to see top shows".

In January 2017, Robert Love was awarded a Member (AM) in the General Division of the Order of Australia for "significant service to the performing arts, particularly in Western Sydney, as an administrator, and as a supporter of independent artists".

Riverside Theatres has now come to be recognised as Western Sydney's premier performing arts centre. Riverside delivers more than 1,000 well-attended events per year, catering to a range of groups and interests – from large-scale musical productions to stand-up comedy acts, drama, ballet and contemporary dance. The venue is also used for cultural presentations, specialist talks and corporate events.



29 May – 1 June 2018

9

## STOLEN

Directed by Vicki Van Hout  
Playwright Jane Harrison

Insightful and poignant, *Stolen* tells the stories of five individuals from the Stolen Generation twenty years on from its original staging. Vicki Van Hout brings a fresh interpretation to this tender and moving play which revisits Jane Harrison's important historical text in the context of Australia today.

Reflecting the pain, poignancy and sheer desperation of 'The Lost Children', *Stolen* is a tale of these children's experiences struggling to make sense of a world where they have been told to forget their families, their homes and their culture. The theme of a deep desire to belong runs throughout this play. Segregated from their community, the children begin their journey 'home' after their release.

"Van Hout has inter-woven and augmented the scenes with beautifully choreographed and performed dance and movement segments, that heighten the anguish and despair of the stories,

### DATES & TIMES

May 29 Tuesday	11am
May 30 Wednesday	10am / 1pm
May 31 Thursday	11am / 6.30pm*
June 1 Friday	11am / 7.30pm

\*Austlan interpreted performance.

### TICKETS

Adult	\$49
Concession	\$44
30 & Under	\$30
Drama Club	\$18
Adult Member	\$42
Concession Member	\$37

Transaction fees apply, see page 17.

Details of 'Stolen', a production being staged at Riverside Theatres in 2018.

Source: National Theatre of Parramatta brochure, 2017

The Riverside Theatres has also supported the development of new organisations including FORM Dance Project, Beyond the Square and Dance Makers Collective. In 2015, the National Theatre of Parramatta, Riverside Theatres' resident professional company was launched. The company is creating work in Western Sydney that resonates with and reflects the community.

Riverside itself continues to be supported by an engaged and dedicated group of community volunteers, the 'Friends'.





*Robert Love AM announces the launch of the National Theatre of Parramatta, 2015.  
Source: Riverside Theatres website*

Over coming years, Riverside Theatres aims to reimagine and develop into a new cultural venue which, while retaining its valued core identity, "creates more possibilities for audiences, artists and communities to share and participate in the cultural life of our City".

This revitalisation will follow the continuum of the site as a place for gathering by the river for recreation, connecting with community, and creating and sharing stories.



*Artist's impression of the redeveloped Riverside Theatres.  
Source: City of Parramatta Council. (2017). Culture and our City: A Cultural Plan for Parramatta's CBD: 2017-2022*

## Australia's Retail History – the David Jones building Parramatta

*Emma Stockburn*



[David Frater Reserve Car Park. Airspace leased to David Jones. View to the south west 1969.](#) Source: City of Parramatta Council Archives

The David Jones building on Church Street Parramatta was a permanent fixture since the early 1960s and was seen as a bright star in the DJ's galaxy. Yet over the years this shining light unfortunately lost most of its sparkle and in September 2002 the Daily Telegraph even referred to it as being a ... dark and spooky store. In June 2013 the Meriton group had started the demolition of the building ending a part of Australian retail history.

In 1959 it was decided that the stone house of Mr J. K. S. Houison, President of the Parramatta Historical Society, was to be demolished to make way for the new David Jones department store. This new store would cost 2 million pounds before being opened in November 1961. The opening was met with much fanfare with 400 people per minute entering the store for when it opened its doors for the first time. With 220,000 square feet inside and an outside surrounded by lawns, willow trees and a car park it claimed to be the "*biggest outer metropolitan store in the Commonwealth*".



The inside adopted a *"quiet but colourful and cheerful décor with a number of shops-within-shops"* but after twenty five years of success the business started to decline. David Jones executives criticised surrounding retail outlets and rumours of a move and a new relationship with Westfield and then in 1989 there was the shock announcement that David Jones would be moving from the riverside store to a Parramatta Westfield Shoppingtown, with DJ's eventually moved there in 1996.



*David Jones Building, 1992.*

*Source: Heritage Review, City of Parramatta Council Archives*

The old David Jones building then entered into a series of relationships with a variety of owners, business models and concepts. It was re-branded as the Riverside Centre in the late 1990s and housed offices, a gymnasium, childcare centre, restaurants and a coffee shop. Then in 2001 David Jones again used the building in the form of gourmet food business called the Food Chain. But by 2002 David Jones closed this store and when opened again its next incarnation was a factory outlet building.



*Demolition of David Jones building November 2013.*

*Source: Emma Stockburn*

By 2010 over 50 retailers had moved out and Parramatta Council was calling for the redevelopment of the foreshore and the need for a boost to the economy. Many councillors called for a mix of residential, retail and commercial to energise the Northern Parramatta area. In September 2010 Meriton purchased the David Jones site for \$36.5 million and developed their plan for a twin-tower high-rise building with shops, residential accommodation and a supermarket. In 2011 the plan was revealed which included a public square and terraces running down to the river.

In July 2013 the bulldozers were bought in and by December the demolition of the David Jones building was nearly complete.



