

Prospect - Timeline

Before the settlement of New South Wales by Europeans, the Blacktown district was inhabited by the Darug Aboriginal people, who are the traditional owners and ongoing custodians of the land. We pay our respect to elders past and present, and acknowledge the Aboriginal people for their custodianship of the land.

Captain Arthur Phillip called the area "Bellevue" but later changed the name to Prospect.

1788	Governor Arthur Phillip explored the area on 26 April and named it Bellevue Hill. Bellevue means 'fine prospect'. The area later became known as Prospect Hill and then gradually Prospect.
1791	Governor Phillip granted land at Prospect to 13 ex-convicts. By the end of the year, only 20 acres of land had been cultivated.
1792	A further six families joined the other settlers.
1794	The total of land grants in the area was 25.
1798	Only six of original settlers remained.
1799	160 acres of land was granted to John Kennedy on 3 May.
1802	Prospect Hill was included in the new parish of St John based at Parramatta.
1806	William Lawson bought 30 acres west of Prospect Hill
1808	William Lawson was granted 500 acres north east of Prospect Hill.
1810	First mention of Lawson family living at Prospect.
1813	William Lawson departs Prospect to meet Gregory Blaxland and William Charles Wentworth for the exploration trip over the Blue Mountains.
1819	A road from Prospect to Richmond was built. Jacques Arago's painting shows Lawson's <i>Veteran Hall</i> under construction. Francis Peisley built <i>The Fox Under The Hill Inn</i> .
1820s	Local roads partly paved with broken dolerite from surface of Prospect Hill. Toll Bar erected opposite the <i>The Fox Under The Hill Inn</i> . Regular coach service operated along the Western Road to Penrith.
1821	Lawson family occupy newly completed homestead <i>Veteran Hall</i> .
1822	Surveyor General John Oxley advised Governor Brisbane that 1,050 acres of Crown Land were allocated in Prospect for town, church and school. In September, convict clearing gangs assigned to William Lawson at <i>Veteran Hall</i> . William Lawson receives 500 acre grant.
1825	Governor Darling's despatches recorded church services were held at the school master's house. Tenders called for the building of a church and school, but none finalised.
1828	According to Census William Lawson retained a workforce of 27 convict labourers and mechanics at <i>Veteran Hall</i> , which included an overseer, grooms, blacksmith and clerk.
1830	<i>Fox Under The Hill Inn</i> burnt down.
1830s	Subdivision of John Kennedy's 160 acre grant laid basis for the Prospect village.
1832	First coach service across Blue Mountains passed through Prospect on its two-day journey. <i>Fox Under The Hill Inn</i> re-built. <i>Veteran Hall</i> described as having "one of the richest mineral soils in the colony".
1833	The first record of Mass celebrated was at the family home of Matthew Hyland on 16 July.
1836-37	Greystanes (home of Nelson Simmons Lawson, 3 rd son of William Lawson) was built.
1838	William Lawson called for tenders to build an Anglican church.
1841	William Broughton, the Bishop of Sydney, opened St Bartholomew's Anglican Church, designed by Henry Robertson on 14 April. First baptisms' at St Bartholomew's, Margaret, Mary and James Goodin on 2 May.

