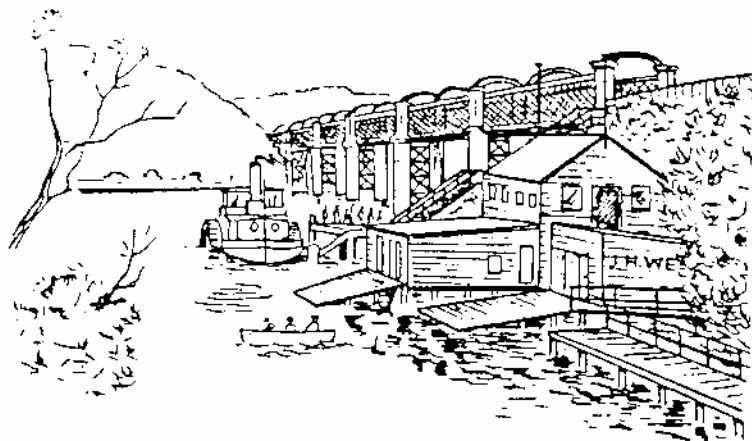SUTHERLAND RAILWAY STATION.
1886

Sutherland Shire placenames

COMO
ABOUT 1900

ILLUSTRATIONS
BY
F. MIDGLEY.

Introduction

This pamphlet lists Sutherland Shire placenames and their origins. These have been compiled from various sources, including Sutherland Shire Historical Society Bulletins. Meanings, including those it has not been possible to verify, are shown and, wherever necessary, variations have been listed in cases where there is doubt as to the correct version e.g. Sutherland.

Sutherland Shire Council gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the late Mrs. M. Hutton Neve in the compilation of this list.

It would be appreciated if anyone with knowledge of the origin of placenames in the Shire or any variation not shown would inform the library staff or the Communications Unit at council of these.

(J.W. Rayner)
General Manager.

ALFORDS POINT
Alford was the name given to the area and Public Reserve bordering the south bank of the Georges River and also to a road leading to it from Old Illawarra Road, Menai. The area now bearing the name Alfords Point is a couple of miles downstream from 50 acres of land that was owned by Jane Alford, widow of John Snr. in 1828.

AUDLEY
This area was surveyed by George Edward Thickness-Touchet, 21st Baron Audley, in 1863-64, where he set up a semi-permanent camp. He later became a son-in-law of Surveyor General Sir Thomas Mitchell.

BANGOR
Named after the city of Bangor in the Menai Strait of Wales. The name was originally suggested by Owen Jones, a Welshman who was an early settler in the area.

BARDEN RIDGE
In 1992 local residents voted to rename part of the suburb of Lucas Heights. In 1996 the Geographical Names Board assigned the name Barden Ridge to the area 3 km south of Menai. Named after Alfred Barden whose pioneering family is associated with the Bangor area prior to the 1850s.

BATE BAY
No known meaning.

BIRNIEMERE
Now part of Kurnell, this was originally 'Alpha Farm' which belonged to Captain James Birnie, who was granted '700 acres, Portion No. 1' in the area in 1815. This was the first farm in what later became Sutherland Shire, 'alpha' being Greek for 'first'.

BONNET BAY (suburb)
Named by the Geographical Names Board, NSW Lands Department in 1969. An area of land north-west of Jannali bounded by Woronora River. Originally proposed to name the area Kirkby. However a cave in the area known as 'The Bonnet' (as it is shaped like an old woman's bonnet) prompted the suggestion to name the area Bonnet Bay.

BOAT HARBOUR No known meaning.

BOTANY BAY Named by Captain Cook—originally 'Stingray Bay' or 'Stingrays Bay', later 'Botanist Bay' and finally 'Botany Bay', because of the numerous plants found there by Sir Joseph Banks.

BUNDEENA Aboriginal meaning: 'noise like thunder'.

BURRANEER First named Burrameer Bay, an Aboriginal word meaning 'point of the bay', in 1827 by Surveyor Dixon.

CARAVAN HEAD The locality of Caravan Head is thought to have been named after 'Caravan Rock', which was shaped like a covered wagon or caravan situated on private property on the point of Caravan Head.

CARINGBAH Aboriginal word referring to the 'Pademelon Wallaby'. Caringbah was originally called Highfield but the name changed with the opening of the Post Office in 1912.

COMO Named after Lake Como in Italy, because of the similar scenery, by James Murphy, in his capacity as manager of the Holt-Sutherland Estate Land Company.

CONSTABLES POINT
A point which forms the eastern headland of Fisherman's Bay. The land (portion 10) was originally granted to Marmaduke Constable.