*David Jones Building Site, January 6 2014.*

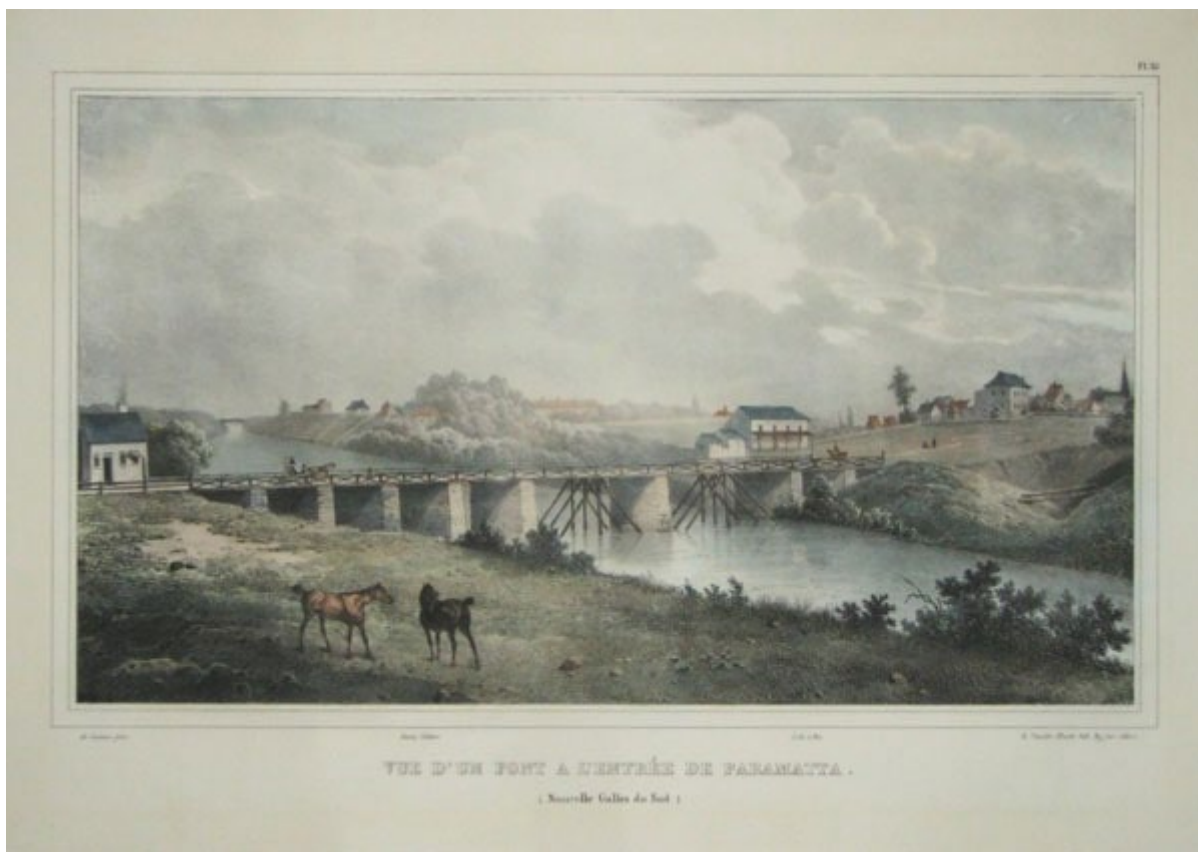
*Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre*

## Timeline

1959	Announcement that the stone house of Mr J. K. S. Houison, President of the Parramatta Historical Society, and known locally as the 'Bond House', is to be demolished to make way for a new David Jones department store.
1961	Plans for the new 2,000,000 pound department store on the banks of the river are released.
1962	David Jones Store opens to 400 per minute entering the store with over 4000 people watching the opening ceremony.
1963	Commemorative Stone is set to mark old building, the 'Bond House' that was demolished to build the David Jones store.
1986	David Jones celebrates 25 years of business in Parramatta.
1989	David Jones announces move from its riverside site in 1991 to the new Westfield mall.
1994-1998	In these years the building was owned by various companies including Friendship Pty Ltd and ICA Property.
1998	Building bought by ICA Property and to be turned into \$40 million Riverbank Corporate Centre. The site was previously owned the Friendship Pty Ltd.
2001	David Jones to starts an upmarket venture called 'Food Chain' at the Riverbank Centre.
2002	'Food Chain' store closes.
2008-2010	David Jones building brought by Parramatta Site Developments Pty Ltd a subsidiary of Professional Investment Services. During this time the building is a factory outlet.
2010	Meriton Group buys the David Jones building.
2011	The Twin Towers design by Tony Caro approved.
2013	Meriton relinquishes its 50 year lease over the council owned car park and other land providing for wider foreshore access.
July 2013	Renewal of old David Jones site starts.

## Parramatta Gaol Bridge: 1794 – 1837

*Research & Collection Team*



*Second ridge over the Parramatta River. From the first voyage of Dumant D'ville, Voyage de la corvette l'Astrolabe, published Paris 1833, Plate 33*

Parramatta Gaol Bridge is one of Australia's first bridges. The remnants of this bridge is buried inside Lennox Bridge.

In 1794, first wooden bridge was constructed over the Parramatta River connecting the Parramatta Gaol (then at Prince Alfred square site) and Church Street. In 1795, this wooden bridge was swept away by floodwater.

In 1796, the first wooden bridge was replaced by second bridge constructed of timber girders on stone piers. In 1802 two stone bridge piers were replaced by timber trestles.

The decking of the bridge was supported on ten sandstone piers. It was of timber and included a guard-rail or balustrade on either side that comprised drop posts with top and bottom rails with each section infilled with timber diagonals.

It was said that '*even when a horse cantered over it, the bridge would shake*'. Stockmen told of cattle falling over the sides on being herded across the bridge, as

apparently balustrading was missing. Piers supporting the two longer spans on the northern side were now missing and these spans had to be strengthened with trestles of hardwood posts which were braced with diagonals against the feet of the existing stone piers.

The Parramatta Gaol Bridge has a great historical significance as it was the first major crossing of the Parramatta River to join the southern and northern section of the new colony at Parramatta.

The wooden bridge was built on the site of the Lennox Bridge and had a crossing span at Church Street which gave access between the town and the gaol. It also helped to open up access to the growing settlements to the north of Parramatta River.

