

Claremont Meanders

EXPLORING THE PAST



TRAIL OF MEMORIES

A self-guided walk trail
Approx 1.5-2 hour duration (5km)

Image: John Atkinson, son of Pensioner Guard with Council horses c1930

Information and resources from Claremont Museum and local residents. Photographs courtesy of Claremont Museum Collection.

We gratefully acknowledge the donors of information and photographs used in the development of this map.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Town acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, and pays its respects to Elders past and present.

Map illustrator: Mary Yates

HERITAGE PRECINCT (REF. 2)

The area bounded by Mary, Guger, Melville and Loch Streets and Stirling Highway is a distinct heritage precinct and provides a tangible reminder of Claremont's past. Subdivided in the early 1900's the area was almost fully developed by 1915. Most of the original Federation style homes have been retained and lovingly conserved and extended. The majority of houses in this area are brick, a legacy of the by-laws introduced by the Claremont Council in 1899 declaring that houses must be built in brick or stone. Apparently cheaper forms of housing did not reflect Claremont's status as a 'charming suburb'.

The built environment may not have changed significantly, but the day to day life of the original residents was very different to what it is today. Without motor cars the local butchers, bakers, icemen and grocers delivered their wares by horse and cart. Corner grocery stores, usually with an attached residence, were scattered throughout Claremont providing an opportunity to acquire essential goods close to home. One such shop was located on the corner of Vaucluse Street and Stirling Highway. People were generally self sufficient with chicken runs, vegetable gardens and a wide range of fruit trees in most backyards. The early residents of Walter Street may have had a wider range of livestock in their back yards than most. The Tandy's kept geese, Mrs Falconer and the Denis Family both had cows, Amy Hyde a horse and Mrs Coleman had a commercial interest in angora rabbits.

Claremont was not immune to the effects of WWI & II. During WWI more than one in eight Claremont men serving in the Australian Infantry Force died in action. Those left at home struggled to support their families. Others were forced to leave their homes. The Fosters had to move to their holiday house in Scarborough when the Department of Navy requisitioned their home in Langsford Street during WWII. This was not uncommon if a family had more than one home.

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY GROUNDS: ROYAL SHOW (REF. 7 & 8)

Due to its close proximity to the railway line and the size of the parcel of land offered by the State Government, the Royal Agricultural Society moved to Claremont from Guildford in 1902 and the first Show in Claremont opened on the 1st of November, 1905. The Show was initially a five day event: Tuesday was judging day, Wednesday the Opening Ceremony and Peoples' Day, Thursday Children's Day, Friday livestock sales and ring events and Saturday Horses-in-Action. The Show was considered the premier festive event of the year providing an opportunity for "the country to meet the city".

Rural activities have always been at the core of the show's existence, promoting achievements in animal breeding, crop production, product processing and home industries. People flocked to the main arena to see the Horses-in-Action, the trotting races, sheepdog trials and of course the grand parade.

However, in order to survive, the Society had to attract a large number of city people seeking entertainment rather than education, therefore sideshows and other entertainments have become an important part of the Show.



CLAREMONT FOOTBALL CLUB (REF. 14)

Claremont Football Club, initially called the Claremont-Cottesloe Football Club, was officially formed in 1921 when the club was accepted into the Western Australian Football League. Within its first ten years Claremont introduced Malye Haywood, the first Aboriginal to play League Football in Western Australia and George Moloney, a well known player who became team captain in 1936. Under his captaincy the team was runner up in 1936 and 1937 and won the premiership in 1938, 1939 and 1940.

These years are remembered as the clubs 'golden' years.

The social importance of the football club to the community became evident during the 1930's depression and the hard times of the 1940's. Claremont businesses rallied to help the club and its players. The Claremont Hotel provided free board for members who could not find work and Drabbles Hardware provided employment to many players right through this period.

Arthur Macrides, a local greengrocer, supplied oranges for the three quarter time breaks and Jack Manolikas often gave the players fish and chips in the tin shed built by the community to replace the clubhouse that burnt down in 1944.



