

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SUBURB

MOUNT HAWTHORN

The suburb of Mount Hawthorn is bounded by Anzac Road, London and Green streets and the Mitchell Freeway.

HISTORY

Pre-1870

Aborigines were known to have camped in the area now known as Lake Monger at the time of the arrival of the first settlers. They followed the seasons, hunting, gathering and fishing in the bush and wetlands area. Written accounts by early settlers describe Lake Monger and its surrounds as a hub of Aboriginal activity. At this time the lake was much larger, reaching to around where Britannia Road runs now. The land that was to become the suburb of Mount Hawthorn remained vacant Crown Land during this period. It was largely unsurveyed.

1871-1890

Development of the land began when a road was put through between North Perth and Herdsman Lake. The first land grant in the area was 50 acres to Lois Beurteaux, a Perth dentist, in 1875. He added a further two 50 acre parcels in 1876 and 1877, by which time the whole district had been taken up in nine 50 acre grants. The main land holders were L Beurteaux, M Banks, EP Barrett (ex-convict and gardener), HS Ranford, E de Ponte and R Paisley.

The first Mount Hawthorn subdivision made for urban purposes was by the Intercolonial Investment Land and Building Company of Sydney in 1887. The area was between Anzac Road and Scarborough Beach Road (known then as North Beach Road), and included The Boulevard, Matlock Street (formerly The Promenade), Coogee and Flinders (formerly Randwick) streets. In 1888 the company established Merredin Park Estate in the triangle created by Scarborough Beach Road and Charles Street. This estate had streets named after cities, and advertised 'building and garden land all in half acre lots'. The Randwick Estate, bounded by Scarborough Beach Road, Bondi and Matlock streets, was also established. No building was done at this time, except for the construction of the North Perth (Wanneroo) Hotel on the corner of Charles Street and Scarborough Beach Road. The bush north of Scarborough Beach Road was abundant with tuart, jarrah, white and red gum tree, and zamia palms.

1891-1919

The State gold boom sparked the development of the suburb. While Perth had no suburbs in 1884, by 1911 the city area was surrounded by them. Further subdivisions took place in Mount Hawthorn in the late 1890s. In 1896 there was the Leederville Estate extension and the Ambleside Estate was released in 1899, although little settlement took place. Mount Hawthorn was ideally located to meet the demand for housing created by the population growth. On the northern side of Scarborough Beach Road the Merredin Park Estate was offered at auction in 1901. Blocks were advertised as 'splendid mansion and villa sites'. Subdivision advertising emphasized the height of the blocks and wonderful views. Randwick Heights, released in 1908, was described as '150 feet above sea level' with 'magnificent views of Perth, Monger's Lake and the Darling Ranges'.

The Hawthorn Estate, from which Mount Hawthorn eventually took its name, was opened in 1903 by a syndicate. One of the syndicate, JA Hicks, named it Hawthorn after a visit to Victoria 'because I considered that what Hawthorn was to Melbourne our estate was to Perth'. Hicks also gifted three acres of land on Oxford Street, opposite the Oxford Hotel, to the Perth Tramway Company to encourage them to run trams further up Oxford Street to the Hawthorn Estate. The 'Mount' was added to the suburb name to avoid confusion with Hawthorn, Victoria and Mount was fashionable at the time.

The privately-owned Osborne Park tram service operated in the area from the late 1890s, linking to the No. 15 government tram which ran up Oxford Street to Scarborough Beach Road. This encouraged business and residential development. In the late 1890s and early 1900s settlement was generally confined to the Oxford Street end of Mount Hawthorn, and along parts of Anzac, Britannia and Scarborough Beach roads. The Mount Hawthorn Progress Association was formed in 1904 by men eager to guide the development of the suburb. They tackled issues such as the extension of the tram line beyond the Oxford Hotel, bringing scheme water to the area (1907) and lifting North Perth Council restrictions which hindered the development of the suburb, as many of the working class families could not afford to build with brick. Timber homes were considered to be inferior to brick, and a fire hazard, and the North Perth Council exerted control by declaring 'brick areas' where timber homes could not be built. Once the area moved under the Perth City Council jurisdiction, this restriction was lifted. The greatest achievement of the Association was the building of Anzac Cottage in Kalgoorlie Street, in 1916, as a memorial to the Anzacs.

The Hawthorn State School opened in September 1906 in the Congregational Mission Hall on the corner of Flinders Street and Scarborough Beach Road. The pupils moved into a purpose-built school, with two rooms, a cloakroom and verandah, on the present site in 1908.

The first business recorded on Scarborough Beach Road, in 1907, was a general store owned by P Gleeson between Flinders and Coogee Streets. A post office opened in 1910. By 1919 there were a variety of businesses along Scarborough Beach Road, including a baker, newsagent, butcher and several grocers.