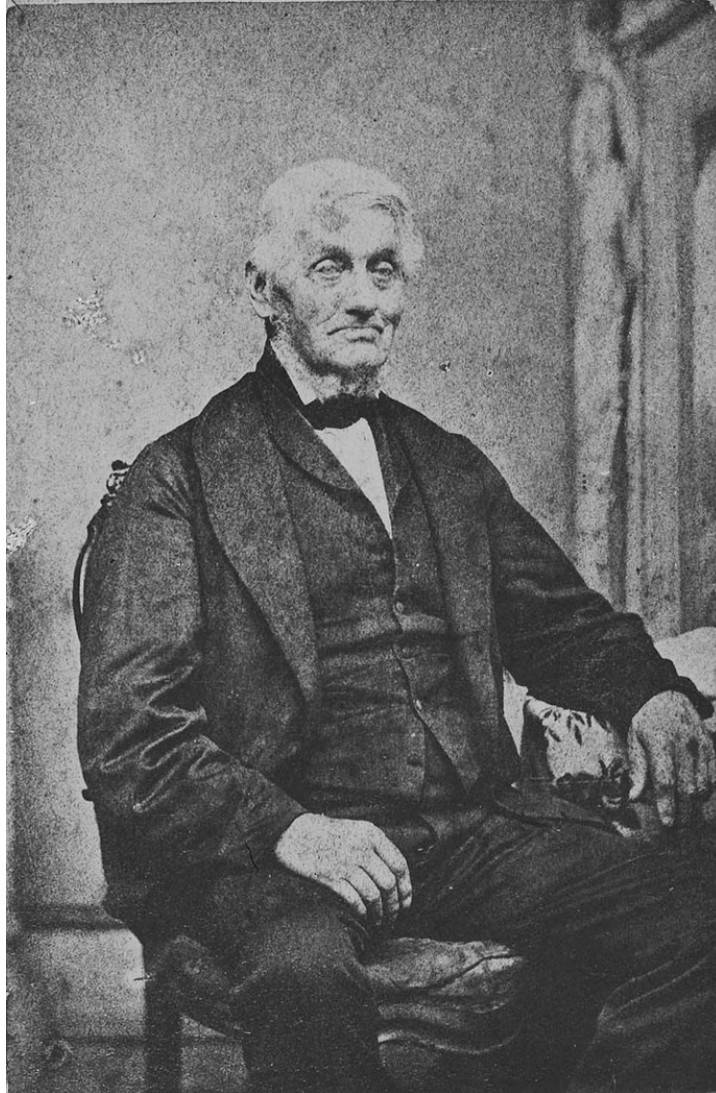
Floodwaters in 1826 severely damaged three of the piers and, with one being rebuilt in late 1827, the bridge managed to survive until 1837.

On August 1, 1832 David Lennox arrived in Sydney. A few months later, he was appointed Sub-Inspector of Roads followed by Superintendent of Bridges in 1833. He reported on the deteriorating Condition of second bridge at Parramatta. Submitting plans for a replacement structure, as the wooden bridge was by that time in a very insecure state. On November 23, 1836 the foundation stone of a new bridge (now the Lennox Bridge) was laid by Governor Bourke and part of the bridge was opened in 1837.



## David Lennox and Lennox Bridge

*Neera Sahni and Caroline Finlay*



[David Lennox, Superintendent of Bridges 1832.](#)

Source: State Library of New South Wales FL1798749

David Lennox the bridge builder was born in Ayr, Scotland in 1788. He was initially employed as a stonemason and was later the foreman in the construction of the stone bridge across the Severn in Gloucester and the Menai suspension bridge in north-west Wales, both designed by the engineer Thomas Telford. For over twenty years he held positions of high responsibility in the execution of public works across England. In 1828 his wife Jane nee Romie died after a long illness and this in addition to the economic crisis in England at the time seems to have prompted his interest in seeking employment in New South Wales. On the 11 August 1832 Lennox arrived in Sydney as an unassisted migrant on the ship *Florentia*. Lennox arrived alone leaving his two daughters Mary and Jane in Ayr until he was able to provide for them in his new home. Mary and Jane finally migrated to Sydney in 1837.

Despite his enormous experience building bridges in England, Lennox was first employed in Sydney by the Surveyor General Sir Thomas Mitchell as a stonemason coping stone for the wall of the Macquarie Street hospital. The Surveyor General noticing the high quality of the work recommended Lennox to the Governor Sir Richard Bourke which resulted in his appointment as Sub-Inspector of Bridges by October 1832 and Superintendent of Bridges by June 1833.

The first bridge that Lennox worked on, and which required substantial experience, was the bridge at Lapstone Hill. This bridge was built from 1832 to 1833 and was named Lennox Bridge. It is the oldest surviving Australian mainland stone arch bridge and is currently owned by the Blue Mountains City Council.

One of the earliest priorities for Parramatta was to build a wharf which became known as the '[Landing Place](#)', then '[The King's Wharf](#)', and was just east of the current Gasworks Bridge. As this wharf was eventually unable to accommodate the growth of river traffic a new wharf slightly east to the King's Wharf was built. This wharf was named Queen's Wharf and Lennox was commissioned to complete the work. Work on the wharf commenced in March 1834 and was completed in January 1835. Queen's Wharf was the major wharf for all water transport between Sydney and Parramatta.

Over the next few years Lennox built many other bridges including the Wingecarribee River Bridge at Berrima, Duck Creek Bridge on Parramatta Road and most significantly Landsdowne Bridge over Prospect Creek. He was also responsible for the construction of a dam across George's River for the supply of water to the Town of Liverpool. The work on the Liverpool Dam was completed around August 1836.

In 1838 the requirement to mark out the boundaries of the town of Parramatta was deemed necessary. Under the Towns Police Act this work was carried out with the use of boundary stones which were designed by Lennox. Nine stones were erected by Lennox and inscribed by John Weston. Many have been removed from their original locations often for preservation requirements.

Lennox's major contribution to Parramatta and the last bridge he completed in New South Wales before moving to Victoria was the [Lennox Bridge](#) which crosses the Parramatta River on Church Street. In 1833 Lennox reported on the existing bridge at that location and submitted plans for a replacement structure. On November 23 1836 a foundation stone for the new bridge was laid by Governor Bourke, and by September 1838 a section of the new bridge was opened to the public. The bridge was finally completed in 1839 and was officially named [Lennox Bridge](#) by Parramatta Council in 1867.



[Lennox Bridge, Parramatta, view of west side of bridge from street level position on north bank of river, 1928.](#)

Source: LSP 00808

In recognition of his contribution to Parramatta, Lennox was appointed District Surveyor to the Parramatta District Council in November 1843. He only held this position for one year as the Governor George Gipps appointed him Superintendent of Bridges at Port Phillip, a local government area of Victoria. His departure was met with much regret, as not only was his work highly respected but he was at this time a resident of Parramatta and very much active in the Parramatta community. A public dinner was held by his friends in his honour on the 18 November 1844 at the Australian Arms Hotel on the corner of Church and George Streets. The *Parramatta Chronicle and Cumberland General Advertiser* reported:

*"Covers were laid for 26...Several very excellent speeches were made on the occasion, amongst which we cannot refrain from noticing that of Mr. Lennox. After the removal of the cloth a silver snuff box was presented to Mr. Lennox, as a 'testimonial of the esteem of his fellow townsmen.' The company spent a most convivial evening, and separated at an early hour in the morning."*

For the next nine years Lennox lived in St Kilda, Melbourne, and was in charge of all bridge construction and other public works in Port Phillip. He built 53 bridges over this period, the most significant being the Prince's Bridge which crosses the Yarra River in Melbourne.