Gerald Neesham, the coach at the time, is credited with reviving Claremont into another golden era in the later 1980's and early 1990's. Prominent players were Dale Kickett, John Dimmer, John Hutton, Jason Norrish, Andrew McGovern and Scott Chisholm.

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY GROUNDS: SPEEDWAY (REF. 7 & 8)

Many ex-patrons say (although no doubt many Claremont residents would disagree) that nothing compared to the atmosphere, smell, noise, crowds and great racing that used to be the Claremont Speedway. For over 70 years, from 1927 to 2000, the Claremont Speedway, held on the Royal Agricultural Society grounds, was one of the oldest running speedway venues in the world. Unlike today's speedways patrons were able to get up close to the action with only a fence between them and the racing. Over the years there were eighteen fatalities, including one spectator at the speedway.

WORKING CLASS HERITAGE (REF. 9)

Due to an acute land shortage towards the end of WWII the Workers Home Board began large scale development of land north of the railway line in Claremont. The first subdivision included the eastern end of First and Second Avenues, Mengler, Mofflin and Judge Avenues. Rows of similar houses with dividing picket fences were built and as a result of a materials shortage affecting the nation the houses were very basic and generally of a poor quality.

In Mengler Avenue all the housing was allocated to ex-servicemen who had two or more children. The absence of parks meant that children occupied themselves roaming the nearby bushland, exploring Lake Claremont and playing rowdy football games in the street.

In the early days, surrounded by scrubby bushland with no built roads, footpaths, local shops or services and the closest train station at some distance, this part of Claremont was not an easy place to live. Residents had access to goods through local merchants, including a greengrocer, baker, butcher, fisherman, ice-man and milkman, who delivered their wares to the neighbourhood. This continued into the mid 1950's when a series of shops and an out-door theatre were developed in Ashton Avenue.

WYANDRA - 4 MELVILLE STREET (REF. 3)

Wyandra was built in 1906 for Sydney Roberts, a civil servant and Registrar of Mines. This magnificent and unusually large Federation Bungalow started life as a typical four room residence with a verandah. It is unclear where the name Wyandra originated from but the house was first recorded as having the name in 1908.

In the post World War II period, the Department of Public Health mounted a vigorous anti-tuberculosis campaign that directly affected the future use of Wyandra. In 1950 Wyandra was purchased by the Crown for the purposes of a preventorium to house children of tuberculosis patients in an effort to contain the spread of the disease. It was called the Morriston Tuberculosis Preventorium.

Although preventoriums were opened all over the world this is understood to have been the only one opened in Western Australia.

With the threat of tuberculosis controlled Wyandra was converted to nurses quarters in 1970 and called the Morrison Annexe. In 1978 it was transferred to the Mental Health Services and initially used as a private residence to accommodate psychiatrists from England and then as a hostel for intellectually disabled women.

In 2001 Wyandra was sold to a private owner which saw it come under significant development pressure. The heritage listing on the place saved it from demolition.

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY GROUNDS: 44TH BATTALION (REF. 7 & 8)

The 44th Battalion was formed in Claremont in February, 1916, and was made up of men from Fremantle through to Subiaco. The Battalion was stationed at the Claremont Showgrounds where the recruited men undertook their initial training. Twice weekly the troops would march to Swanbourne Beach for a swim and when field training and musketry commenced the 44th were a common sight marching along Stirling Highway to and from Buckland Hill for company field exercises.

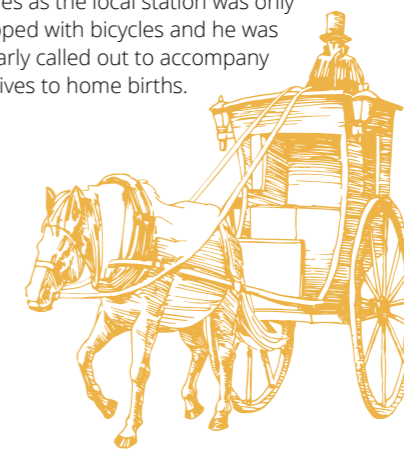
The people of Claremont adopted the 44th as "their Battalion" and formed a Battalion Committee that collected funds and goods for the troops and monitored their movements. The local spinning association made an offer to donate all of the woollen articles they produced to the troops. The people of Claremont also donated instruments to form the band of the 44th.

