Botany Historical Trust

LEST WE FORGET ANZAC 2025 **LEST WE FORGET** ANZAC 2025 **LEST WE FORGET** ANZAC 2025

The
PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Robert Hanna

Welcome to Our First Newsletter of 2025!

We have a new Executive Committee that was elected at last November's Annual General Meeting (AGM). This Executive Committee will serve until the next Bayside Council Elections in 2028.

I welcome two new Executive members elected at the AGM. They are Lenore Daley and Amanda Wilson. They will serve alongside those members re-elected in December. In addition, the Council has appointed Councillors Christina Curry and Scott Morrissey to the Executive.

In addition, the Executive recommended Jenny Muscat, Jo Jansyn and Nathan Brown as Community Representatives. Bayside Council's General Manager has since approved the appointment of all three to the Executive Committee.

Accordingly, we welcome Jenny, Jo and Nathan to our Executive meetings and look forward to their ongoing contribution to the BHT's aims and objectives.

The Executive Committee met for the first time on 3 February. Among matters we discussed were the proposed Program and Activities for 2025. These include a visit to the ANZAC memorial museum in Hyde Park and an excursion to Sydney's National Trust homes. We will make a decision on these proposals at our May meeting.

The Executive has also recommended that Council recognises the late Dr Peter Orlovich, the former Archivist and founding BHT Executive Member in recognition of his contribution to the Botany Historical Trust.

Our new Executive member Amanda Wilson AM is working on a draft engagement strategy which will seek to increase the engagement and participation of general non-executive members of the BHT, and to grow our membership.

Seven Planning, Development and Compliance matters were tabled for discussion with the Committee. We noted the information provided about heritage related planning, development and compliance matters, and indicated that we had no objections to these development applications.

And finally, the meeting sought more advice from Council on our plans to add the missing names of our World War II servicemen on the Botany War Memorial.

I'm also pleased to mention that we already have a positive suggestion from a BHT non-Executive member for a members' event later this year. We will also consider this suggestion at our May meeting.

There are forthcoming exhibitions at the George Hanna Memorial Museum and Mascot Library that you may be interested in attending.

From June – October 2025, Bayside's local history team is planning a new exhibition which will be *An A-Z History: Uncovering 26 Unique Stories of Bayside's People and Places*, with each letter of the alphabet serving as an entry point into a different story about our the local past, offering viewers a deeper understanding of the area's development, landmarks, and everyday life across time.

The exhibition will use objects already held in the collection to showcase the rich and diverse history of our collection, and the community.

Bayside Council is also planning a future exhibition at the George Hanna Memorial Museum and in public libraries regarding the contribution made by local women in wartime and the inclusion of women's names on Cenotaphs. The Women in Wartime themed exhibition is planned from October 2025. Council will continue to work with the Botany Historical Trust and St George Historical Societies, RSL Sub Branches and Office of Veteran Affairs to update and include names of women (and men) on Cenotaphs.

I'm pleased to mention that I attended the Botany and Mascot RSL Sub-Branches ANZAC Commemoration services, and laid wreaths on behalf of the Trust at the Botany and Mascot War Memorials.

Best Wishes

Robert Hanna
President
Botany Historical Trust

THE COMMITTEE

Robert Hanna
President

Jacqueline Milledge
Senior Vice President

Christopher Hanna
Vice President

Richard Smolenski
Treasurer

Warren Hensley
Secretary

Amanda Wilson AM
Committee Member

Lenore Daley
Committee Member

Jenny Muscat
Community Representative

Jo Jansyn
Community Representative

Nathan Brown
Community Representative

Christina Curry
Councillor

Scott Morrissey
Councillor

2025 Meeting Schedule 3 February, 5 May, 4 August and 3 November

FLIGHT SERGEANT

OSCAR PATRICK MCFADDEN

RAAF, S/N 424303

Flt. / Sgt. O. P. McFadden, missing, presumed dead after air operations over Germany. Mrs. C. McFadden, 79 Bay - street, Botany, would appreciate further news.

ZEL LIVER TO

Newspaper article

The adjacent press cutting (from 24 Oct 1945, *The Sun* p.6) was found among my grandmother's photo collection during a recent audit of family memorabilia. It is a heartfelt plea from a mother whose son was posted missing in action during World War II. My grandmother was a close friend of Oscar's mother, Christine McFadden. Flight Sergeant Oscar McFadden, RAAF, was killed on a bombing raid over Germany in 1944.

Oscar grew up in Bay Street, Botany. His family recalls him growing up in Botany, including fishing and swimming in Botany Bay.

Oscar initially enlisted as a Gunner with the 9th Australian Field Regiment on 20 January 1942 at Kingsford, NSW. He was discharged on 14 August, then enlisted in the RAAF on 17 August 1942. He was then almost 19, born on 21 August 1923.

He undertook training in Australia at RAAF bases in NSW and South Australia before embarking from Sydney on 25 May 1943, arriving in England on 7 July 1943. He was promoted to Flight Sergeant on 28 October 1943.

Oscar was posted to RAF Squadron 166 as Flight Sergeant, Wireless Operator (Air) on 20 March 1944. RAF Squadron 166 was a Lancaster bomber squadron, operating out of the RAF base at Kirmington in Lincolnshire. Lancaster bombers carried a crew of seven men. Squadron 166's Record of Events for March 1944 show that his crew was posted to the unit with effect from 29 March 1944.

Some 12,000 Australian airmen served in Bomber Command during World War II. Some 4,050 died during the course of the war and included those killed in training or other air accidents.

Lancaster Bomber, image courtesy of Australian War Memorial.

Another 600 became German prisoners of war. Of those who died, 3,486 died on Bomber Command operations. This was the highest casualty rate of any other Australian unit serving in World War II, including Army, Navy and Air Force. Oscar was one of the 3,486.

Oscar flew 16 bombing operational sorties (operations) over enemy and enemy occupied territory between 9 April and 27 May 1944, his final fatal mission.

Don Charlwood, an Australian who flew with Bomber Command in World War II wrote of his wartime experiences in his book titled "*No Moon Tonight.*" The book is an evocative account of his impressions of his time with 103 Squadron based at Elsham Woods, also in Lincolnshire not far from Kirmington.