[Lennox House 39 Campbell Street, Parramatta.](#)

*Source: Heritage NSW*

In November 1853 Lennox retired from his position as Superintendent of Bridges and a few years later in 1855 returned to Parramatta. He designed and built a large mid-Victorian brick cottage with an attic and timber columns in Campbell Street, Parramatta, and it was in this cottage that he lived with his widowed daughter Jane Rowling. Jane's husband Charles William Rowling who had been a councillor of the City of Melbourne died in July 1853. Lennox's eldest daughter Mary who had married George Urquhart died in October 1841. Lennox spent the rest of his retirement in this cottage, and died at his residence on the on the 11 November 1873. After his death the cottage was sold by his daughter Jane to Henrietta Lyons. The cottage still stands today.

David Lennox is buried at St John's Cemetery Parramatta in the shared family plot with his daughter Mary and son-in-law Charles Rowling. Due to a clerical oversight the plot does not bear his name but it is located in Section 1, Row D, Plot 9.

## The Construction of Lennox Bridge – A Time Line – 1796 to 2016



[The Lennox Bridge, Parramatta.](#)

Source: LSP 00896

<b>July 1790</b>	Town of Rose Hill (later Parramatta) marked
<b>1794</b>	First (wooden) bridge over the river at Parramatta Constructed
<b>1795</b>	Wooden Bridge swept away by floodwater
<b>1796</b>	Second Bridge constructed of timber girders on stone piers erected on site of existing bridge.
<b>1802</b>	Two stone bridge piers replaced by timber trestles
<b>1826</b>	Second Bridge sustained further damage but repaired
<b>11 August 1832</b>	David Lennox, who was born in Ayr, Scotland, and trained as a stonemason arrives in Sydney
<b>October 1832</b>	David Lennox appointed Sub-Inspector of Roads
<b>June 1833</b>	David Lennox appointed Superintendent of Bridges
<b>1833</b>	Lennox reported on deteriorating Condition of second bridge at Parramatta, submitting plans for a replacement structure
<b>July 1835</b>	Second Bridge reported to be in a very insecure state
<b>22 October 1836</b>	Lennox announced that construction of a new stone bridge to be built alongside the old one would commence in about a fortnight



<b>23 November 1836</b>	Foundation stone of a new bridge laid by Governor Bourke
<b>March 1838</b>	Bridge only half complete
<b>September 1838</b>	A section of the new bridge was first opened to traffic
<b>1839</b>	Stone arch bridge finally completed at a cost of 1797 pounds
<b>1867</b>	Bridge officially named "Lennox Bridge" by Parramatta Council in honour of its designer
<b>November 1873</b>	David Lennox died and was buried in Parramatta
<b>November 1885</b>	Plans were prepared for the construction of cantilevered foot way on either side of the bridge
<b>February 1895</b>	widening of bridge from 30 feet to 52 feet
<b>1901 – 1902</b>	Width of 10 feet of the stone arch was strengthened internally for the purposes of carrying the Parramatta-Castle Hill Tramway.
<b>18 August 1902</b>	Tramway opened for traffic
<b>1912</b>	Parapet on the western side was removed and a continuous foot way 5'3" wide was added to the bridge
<b>1932</b>	Tramway Bridge was closed
<b>1934 – 1935</b>	Bridge was widened under the direction of the Department of Main Roads. This included removing the western footway and erecting a new reinforced concrete structure. A brass plaque on the western side of the bridge (footway) records this work.
<b>1976</b>	Lennox Bridge classified by National Trust of Australia (NSW)
<b>December 1989</b>	Lennox Bridge entered on Australian Heritage Commission's register
<b>21 February 1990</b>	Lennox Bridge declared a "National Work" under the <i>Local Government Act</i> .
<b>2014</b>	Parramatta City Council approves proposal to construct tunnels through Lennox Bridge on both sides of the bank for pedestrians and cyclists.
<b>2014-2016</b>	Successful construction of pedestrian portals through Lennox Bridge in 2015. Note: The southern tunnel remains closed off due to the construction of the Parramatta Light Rail and The Lennox, a riverfront high-rise residential apartment building.

## Gasworks Bridge

*Neera Sahni*



[Gasworks Bridge, Parramatta, view of bridge from a low position on an adjacent river bank, circa 1928.](#)

Source: LSP 00813

Bridge construction in New South Wales (NSW) started with the needs of the first settlers. NSW at the time of early settlement had an abundance of convict labour and had a need for rapid construction. Iron bridges were used for major crossings on important corridors.

Three prominent engineers, Percy Allen, E M de Burgh and Harvey Dar, in the Department of Public Works, undertook the construction of the iron lattice bridges from 1881 to 1893. All these bridges were designed by the bridge engineer John A McDonald.

Iron lattice bridges are the most significant bridges of the colonial period. The Gasworks Bridge over the Parramatta River is one of 41 lattice girder bridges built throughout New South Wales and Victoria. 32 lattice girder bridges are in NSW. Out of 32 lattice girder bridges, 20 were road bridges and 12 were railway bridges. Meadowbank Railway Bridge is a lattice girder bridge.

The Gasworks Bridge began construction in 1878 after a petition was sent to parliament. The cost to build this bridge was 16,800 pounds and was completed on the 2 September 1885.

The Gasworks Bridge is supported on large sandstone piers. It has three main spans each 31m in length and two steel beam approach spans. The overall length of this bridge is 110m and 6.8 meters wide. The Gasworks Bridge is also known as Newlands Bridge and is still in use.

It was opened by the then mayor of Parramatta Joseph Smith. The opening of the bridge was celebrated by speeches and the opening of champagne. It was a technically sophisticated bridge structure for its time.

Since its construction 115 years ago the Gasworks Bridge has been an important item of infrastructure in NSW and has greatly contributed to the social and cultural development of Western Sydney.

