

Bayswater Local History

Bayswater was originally inhabited by Aboriginal people who had lived in the area for thousands of years before the Swan River Colony was established in 1829.

Upon European settlement, the Swan River became a focus and land along the river was divided into numerous narrow strips (known as ribbon grants), allowing many landowners to benefit from the river. Yet, much of the area remained undeveloped until the turn of the 20th Century as most of the land was either of very poor quality, waterlogged, or both. Up until the 1870's, 'absenteeism' was common which meant that landowners often lived elsewhere, such as the eastern colonies or overseas. A track along current day Guildford Road was the only obvious evidence of colonisation in the district.

In 1881, the Perth to Guildford railway line was built, passing through Bayswater. As with many areas along the railway line, Bayswater underwent significant change. A minor property boom occurred and subdivision of the original land grants began. The first area to be developed was Bayswater Estate, located between Drake and Lawrence Streets.

Land speculation increased when gold was discovered in the eastern parts of the colony. The gold rushes attracted thousands of people from the eastern colonies and overseas, many of whom eventually settled in the Bayswater area.

Yet at the turn of the century, much of Bayswater remained semi-rural. Many land buyers purchased a number of adjacent lots for gardening and farming and homes were spread out over the area.

The opening of the Midland Railway Workshops, further along the Perth to Midland railway, fuelled much greater suburban growth in Bayswater between 1904 and 1914. The area attracted a number of workers to Western Australia and in particular, high proportions of people from the eastern states and Britain. The surge of activity led to the establishment of many more permanent and substantial structures across the locality including a number of commercial properties along King William Street (Bayswater Town Centre). While many buildings over time have redeveloped, a number of buildings from this era remain today as featured in this brochure.

Reference: "Changes They've Seen - The City and People of Bayswater 1827-1997" by Catherine May

Other Local Heritage Places

Ellis House and Halliday House are two places in Bayswater which also hold significant heritage value. These places are located a short distance from the other sites featured in this brochure.

Ellis House

Construction on Ellis House first began in 1912, and the weatherboard building originally served the area as a local dairy owned by the Ellis family who were British migrants of 1911. Today there are few traces of the local dairy industry which was a major activity in the Bayswater area, making this an old homestead of great historic value. In 1995, the City of Bayswater restored the property which today is open to the public as a community art centre and gallery. Further information on Ellis House is available online at www.ellishouse.net.



Halliday House

Halliday House (or 'Leighton House' as it was originally named) was built by the Halliday family in the 1890's during Bayswater's pioneering phase. 'Leighton House' was a substantial development in Federation Queen Anne style, reflecting the family's resources and faith in Bayswater's future. The house also served as meeting place for the small local Baptist congregation. In recent years, the house has been restored and was transferred to the Bayswater Historical Society who maintain the house as a museum and headquarters of the historical society.



For further information please visit the City's website at www.bayswater.wa.gov.au or call the City's Planning Services on (08) 9272 0622.

For further detail on the history and significance of places featured in this brochure, please refer to the City's Municipal Heritage Inventory available online at <http://www.bayswater.wa.gov.au/2/162/1/heritage.pm>.

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Bayswater Town Centre Heritage Trail



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Bayswater Town Centre Heritage Trail

1. 6 Hamilton Street

This Edwardian style residence overlooking Bert Wright Park is associated with settlement on the Hamilton Estate. It is thought to have been built in 1906 and was one of the earliest residences in the estate. The design was a more elaborate and substantial type of house than that generally built at the time.



2. Campbell's Store

79 Whatley Crescent

Built around 1919, the store was run by the Campbell family and was Bayswater's main grocery store until the 1950s. The store was run on the basis of deliveries and provided produce for many farms in the surrounding area.



3. Smoker's Store

81 Whatley Crescent

This building was originally a grocery store run by Reginald Smoker and opened around 1920.

4. Inglis Buildings

1 King William Street

Constructed in 1905 and designed by architect Henry Halliday, the premises was the first business to be constructed along the railway line in Bayswater.