Taking off in a sortie over Essen he wrote "*… in this moment of take-off, as we part from the earth, a different spirit holds us. In the voices that have spoken I could swear that there was a momentary realization, called by the intensity of the hour. What the realization for each man, I do not know, but I feel that in it there is an awareness of his love for the men with him and, more than this, a moment of widened vision in which all danger, and death itself, assume their ultimate proportions, which are far less than the proportions we have given them in daily life. We feel on our bodies the forward surge of the aircraft and on our eardrums the assault of the engines.*"

Another Australian airman who survived the war described that each time they took off on an operation, it was like flying into the valley of death.

Bomber crews largely selected themselves during their operational training before being posted to operational squadrons, and developed a strong esprit de corps. Oscar's crew that was posted to 116 Squadron on 29 March 1944 was:

**F/Sgt F A Mander
RAF, Pilot**

**Sgt H J Evans
RAF, Flight Engineer**

**F/Sgt G J Overend
RCAF, Bomb Aimer**

**Sgt V L J Newell
RAF, Navigator**

**F/Sgt O P McFadden
RAAF, Wireless Operator**

**F/O B A White
RAF, Mid Upper Gunner**

**W/O H Shaw
RAF, Rear Gunner**

On the evening of 27 May 1944, Oscar's Lancaster, LL916, was one of 20 aircraft that took off for an air raid over Aachen in the German Rhineland. The target, German railway marshalling yards. Although the crew were unaware, railway lines and infrastructure were strategic targets leading up to the Allied invasion at Normandy on D-Day, 6 June 1944. Oscar was the wireless operator on his aircraft. RAF Archives for Squadron 166 reported that of the 20 aircraft that took off that evening, two failed to return. One of those was Oscar's Lancaster. The Squadron's records simply record that nothing was heard of his aircraft after it took off.

Oscar was posted missing on 28 May 1944, and later presumed dead on that date. Neither Oscar, his crew, nor his aircraft were ever found. He was 20 years old. His name is commemorated on the Runnymede War Memorial in England, as well as on the commemorative wall at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

Sadly, his name does not appear with those killed in action in World War II on the Botany War Memorial. The BHT is currently pursuing efforts to have Oscar's name, along with others, added to the Botany War Memorial.

It is fitting to remember Oscar at this time, around ANZAC Day, and the eightieth anniversary of the end of World War II.

Robert Hanna
President
Botany Historical Trust

Images courtesy of Peter McFadden.

Women During Wartime

Veronica Schweinsberg NF464515 Service Photo. Courtesy of the National Australian Archives.

Veronica Margaret 'Marge' Hanna, nee Schweinsberg, was born 9 October 1913 in Guyra NSW to George Christie and Catherine Veronica Schweinsberg, nee Maher. Her Grandfather Heinrich 'Henry' Schweinsberg (1851-1942) immigrated from Germany with his family in the late 1800s.

Prior to enlistment, Veronica was employed, as a Clerk Public Service, at the NSW State Lotteries since 1931. During her time in the State Lottery Office, she wrote tickets to the public, used the calculator machine and the Burroughs Adding Machine. She completed a course with the National Emergency Services (NES) after the war was announced on 3 September 1939 and topped her class.

Veronica was part of the Catholic United Services Auxiliary (CUSA), and she became commandant of the North Sydney Detachment. With the other parishioners she completed the St John's Ambulance Course and Sanitation Courses. She was asked by a St Johns Ambulance lecturer to become an instructor but refused due to other commitments.

Veronica was attached to the Kirribilli NES at Milsons Point Public School and was on duty the night the Japanese Submarine entered Sydney Harbour on 31 May 1942. Veronica was called to her NES First Aid station at Kirribilli when the raid occurred, and witnessed gunfire, explosions and searchlights everywhere, with aircraft and naval action. She noted the confusion and lack of knowledge of what was going on, only finding out about the submarine attack the next day.

During this time Veronica had worked her way up the Lottery Office and was in the position of one of the senior men's jobs when female Public Servants were given permission to join the Services. Veronica initially rang the AAMWS Department to enquire how to join them, however only Red Cross qualifications were acceptable.

Veronica formally enlisted with a friend from work at Paddington NSW on 7 September 1943 (MOB 2. 33105), age 30 and was drafted to Ingleburn on the same day to complete the 'very tedious rookie course' to join the AWAS (Australia Women's Army Service).

Veronica Hanna during AWAS service, unknown date.

Bayside Council Local History Collection.

The AWAS was formed in 1941 and was the only non-medical women's service deployed on active duty during World War II. To join the AWAS women had to meet certain criteria, including medical exams, age, and security clearance.

Due to her excellent test results, Veronica was sent to clerical school, where she finished second in the final test. She was offered a position as a Corporal in the Orderly Room at Ingleburn Rookie Camp but chose to be attached to the DFO (District Finance Office) at Sydney Showground instead, allowing her to live at home and commute daily. At the time, her family resided on Amherst Street, Cammeray, North Sydney.

Veronica enjoyed Army life and made friends with other AWAS. She was attached to the Checking Staff and did lots of writing. One time she was asked to assist Colonel Davis, head of the DFO, while he checked the staff service records books because of her lovely handwriting.

A fortune teller Veronica met at Bondi told her she had "magnetic" hands meant for healing, and that both she and her sister will marry men "Under the Crown."

Around this time, she met George Carroll Hanna, DFO Sergeant, at the DFO and he took her to a show at the Lux Radio Theatre as he knew the manager.

Veronica invited her younger sister Betty to a subsequent visit to the same theatre, where she introduced her to George. George and Betty became a couple and married on 4 November 1944. Through him, Veronica met George Robert Hanna (ARMY Sergeant N230518) who had returned to Sydney on compassionate leave and was serving locally. They were instantly attracted to each other and were engaged over Christmas and married on 31 March 1945.

George Hanna and Veronica "Marge" Hanna nee Schweinsberg on their wedding Day 31 March 1945.

Bayside Council Local History Collection.

Veronica had been recommended for Sergeant's stripes by her Warrant Officer at the DFO, but following her marriage, it was withdrawn. After her marriage Veronica was sent to a different unit as husband and wife were not allowed to work together. She was offered three other jobs by two Majors and a Captain however rejected these and instead was discharged by her own request on compassionate grounds on 20 April 1945 with a total of 623 days of continuous war time service with AWAS.