## Bernie Banton AM

*Neera Sahni and Emma Stockburn*



*Bernie Banton.*

*Source: Bernie Banton Foundation*

Bernard Douglas Banton AM was born in Parramatta NSW in 1946 and passed away from asbestosis and asbestos-related pleural disease (ARPD) in November 2007. He was sixty - one at the time of his death.

Bernie Banton was an influential and prominent Australian social justice campaigner. He was the widely recognised face of the legal and political campaign to achieve compensation for the thousands of sufferers of asbestos-related conditions. At the time many of these individuals had contracted asbestos related diseases after working for the company James Hardie or being exposed to James Hardie Industries' products. Mr Banton also suffered from asbestos pleural disease.

Asbestosis is a:

*"chronic lung disease caused by inhaling asbestos fibers. Prolonged exposure to these fibers can cause lung tissue scarring and shortness of breath. Asbestosis symptoms can range from mild to severe, and usually don't appear until many years after continued exposure. Asbestos is a natural mineral product that's resistant to heat and corrosion. It was used extensively in the past in products such as insulation, cement and some floor tiles."*

And in 2017:

*"Mesothelioma accounts for over 700 deaths per year in Australia – The true burden of asbestos related disease is over 4,000 Australian lives every year."*

Banton was first diagnosed with asbestosis in January 1999 after having worked at James Hardie Industries, decades earlier, making asbestos lagging. During this time Banton and his colleagues were called the 'Snowmen'. This was between 1968 to 1974 at the James Hardie plant in Camellia.

*"Because we were covered from head to toe with the white dust of asbestos in the manufacture of kaylite. The factory was just covered in dust. That's why, when we used to walk out, if we didn't use the air hose to blow the dust off, all you could see was our eyes."*

From 2000 Mr Banton was unable to work as part of the funeral industry he was employed in. This was due to the physical nature of the work. These conditions required that he use oxygen at all times. As stated by Banton in an interview with Andrew Denton:

*"The best way I could explain asbestosis is like a wheat silo. Your lungs are encased in a concrete-like substance, so when you try to take that deep breath, you are sort of hesitating halfway there because, you know, if you try and take those big deep breaths, you're sort of in limbo. So what it means is, I don't have a real lot of lung capacity."*

And in relation to his life expectancy:

*"Well it's not good. Simple as that. It's not good. But I've said right from the beginning of this fight that until they put me in a box, I'll be out there fighting. My claim was settled back in 2000 and so this fight, from there on, has not been about me and my compensation. It's about everybody else."*

Mr Banton received an \$800,00 settlement in 2000 from James Hardie for the role in his diagnosis of asbestosis. But after watching his own brother pass away from mesothelioma as well as seeing the deaths, suffering and hardship of many of his own colleagues, family and thousands of others, he continued to fight for their compensation. To put this in to perspective, in 2006 only nine of the one-hundred and thirty seven people Banton worked with were still living.



In 2004, after the campaigning of Bernie Banton along with various unions James Hardie agreed to the largest settlement in Australian history. The company had to commit 35% of its profits for the next 40 years to the victims of asbestos poisoning.

On the 17 August 2007, Bernie was also diagnosed with terminal peritoneal mesothelioma asbestos cancer.

That same year, Banton brought an action against Amaca Pty Ltd, formerly James Hardie, before the Dust Diseases Tribunal of New South Wales. This was for compensation related to his cancer diagnosis. Mr Banton was one of the first individuals to take advantage of a provision that allows for further compensation if mesothelioma asbestos cancer is diagnosed. Bernie gave much of his testimonial for this case while in hospital, in the last days of his life.

During his final years Bernie also advocated for the Australian Federal Government to have the drug Alimta, listed on the PBS for treating mesothelioma. The final approval was made only three weeks before his death. The drug was listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) in 2008.

For his tireless commitment to achieving compensation for asbestos victims, despite severe health issues, Bernie Banton received many accolades, and garnered great respect. In 2005 Mr Banton received an Order of Australia for his *"service to the community, particularly as an advocate for people affected by asbestos-related illnesses"*. When former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd won the federal election in 2007, just 3 days before Banton's death he spoke of the campaigner as a *"beacon of decency"* who represented the *"great Australian trade union movement"*



*Bernie Banton AM. Source: Bernie Banton Foundation*

The Banton family accepted the State Funeral offered by the New South Wales government. It was held on the 5 December 2007. The Australian and NSW state flags were raised at half-mast at in all NSW government department buildings. In 2009, the asbestos diseases research institute at Sydney's Concord Repatriation General Hospital was named the Bernie Banton Centre. The facility is the world's first standalone research facility dedicated to the treatment and prevention of asbestos-related diseases. The Bernie Banton Bridge, which carries Marsden Street over the Parramatta River in Parramatta also carries his name.

The Bernie Banton Foundation existed from 2009 until 2020. It was an Australian not-for-profit organisation devoted to asbestos awareness and education, support and patient advocacy. The Foundation's aim was to be: *"The voice of reason for Australian asbestos related disease sufferers, their carers and loved ones, allied health and care providers, and to the wider community."*

Bernie Banton passed away at this home 103 days after receiving his diagnosis of peritoneal mesothelioma, an incurable asbestos-related cancer on the 27 November 2007.

His legacy is a powerful and enduring one.

*"Without Bernie, there may have been people with asbestos diseases today who would not have access to compensation". Bernie had a rare capacity, a capacity to connect with people and to inspire in them the same passion for justice that he himself felt and he moved the Australian community." –Greg Combet former Secretary of the ACTU.*

*"Bernie Banton was a tireless campaigner for those suffering asbestos diseases. His example will live on and his legacy will be the great success he had in holding James Hardie and its directors accountable for their actions." - VTHC Secretary Brian Boyd.*

*"If there is such a thing as a true Australian spirit, I think Bernie embodied it and that's why so many of us identified with him," "No one articulated the case as to what Hardie's had done and the outrage people felt better or more succinctly than Bernie Banton did. And it wasn't a role anyone chose for him." – Peter Gordon*

## Bernie Banton Bridge



[Marsden Street Bridge, Parramatta, 1972, \(now Bernie Banton Bridge\).](#)

Source: LSP 00331

In 2006, Bernie Banton was awarded the Key to the City of Parramatta and Marsden Street Bridge was renamed in his honour.