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	First burials at St Bartholomew's, Margaret and Ann Goodin on 18 July.
1845	A Catholic School commenced at Prospect with 55 children, taught by Mr John McFaddin.
1848	Wells Gazetteer stated that there were 117 houses and 714 inhabitants across the whole Parish of Prospect.
1850	William Lawson died, aged 76 years on 16 June. He was buried in St Bartholomew's churchyard. Henry Neeve built <i>Neeves' Cottage</i> (slab house) in around 1850.
1850s	William Lawson Jnr. adds 'new front' to <i>Veteran Hall</i> . Lawrence Hyland built <i>Prospect Inn</i> on the Western Road.
1855	Archdeacon John McEncroe laid the foundation stone of St Brigid's Catholic Church, on the corner of Thornley Road and the Western Road on 19 July.
1856	Archbishop John Bede Polding opened St Brigid's Catholic Church on 27 July.
1862	E. O'Doherty operated a Post Office service. Reverend Donkin operated a private school near the post office.
1867	William Pidcock appointed first Head Master of Prospect Public School on 28 October. James Watts appointed as Prospect postmaster. Prospect Public School opened.
1870	Stone quarry opened by Mr Walding and Warrins to supply blue-metal to the Sydney Council and government departments. They built a narrow gauge tramway to the Western Railway at Fullager's Bank, 4 ½ miles in length. Bailliere's gazetteer described Prospect as a postal village. Population of the village was 100.
c1871	Five acres of land at the corner of Blacktown Rd and the Western Rd bought for thirteen pounds ten shillings, for the erection of a public school.
1871	New Prospect Public School building completed. Teacher's residence was a four room cottage with no kitchen or bathroom.
1874	James Watts and his wife Mary Ann operated the general store and Post Office. NSW Mines Department annual report stated basalt on Prospect Hill was good quality, in unlimited quantities.
1875	Toll Bar opposite <i>Fox Under The Hill Inn</i> removed.
1879	Teacher's residence extended with an extra room, kitchen and verandah.
1880	<i>Veteran Hall</i> and its surrounding 2,000 acre property resumed by the Board of Water Supply and Sewerage. Work on Prospect Reservoir commenced.
1881	James Manning was issued a publican's license for <i>Royal Cricketer's Arms</i> hotel on 16 September. Flushcombe Stores, which James Manning operated in partnership with William Neeves, was established next to the <i>Royal Cricketer's Arms</i> hotel. Parents petitioned for a weather shed at the school.
1882	A hall was built at Prospect Reservoir to serve as Chapel and school for the families of workers building the Reservoir. This hall was later moved to St Bartholomew's Church property and used as the Sunday School hall. Weather shed at school completed.
1883	Presbytery was built next to St Brigid's Church. Two police constables stationed at Prospect. First commercial quarrying begun by Sperring and Partner.
1885	Father Patrick Augustine Holland appointed as first Parish Priest of Prospect.
1887	The parish of Prospect was proclaimed on 26 February. The red brick octagonal Valve House, as well as the lower Valve House, also octagonal in style, located below the dam wall were built. This valve house released the water into the Lower Canal.

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	Hotels & Hoteliers: Nils Desperandum, Charles Curtis; Reservoir Hotel, John Bucket; Royal Cricketer's Arms, John Manning; Commercial Hotel, Nelens Radbourn; Prospect Inn, John Walton.
1888	Completion of Prospect Reservoir. Metropolitan Water Supply Board used <i>Veteran Hall</i> as a Manager's Residence from 1888 til 1912. Police station downgraded to a single constable. Municipality of Prospect & Sherwood, area 20 square miles, 345 houses, population estimated at 1725. Prospect Registry Office closed in July.
c1890	The Post Office building was built at Prospect (now 23 Tarlington Place).
Mid 1890s	Reservoir post office closed.
1891	Sacristy built on to St Brigid's Church. Postal Inspector reported that the Reservoir works village had a 'very deserted appearance'.
1892	The Commissioners for Fisheries established a trout hatchery at Prospect Reservoir which supplied trout for all NSW streams until 1926.
1893	Prospect Reservoir transferred to the Board of Water Supply and Sewerage.
1895	Arthur Streeton completes a painting of Prospect Reservoir.
1897	Reservoir school closed in January. Constable Beattie at Prospect Police Station. New avenue under construction from Veteran Hall to Western Road.
1898	James Watts died. His wife Mary Ann Watts continued to operate the general store and Post Office. His widowed daughter, Harriet Higgin became Postmistress.
1899	Residents of Prospect voted against Federation, 18 for, 53 against in June. A new road was built at the foot of the dam to embankment to ease pressure.
1900	Cottage built at Reservoir for the gardener. Yewen's Directory showed a variety of agricultural crops grown.
1902	A private railway began operation from Prospect Quarry to Toongabbie on 7 April, which ran until 1945.
1903	The Emu and Prospect Road Gravel and Metal Company formed.
1904	Florence and Edward Cooney became caretakers of St Brigid's Church.
1907	Cottage built at Reservoir for one of the maintenance men. All Metropolitan Water Supply & Drainage Board residences at the Reservoir provided with 'proper sanitary arrangements' including septic tanks and continuous filters.
1909	Cottages at the Reservoir had earth-closets replaced with septic tanks.
1910	Mary Ann Watts died. Son George Henry Watts (a local builder) bought the post office and store and occupied the house with his wife and four children. His daughter, Ethel Watts became the Postmistress.
1913	Veteran Hall and surrounding paddocks leased on 1 January until 1915 to the Commonwealth military authorities to be used as a remount depot. John Tarlington's grant was subdivided for residential lots, with many of them being purchased by George Watts. Royal Cricketer's Arms Hotel was sold to Edward and Florence Cooney (daughter of James and Agnes Manning) who operated a dairy farm. Their daughters ran a tea-room in the main brick dwelling.
1915	Veteran Hall handed back by the military to the Water Board, but was not re-occupied. Georgina Watts became Postmistress.
1919	Emu and Prospect Gravel and Road Metal Company taken over by the New South Wales Blue Metal Company.
1921	New company incorporated, New South Wales Associated Blue Metal Quarries Limited.