CRONULLA Thought to be a European variation of the Aboriginal word 'Kurranulla' — a place of pink shells. Originally named Gunnamatta.

DAROOK PARK Named after the Darook tribe of Aborigines whose tribal territory had included Port Hacking.

DOLANS BAY Named after Patrick Dolan who purchased approximately 286 acres on 17 January 1856.

ELOUERA Aboriginal meaning: 'a pleasant place'.

ENGADINE Charles McAlister named his estate Engadine because the scenery reminded him of 'Engadin' in Switzerland. When the railway station was opened in 1920, his widow, Mrs McAlister, named it after her estate.

GARIE Two theories.

1. Aboriginal meaning: 'sleepy'.

2. Geera, Garie or Geara: not Aboriginal in origin; named after a bushranger called Geaty who camped here.

GEORGES RIVER   Named after King George III, probably by Governor Philip.

GRAYS POINT   Two theories.

1. Named after Samuel William Gray who owned 50 acres of land on the point.

2. Named after John Edward Gray, a resident in The National Park in the late 1800s; he lived at Gundamaian and became a well-known local identity.

GUNDAMAIAN   No known meaning.

GUNNAMATTA   Probably named by Lord Audley when he made the first official survey of Port Hacking and the Hacking River in 1863-64. Aboriginal meaning: 'a place of beach and sandhills'. The original name for Cronulla.

GYMEA   Aboriginal meaning: 'a giant lily'. Believed to have been named by Government Surveyor WAB Greaves in 1855, after the tall, red flowered, native lily.

HEATHCOTE   1. The civil parish was called Heathcote (1835) by Surveyor General Mitchell after one of two fellow officers who served with him in the Peninsular Wars (1809-14).

2. The village was originally called Bottle Forest. It was surveyed in 1842 and is now East Heathcote.

HOLTMERE   A Kurnell locality covering an area of land originally held by Thomas Holt, appearing on the first map of the Shire.

ILLAWONG   Known as East Menai, but changed to Illawong when the public school was erected in 1960. An Aboriginal word meaning 'between two waters'.

INSCRIPTION POINT (Kurnell)
Named by the Australian Philosophical Society in 1822 after they affixed a plaque to the cliff face where the '*Endeavour*' crew first landed.

JANNALI   Aboriginal meaning: 'moon' — name given when the Railway Station was opened in 1931.

KAREELA   Suggested by Sutherland Shire Council and approved by the Geographical Names Board of the NSW Lands Department, in 1968. Aboriginal meaning 'place of trees and water' or alternatively 'south wind'.

KIRRAWEE   Aboriginal meaning: 'lengthy'—the name was adopted in 1939 with the opening of the railway line. A postal receiving office in the locality was known as 'Bladeville'. It operated from the home of Mrs Louisa Blade, was opened in 1909 and closed in 1915 when a letter delivery commenced from the post office at Sutherland.

KURNELL Believed to be English pronunciation of an Aboriginal word 'Collonel', although it has been suggested that it came from the name of an early settler, John Connell.

LILLI PILLI Named after the Lilly Pilly (or Lilli Pilli) Tree (*Acmenia smithii*).

LOFTUS Named after Lord Augustus Loftus, Governor of NSW 1879-85.

LUCAS HEIGHTS Named after John Lucas Snr., flour miller at Liverpool, granted 150 acres at 'head of unnamed stream sailing into Georges River', 1823. He built a water-driven mill for grinding corn from the Illawarra farms — small ships sailed up the coast into Botany Bay, Georges River and Woronora River.

MAIANBAR According to the Lands Department, no information can be found relating to the original of Maianbar.

MENAI Originally called Bangor by Owen Jones, a Welshman and first settler, 1895. Changed by the Post Master General in 1910 because of confusion with Bangor in Tasmania. Named after the Menai Straits between the Welsh mainland and the Isle of Anglesey, opposite Bangor.

MIRANDA Named after Miranda, a character in the Shakespearean play '*The Tempest*'. 'The name Miranda was given to the locality by me as manager of the Holt Sutherland Company which I formed in 1881. I thought it a soft, euphonious, musical and appropriate name for a beautiful place.' (Extract from a letter of James Murphy, 31 October 1921.)

OAK PARK Originally Oak Park Water Reserve—where a well was sunk to provide water to local residents in 1906.

OYSTER BAY Derives from the abundance of oysters in the bay. Did not originate from the Holt period (1860-88)—is of earlier origin, appearing on Surveyor Wells's map of 1840.

OYSTER BAY (suburb)
A map of the parish of Sutherland for 1925 shows the village of Oyster Bay. The bay itself, a place once plentiful in oysters, was named much earlier appearing on a survey map of 1840. The suburb was officially recognised in 1933.