Over time there have been a variety of tenants in the building including Campbell's Grocery Store (until 1919), and a grocery store operated by the McLeish family during the Second World War. In the late 1950s, Jack Percival Inglis relocated his chemist shop to this site.

This guide features 17 places in Bayswater Town Centre that have heritage significance. A map is included on the open foldout side of the guide to help you locate each place.

5. 9 King William Street

This brick cottage was built on land owned by Henry Halliday in 1905. Henry, a member of the influential Halliday family, owned a number of similarly designed properties on the same street and likely built this cottage and the others as investment properties in the building boom of the 1900's. The house is representative of early residential development in Bayswater and formed part of the Hamilton Estate.



6. McLeish's Grain Store

11 King William Street

This building is believed to have been constructed during the Great War. The origin of this store is obscure, but the land was purchased in 1905 by Alfred Archibald West, a prominent citizen, Roads Board Chairman and master plumber. It is thought that the building was constructed as a produce store which reflects its simple design. In the 1920's, James McLeish is believed to have operated the store. Today, the building is home to a local cafe.



7. Billiard Saloon

13 King William Street

A small billiard saloon was opened by Jack Smart on the site in 1919. In 1921, the Marshall family moved to Bayswater from the Goldfields and acquired Smart's saloon, increased the size of the operation and added a hairdressing business in a small shed. In 1922, the front of the site was developed into two stores - a women's and a men's hairdressing salon. Bob Marshall Jr recalled that originally the building was to be two storeys but Bob Marshall was prone to sleep walking, so it was decided that single storey shops would be a better option.

Bob Marshall Jr also received his early billiards training in the saloon and went on to become an international champion. After the war, Bob Marshall Jr turned the site into a modern dry-cleaning business.



8. Emberson's Butcher

15 King William Street

This two storey building was built around 1908 by the 'Emberson Bros' in a decorative Victorian style. Emberson began working as a butcher at the McLeish Family Butcher Shop on the other side of King William Street before setting up his own business. Staff would sleep upstairs to be ready to run the business in the morning.



Bayswater Town Centre Heritage Trail

1. 6 Hamilton Street
2. Campbell's Store
3. Smoker's Store
4. Inglis Buildings
5. 9 King William Street
6. McLeish's Grain Store
7. Billiard Saloon
8. Emberson's Butcher
9. Bert Wright Park
10. Bayswater Post Office
11. 1 & 1A Murray Street
12. Murray's House
13. Bayswater Primary School
14. School Corner Shop
15. 12 Murray Street
16. McLeish's Store
17. Row of Shops



9. Bert Wright Park

The land on which Bert Wright Park now exists was originally a market garden called 'Chue Hing's Garden' and small mixed farm. In the late 1920s there was a push to improve the business district and it was decided that the farm no longer suited the town centre. Robert McLeish, President of the Businessmen's Association, led a campaign to resume the site for public purposes. In 1928 the site became the first site in Bayswater to be resumed by the Roads Board and a small park named 'Whatley Gardens' was established.

There have been many community and recreational uses at the park. In the 1960s it was chosen as a site for the Senior Citizens Centre and Bayswater Library. The name was later changed to honour Bert Wright, a long standing Council member and prominent local businessman.

10. Bayswater Post Office

14 King William Street

The Bayswater Post Office site was originally built around 1895. The part of the building with the large chimney and pyramid shaped corrugated iron roof was the first part of the building constructed.



Over time, various additions in differing styles, but in the same basic materials, have been built.

The original building was the Receiving Office, with Mrs Smeed as the first Post Mistress. In 1898 the facility was upgraded to a Post and Telegraph office. Yet by the 1920's the facility was deemed inadequate. A major upgrade followed in 1935 but post-war population growth later saw the facility become obsolete.