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1923	<p>Father Dionis Spiteri at St Brigid's Church conducted the first Maltese Mission in Australia.</p> <p>School of Arts building opened with a dance on 2 June. The land was donated to the council by George Watts.</p> <p>George Henry Watts died.</p> <p>School enrolments increased due to growing local population.</p>
1925	Water Board announced intention to demolish Veteran Hall on 26 December.
1926	<p>Widemere Quarry opened on the southern side of Prospect Hill with a private railway from the quarry to Fairfield station. This operated until 1945.</p> <p>Great Western Road gazetted as a 'Main Road'.</p>
1927	The electricity substation on Blacktown Road was opened on 17 December. The Shire President's wife Mrs William Thomas Cable turned on the electricity.
1929	<p>Veteran Hall demolished.</p> <p>Great Western Road became the Great Western Highway.</p>
1933	New school building completed at a cost of £2,254.
1936	Charley family sell Prospect Hill to NSW Associated Blue Metal Quarries Ltd for £38,000.
1937	<p>Royal Cricketer's Arms Hotel was a private residence under several owners until 1963.</p> <p>Fox Hills Golf course was operating.</p>
1939	<p>During WWII there was an anti-aircraft battery at Prospect Reservoir.</p> <p>Avenue of Jacarandas planted at the Reservoir.</p>
1942	Rifle range associated with Wallgrove army camp was operating.
1944	George Watts' widow Grace Louise died in January, leaving the store and post office business to her daughters, Georgina and Ethel.
1946	<p>Styles Blue Metal Co Ltd, leased land to the west of Prospect Quarry from the Water Board. This quarry later operated by Ready Mixed Concrete.</p> <p>Georgina Watts retired as Postmistress and the family sold the business. The Watts family had run the Post Office for 79 years.</p> <p>Greystanes House was demolished</p>
1947	The population of Prospect was 671.
1948	In December, The National Trust of Australia (NSW) included St Bartholomew's Church on its first list of buildings considered essential to the heritage of New South Wales.
1949	Mr J.A. Cornell applied for a licence to screen films in the School of Arts building.
1950s	Honeman family operated <i>Honey's</i> , a roadhouse on the Western Road, selling meals and petrol. This was near the Reservoir Rd intersection.
1950	The first film, " <i>Blue Skies</i> ", screened at the School of Arts on 18 January.
1951	<p>BMG established a hot mix bitumen plant called Bituminous Pavements at Prospect.</p> <p>Land north of the Great Western Highway/Reservoir Road zoned as green belt land.</p>
1952	4 th Australian Pan Pacific Scout Jamboree held at Prospect Hill, Greystanes, from 29 December until 9 January 1953.
1953	CSIRO established a Sheep Biology Laboratory.
1954	<p>NSW Associated Blue Metal Quarries Limited was taken over by Blue Metal Industries Ltd (BMI).</p> <p>Blacktown Sub-station set up at 432 Blacktown Road, Prospect.</p>
1956	<p>Prospect County Council took over electricity supply for the area.</p> <p>A new room added to the Public School.</p>
1958	Film screening ceased at the School of Arts on 7 June.
1959	CSIRO site was renamed as "Ian Clunies Ross Animal Research Laboratory".