Veronica and George had their two sons, Robert and Chris, in 1946 and 1950. After the war George Hanna became an Alderman of Botany Municipal Council and stayed in the position for nearly 10 years, also becoming the Mayor of Botany (1966), where Veronica held the position of Mayoress. Both George and Veronica were strong believers in community and were involved with many organisations and events, promoting the local area and history.

Veronica kept in touch with her DFO friends and attended many luncheons with them over the years at each other's homes and attended the ANZAC Day and AWAS luncheons each year.

This story was compiled from notes in Veronica's service records, available on NAA, and personal memories compiled by her later in life, supplied by her son Robert Hanna.

Celia Piper
Local History Librarian

George and 'Marge' with their 2 sons, Chris and Robert c.1955-60.

Bayside Council Local History Collection.

Do you know a local woman who contributed during WWI or WWII?

Bayside Council is seeking nominations for women from the Bayside area who contributed during World War I or World War II, to be recorded into our local history collection.

The collected information will be preserved for further research, educational programs, and museum exhibitions, and will be accessible to the community, providing valuable insights into their role and impact on these pivotal times in history.

If you know a woman from the Bayside area who served during World War I or World War II, we invite you to share her name, photograph, memorabilia and a brief story about her experiences.

Whether they served in the armed forces, were nurses, volunteers, or contributed in other significant ways, their courage and contributions are an important part of history.

By submitting her story, you help preserve her legacy and celebrate her invaluable contribution to our community and to history. Please contribute your memories to ensure that these remarkable women are remembered and honoured for their extraordinary dedication.

Scan the QR code to submit a nomination

Anzac Day Flags

This year Bayside Council launched a set of flags across the LGA which showcase women who served in the military during World War II. On the flags are:

BARKER, Elsie Maud
98744 RAAF Corporal WWII Botany

Elsie joined the WAAAF in July 1942, at 18 years old. On enrollment, Elsie was enlisted as a trainee cook and was later remustered to cook. Elsie was discharged from service in December 1944.

BRENNAN, Lilian May
109876 RAAF Aircraftwoman WWII Botany

Lilian enlisted into the WAAAF August 1943 at age 19. Lilian served as a fabric worker until her discharge in October 1946.

GREGORY, Gwendoline Lorna
92550 RAAF Corporal WWII Bexley

Gwendoline enlisted in October 1941, at the age of 18. Gwendoline worked as a clerk, posted across a number of depots until being discharged in March 1944.

COHEN, Gwendolen Mary
93620 RAAF Corporal WWII Ramsgate

Gwendolen was a Ramsgate resident when she enlisted in the WAAAF in April 1942 at 18 years of age. Gwendolen served in the WAAAF as a clerk general, a clerk and a recorder. Gwendolen married Leon Cohen (35742), a wireless operator in the Royal Australian Air Force in 1944. She was working at Air Defense HQ Sydney when she was discharged January 1946.

FAZAKERLEY, Eileen Theresa
93622 RAAF Corporal WWII Bexley

Eileen enlisted into the WAAAF at 21 years of age. Eileen served as a clerk general and a clerk. Eileen was discharged from service in September 1945.

BEARD, Ruby Violet Gladys
106700 RAAF Corporal WWII Sans Souci

Ruby enlisted into the WAAAF October 1942 at the age of 26. Ruby joined the WAAAF, where she worked as a storekeeper and an equipment assistant. Ruby was married to Flight Lieutenant Warwick Brian Poulton (402752) of the 122 Squadron. Ruby was posted at 2 Stores Depot Waterloo upon her discharged in July 1945.

CARTWRIGHT, Nancy Lauraine/Lorraine
107813 RAAF Sergeant WWII Eastlakes

Nancy was 18 when she enlisted into the WAAAF in November 1942. Nancy worked as a cypher assistant within the WAAAF. Nancy was a sergeant in the Telecommunications and Communications Unit and posted at Melbourne Wireless/Telegraphic Station at the time she requested to be discharged from service in August 1944.

HAYES, Nita Mary
109150 RAAF Corporal WWII Brighton Le Sands

Nita was 24 years old when she enlisted into the WAAAF in April 1943. She worked as a cypher assistant. Her husband, George Rennie Hayes (N26002) had enlisted into the Army in August 1940 and was called up for full time duty in October 1940 until being discharged in December 1942. Nita was a corporal, posted at Air Force Headquarters Melbourne when she was discharged in September 1946.

Photos courtesy of the National Australian Archives.

Celia Piper
Local History Librarian

Honouring Sacrifice
The War Memorials of Botany

During World War I, more than 650 men from the Botany area enlisted to serve. While many were young, older married men and fathers were also well represented in the ranks. Tragically, approximately 15% of those who enlisted from the Botany region never returned home. As the war unfolded, both Mascot and Botany Councils took steps to honour those who served, compiling Honour Rolls and adding names as necessary. In the years following both world wars, memorials were built to provide a lasting tribute.

The first of these was Mascot Council's Mascot Memorial Park, initially dedicated to World War I. Botany Council erected three memorials: the Arthur Park War Memorial commemorating those who served in World War II; the Botany War Memorial at Booralee Park, which came to be dedicated to those who served in all wars; and in 1973, the Light Horse War Memorial was added at Eastlakes, further cementing the region's commitment to honouring its servicemen and women.

These memorials stand as reminders of the sacrifices made by local residents, ensuring their legacy is never forgotten.

Mascot Park War Memorial. Photo courtesy of Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

Mascot Park War Memorial

After World War I, Mascot Council sought to honour the 500 local men who enlisted— and the 58 who were lost overseas. In 1920, the Council purchased four acres of Parker's land for £2,000 to create a Soldiers' Memorial Park.

Designed as a formal garden, the park featured tree-lined pathways, ornamental plantings, and a prominent intersection location at Coward Street and Botany Road.

The war memorial's foundation stone was laid in December 1920, and the monument was officially dedicated on 4 April 1921, largely funded by public subscription.

Over the years, Mascot Memorial Park has evolved as a site of both remembrance and community activity. An additional plaque was installed in 1967 to honour those lost in World War II and later conflicts. In 1994, extensive restorations were undertaken, including the refurbishment of historic lights, the addition of sandstone features, and the installation of Remembrance Walls commemorating World War II's Pacific and European campaigns. Today, the park remains a significant landmark and is regularly visited on ANZAC Day by those wishing to honour the sacrifices of Mascot's servicemen and women.