In 1914 the suburb which was in the North Perth Municipality became part of the City of Perth.

1920-1946

The suburb boundaries had been recognized by the State Electoral Commission by 1929.

Plunkett, a building company developed by carpenter Thomas Scott Plunkett, built many homes in Mount Hawthorn after World War I, developing large areas of the suburb. After World War II the company concentrated on War Service and Workers Homes Board residences in the area.

The residences petitioned for police protection in 1925, which resulted in a police station opening at 52 Ellesmere Street in 1928.

The North Perth Brick Works, a sand excavation and brick yard for the manufacture of sand bricks, occupied a large portion of land off Scarborough Beach Road near Shakespeare Street in the 1920s. On the opposite side of Shakespeare Street there was a State Timber Yard.

The Mount Hawthorn Hotel was built in 1932 on the corner of Scarborough Beach Road and Fairfield Street. Also in the early 1930s the Ritz Theatre, with a seating capacity of 1200, was built on the corner of Oxford Street and Scarborough Beach Road. On the opposite side of Oxford Street the Ritz Picture Gardens opened in November 1937, with seating capacity of 500 on canvas deckchairs.

By 1935 there were many shops along Scarborough Beach Road between Fairfield and Matlock Streets, some of which remained for many years. On the south side after the Mount Hawthorn Hotel was Mrs Sewell the draper (143), a chemist (145), Mrs Eagles' mixed business (147), Matheson the grocer (151) and a butcher (153) on the corner of Flinders Street. Following along, on the opposite corner of Flinders Street was a hairdresser (169), mixed business (171), and Mulchinaughs' fuel and produce (173) on the corner of Coogee Street. There was also a dairy (186) on the corner of Matlock Street. On the northern side of Scarborough Beach Road, opposite the hotel was a newsagent (140), tailoress (142), Saville's Fruit Shop (144), followed by six private residences, then a hatmaker, Dolling's store and mixed business (176) on the corner of Coogee Street with Neille Bros butchers (178) next door.

The City and Suburban Plans and Street Index of 1933 described Mount Hawthorn as a progressive suburb with numerous residences in the course of construction, and 'a striking example of the progress of the capital and its suburbs'. The Mount Hawthorn area was largely built-out by 1941.

1947-1972

Post World War II the demand for housing materials far outstripped the supply available for construction. The Australian Government had also embarked on an immigration campaign for displaced persons from Europe. The 1950s and 1960s were a period of suburban infill. The Workers Homes Board, renamed the State Housing Commission, began a post-war construction program. Lots were resumed in Lynton Street and Housing Commission homes constructed there in the early 1950s. The City Council could not enforce its building by-laws on the Commission, and in order to cut costs, many Commission homes did not conform to the City's building standards. Reduction in ceiling height from the regulation 10 feet 6 inches to 9 feet 6 inches (3.2 metres to 2.9 metres), and wider spacing of piers and floor bearers, were common cost-cutting measures. The Commission controlled the supply of building materials until June 1952 and industrial materials until the end of 1953. During the post-war period many Italian migrants settled in Mount Hawthorn, giving their houses and some shops a more European style, which contributed to Mount Hawthorn developing a distinctive cosmopolitan character.

A post office operated in Mount Hawthorn at the corner of Scarborough Beach Road and Egina Street from 1948 to 1955. This was replaced when the Mount Hawthorn Post Office opened further east along Scarborough Beach Road.

In 1958 the foundation stone was laid for the Mount Hawthorn Boy Scouts Headquarters in East Street, corner of Berryman. Sir Charles Gairdner officiated declaring 'scouting is the best answer to delinquency'. The old council depot site in Britannia Road, which had been used to stable the night cart horses, was used to build the Velodrome in 1959, ready for the VIIth British Empire and Commonwealth Games in 1962. In 1962 the Mount Hawthorn Community Centre opened opposite the Mount Hawthorn Primary School.

During the early 1960s the shops and little weatherboard Congregational Church on the corner of Flinders Street (where the school began) made way for a new shopping arcade. A two-storey shopping complex was developed with John Allans department store and a few specialty shops on the ground floor. The top level was the 'Tom the Cheap' supermarket. Following the introduction of television in 1956 and new access to easy credit, John Allans had 160 television salesmen out on the road at its peak.

1973-2014

The building of the Mitchell Freeway in 1976 blocked easy access to Lake Monger from Mount Hawthorn.

During the 1970s and 1980s as the old houses were bought and renovated, house prices in the area increased. The Lord Mayor's Report of 1980-81 made note that 'typical brick and tile two bedroom (plus sleepout), well maintained houses in Mount Hawthorn and North Perth are generally speaking realizing prices in the \$45,000-\$55,000 range'. Many people wanted to live close to the city in character homes.