At a public parade conducted at the Claremont Showgrounds in May, 1916 Claremont Mayor GP Stevens presented the 44th with its Colours. The Colours went overseas with the Battalion when it embarked on June 6th 1916 to be safeguarded by the Bishop of Oxford during the war.

JACK WILLIAMS (REF. 10)

Jack Williams was one of the colourful characters of Claremont's past. Born in Threntham in Victoria he was orphaned at the age of 11 and made his living as a rabbit-trapper. During the Boer War he served as a cavalryman in South Africa where he acquired his deep and lasting love of horses.

After the war he migrated to Western Australia and set himself up as a horse cab proprietor operating from a stand opposite the Claremont Station. His cabs were frequently used as police vehicles as the local station was only equipped with bicycles and he was regularly called out to accompany midwives to home births.



On retirement he acquired a block of land in Davies Road where he built a small cottage and, refusing to ride in motor vehicles, he travelled in his sulky drawn by his grey carthorse Major. He owned other horses and local children would gather at his property where they learned to ride.

CLAREMONT TENNIS CLUB (REF. 15)

The Claremont Tennis Club was formed in 1899 and officially opened courts in Rowe Park in 1901. The club moved to Claremont Park in 1910 and then to its current location in Shenton Road in 1948. The timber clubhouse was also moved from Claremont Park to Shenton Road. The club's new site in Shenton Road had originally been the site of an electric sub station which supplied electricity to houses, shops and streetlights in Bay View Terrace. Made redundant the sub station was demolished in 1929.

CLAREMONT POOL (REF. 13)

The Claremont Baths, located in Freshwater Bay, were opened in 1901 and functioned as a centre where generations of children learned to swim and where national, state and school swimming titles were contested. Damaged, dilapidated and no longer appropriate as a venue for sporting competitions the Baths were demolished in 1971. The same year Claremont Council opened a new aquatic centre on Davies Road.

REFERENCE NUMBERS

You will find our walk trail numbered 1 through to 15. Use the reference below for information on the numbers. Search around the map for further facts and trivia.

On the back of the map you will find more detailed information. From the Claremont Train Station, head towards the Town Centre and turn left (East) onto Guger Street and follow the trail from here.

1. Claremont Train Station
2. Heritage Precinct
3. Wyandra House
4. St Thomas Church
5. UWA Endowment Land
6. Showgrounds Train Station
7. Royal Agricultural Society Grounds
8. Royal Agricultural Society Grounds
9. Working Class Heritage Area
10. Jack Williams - Claremont Character
11. Lake Claremont Bushland/Parkland
12. Lake Claremont Golf Course
13. Claremont Pool
14. Claremont Football Club
15. Claremont Tennis Club

MAP HINTS

YOU WILL FIND OUR WALK TRAIL
ARROWED & NUMBERED 1-15.
FURTHER FACTS & TRIVIA
MATCHING THESE NUMBERS
ARE DOTTED AROUND
THE MAP - WITH MORE
DETAILS ON THE REVERSE
FOR YOU TO DISCOVER!

MAP NOT TO SCALE

CLAREMONT MEANDERS ~ GLIMPSE THE PAST ~ TRAIL OF MEMORIES

LAKE CLAREMONT
PEAT WITH LIMY MARL ABOVE HIGH WATER MARK
1914-18 TROOPS LEARN ART OF CAMOUFLAGE AROUND SWAMP
WILD BRUMBIES COME TO DRINK FROM LAKE
1844 Geological Report: Swamp in valley between coastal aeolian sand dunes in Claremont
Wild Flower Show: 1898
TOWN OF CLAREMONT HAD A DRAUGHT HORSE/DRAY DEPOT UNTIL 1970s
NOTE: GOOD LUCK U - Still at Depot (somewhere!)

