

Narellan Vale

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Narellan Vale is one of the new suburbs in the Camden area on Sydney's south-west suburban fringe, the traditional lands of the Dharawal and Gundungurra people. Narellan Vale is located in the central part of the Camden Council Local Government Area. In 2001 it had a population of 6,967 in one of the fastest growing areas of Sydney. Between 1996 and 2001 the population increase in Narellan Vale was 117 per cent.

Narellan Vale is bounded on the north by Narellan Road, the west by Camden Bypass and Richardson Road, the southern boundary in the ridge line south of Welling Drive, and the eastern boundary takes in Morshead Road and a line travelling south along the ridge to Welling Drive. This relatively new suburb is bounded on the east by Mount Annan, in the south by Spring Farm and its new land releases, in the west by Elderslie and Narellan, and finally in the north the industrial area of Smeaton Grange.

The first land release in the Narellan Vale area was in 1990 with Narellan Gardens Estate in the Morshead Road area. This prompted the desire for a new suburb name for the development. The three alternatives considered were Narellan Vale, William Grove and Howe Park, the latter two related to William Howe, who was given the original grant on which most of Narellan Vale is located. The northern part of the Narellan Vale area (the frontage up to Narellan Road) is located on the grant given to William Hovell called *Narralling* in 1816 of 700 acres.

William Howe was given a grant of 3000 acres called *Eskdale* in 1818. He was a member of the local gentry and a magistrate in the 1820 and later became Superintendent of Campbelltown Police. Howe was a member of the 1824 Hume and Hovell expedition to Port Phillip. In 1816 Howe purchased Micheal Hayes's 120 acre grant, which gave him access to the Nepean River. With other purchases this was amalgamated into *Glenlee* by 1827, which had river frontage on the eastern side of the Nepean River, opposite the Macarthur's *Camden Park*. *Glenlee* had a fine Georgian house (1824) and by 1830 Howe had developed the property into a dairy farm 'laid out in the best English style'. The house has extensive vistas of the Nepean floodplain to *Camden Park* and beyond.

One of the notable attractions in the area in the 1960s-1980s was the drive-in theatre, which was located on Morshead Road. It owned and operated by EJ Frazer from 1967-1990 as the Gayline Drive In Movie Theatre. Frazer lived in the house on the premises. The drive-in had

a snack bar selling banana fritters, hot dogs, battered savs, chiko rolls, pop corn, choc tops and ice-creams. It had a large screen, a projector booth, a children's playground and a large parking area. It eventually closed down, like many in the Sydney area, when residential development at Narellan Vale started to grow and land was more valuable as real estate. During its heyday it was very popular and allowed the entire family to go to the movies and not have to hire a baby-sitter. Lots of local teenagers had access to cars and found the drive-in an ideal place for a date. But unfortunately, lifestyles have changed and people prefer the comfort of suburban movie theatres.

References

'Camden Bibliography' , *Camden History*, <http://www.camdenhistory.org.au>. Online.