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1961	Gold discovered on Prospect Hill, though assays found it was not in payable quantity.
1962	Copper guttering stolen from St Bartholomew's Church.
1963	Royal Cricketer's Arms Hotel was bought by the Blacktown Drive-In and served as a caretaker's residence. Hoyts Skyline Drive-In opened with <i>State Fair</i> on 20 December.
1964	Prospect Inn demolished to build the present Prospect Hotel. Millers Hotel/Motel built to replace Prospect Hotel, to the rear of original site. Fox Under The Hill Inn demolished to make way for Golf Club car park.
1967	Transfer of Prospect School of Arts to Blacktown Municipal Council. Group of interested parties met at St Bartholomew's Church to commence cleaning up the grounds. The Prospect Heritage Trust, under different names, grew from this group. Last service held at St Bartholomew's Church 31 December.
1968	Prospect deviation of Great Western Highway, which cut off a large section of the old highway, constructed at a cost of \$1,122,000. Substantial changes made to electricity supply system. Electricity Commission and Prospect County Council jointly rebuilt the Blacktown Substation.
c1969	Prospect School of Arts building destroyed by fire.
1970s	New South Wales Department of Main Roads constructed Western Freeway, running parallel to Great Western Highway, between Prospect and Penrith.
1970	St Bartholomew's Church listed in The Register of the National Estate. Cairn erected to mark the site of Veteran Hall.
1972	Post Office closed. Mr Albert Waldron was the last Postmaster. In May St Bartholomew's Preservation Committee formed. First "Old Ironbark's Day" held in June. Blacktown Municipal Council leased from Church of England, a part of St Bartholomew's Church property for 50 years in August. William Lawson Park (Reserve 44) name officially assigned on 28 January.
1973	St Bartholomew's Church Classified Potential "A", amongst the top 70 buildings in NSW.
1975	Last Mass held at St Brigid's Church.
1976	The New South Wales Planning and Environment Commission resumed the post office property. Population 1,371 (Census). The number of dwellings is 377.
1977	St Brigid's Church was dismantled, with some bricks used for St Michael's Church, Blacktown South. New Blacktown electricity sub-station completed in March.
1978	Restoration works on St Bartholomew's Church completed.
1979	Prospect Dam wall strengthened by the placement of stabilising beams on the downstream face. Village Grand Prix racing tracks opened on 6 May at Rowood Road, Prospect.
1981	Population was 10,330 (Census)
1982	Permanent Conservation Order No 37 placed on St Bartholomew's Church on recommendation of the Heritage Council of New South Wales on 19 February. Boral Ltd acquired Blue Metal Industries (BMI) Ltd in October.
1983	William Lawson Child Care Centre opened on 27 August.
1986	Population was 4,100 (Census) Colonial First State Property constructed Homebase Shopping Centre on Stoddart Road. Homeworld display centre established.

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1987	The suburb of Huntingwood named on 9 January, and area was developed to cater for industry, warehousing and goods handling
1988	Cannon Street Child Care Centre opened on 7 September. Prospect Public School closed in December.
1989	Deutsche Schule Johannes Gutenberg, Australia's first German day School, opened with 40 pupils in the former Prospect Public School in February. Department of Planning placed a Permanent Conservation Order on Royal Cricketer's Arms Hotel and purchased the property on 5 May. St Bartholomew's Church gutted by fire on 4 November. Statewide Roads Ltd commenced work on the 'missing link' of the M4, between Mays Hill and Prospect.
1990	State Tourism, Lands and Forests Minister, Mr. Garry West, officially opened the Forestry Commission's new mechanical workshop between the Great Western Highway and Augusta Street in November.
1991	Population was 4,811 (Census) Veteran Hall site listed in the Register of the National Estate on 5 June. Prospect Trust at 'A Day of History & Heritage' at St Bartholomew's Church, gave a Dageurrotype of Caroline Lawson (nee Icely) and her sons Thomas and James to the Mitchell Library on 21 July NSW State Public Works replaced the roof of St Bartholomew's Church and repaired brickwork.
1992	The 'missing link' of M4 motorway between Mays Hill and Prospect opened in May. Prospect Park (Reserve 388) name officially assigned on 2 October.
1993	Regional Headquarters for the State Emergency Services (SES) established in Old Church Lane. Robert Brown, founder of The Prospect Trust, died on 21 May. First 'Back to Prospect Day' held at St Bartholomew's Church on 18 July.
1994	Royal Cricketer's Arms Hotel leased to James and Susan Kelly who restored the interior and re-opened it as an English style pub in May.
1995	Lower Prospect Canal, from Prospect Reservoir to Guildford, was decommissioned by Sydney Water in July.
1996	Population was 5,148 (Census). Prospect Reservoir Filtration Plant commissioned. State Government establish a Steering Committee to develop a plan of management for Prospect Lower Canal.
1997	IKEA, a home furnishing Swedish retailer opened at HomeBase Shopping Centre. Vandalism and a fire at St Bartholomew's Church Hall. Prospect Dam wall strengthened by the placement of stabilising beams on the upstream face.
1998	High levels of cryptosporidium cysts and giardia cysts found in water supply
1999	Royal Cricketer's Arms Inn listed on State Heritage Register on 2 April. Prospect History Cottage opened on 17 April. Boral released colour brochure outlining plans for 300Ha Greystanes Estate and hold an open day at the estate on 9 June. Prospect Reservoir listed on State Heritage Register on 18 November.
2000	Lower Prospect Canal Reserve transferred from Sydney Water to the Minister for the Environment in August. Blacktown City Council purchased St Bartholomew's Church and cemetery from the Anglican Church. Site of <i>Veteran Hall</i> homestead listed on The Australian Heritage Commission's Register of the National Estate Database. CSIRO announce Prospect site to close. Tenders chosen to fill Lower Prospect Canal.