POINT SOLANDER Named by Captain Cook for Dr Carl Solander, a botanist on the '*Endeavour*'.

POINT SUTHERLAND
Named by Captain Cook in memory of Forby Sutherland, a seaman on HMB '*Endeavour*', who was buried at Kurnell.

PORT HACKING Named by Matthew Flinders in 1796. First Fleet pilot Henry Hacking had told him of rumours of a large river south of Botany Bay. Originally named Port Aicken (alternatively Akin or Aken) after midshipman John Aicken, First Fleet, who discovered the river. Port Hacking Heads were known as 'Port Aiken Heads' in 1870.

ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

Founded in 1879 by Sir John Robertson, Premier of NSW, as 'The National Park'. 18,000 acres were set aside as public reserve. The term 'Royal' was adopted during the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Sydney in 1954.

SANDY POINT

The Sandy Point Estate—now suburb—was created in 1925 but the history of its name is not known. Not to be confused with the area (at Sylvania) now called Sandy Point but originally called Holt Point as part of the Holt Sutherland Estate.

SUTHERLAND

1. Civil parish 2. Township 3. Shire. There are two theories.

a) That all three are named after Forby Sutherland, the sailor on the *Endeavour* who was buried at Kurnell. Captain Cook named Point Sutherland in memory of him but there is no other proof for any other area named thus.

b) 1. Civil parish.

The parish of 'Southerland' was proclaimed in 1835; this spelling later appeared in the Government Gazette as 'Sutherland'. The civil parishes were named by Sir Thomas Mitchell in 1835, when he was Surveyor General. He named the first parish south of Georges River 'The Parish of Southerland.' Omitting the 'o' has destroyed the original significance of the name.

2. Township.

The name Sutherland Township was used for land sales in 1882 by the Holt-Sutherland Estate Land Company. The use of the name Sutherland for the subdivision had been decided by the company in 1881.

3. Shire.

The Shire of Sutherland was proclaimed in the Government Gazette of 16 May 1906 by the Governor, Sir Harry Holdsworth Rawson. According to the (Shires) Proclamation, the name was selected by the Governor on the advice of the Executive Council. (Government Gazette No. 121, 7 March 1906.)

SYLVANIA

Believed to have been named by James Murphy because of its sylvan appearance.

TAREN POINT

Origin unknown—first known as Comyns Point, then Cummins Point and finally as Common's Point, the origin of which is also unknown. Later became known by the present name of Taren Point but there is no information about the origin of that name either.

TOM UGLYS POINT

Two theories (1. is probably correct)

1. One of the early residents on the north side of Georges River was a Tom Huxley. The Aborigines could not pronounce the 'x' and the surname gradually became 'Ugly'.

2. The name derives from a white man with only one leg and one arm, living in the locality, known to the natives as Tom Wogully, or 'Wogul'. 'Wogul' means 'one', hence the Aboriginal name for the settler 'Tom Wogully' was corrupted to 'Tom Ugly'.

WANDA   Aboriginal word meaning beach or sand hill.

WATERFALL   Derives its name from the waterfalls near the railway station. McKell Avenue, southern boundary of Royal National Park, was originally 'Waterfall Road'.

WATTAMOLLA   Civil Parish of Wattamolla (1835). Aboriginal meaning: 'place near running water'.

WOOLOOWARE   Aboriginal meaning: 'a muddy flat', named by Surveyor Dixon in 1827.

WORONORA   Aboriginal meaning: 'black rock' — as originally 'Wooloonora'. Believed to have been named by Surveyor Dixon in 1828.

YARRAWARRAH   Aboriginal word meaning 'mountain ash'; area to the north of Engadine. Named by the Geographical Names Board in 1971. Also the name of a ridge about 5 km long extending NNE from Waterfall to Heathcote. Once known as Yarrawarrah Heights.

YOWIE BAY or EWEY BAY

Named in 1827 by Surveyor Dixon and spelt by him as ewey. It has also been suggested that ewey is a corruption of 'ewes' (female sheep). The name of the area was also referred to as 'Yowie', being an Aboriginal name meaning 'place of echoes'. Although the original name Ewey was recognised by the electoral office and postal department, the name Yowie appears to have been also widely used from at least the early 1900s. It is unknown however, when it became the more commonly used name. In 1973 the Geographical Names Board officially assigned the name Yowie.

YOWIE BAY (suburb) Land originally released as the Village of Weeroona in 1889. Assigned by the Geographical Names Board in 1973.

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Sutherland Shire Council's Central Library Reference Section includes local history records. For further enquiries, contact the Local Studies Librarian on 02 9710 0225.