02            SUBJECT            Civic Reception and Dedication of a Bridge for Mr  
Bernie Banton  
REFERENCE            F2004/07639  
MINUTE OF  
LORD MAYOR            Lord Mayor (LM 17/2006)

8582           RESOLVED            (Borger/Prudames)

- (a)    **That** a Civic Reception be held to honour Mr Bernie Banton for his work in preserving individual rights and human dignity in his fight to claim compensation for workers employed by James Hardie Industries who are suffering from asbestosis and mesothelioma.
- (b)    **That** Mr Banton be presented with the Key to the City in recognition of his work in this area.
- (c)    **That** Council seek to dedicate the bridge, which crosses the Parramatta River in Marsden Street, Parramatta, the Bernie Banton Bridge.

*Resolution passed to honour Bernie Banton, 2006.*

*Source: Minutes of the Meeting of Parramatta City Council, 2006*

The Bernie Banton Bridge is a multi-span concrete bridge that crosses the Parramatta River forming a north-south connection between the Parramatta CBD and North Parramatta. Marsden Street Weir was originally constructed in 1818 under instructions from Governor of NSW, Lachlan Macquarie for the purpose of creating a water supply dam for the growing settlement at Parramatta. The weir was used as a vehicular river crossing until being replaced by the bridge in 1971. This bridge carries two lane of vehicular traffic as well as accommodating a pedestrian walkway on either side of the bridge.

A newspaper reported that the new "*much vaunted and much needed*" Marsden Street Bridge will be ready before the end of the year at a cost of \$500,000. "*Gone will be the days when a slight storm, or even a shower flooded the old spillway*". The old crossing was only three feet above the river level. The plans were drawn up by the Parramatta Council's engineering department in conjunction with Main Roads Board architects, Messrs Haskins and Davey. At this time Parramatta's Chief Engineer was Mr F. C. Smale and he stated that "*the route...will ease the strain on Church Street*" and that there will now be "*two fast-moving out-of-Parramatta roadways*".

In January 2020, Bernie Banton Bridge's Marsden Street footpath was widened to improve safety of school kids and pedestrians.

## Barry Charles Wilde

*Neera Sahni and Caroline Finlay*



[Alderman BC Wilde 1973](#). Source: City of Parramatta Cultural Collections

Barry Wilde was born in Marrickville but moved when quite young to a wheat growing and grazing property in the mid-west where his maternal grandparents had been pioneers. He attended primary school at Yarrabandai and secondary school at the Marist Brothers College, Forbes (now the Red Bend Catholic College) as a boarder.

After marrying Kathleen Mary Ferguson in 1950 he moved to the Parramatta district and lived at Northmead returning to an area first visited by his grandmother in 1880 after migrating from Ireland.

For many years he had been an active member of the Australian Labor Party and was endorsed and elected to the Parramatta City Council in 1959.

In 1967, he was elected mayor and held the record for continuous service in the office.

He was also the foundation President and Convenor of the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils in 1973.

He considers his major achievements whilst in office to be:



- The upgrading and widening of O'Connell Street which with the extension of Smith Street across the Barry Wilde Bridge to Victoria Road allowing the long planned construction of the Church Street mall which diverted through traffic from the City Centre
- The formation of the Sydney Western Region of Councils, of which he was founding member.
- The construction of a Senior Citizens Centre in Parkes Street and the introduction of a Meals-on-Wheels service.
  - Significant improvements to sporting facilities such as Jeffery Reserve and tennis courts, Chifley Reserve, Henry Kendall Reserve, Allie Webb Reserve, Dan Mahoney Reserve, and Woodside Golf Course.
  - Assisted the integration of Christian Lebanese into the Parramatta Community by the facilitation of Our Lady of Lourdes Church and school at Harris Park.
- The acquisition and preservation of historic sites such as Hambleton Cottage and Elizabeth Farm

He was elected to the state seat of Parramatta in 1976 and re-elected in the 1978, 1981, and 1984 state elections.

He retired after the state elections of 1988.

In 2016 Barry Wilde was honoured with an Order of Australia Medal in recognition of his work with the Parramatta community.



[Mr Wilde received an OAM in 2016 as part of the Australia Day Honours.](#)

*Source: The Daily Telegraph*

Barry Charles Wilde OAM passed away on January 23, 2018 aged 89.

To recognise his achievements and to commemorate his contributions to the community of Parramatta, a bridge was named after him – Barry Wilde Bridge.

## Barry Wilde Bridge



[Barry Wilde Bridge.](#)

*Source: City of Parramatta Community Archives ACC002/077/050)*

Spanning the Parramatta River upstream from the ferry terminus is the Barry Wilde Bridge. It runs north from Smith Street to Wilde Street with unusual Y-shaped piers. The bridge is named in honour of the local politician Barry Charles Wilde. He served on Parramatta City Council from 1959 to 1977 and in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly from 1976 to 1988. Barry Wilde Bridge was built in 1975.

When City of Parramatta Council was investigating the new fountain effects on Parramatta River, HME (Engineered Solutions for a Creative World) offered to incorporate water, light and colour to create an engaging visual and sensory experience.

This outdoor lighting and water effects, creating an impressive wall of light and water on Barry Wilde Bridge is Australia's first bridge fountain. This fountain bridge was opened in July 2012. Twenty-one high volume fanjets delivering as much as 5000 litres a minute, custom designed and carefully placed to be able to create a wall of water that is lit from 41 LED light sources. The highly regarded lighting designer, Martin Kinnane, designed this display. This outdoor display is designed to delight.

The fountain runs during the day as a simple water effect and after sunset that the real show begins. After the sunset, the LED lights begin to operate, and at each half hour one of four different lighting shows will run for ten minutes.

The Lighting Designer Martin Kinnane said:

*"Working on the Barry Wilde Bridge Fountain was a fantastic experience. The ability to take all my knowledge from lighting theatre and events and apply them to such an exciting kinetic display. I have created four shows each individual in content and style. One celebrates Australian music, another to some strong international acts; the third has a movie theme and the fourth a tribute to our local and national sporting stars. I have always been fascinated by light and water, not something that always mixes happily and to design not only thinking of the lighting in the jets of water but also reflected in Parramatta River was exciting."*



[Barry Wilde Bridge Parramatta.](#)

Source: HME Services



## Rivercat Wharf – Parramatta

*Research & Collection Team*



*Queens Wharf Construction, 1988.*

*Source: Parramatta Heritage Collection, 201403*

In 1951, the State Government took over the Sydney Ferries Ltd. operations. Between 1969 and 1973 an attempt to revive ferry transport between Circular Quay and Meadowbank was made by Stannard Brothers Launch Services Pty. Ltd. but the service was both slow and unprofitable. Attempts were made in 1973 to introduce fast hydrofoil and hovercraft ferries along the river, from Gladesville to the City, also without success.