Booralee Park & War Memorial, 1938. Photo courtesy of Bayside Council Local History Collection.

Booralee Park War Memorial

In the years following World War I, the Botany community sought an appropriate way to honour its fallen soldiers. Initial plans included reconstructing the Mill Stream Bridge or adding features to the Botany Town Hall, but ultimately, a dedicated memorial in Booralee Park was chosen as an ideal setting for a lasting tribute.

Funding for the memorial was raised largely through a local carnival, which generated £1,362, with additional support bringing the total to £1,850 (equivalent to approximately $187,500 today). Designed by Mr. Martin and constructed by A. Goode, the monument featured a fluted granite column crowned with a sphere and resting on a sandstone and granite base.

The foundation stone was laid on 16 December 1922, and on 5 May 1923, the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Walter Davidson, officially unveiled the memorial before a crowd of 2,000 people. A grand procession, including returned soldiers, Boy Scouts, and performances by the Botany and Mascot bands, marked the occasion.

Following its unveiling, Botany Council worked to enhance the memorial's setting, adding gardens and installing electric lighting by 1923. In later years, plaques were added to commemorate those who served in World War II and subsequent conflicts, ensuring that the memorial continues to stand as a symbol of remembrance.

Arthur Park Memorial

In 1946, Arthur Park was developed by Botany Council as a living memorial to the Botany Servicemen who gave their lives in World War II. The Park was designed as a commemorative garden: in a tribute to the fallen, Lombardy Poplars were planted, each accompanied by a brass plaque bearing the name of a deceased serviceman.

Over time, the park underwent changes and the health of many of the trees deteriorated. The park was upgraded in 1985, and the 25 brass plaques were set in a concrete block; in 2003 they were reattached to a new sandstone plinth. By 2018 the Botany Historical Trust were concerned at the state of the plinth and by the fact that only seven plaques now remained. Moreover, the plaques were so heavily tarnished that the names of the servicemen were almost illegible. The BHT were instrumental in a project to remove the tarnished plaques, have them cleaned and restored, and then conserved in a new framed mount. The plaques were placed on permanent display in Mascot Library in 2022. This complemented the 2020 Bayside Council project to upgrade Arthur Park with a new memorial avenue of 27 trees to replace the original 1946 memorial planting.

The seven remaining Arthur Park plaques on display at Mascot Library. Photo courtesy of Bayside Council Local History Collection.

Light Horse War Memorial

The Light Horse War Memorial at Florence Avenue Reserve, Eastlakes, stands as a tribute to the 1st Light Horse Regiment and Headquarters 8th Division, which trained on this very site at the former Rosebery Racecourse before embarking for service in both World Wars. The reserve itself was created following the closure of sections of Florence Avenue due to the construction of Southern Cross Drive, and in 1973, the site was officially gazetted as a public space, and shortly after, the memorial was established to honour the legacy of the mounted troops who had trained there.

The memorial consists of a pink granite block mounted on a white marble plinth, with two bronze plaques commemorating the regiments. Surrounded by brick paving, the monument serves as a lasting reminder of the cavalrymen who played a significant role in Australia's military history. It was rededicated on 12 August 1990 and later refurbished, with a special plaque added on 3 November 2018 to mark the centenary of the charge of the 4th Light Horse Brigade at Beersheba. This historic battle, fought on 31 October 1917, was a pivotal moment in the Sinai and Palestine campaigns, securing crucial water supplies and ensuring British control of the Suez Canal. The memorial remains a focal point for community remembrance, with annual commemorations held alongside the Botany Historical Trust and Bayside Council.

Dean Palmer
Library Graduate

Light Horse Park Memorial. Photo courtesy of Bayside Council Local History Collection.

Seniors Bus Tour

Botany Post Office, 1938. One of our tour stops where we learned facts about the history of the building and the postal service in the area and heard a story of a daring 1939 robbery. Bayside Council Local History Collection.

On an overcast Monday morning in March, a group of excited Bayside residents eagerly piled onto a bus for our first seniors bus tour. This event, part of the Bayside Seniors Festival, was a collaboration between Local History and the Council's Positive Ageing team. The tour was expertly guided by library staff member Julie Fitzsimons, who brought her extensive knowledge and experience to the journey.

The tour took participants past several historical sites around Mascot and Botany. We learnt about the history of suburbs and street names, schools, churches, emergency services, town halls and parks. We saw trees that mark entrances to former market gardens and learnt about the industrial history of the area. Julie intertwined historical facts with amusing and personal stories, making the tour both educational and entertaining. Many of the tour participants had only lived in the area a short time and were excited to learn about the history of buildings and landmarks they regularly pass.

The tour concluded with a morning tea at the George Hanna Memorial Museum. Here, the group viewed historical photos of the locations visited, asked questions, and discussed their experiences over croissants and tea.

The event was a resounding success, with everyone enjoying themselves and gaining a deeper appreciation for the area's rich history.

The positive feedback from participants has sparked interest in making these tours a more regular event, with the possibility of expanding to explore different areas in the future. The seniors bus tour not only provided an educational experience but also fostered a sense of community among Bayside residents.
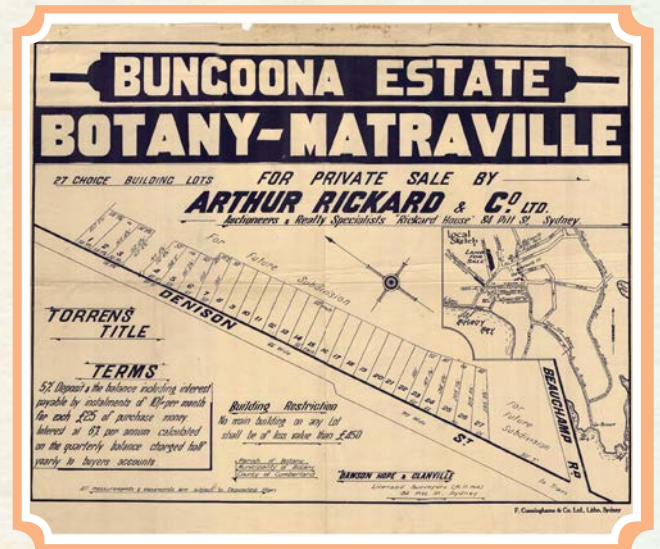
Laura Daaboul
Local History Librarian

Group photo of participants at the morning tea.

