Blue Mountains History Hound — No. 6

Blue Mountains Weekend Leases
Part 1 — Hazelbrook

Keith Painter

During my research recently for the Horseshoe Falls Reserve and the short-lived Diggers Bridge at Hazelbrook I discovered “Weekend Leases”. And yes, I followed the “sidetrack” into that topic.

In December 1912 John Trefle became the Minister for Lands in NSW. He set out to reform the way Crown Lands were managed. He introduced a Bill which, among other measures, introduced Weekend Leases, where the lessee was only required to live on the holding during the weekend (Sydney Morning Herald, 31 Jul 1914, p7 c4, Trove#15526452; Northern Star [Lismore], 31 Jul 1914, p4 c6, Trove#72133643). Sadly, before the scheme was implemented, Mr Trefle, 49 years old, died in January 1915 of complications after an appendix operation. Another of his schemes which affected the Blue Mountains, and which was brought to fruition by his successor Mr Ashford, was the setting up of one trust in each Blue Mountains town to control the local reserves (Lithgow Mercury, 26 Mar 1917, p2 c7, Trove#218768244; Government Gazette of NSW, 9 Mar 1917, p1487, Trove#229428075; 21 Dec 1917, p6925, Trove#227330384).

“Weekender”

It could perhaps be said that Mr Trefle was responsible for the great Australian tradition of having a beach, bush or mountain “Weekender”.

The Weekend Lease legislation was passed and implemented in 1916. Weekend Leases were to be made available in various places in the state. Initially, three towns in the Blue Mountains were included in the scheme: Glenbrook, Hazelbrook and Blackheath. Glenbrook had one area; Hazelbrook had three; and Blackheath had two.

In this History Hound report let’s have a look at the Hazelbrook Weekend Lease schemes.

The three areas were located at:
• Terrace Falls Road;
• Winbourne Road;
• Alexander Road (then known as King Edward Parade).

All three Hazelbrook areas had weekend leases granted.
All three had some lots withdrawn from the scheme.

Weekend Lease Area No. 1 — Terrace Falls Road

The first Weekend Lease area in the state was at Hazelbrook and naturally it was designated “Weekend Lease Area No. 1”. See Diagram B in Figures 1 and 2.

It consisted of 53 (some reports said 55) blocks fronting Terrace Falls Road. I have

Figure 1. The area outlined in brown through the vertical centre of this parish map excerpt is Weekend Lease Area No. 1.
Parish of Linden, County Cook, Parish Map, Edition 5. hirv.nswls.com.au
counted 53 in the *Government Gazette* table (*Government Gazette* NSW, 1 Sep 1916, p5301,5302, Trove#225844949/13888973).

During October 1916, Weekend Lease Areas in several other districts of NSW were notified: Berrima (Weekend Lease Area No. 5, *Government Gazette*, 13 Oct 1916, p6120, Trove#225846617), Nos. 2 & 3 Murwillumbah, No. 4 Bungendore, No. 6 Field of Mars, No. 7 Gosford, and No. 8 Taree.

The blocks in Hazelbrook Area No. 1 ranged in size from 36 perches to 1 rood 15 perches (roughly ¼ acre or .09 hectare to 3/8 acre or 0.15 hectare). They were Portions 158 to 210, Parish of Linden, County Cook.

The leases were notified in the *Government Gazette*, 1 Sep 1916, p5301,5302, and advertised in various newspapers including *The Sun* (3 Sep 1916, p22 c7, Trove#223376594). The rent was £1 a year plus the applicant had to pay a survey fee of £3/5/-.

However, a few weeks later the Government advertised a modification to the terms of the leases by adding the following “special condition”: “The lessee shall, within eighteen months after the date of confirmation of his application, erect upon the week-end lease, and thereafter maintain, a dwelling-house of not less than fifty pounds (£50) in value”. See Figure 3.

Even before this extra “burden” on would-be lease holders there had been an outcry against the provisions of the lease agreements. Critics pointed out that the conditions belonged more to large rural holdings than to small weekender blocks (Blue Mountain Echo, 15 Sep 1916, p2 c6, Trove#108042260).

The wheels of government are often slow to turn but eventually 14 months later in November 1917 a Modification was gazetted “cancelling the following special condition ... erect ... dwelling-house of not less than fifty pounds (£50) in value”. The cancellation applied to Weekend Lease Areas 1 and 18 (Hazelbrook), Area No. 10 (Blackheath) and various others (Government Gazette, 30 Nov 1917, p6464, Trove#227329562).

Between 1920 and 1937 notification was given that a number of blocks would be forfeited for non-payment of rent or arrears:

- 13 Feb 1920, Portion 201, Lessee Arthur Leslie Lyell;
- 2 Jul 1920, Portion 189, Lessee Hannah Young;
- 26 Nov 1926, Portion 195, Holder Theodore Townsend Green;

**Figure 2.** Diagram B shows the Portions in Weekend Lease Area No. 1 at Hazelbrook. Parish of Linden, County Cook, Parish Map, Edition 5. hlrv.nswls.com.au
• 16 Mar 1928, Portion 209, Holder William Robert Robinson;
• 31 Dec 1937, Portion 190, James Daniel Callaghan
(Source: Government Gazettes of same dates).

**Most portions revoked in 1924**

Notations on Parish of Linden maps, Editions 5 and 6, list several further portions revoked or forfeited and reserved from sale or lease: Portions 185 and 210, 24.10.30; Portion 194, 13.3.31; Portion 192, no date.

On 9 May 1924 most of the portions in Weekend Lease Area No. 1 were revoked except for 10 blocks, namely “portions 185, 188, 190, 192 to 195 inclusive, 205, 207, and 210”.