Financial viability depended upon speed, comfort, and the regular custom of commuters of the burgeoning Central Business District of Parramatta, and in addition, the tourist trade. In 1988, Parramatta's bicentennial year, State Government financed a programme to dredge the silted river between Charles Street and Silverwater to allow fast ferry mooring facilities and close access to the CBD. More than 20,000 cubic metres of the river bed was dredged between Rydalmere and Silverwater and a channel excavated for the remaining 4.6 kilometers to Parramatta.



*Queens Wharf Construction, 1988.*

*Source: Parramatta Heritage Collection, 201402*

Passenger shelters, car parks and landscaping at Rydalmere and the Charles Street Wharf at Parramatta cost \$400,000, the two wharves alone costing \$190,000. Six new shallow draft, low wash catamaran ferries, known as 'rivercats', were designed for the run to Parramatta. Overall length of each craft was 40 metres with a beam of 10.5 metres. The hulls are constructed of marine grade aluminium alloy and when fully loaded, displace 58 tonnes, can carry 230 passengers and travel at 22 knots. Named for famous sportswomen, *Betty Cuthbert, Dawn Fraser, Shane Gould, Evonne Goulogong, Marjorie Jackson and Marlene Mathews*, the distance can be covered in 40 minutes calling at 7 wharves: Parramatta, Rydalmere, Meadowbank, Gladesville, Darling Harbour, McMahons Pt, Circular Quay.

The service commenced on 9 December 1993 and carried more than 10,000 passengers in the first week, becoming so popular over the festive season that three ferries had to be employed on the daily run – a far cry from the ships gigs and the passage boats of two hundred years ago. A seventh vessel, the *Nicole Stevenson* was commissioned during 1994 to cope with the unexpected demand.

From the unpublished manuscripts of John McClymont



## Former Shell site at Camellia

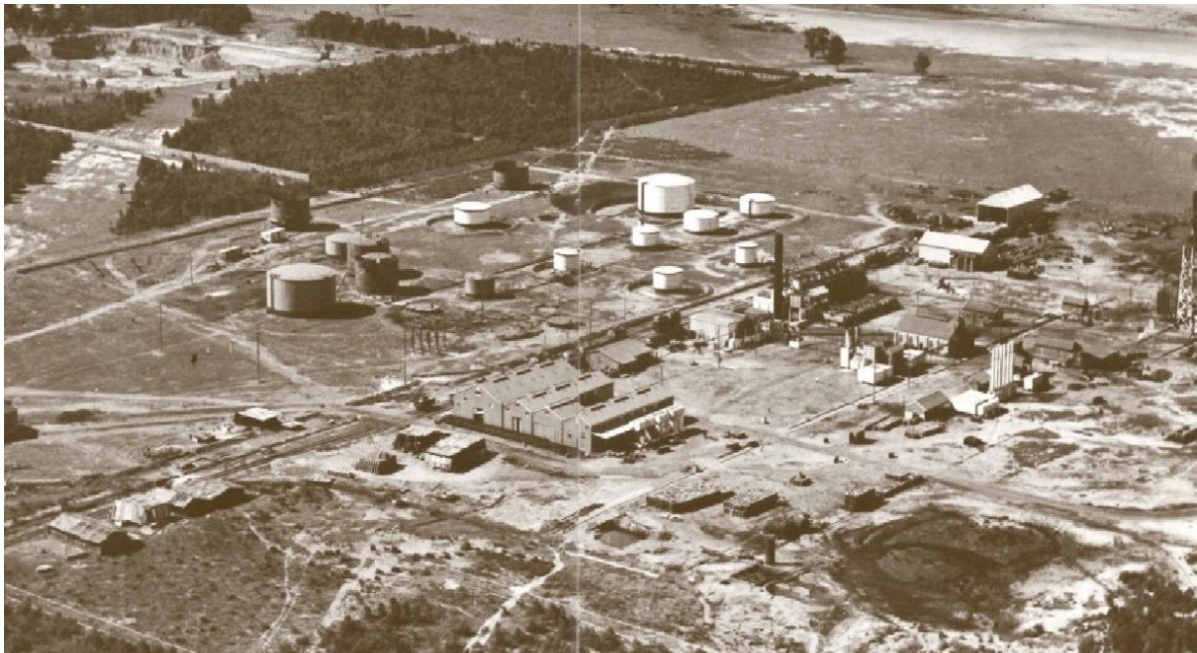
*Neera Sahni*



*Old Mobil Tank Farm, Nature Reserve, 2015. Source: Peter Archibald*

We have received a donation by Peter Archibald who was charged with the decommissioning of the Viva Energy site (formerly Shell) at Camellia. As it was such an important part of the area's history, it was a requirement by the Department of Planning and Environment to document as much as possible before the site is cleared. The donation included photos, oral history and site plans.

This precinct within the Parramatta local government area has a strong industrial history, important in the development of New South Wales as well as locally. It is currently earmarked for potential redevelopment and there are ongoing discussions regarding the possibilities for residential development on the site.



*Shell site Clyde circa 1928. Photographer unknown*

Shell bought Australia's first oil refinery on the banks of the Parramatta River at Clyde in 1928. Bought from John Fell, along with the Gore Bay shipping installation, both sites played a significant role in the supply of petroleum needs of New South Wales for almost 100 years. The site was a major source of employment for the local Parramatta community. Staff numbers peaked in the 1930s and 1940s when thousands of staff were employed. In recent years this was reduced to about 300 staff employed along with a couple of hundred contractors. During World War Two, the Shell site at Clyde was a major supplier of fuel for the Australian war effort and this buoyancy continued during the 1950s and 1960s as Sydney's west expanded rapidly. Fuel prices tripled during the 1970s and 1980s and it was only in the 1990s that the competition from refineries in Asia began to be felt followed by competition from a much more global marketplace in the 2000s.