TREASURES FROM THE ARCHIVES

As part of its on-going conservation work, the Local History Team at Bayside Library have preserved and scanned a number of original Botany estate plans, the earliest of which, the Bungoona Estate Plan, is now over 100 years old.

Bungoona Estate, comprised of 27 lots of land along Denison Street, was subdivided in 1924 by the auctioneers and reality specialists Arthur Rickard & Co. At the time, Denison Street's location was simply Botany-Matraville; this area of Botany would not be known as the suburb of Hillsdale until the 1960s.

Suburb name changes are among the many changes illustrated clearly in Estate Plans. Among the early plans conserved by the library are four that advertise land for sale around Jellicoe Park in what is now the suburb of Pagewood: the plans date from 1926, 1928, 1930 and 1939.

The three earliest plans advertise the land as being at Daceyville. Only the 1939 plan uses Pagewood, the name adopted by Botany Council for 'South Daceyville' in 1929.

These plans also show street name changes. Maroubra Bay Road, shown on all four plans, is now Heffron Road. The 1926 plan shows that Park Parade was originally called Jellicoe Parade. The 1930 and 1939 plans show that the northern section of Park Parade was once called Clearly Parade while the southern section was Warren Parade.
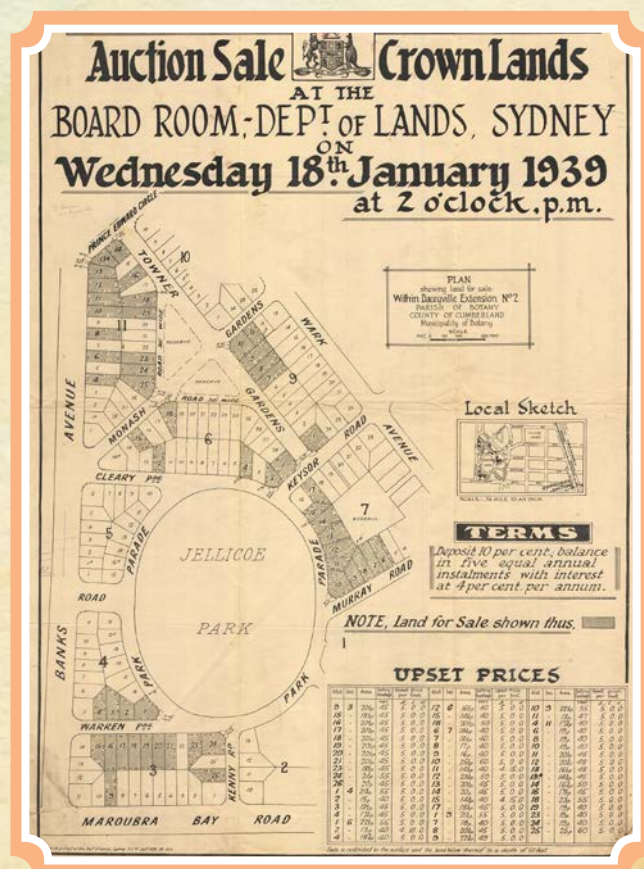
The 1926, 1928 and 1930 plans show a Jackson Avenue, by 1939 it has been renamed Monash Gardens. The two diagonal roads that run off Monash Gardens, are simply labelled as 'Road' on the plans. Botany Council would name them Chant Avenue and Siddins Avenue in May 1939.

Plans such as the 1926 and 1928 Daceyville plans are especially useful because they show not only what lots are available for sale, but also what lots have houses already built on them. This is an easy way for residents of these streets to establish whether their houses were built before or after those years. The plans also give the area and frontage of each allotment for sale, as well as the terms of the sale. Anyone bidding for a block of land in Pagewood in 1939 would know they would have to pay a deposit of ten percent and then pay the remaining amount in five equal annual instalments with an interest rate of 4 per cent per annum. All of which means that new residents in 1939 could look forward to paying off their land in five years.

Bayside Library is fortunate to have such a wide range of original material illustrating the suburban development of Botany.

Kirsten Broderick
Local History Librarian

UNCOVERING
MASCOT'S CHINESE HISTORY

Botany Historical Trust members will be aware of the historical markers recently installed across Bayside to mark sites of historical importance to the local community. Two of the sites chosen marked important 'firsts' for all of Sydney: the Botany Public School was the first public school in the city, while the former Sir Joseph Banks Hotel building was built to replace the original 1844 hotel reputed to have been the site of Australia's first zoo.

In the 1880s, among the residents of the districts of Botany and Waterloo, were between 800 and 900 Chinese settlers, most of whom were working as market gardeners. It was the presence of this large Chinese community that led to another 'first' for Botany: the building of the first Anglican Chinese Church in the Colony of New South Wales.

The church was built on land acquired by the Church of England Property Trust at the corner of Botany Road and Tramway Street in today's suburb of Mascot. The Foundation Stone was laid in June 1885, and the new church was dedicated on Sunday 27 December 1885, with both events being extensively covered in the newspapers.

A Daily Telegraph article described the building of the new church – officially called 'Christ Church' – as 'a neat little structure, built of brick cemented both outside and inside, comfortably seated, and here and there inscribed with passages of scripture in the Chinese language.' It added that 'the church is in the very midst of the market gardens, and thus convenient to the Chinese gardeners, to whose industry we owe so much of our produce.'

A week before the church was dedicated, the first Chinese Australian ever to be made a minister of the Anglican Church was ordained in a ceremony at St Andrew's Cathedral: Reverend George Soo Hoo Ten. It was Reverend Ten who was asked to take charge of the new Chinese Church.

George Soo Hoo Ten was born in Hoiping, Kwangtung, China, in 1848. In his late teens he journeyed to San Francisco, learnt English and converted to Christianity. By the 1870s he was working as a tea merchant in Sydney, and by 1880 he was working as a catechist in the market gardens of Botany and Waterloo. Reverend Ten went on to become a well-known figure in Sydney's Chinese and Anglican communities.

A photograph of Reverend Soo Hoo Ten published in the Sydney Morning Herald on 26 September 1934 after his death. Rev. Ten died on 24 September 1934 after a long illness.