PARKLAND
SIX GIANT MORETON BAY FIG TREES HERE
CHILDREN CAN JUMP OVER THEIR LONG ROOTS!
FOX LAIR?
AUSTRALIAN SHELDUCK
AUSTRALASIAN SHOVELER
TWO DUCKS TO LEARN!

LAKEWAY (was Hay)
SCHOOL CHILDREN PLAY ON ARMY TANK AT OLD RUBBISH DUMP
ROMA'S DAIRY - Milking Sheds - as sweet as the boudoir of a refined lady
LINKS DAVIES
JOHN ROME had six hectares of fodder crops for his dairy cows here, beside Lake
CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND
MULDER PARK
ATKINSON'S BENCH
WILD IRISH family - rode bareback to Claremont from here
ELLIOTT
LAPSLEY
CLUBHOUSE
GOLF COURSE
PENSIIONER GUARD SUTTON was given land at Butler's Swamp in 1850s
STIRLING ROAD PARK
CLAREMONT POOL
25m Geothermal heating OPENED 1971
MAIN POOL 8LANE 50m
TEMP 27.5° YEAR ROUND
POND WANDERING GOATS 5/- DELIVERED HERE TIL 1974
WATER SUPPLY BORE
DEPRESSION ERA 1930
RAFFLE FOR UNEMPLOYED
THE CEDUS
YOU COULD WIN! SUPERB OAK BEDROOM SUITE
SHENTON
BULLOCH'S WOOD YARD x Here x
ALLGRASS COURTS AT TENNIS CLUB TODAY
CLAREMONT Telephone Exchange 1912
STIRLING ROAD
KOTT
ADVERT: WEST AUSTRALIAN - JAMES MORRISON - STOCK & STATION AGENT - August 25 1880
FINE elevated position commanding PERTH and FREMANTLE...
SITUATED MIDWAY BETWEEN...
OFFERED FOR SALE...
GENTLEMEN offered for sale...
pleasures of Country Life after their day's work is over...
Suburban Villa...
Buying what Kensington is...
Particulars apply to James M.

CLAREMONT CRESCENT
CLAREMONT declared Municipality 15 JUNE 1898
ST. QUENTIN
Town of Claremont SHOPS in this area
FROM 1899 all houses had to be brick or stone

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF WA.
1901 STATE OFFERS LAND
1902 RAS ACCEPTS
1905 FIRST SHOW IN CLAREMONT (previously in Guildford)
MAIN ARENA
SPEEDWAY PROGRAMME
70 YRS - CLOSED 2000
FAMOUS FIREWORKS SHOW
HALL OF FAME
Ride The CHAIRLIFT
IN 1834 the very first Show was known as the 'Fair and Cattle Show'. Total Colony stock at that time was only - 307 cows, 96 working cattle, 374 pigs, 97 bulls/steers, 492 goats and 3545 sheep (At Guildford)

CLAREMONT FOOTBALL CLUB
THE TIGER'S CLUB FORMED IN 1921
GRANDSTAND DESTROYED 1944
PCYC
CLAREMONT FOOTBALL CLUB

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF WA.
270 different SHOWBAGS in 2009!
ONCE BAGS OF FREE SAMPLES
FILMS OF THE DAY
Open Air Picture Garden 1950s-62 Run by Claremont District Theatres
ENGINEER had hessian 'house' in 1900

CLAREMONT HUNT CLUB
...over splendid galloping country... (from KINGS PARK)
CLAREMONT HUNT CLUB...
JACK was a very popular character who loved horses. He was orphaned at 11. Children rode his Shetland - Robin Hood!

CLAREMONT'S - FIRST HORSE-DRAWN TAXI
owned by JACK WILLIAMS - he waited for business here, opposite the station
FEDERATION STYLE HOME
This era 1890-1920
FEDERATION STYLE details:
a Gable
b Iron roof
c Chimneys with terracotta pots
d Tuckpointed brickwork
e Stucco bands
f Bullnosed Verandah roof
ALSO - Verandah timber - floor, posts & frieze

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Map illustrator: Mary Yates

ANSWER: APPROX HEIGHT 1.2m or 63ft... (Parks Dept)