Included with the donation is a timeline summarising the site's development:

<b>1868-1901</b>	The Fell family (Scottish immigrants) play a lead role in the development of the NSW Shale Oil industry with interests and management roles at Hartley Vale, Joadja Creek and the Shale Oil Refinery at Waterloo. At different times they worked for or were partnered with NSW Shale & Oil Company. This company came from an amalgamation of Western Kerosene and Hartley Kerosene Oil & Parrafin Ltd.
<b>1901</b>	John Fell & Co is formed and establishes a facility at Gore Bay alongside the Shell Trading Co.
<b>1905</b>	Commonwealth Oil Corporation (COC) is launched and buys up mining leases at Wolgan Valley and Capertee.

<b>1914</b>	John Fell & Co either bought out COC or formed a partnership, and the Newnes Shale plant reopens.
<b>1916</b>	John Fell buys 60 acres at Clyde to expand shale oil refining operations.
<b>1922</b>	Cost and Labour issues force the closure of the Newnes mines. Equipment from Newnes is relocated to Clyde and operations continue refining purchased crude oil.
	Crude Oil is brought from Darling Harbour to Clyde by rail.
<b>1923-1928</b>	Refining at Clyde continues, a wharf is constructed on Duck River and crude oil is barged up the Parramatta River from Gore Bay. American Designed "Dubbs" Thermal Cracker is installed.
<b>1927</b>	Catastrophic explosion claims the lives of three men, John Simpson Fell (John Fells' son), Horace Liddon Spencer and Edward Albert Ward.
<b>1928</b>	John Fell sells the Refinery to Shell, he agrees to operate it for two years, his son Douglas Fell becomes the Refinery Manager and later Shells' NSW Manager.
<b>October 2012</b>	The Refinery shuts down and the conversion to an import Terminal begins.
<b>2014</b>	Shell sells its Downstream business, (Terminals, Refinery in Geelong, Service Stations), to Vitol, the company Viva Energy Australia is created.

# The Demolition of the David Jones Building, Parramatta. Time Lapse Video

*Research & Collection Team*



*David Jones Building, 1992.*

*Source: Heritage Review, City of Parramatta Council Archives*

In August 2013 work began on the demolition of the David Jones building in Parramatta. The building was located on the south eastern end of the Lennox Bridge, Church Street, Parramatta. With the office of the Parramatta Heritage and Visitors Information Centre located directly across from the David Jones building we thought it was an ideal opportunity to record the demolition using time lapse video. We purchased a GoPro camera and set it to take a photograph every 1 minute for a few hours each day.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrCROjOf8dg>

The images used to create this video were recorded between August 2013 and January 2014. The video above is a shortened 4 minute version. This is a high definition video so it is best viewed on a full screen.



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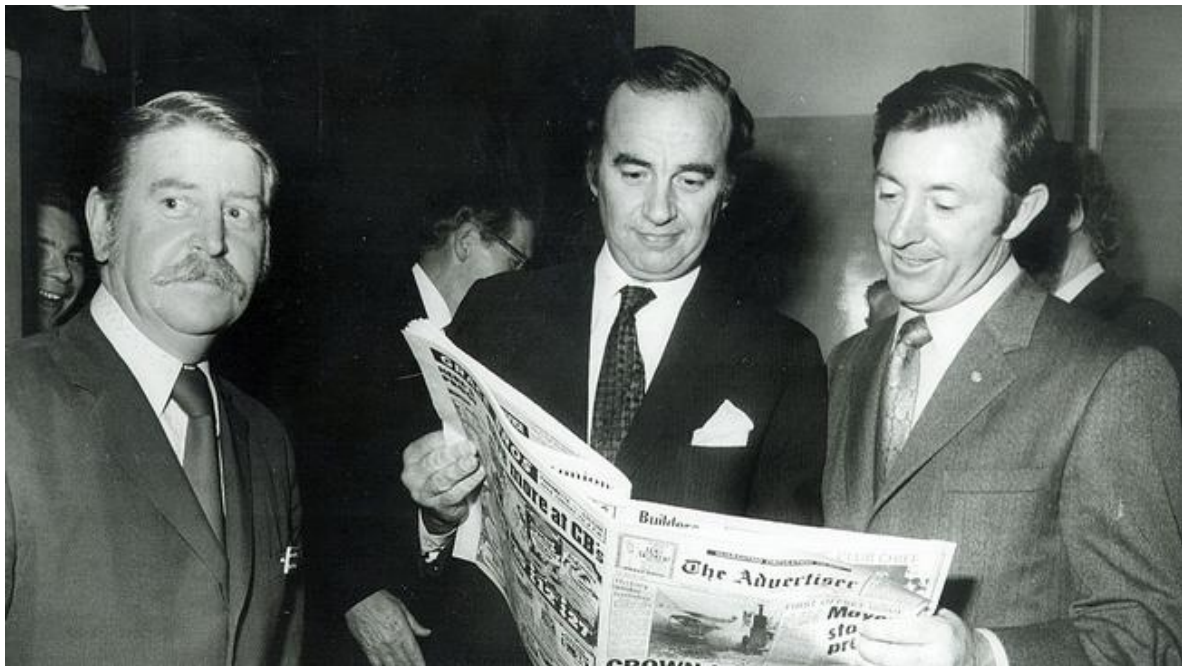


*[Former Lord Mayor and ALP member Barry Wilde passed away suddenly at the age of 89.](#) Source: The Daily Telegraph*



[Barry Wilde Bridge Fountain illuminates Parramatta at night.](#)

Source: Where It's At Parramatta



[Rupert Murdoch \(centre\) with Cumberland managing director, Geoff Noakes \(left\) and Mayor of Parramatta, Barry Wilde, at the Goss press commissioning in 1972 Cumberland Historical.](#)

Source: The Daily Telegraph

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Barry Wilde Bridge Fountain illuminates Parramatta at night, *Where It's At Parramatta*

Rupert Murdoch (centre) with Cumberland managing director, Geoff Noakes (left) and Mayor of Parramatta, Barry Wilde, at the Goss press commissioning in 1972 Cumberland Historical. *The Daily Telegraph*

Back cover image: *Aerial image of Phase 2 of the revitalisation of Parramatta Quay in the Parramatta City River Foreshore transformation. (Source: City of Parramatta, 2020)*