Although Reverend Soo Hoo Ten's first appointment and the opening of Sydney's first Chinese Church are both well documented, little is known of the later history of the church or how it was used in the following decades. In fact, other than early newspaper articles, there is very little documentation of the church's history at all. Even its name is unclear. It was named Christ Church in 1885; in Sands Postal Directories it is listed as 'Christ Church' or as the 'Chinese Anglican Church' until 1909, after which it was simply listed as 'Anglican Church'. Around 1918, the church was renamed as 'St John's Church of England Mission Church'.
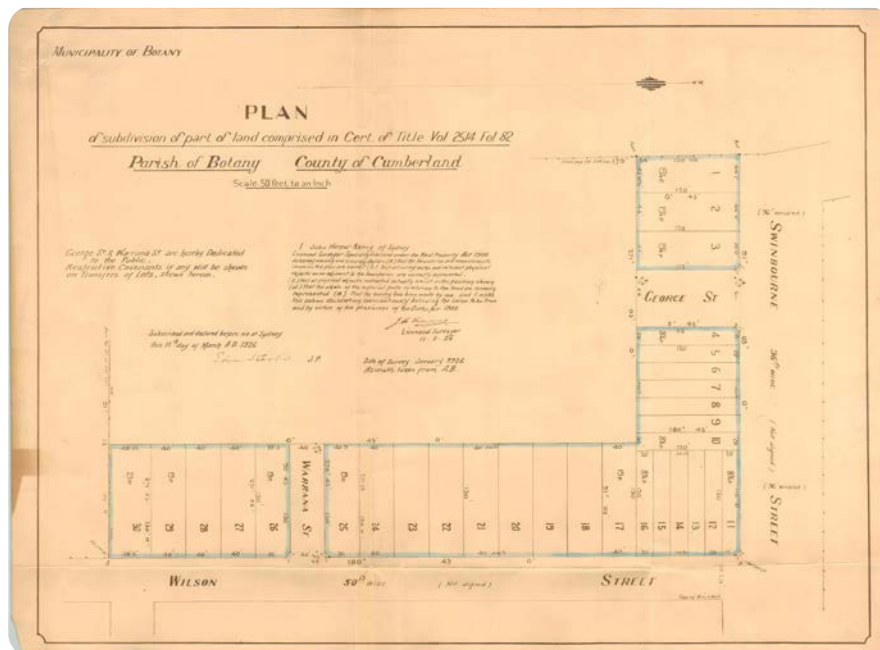
There are few other records of the church until 1928 when it again began to appear in newspaper articles. On the 16 May 1928, a small article appeared at the very bottom of page 12 of *The Sun* newspaper:

Old Church to be Sold

The Sydney Diocesan Registrar has written to the Mascot Council stating that the old church building in Botany-road, Mascot, which was stated by the council Inspector to have become a rendezvous for larrikins, is to be sold.

Municipality of Mascot Minute Books for 1927 and 1928 contain a few brief references to the neglected and dilapidated state of the church building, which the newspapers claimed had turned into a 'gaming den' and 'two-up school'. The Council Minutes refer to correspondence between the Sydney Diocesan Register and Mascot Council, as well as to reports made by Council's Health Inspector regarding the state of the church. On 17 May 1928, the Minutes record that the Sydney Diocesan Registry had written to Mascot Council saying, 'The Committee has passed an Ordinance to enable the Church on Botany Road & Tramway Street (Chinese Church) to be sold.'

Mascot Council Valuation Records reveal that in 1929 the church was finally sold to the manufacturer John O'Riordan. The corner lot was subdivided into two lots, on which a shop and dwelling were built. Fifteen years previously, in 1914, Reverend Ten had purchased seven acres of land on the corner of Swinbourne and Wilson streets, Botany.

A 1926 plan submitted to Botany Council by Reverend Soo Hoo Ten requesting permission to subdivide his land into lots for individual sale.
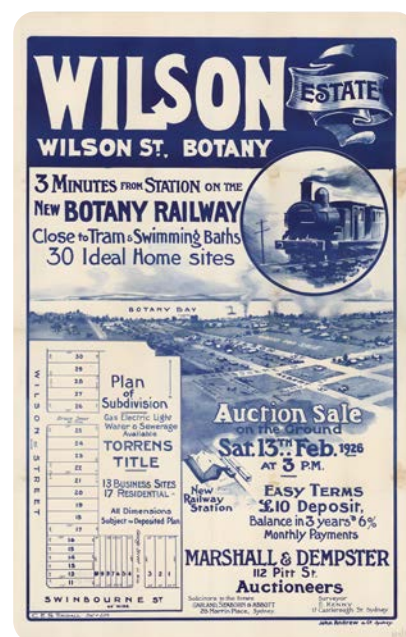
By the mid-1920s, as the church was falling into disuse and disrepair, Rev. Ten began negotiating with Mascot Council for permission to subdivide his large land holding into individual lots for sale. The Council eventually approved the subdivision and the lots on what had once been George Soo Hoo Ten's land were advertised for auction sale as the Wilson Estate.

With Rev. Ten's land sold, and the church demolished, nothing now remains in Botany or Mascot to remind residents of Sydney's first Chinese Anglican Church or of its first minister, the Rev Soo Hoo Ten. History is commonly forgotten, lost or concealed. The fact that such a significant historical site can so completely disappear is why initiatives such as the Historical Markers are so important.

Kirsten Broderick
Local History Librarian

The 1926 real estate plan advertising lots on Reverend Ten's land for sale as part of the 'Wilson Estate'.

Image courtesy of the State Library of NSW, available online at: collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/digital/ qemlMjb5zqpdO

2025 Ron Rathbone Local History Competition

Bayside Council's annual Ron Rathbone Local History Competition, designed to encourage local historians to explore the diverse history of Bayside, is now open for entries. This year, for the first time, entrants have the option to write on the themed topic of Bayside Women in War.

A competition for works of original research on any aspect of the history of the Bayside Local Government Area.

Optional Theme:

Role of women in war during WWI and/or WWII within the Bayside Council LGA.