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2001	<p>St Bartholomew's Church restored for community use with the aid of government grants.</p> <p>Timbertop Reserve (Reserve 408) name officially assigned on 5 October.</p> <p>Population was 4,278 (Census).</p> <p>Prospect Trust officially changed name to The Prospect Heritage Trust Inc.</p> <p>Boral start plans to close down the quarry and turn the 330ha site into half light industrial, half housing and open space, with completion date of 2013.</p> <p>Boral hold community open day at the 300ha Greystanes Estate on 5 August. First plans of the housing estate at Greystanes are on public display on 15 August.</p> <p>Premier Bob Carr launched 1st stage of \$600million Business Park on 31 August.</p>
2002	<p>An old well rediscovered, probably built by convicts.</p> <p>CSIRO vacated Prospect site in January.</p>
2003	<p>CSIRO sold its Laboratory site in October.</p> <p>Prospect Hill listed on State Heritage Register on 17 October.</p>
2004	<p>Last 'Back to Prospect Day' held by The Prospect Heritage Trust on 18 July.</p> <p>September: HomeBase Shopping Centre renamed HomeWorks.</p> <p>IKEA at HomeWorks, closed on 28 November.</p> <p>Reserve on corner of Flushcombe Rd and Great Western Highway named "<i>Robert Brown Reserve</i>".</p> <p>7.7 km bicycle/walking track on Lower Prospect Canal opened.</p>
2005	<p>Blacktown City Council formed a Friends of St Bartholomew's group to assist Council in protecting and conserving the integrity of the Church and Cemetery in April.</p> <p>Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources call for proposals from the private sector for development of a major commercial recreation facility on a 25ha site adjacent to the M4 Motorway on 15 March.</p> <p>Blacktown City Council commission a heritage study of the Prospect area.</p>
2006	<p>First 'Back to St Bartholomew's Day' held by Friends of St Bartholomew's held on 1 April.</p> <p>Population 4,217 (Census).</p>
2007	<p>Lewis Henry Campbell family reunion held at St Bartholomew's on 22 April.</p> <p>First Cemetery Workshop at St Bartholomew's held by Friends of St Bartholomew's on 4 August.</p>
2008	<p>Millstone unveiled at Prospect History Cottage on 2 April.</p> <p>Sydney Water announced \$10million hydro-power generation plant to be added to Prospect Reservoir filtration plant on 14 August.</p>
2010	<p>Eddie Aaw Reserve (Reserve 440) name officially assigned on 26 March. Named in honour of Eddie Aaw who was one of three businessmen who built and ran the Ace Squash Courts on Devitt Street, Blacktown.</p>
2011	<p>Population 4,621 (Census)</p>
2016	<p>Population 4,716 (Census)</p>
2018	<p>Proposed expansion of St Bartholomew's Cemetery proposed.</p>
2019	<p>Wet'n'Wild Theme Park rebranded as Raging Waters Sydney.</p> <p>A memorial plaque to the memory of Maria Lock was unveiled on 22 September.</p> <p>Public exhibition for public comment on proposed extension of St Bartholomew's Church held from 11 September to 11 October.</p> <p>Population 44 (includes Arndell Park Huntingwood and Prospect Reservoir)</p>
2020	<p>Upgrade work on Prospect Highway between Reservoir Road, Prospect and St Martins Crescent, Blacktown started in June and is expected to be completed by late 2024.</p>
2021	<p>Population 14,866 (Census - includes Prospect Reservoir and some part of Seven Hills)</p>