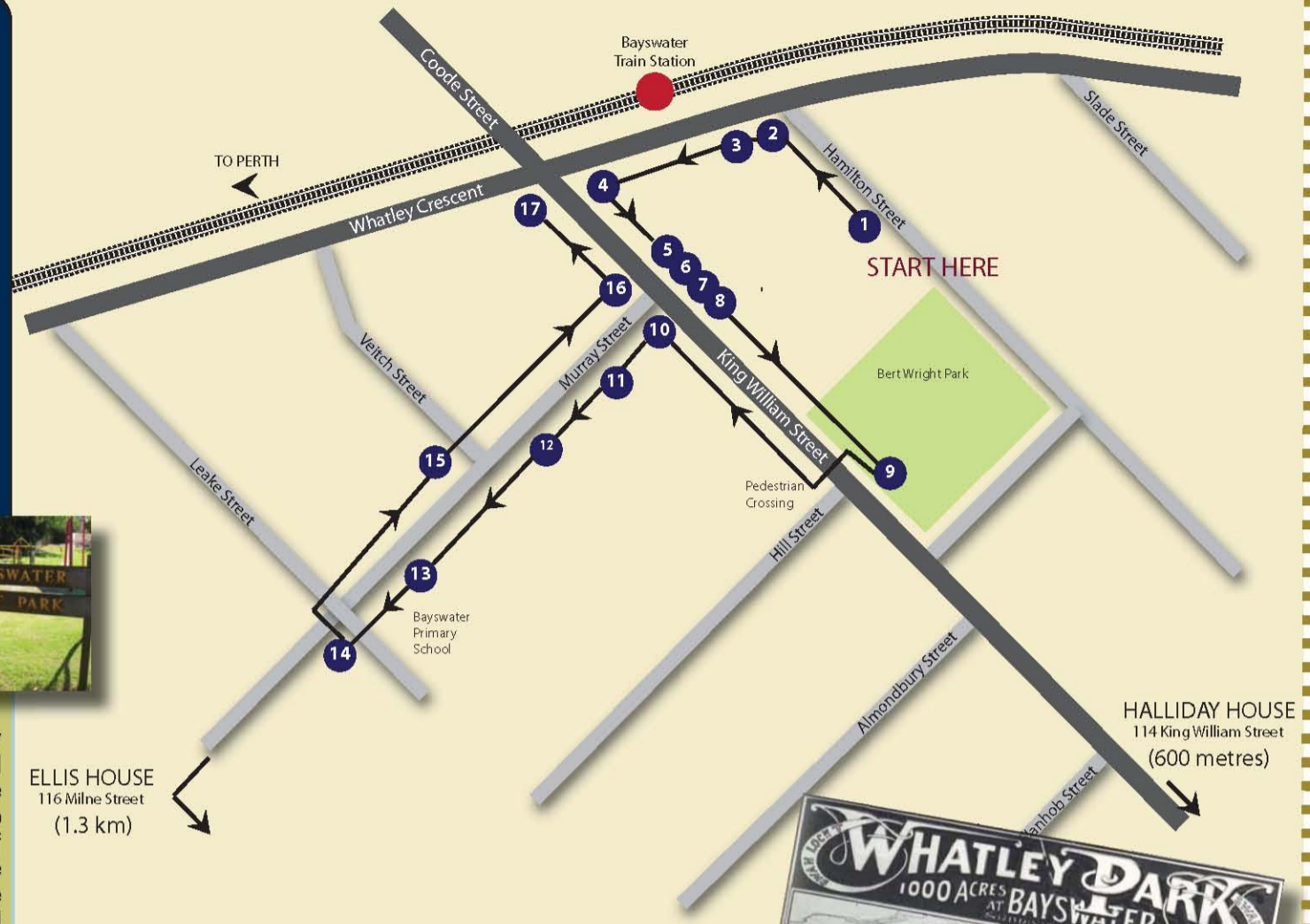
11. 1 & 1A Murray Street

It is thought that this pair of small timber frame cottages were built around 1900-01 by Edward Stevens who had owned the property. One house was a grocery store while the other was a residence. The grocery store was one of many that opened as the Bayswater Town Centre was establishing.



This site also has connections with early prominent residents. Stevens acquired the property from David Murray, the original owner of Section 38 of the Bayswater Estate, around 1899. Murray, a local pioneer, was one of the first landowners in the area and the district's first dairyman.