Open Category
Prize Pool $7,000
$5,000 for the Winner

High School Category
Prize Pool $2,000

Past award-winning entries in the Open Category have included Peter Hobbin's work, *Miracle at Mascot: Surviving Sydney's 1971 Airliner Collision*; Ian Hoskins' work, *Looking Backward: Daceyville and a time of idealism in public housing;* and Leonie Bell's works, *Stannumville: Suburb in the Sand* and *Botany Wool.*

Entries close at 5pm on Thursday 17 July 2025.
Enquiries: *local_history@bayside.nsw.gov.au*

For more information please scan the QR code or visit our website at: **bayside.nsw.gov.au/ronrathbone**

2025 Historical Markers Nominations

Bayside Council will be calling for nominations for the 2025 round of Historical Markers during History Week in September 2025.

The Historical Marker Program aims to create visibility and awareness of the history and cultural heritage of the Bayside LGA to build a sense of belonging and connectivity in the community.

The program was inspired by London's Blue Plaques scheme which was established in 1866.

Each financial year, Council will fund the production and installation of up to five (5) historical markers nominated by community members or community organisations through the nomination process. The historical marker will be installed at the nominated building, site or place in Bayside's Local Government Area.

SIR JOSEPH BANKS HOTEL

Opened in 1844 as a place of recreation and holiday, the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel estate hosted Australia's first zoo. Doris Rutley purchased the property in 1946 and dedicated her life to its upkeep and preservation.

The plaque for Sir Joseph Banks Hotel. Photo courtesy of Bayside Council.
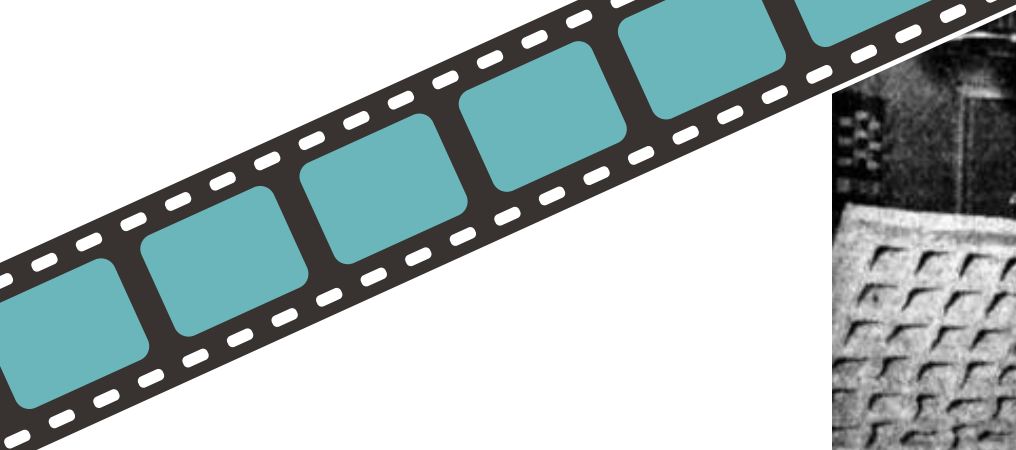
2024 Historical Markers Unveiling

Jo Jansyn and Chris Hanna outside Botany Public School with the historical marker.

Photo courtesy of Bayside Council.

In February 2025 Bayside Council installed the first Historic Markers as part of its inaugural program to recognise local sites of historical significance.

The inaugural five sites recognised are Bexley Public School, Botany Public School, the Former Sir Joseph Banks Hotel, Tempe House, and Wilson's Farmhouse.

Christopher Hanna represented the BHT at the unveiling of the plaque at Botany Public School on Tuesday 18 February. BHT member Jo Jansyn, who nominated the school, spoke about the history of Botany Public School and unveiled the marker.

The Student Representative Council members, the school director, parents and teachers were also in attendance.

Keith Loone
From Cook Avenue to the Cinema

A photo published in the Daily Advertiser, 22 May 1952, shows Keith Loone packing camera equipment to be sent to central Australia for the filming of Australian movie 'Jedda'. Daily Advertiser

Cinematographers are the visual storytellers of film and television, working closely with directors to frame shots and create cohesive, visually stunning narratives. One of Australia's top cinematographers, Keith Bryan Loone, left a permanent mark on the industry.

In a recent conversation with Carlyn Johnston, a member of the Botany Historical Trust, I learned that Keith grew up in Daceyville. Carlyn fondly reminisced about visiting the Loone family home on Cook Avenue. She affectionately referred to Keith's parents, Clara and Bert, as aunt and uncle, recalling Aunt Clara as a brilliant cook and dressmaker who made beautiful dresses for their daughter, Coral. Carlyn shared a cherished memory of Keith putting her on the handlebars of his bicycle and riding around, reflecting his happy and caring nature.

Keith began his career at Cinesound Studios in Bondi Junction. He later worked as a second unit camera operator on notable productions such as King of the Coral Sea (1954), Long John Silver (1954), Walk into Paradise (1956), and Dust in the Sun (1958). Perhaps his most notable work was as the main camera operator for the widely acclaimed film They're a Weird Mob (1966).

Sadly, Keith passed away in 1988 at the age of 58. In recognition of his remarkable contributions to cinematography in Australia, Keith was inducted into the Australian Cinematographers Society's Hall of Fame in 2015.

Laura Daaboul
Local History Librarian

LINDA ROYAL - THE STAR ON THE GRAVE

We invited Linda to Mascot library to debut her historical novel inspired from the incredible true story of the Japanese diplomat who defied his government to save thousands of Jews from Lithuania, including Linda's own family. Linda spoke very passionately pointing out that she would not be here today if it was not for the heroism shown by Chiune Sugihara to guide her family to freedom.

Alec Sissaguian
Programs and Projects Librarian

Author Talk

Discover Our
A-Z HISTORY OF BAYSIDE

Mascots snake charmer, Frederick Fox. Bayside Council Local History Collection, donated by Botany & District Historical Society.

The local history team is excited to present *Our A-Z History,* an exhibition at the George Hanna Memorial Museum that delves into 26 unique stories highlighting the rich and diverse history of the Bayside area. Each letter of the alphabet explores a different aspect of local history, offering insights into the region's development, significant landmarks, and everyday life.

Have you heard of Snakedomia? Do you know about the powerful cyclone that swept through the area? These are just a few of the intriguing stories featured in the exhibition. From moments of progress to periods of struggle and innovation, *Our A-Z History* reflects the complexities of Bayside's past.