In 1980 the Murdoch Group took over the John Allans shopping arcade, extended and renovated it, and in November 1981 the Mount Hawthorn Shopping Plaza opened, which included a supermarket and specialty shops. It was advertised as 'Mount Hawthorn Plaza: the centre of the Mount'. During the 1980s the Mount Hawthorn Hotel underwent extensive renovation to meet the new needs of patrons, and was reopened as the Paddington Ale House in 1987.

In 1994 Mount Hawthorn became part of the Town of Vincent with the division of the former City of Perth into four municipalities. There was concern that Mount Hawthorn needed some regeneration and a working group, 'Mount Hawthorn On the Rise', was formed in 1999 to look at revitalising the area. Concerns raised for Scarborough Beach Road included traffic speeds, lighting, lack of parking, and lack of vibrancy and things to do. The New Norcia Bakery opened in 1996, incorporating a 1911 wood-fired oven, and a café was added in 2000; both increased the appeal of the shopping strip. Between 1998 and 2000 the Paddington Ale House underwent further substantial renovations to make it more appealing for the clients of the twenty-first century. Development since then has included increased construction of buildings containing apartments, shops and offices. The Mount Hawthorn Plaza was upgraded to The Mezz in 2010 with changes along the street frontage and rear leading the way in revitalizing the area into a vibrant shopping strip. In 2014 Mount Hawthorn was rated as Western Australia's top suburb to have a house according to search data analysis by a real estate website.

PLACES OF INTEREST

. Anzac Cottage, 38 Kalgoorlie Street



Built in 1916. This was the first World War I ANZAC memorial in WA and only the second to be built in Australia (and the first house). Organised by the Mount Hawthorn Progress Association it was to be given to the first wounded soldier to return to Perth. The building was a community project using donated money and materials and volunteer labour. The bush block was cleared on 29 January, the building materials delivered in a grand procession of drays on 5 February, and on 12 February 1916 the cottage was built, with the outside of the building completed, a lawn planted and fence erected. The interior was completed in the following weeks and the cottage officially opened on 15

April 1916. The next day the key was handed over to Private John Porter. He and his descendants were given full ownership provided they reside permanently in the cottage. The deeds were vested in the Trustees of the Progress Association, with rules that the property could never be sold and must always remain a monument to the Anzac Landing.

After Private Porter and his wife died the cottage did move out of the ownership of the family. Their four daughters had married and made their own homes elsewhere. The building began to fall into decline. As the Mount Hawthorn Progress Association was defunct, the RSL were offered the cottage in 1989 but did not accept. The Vietnam Veterans' Association took ownership in 1991.

The cottage was State heritage listed in 2000, and acquired by the City of Vincent in 2006. A number of conservation and interpretation works funded by the City and the Lotterywest are scheduled to be undertaken in 2014-2016.



2. Mount Hawthorn Primary School, 204 & 212 Scarborough Beach Road and Matlock Street



The School began in 1906 in the Congregational Mission Hall on the corner of Flinders Street and Scarborough Beach Road. It moved to its present site, with two classrooms, in 1908. The Headmaster was Mr Lutz. As the population of children in the area increased the school became very overcrowded. The school enrolment in 1933 was over 700 and more classrooms were added over the following years. In 1938 the Mount Hawthorn Infants' School was opened, with Miss Davidson as Headmistress. The school was built to accommodate 200 students, but by the end of the first year there were 240 enrolments. The infants' school continued with problems of overcrowding for many years, adding more classrooms and using various church halls as classrooms. Miss Harbeck, Headmistress from 1944-63, made a significant contribution to the school during this difficult time. Enrolments reached a peak of 624 in 1953. In 1966 the name changed from Mount Hawthorn Infants' School to Mount Hawthorn Junior Primary School. The school building underwent several changes in the 1980s, including adding a library. The Mount Hawthorn campus currently consists of three schools, each with their own principal – these are the Junior Primary, Senior Primary and Education Support Centre. (There is also the Margaret Pre-school in Richmond Street, Leederville linked to the Junior Primary.)

3. Mount Hawthorn Community Centre, Braithwaite Park (Scarborough Beach Road/ The Boulevard/Kalgoorlie Street)



The Mount Hawthorn Community Centre, designed by architects Messrs Ean McDonald and Whittacker, was built in 1961. There is a main hall and lesser hall. The Community Centre building, which stands within Braithwaite Park, was built on two plots of land purchased in 1928 and 1929, which were not included in the recreational reserves under the Council's Deed of Trust. (Braithwaite Park, originally known as Beach Road Children's Playground, was named after HN Braithwaite, former Director of Parks and Gardens with the City of Perth.) The Centre was officially opened by Lord Mayor Sir Harry Howard on 22 September 1961.