The housing and subdivision are rare examples of development before Roads Boards required development and subdivision approvals. The design is out of keeping with the generally spacious layout of Bayswater and the construction of two houses on one block built to the boundaries would have not been permitted after 1913. However for the time, these were substantial buildings, for most development of that era was alternatively of corrugated iron construction.



12. Murray's House

7 Murray Street

This house, otherwise known as 'The Rectory' was built by David Murray in 1900 and is believed to have been his second house on his farming property. The connection of the house with Murray (one of the area's pioneers), makes it historically important. The property was refurbished in 1927.



13. Bayswater Primary School

17 Murray Street

Bayswater Primary School was founded in 1894 and was campaigned for by William Leonard Smeed and Frederick Stone. As the area's population grew, so did overcrowding at the school and campaigning from teachers and parents resulted in the construction of new classrooms and buildings in 1900, 1906, 1910 and 1914. A parents and citizens association was later established and pushed for additional facilities including a hall which was built in the 1920's.

The oldest buildings onsite today include two brick rooms built in 1900. The original wooden school room was destroyed by fire in 1957.



14. School Corner Shop

19 Murray Street

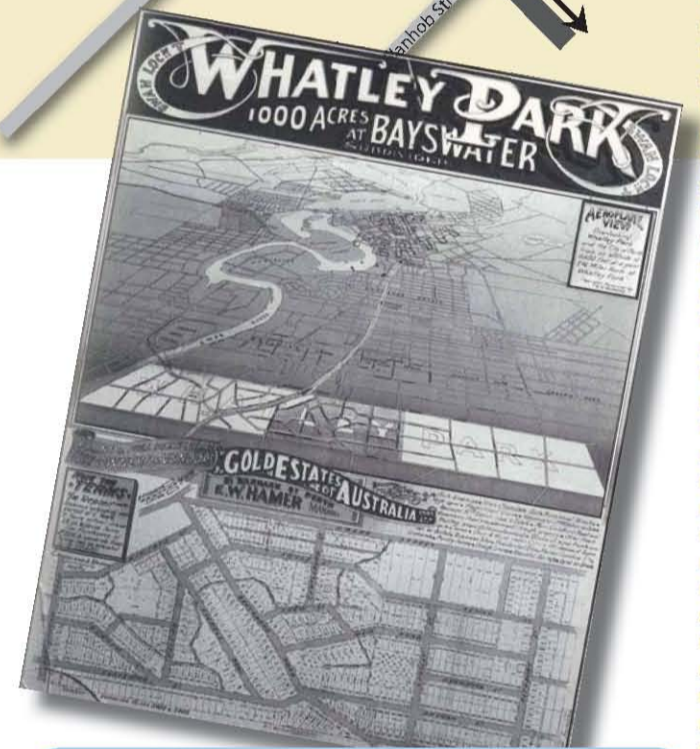
The shop was opened in 1928 by Mrs EJ Colliss. The building has recently been upgraded and has been retained as a residence.



15. 12 Murray Street



This house was built by Bob Marshall Sr in 1924 who was a well known local identity. It is a good example of a solid, villa style residence which was commonly built in the district in the 1920s.



16. McLeish's Store

10-12 King William Street

Constructed in 1906, this is one of the most significant buildings remaining in Bayswater, being the first major commercial building south of the railway line. It is also a rare example of a commercial building constructed in corrugated iron and one of the last to be built in corrugated iron in Bayswater before brick construction became more common. The building is also one of several larger structures from the period 1905-1908 - a building boom time for the district, resulting from the gold rushes and opening of the railway.

The McLeish family were of South Australian origin and originally built Bayswater's first butcher shop on the northern side of the railway line. The larger store was built after the original store burnt down. Robert McLeish was a powerful force in the community, channelling public opinion and chairing the local Businessmen's Association in the 1920s. The family was very active in the local community. In later years the store was well known as the home of Wright's Grocery Store.



17. Row of Shops

89 Whatley Crescent

This site was built after the Second World War and was home to the first bank in Bayswater.