Visitors will gain a deeper understanding of the community's history as each letter uncovers a new piece in the area's narrative. Objects from the museum's collection will bring these stories to life, showcasing the diverse and intricate history of both the local people and places.

Join us in celebrating and reflecting on the events and moments that have shaped Bayside into what it is today. *Our A-Z History* exhibition will open in June and run until October 2025. Don't miss this opportunity to explore the fascinating history of Bayside, and take the opportunity to tell us what would be in your A-Z.

Laura Daaboul
Local History Librarian

Debra Oswald - One Hundred Years of Betty

Multi-award-winning author, playwrite and screenwriter Debra Oswald discusses her new novel, in conversation with Kathryn Heyman.

Friday 23 May 2025, 7pm
Botany Town Hall, 1423 Botany Road

Registration required via the QR code.

This event is presented in partnership with Sydney Writers Festival.

Author Talk

CRAFT GROUPS

Eastgardens Knitting Club

2nd and 4th Mondays of the Month
10:30am – 12:30pm

Eastgardens Library
Westfield Eastgardens, 152 Bunnerong Road

For more information about the Knitting Club contact Eastgardens Library on **02 9366 3888**

Sans Souci Knitting Group

1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the Month
11:30am – 1:30pm

Sans Souci Library
104 Russell Avenue

For more information about the Knitting Group contact Sans Souci Library on **02 9562 1817**

Rock & Wool Group

1st Wednesday of the Month, **5pm – 7pm**
3rd Monday of the Month, **10am – 12pm**
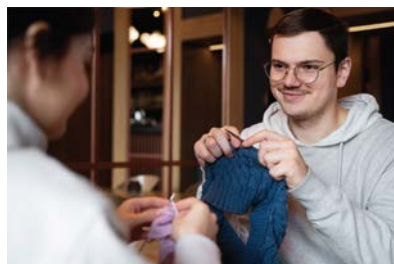
Rockdale Library
444-446 Princes Highway

For more information about Rock & Wool contact Zulma on **0401 426 571**

Crafternoon

3rd Sunday of the Month
12pm – 4pm

Rockdale Library
444-446 Princes Highway

For more information about Crafternoon contact Rockdale Library on **02 9562 1821**

Chess Club

Adults of all skill levels are welcome.

Tuesdays, 3pm – 5pm
Mascot Library
2 Hatfield Street, Mascot

Sign up for this free activity at
baysidelibrary.eventbrite.com

For more information call 02 8338 0313

Botany Historical Trust
Application for Membership

Council established the Botany Historical Trust (BHT) in 1994 to encourage and ensure the preservation of the history and heritage of the former City of Botany Bay local government area. Council encourages membership of the BHT by local residents and other applicants with a commitment in contributing and participating in initiatives that assist in promoting and preserving our local history and heritage.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No: _____ Fax No: _____

Mobile: _____ Email: _____

Details of historical interest and/or association with the Area

_____

_____

_____

I'm applying to become a member of the Botany Historical Trust. I have read the BHT constitution and agree to subscribe to its aims, objectives and terms.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

▶ ▶ ▶

This information is collected for office use only and will not be disclosed to third parties. All personal information (paper and electronic formats) are stored securely.

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO:
Manager Libraries and Lifestyle
Bayside Council PO Box 21
ROCKDALE NSW 2216

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date received: _____

Referred to BHT Executive meeting on: _____

BHT Executive determination of membership: Accept/Decline ___

Comments: _____

_____

Minutes of BHT meeting endorsed by Council on: _____

Memberships must be renewed every five (5) years.
Current members please check, as your membership may have lapsed.

BHT
Botany Historical Trust

www.bayside.nsw.gov.au

Bayside
Council

Flight Sergeant Oscar Patrick McFadden

Australian War Memorial

Australian Archives

RAF Squadron 166 Archives

Lancaster Men: The Aussie Heroes of Bomber Command. Peter Rees, Allen & Unwin, 2013

Chased by the Sun: Courageous Australians in Bomber Command in World War II. Hank Nelson, ABC Books, 2002.

No Moon Tonight. Don Charlwood, Penguin Australian War Classics, 1987

The Sun

Women During Wartime

Shweinsberg Veronica NF464515 B884 *Citizen Military Forces Personnel Dossiers, 1939-1947.* National Archives of Australia https://www.naa.gov.au/ Records Search, Accessed March 2025.

ANZAC Day Flags Citation NAA: A9301

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Cohen Gwendolen Mary 93620 *A9301 RAAF Personnel files of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and other ranks, 1921-1948.* National Archives of Australia https://www.naa.gov.au/ Records Search, Accessed March 2025

Fazakerley Eileen Theresa 93622 *A9301 RAAF Personnel files of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and other ranks, 1921-1948.* National Archives of Australia https://www.naa.gov.au/ Records Search, Accessed March 2025

Beard Ruby Violet Gladys 106700 *A9301 RAAF Personnel files of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and other ranks, 1921-1948.* National Archives of Australia https://www.naa.gov.au/ Records Search, Accessed March 2025

Cartwright Nancy Lauraine/Lorraine 107813 *A9301 RAAF Personnel files of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and other ranks, 1921-1948.* National Archives of Australia https://www.naa.gov.au/ Records Search, Accessed March 2025

Hayes Nita Mary 109150 *A9301 RAAF Personnel files of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and other ranks, 1921-1948.* National Archives of Australia https://www.naa.gov.au/ Records Search, Accessed March 2025

Honouring Sacrifice: The War Memorials of Botany

City of Botany Bay: A Thematic History. Elizabeth Conroy 2017

New South Wales War Memorials Register https://www.warmemorialsregister.nsw.gov.au/ Accessed March 2025

Monument Australia https://monumentaustralia.org.au/ Accessed March 2025

Uncovering Mascot's Chinese History

Reverend Soo Hoo Ten *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 6, 1976, available online 2006 https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ten-george-soo-hoo-4699 Accessed March 2025.

Keith Loone: From Cook Avenue to the Cinema

Keith Bryan Loone ACS Australian Cinematographers Hall of Fame https://cinematographer.org.au/hall-of-fame/keith-bryan-loone-acs/ Accessed March 2025

2025 Anzac Day March

2025 Anzac Day Dawn Service at Booralee Park, Botany

BHT
Botany Historical Trust

www.bayside.nsw.gov.au

Bayside Council