

SUMMARY OF MAYLANDS HISTORY

By Maylands Historical and Peninsula Association

The Maylands area was inhabited by the Noongar people for thousands of years prior to British arrival. The Derbal Yerrigan is a sacred place for Noongar people being created by the Waugal (a Dreamtime Creation Spirit). The river has many meeting places where indigenous peoples would gather as they travelled from place to place. It also served as a source of nourishment.

British development of Maylands occurred over two separate time periods. The peninsula area from 1830 was farmed by the Tranby Settlers led by Joseph Hardey. The area around the Maylands train station which contains historic homes and the town centre did not develop until the train station was built in 1900 to support the Mephan Ferguson pipe factory. The factory manufactured pipes for the Coolgardie water scheme. The area around the train station was originally called Falkirk.

Although the peninsula land area was known as Maylands for some time, Falkirk was renamed as Maylands and the area has been known as this until now. How the name Maylands was chosen is a source of conjecture among historians.

From 1830 to 1900 Maylands was mainly known for agricultural products, however, with the arrival of Mephan Ferguson, industry commenced and brought population growth as families moved into the area and men worked in the pipe foundry. The increased population resulted in the town centre growing to include pubs, tea rooms, grocery stores, chemists, real estate agents among many new businesses and many weatherboard cottage homes.

The land area housing the Ferguson Foundry has been rezoned residential and developed by the State Government into a housing estate. The names of the streets reflect its history with Foundry Street one of them and Falkirk Park the name of the estate and the park located in the development.

Three early hotels were Central Hotel 1902, Peninsula Hotel 1903 and Hoffman's Hotel. The Peninsula Hotel is now State Heritage listed and houses a DOME café. Maylands Primary School was established in 1903, Maylands Hall was built in 1920 and the War Memorial Cenotaph in 1921. The Maylands Hall, once a place of movie nights and dances, became the Maylands Library and currently houses the West Australian Youth Jazz Orchestra. The War Cenotaph now has a plaque recognising indigenous peoples who served their country and is the location for the Maylands annual ANZAC service. The Maylands Primary School building now houses the West Australian School of Instrumental Music.

The Victorian Institute and Industrial School for the Blind commenced construction in

1898 in Maylands. The buildings contained a factory, workshops and some residences. The 1932 the building was renamed The West Australian Institute and Industrial School for the Blind and in 1937 the Lotteries Commission and the government funded the construction of extra buildings and joined the original buildings together. This building has been repurposed and renovated and is now a world class facility that houses the West Australian Ballet Centre.

World War I and II had significant effects on the townships along the Midland rail line, of which Maylands is one. Many young men went to war from these towns and many did not survive. From news articles of the times it appears there were too frequent and too many announcements of more lives lost. In Perth, a community group named the Ugly Men's Association formed during WWI to support returned soldiers, widows and their families. There was a Maylands branch of this Association and they met regularly at the Masons Hall. By WWII the Government had set up support networks for returned soldiers, widows and their families.

Trams serviced Maylands along Guildford Road from 1934 until they were decommissioned. In 1924 the Commonwealth Government built the Maylands Aerodrome located on the Maylands Peninsula. It was the first commercial aerodrome in Western Australia. Charles Kingsford-Smith landed at the Aerodrome on the first trans Australia flight. The Aerodrome closed in 1963 as Perth Airport overtook its services. A historic hanger from the Aerodrome remains insitu on the peninsula and is used by the Western Australian Police Department. A memorial is located on the peninsula at the old Aerodrome site to commemorate the people and happenings at the Aerodrome. It is open to the public.



By Gore, Stuart, 1905-1984. - <http://catalogue.slwa.wa.gov.au/record=b2390832~S2>,
Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=18251318>

The Peninsular Brick Company commenced production at the Maylands clay pits in 1885. By 1905 the brickworks were purchased by Mills and Sons for use as pottery works. Mr Robert Law purchased land on the peninsula in early 1920s on behalf of the Metropolitan Brick Company including where the Maylands brickworks kiln is now located. The brickworks kiln is a Hoffman Kiln and one of only four remaining in Australia and the only one in Western Australia. It is State Heritage listed and is currently unopen to the public. Its possible restoration is being reviewed by the Heritage Council and it will hopefully be reopened to the public in the next few years.

The land area on the peninsula which was farmed by the Hardey family is now home to thousands of people. Tranby House, the Hardey family home, is State Heritage listed and managed by the National Trust. It is one of the oldest brick homes in Western Australia. It is open to the public and has a tea room in close proximity for visitors to the area.

Maylands today is a multicultural suburb undergoing significant change. The opening of new cafes, boutiques and small bars in historic town centre buildings has seen a rejuvenation of the suburb. There are now many cultural attractions and activities in

area. Noongar connection to country continues in Maylands to this day and is celebrated in many ways including NAIDOC week.

Some useful websites

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/places/peninsula-farm-tranby/>

<http://www.bayswater.wa.gov.au/development/heritage/local-landmarks>

<https://mhspa.website/>