4. Paddington Ale House (former Mount Hawthorn Hotel), Cnr Fairfield Street and Scarborough Beach Road

Built in 1932 by Joseph Monaghan, whose first hotel lease had been the Queens Hotel in Beaufort Street in 1896. The ground floor included bars, lounges and a dining room, whilst the upstairs had 21 bedrooms, a lounge and drawing room. There was also a balcony overlooking Scarborough Beach Road. Monaghan sold unexpectedly in June 1932 before building was completed. The purchaser was Alfred Gillham, who had sold his lease of the Commonwealth Hotel (now the Hyde Park Hotel). The building was finished in December 1932 and was the first two-storey building in the street. Floodlit at night, the hotel had a highly visible presence. The builder was Harold Doust and the hotel has many interesting features, both externally and internally, despite being built in the Depression years. The opening of the Mount Hawthorn Hotel gave the community their own local meeting place and in many ways signified the establishment of the suburb.



In 1986 Dennis Moulton purchased the licence of the hotel and began to restore the building. Restoration included the removal of suspended ceilings which had probably been put in during the 1970s, removal of floor coverings and polishing the timber boards. In 1987 he changed the name of

the hotel to the Paddington Ale House to promote a change of image. The hotel now stocked a large range of national boutique beers and had nightly live entertainment. A larger and more diverse crowd began to patronize the hotel. In 1989 the licence was taken over by Michael Monteleone and Neil Randall, with Randall becoming the sole licensee from 1994. In 1998 the hotel was remodelled on the ground floor and the exterior repainted in heritage colours. These innovations moved the hotel into the twenty-first century with great success. Today the Paddington Ale House is a popular hotel with a wide-ranging patronage.



5. The Mezz (former Mount Hawthorn Plaza, John Allans Hawthorn Shopping Centre), 148 – 158 Scarborough Beach Road



The Mount Hawthorn Congregational Church on the corner of Flinders Street and Scarborough Beach Road conducted its last service on 22 February 1959; the building was then relocated to another suburb. Nine months later John Allans opened a brand new two-storey shopping centre. Its air-conditioned ground floor, lift to the second floor and roof-top parking were unique for a suburban store in Perth. The complex included a food market, butcher, grocer, pharmacy and bank.

The centre was later purchased by Tom the Cheap Grocer (Tom Wardle). In 1981 it was sold to the Murdoch Group and redeveloped as the Mount Hawthorn Plaza with a Target Discount Supermarket as the major tenant and 27 specialty stores. A 1996 refurbishment saw Woolworths become the anchor store. The Hawaiian Group purchased it in 2004 and undertook another redevelopment, opening as The Mezz in 2010.



6. Shops, 135-139 Scarborough Beach Road



The building at 135-139 Scarborough Beach Road was constructed by Reg Williams in 1935. Williams operated a butcher shop from 1937 and there has remained a butchers shop in the group, although it moved from No.135 to No.137 in recent years. Other butchers include David Mickie from 1947, Di Puccio and Re from 1953 and then B Re and Sons from 1963. Bert Re bought the property from Williams at this point. Primavera Quality Meats is run by two former employees of the Re family.



SOURCES AND FURTHER READING IN THE LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

Books

Bell, MD, *Perth – a cinema history*
Sussex, The Book Guild, 1986.

791.43099411 BEL

Davidson, J and Laurie, M, *Early Businesses of Vincent: a local history*
Leederville, Town of Vincent, 2010

994.11 EAR

Everett, Valerie, *Seventy years of cheers! : a history of the Paddington Ale House 1932-2002*
Mount Hawthorn: Neil Randall and the Paddington Ale House, 2002.

647.9509 EVE

Gray, Laura, *Anzac Cottage conservation plan*
Perth, Anzac Cottage Restoration 95 Committee, 1996.

Q728.37 GRA

Pashley, AR, *Policing our State: a history of Police Stations and Police Officers in Western Australia 1829-1945*
Perth, Educant, 2000

Q363.2 PAS

Mt Hawthorn Junior Primary School 1938-1988: the first fifty years.
Mount Hawthorn, The School, 1988

Q372.99

City of Perth Municipal Year Books

Maps and Real Estate subdivision posters

Street Vertical Files

Subject Vertical Files

Oral History interviews & transcripts

City of Vincent Municipal Heritage Inventory: www.vincentheritage.com.au

Local History Image Library: www.vincent.wa.gov.au/library

City of Vincent Library and Local History Centre

99 Loftus Street, Leederville WA 6007

Phone 9273 6090

Local.history@vincent.wa.gov.au

Available in other formats and languages upon request.