On 6 May 1927, Portions 179 to 184 were notified as Reserve 59,672 for Public Recreation (notation on Parish Map, Edition 5).

*See Figures 4 and 5.*

The 1943 aerial photograph shows most of this Public Recreation Reserve as a cleared area. Another feature of this photo is that there appear to be only a couple of houses built in the Weekend Lease Area. Recent aerial photography shows the Public Recreation site has reverted to bushland except that there appears to be some sort of track circuit (maps.six.nsw.gov.au — search for Hazelbrook.) The Progress Association had asked for this Reserve as far back as 1920: “... for the reservation of a further area of about 20 acres for the purpose of cricket and football ground, which include a number of allotments measured and set apart, for week-end leases ...” (*Blue Mountain Echo*, 30 Apr 1920, p6 c4, Trove#108233687).
Not a success

It seems that the Government’s flagship No. 1 Weekend Lease area was not a success.

However, there were two other Weekend Lease subdivisions on the northern side of Hazelbrook.

Weekend Lease Area No. 18

Area No. 18 was made up of two sections about 1 kilometre apart. The northern side of Hazelbrook is in the Parish of Woodford, County Cook.

See Figures 6, 7 and 8.

Adjacent to the northern part of Winbourne Road were eight blocks ranging in size from about 4 to 6 acres (1.6 to 2.4 hectares). These were Portions 86, 87, 88 and 113 to 117.

The second section was at the northern end of what was then King Edward Parade, now named Alexander Avenue. The lots were portions 118 to 123, ranging in size from 36⅛ perches to 1 rood (about 0.1 hectare — 1 rood was 40 perches).

According to the notations in Figure 8 all except two of the portions were allocated.

Both sections were notified on 12 January 1917 in the Government Gazette (p226, Trove #226034861). An advertisement also appeared in the Nepean Times. See Figure 9.

The Winbourne Road allotments were described as:

“Steep to very steep land; sandstone formation; broken sandstone ledges and cliffs; heavily timbered with gum, apple, stringy-bark, black ash, peppermint and bottle brush with undergrowth of five corners prickly-bush and bracken; not suitable for agriculture, orchards or poultry farming.”
For Portion 117 there was an extra note:
“Except that about 2 acres are arable land and being sheltered from the west are suitable for orchard purposes”.

The King Edward Parade allotments:
“Nearly level; sandy soil; heavily timbered with gum, black ash, stringybark, and bottlebrush; all scruffy with natural timbers and undergrowth of five-corners and pricklybush; well suited for residential settlement; arable land, adapted for vegetables and flowers.”

Most of the King Edward Parade Weekend Lease land had been part of the Horseshoe Falls Reserve (No. 23,840). This part of the reserve was revoked for the Weekend Lease Area.

(Above excerpts from Government Gazette, 12 Jan 1917, p226, Trove #226034861.)

**Leaseholders**

Notations on the Parish Maps and notifications of forfeited holdings reveal the names of some of the leaseholders in these two sections:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portion</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Revocation/Forfeiture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>James Fogarty Sp L 55.8.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K. J. N. Effeney Pt Sp L 60.17</td>
<td>Forfeited 16.4.67.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>William Charles Healey</td>
<td>Forfeited, 9 Nov 1928, non-payment of arrears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N. S. Moulton.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>M. Chodowski</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>James Fogarty WEL 46/1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K. J. N. Effeney Pt Sp L 60.17</td>
<td>Forfeited 14.6.67.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>Herman Chodowski</td>
<td>Forfeited, 16 Dec 1927, non-payment of arrears. On 31 Aug 1928, Portion 115 was Revoked from WEL and set apart for “original suburban holding”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>F. W. Kerkhoff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>H. T. Ostendorp.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>??</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>E. R. Robinson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>P. G. ???</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Charles Frederick Robinson</td>
<td>Forfeited, 18 Oct 1929, non-payment of arrears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>Alfred Ernest Thompson</td>
<td>Forfeited, 10 Feb 1928, non-payment of arrears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>P. S. Haddon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Sources: Parish of Woodford, County Cook, Parish Map, Editions 6 — see Figure 8, Edition 7, Charting map LTO; and forfeitures and revocations — Government Gazettes of dates mentioned.)

In addition to the abovementioned forfeitures and revocations, on 13 June 1941, Portions 86 to 88 and 113 to 115 were revoked “from sale or lease” with the note that “These portions will again become available on 13th August, 1941; portions 86 to 88, 113 and 114 for Weekend Lease ... and portion 115 for Suburban Holding ...” (Government Gazette, 13 Jun 1941, p2221, Trove #225114435).

The 1943 aerial photo shows that the only Winbourne Road allotment with buildings on it was Portion 117 (maps.six.nsw.gov.au).

**Alston Park Motor Camp**

All of the King Edward Parade (Alexander Avenue) Weekend Lease allotments were Revoked on 17 April 1931 (Government Gazette, p1495, Trove #220230795). On the same day they were returned to Public Recreation Reserve status as Reserve No. 62,607.
The Trustees of the Hazelbrook Reserves then developed the area as the Alston Park Motor Camp, named after Alston Bourne, son of Harold Bourne, local estate agent. It was advertised as — “Accommodation: cars or caravans. Facilities: fresh water open fireplaces. Earth closets. Application: B. Schleicher”. There were also one large shed and two small ones. (*Hazelbrook & Woodford ~ A story of two Blue Mountains towns*, Ken Goodlet, pp70,75).

Today (2020) it is once again part of the Horseshoe Falls Reserve, with an access track into the reserve from a small picnic area.

**Winbourne Road residential and reserves**

The Winbourne Road allotments have become partly residential and part reserves. The rear portion of Portion 86 is now National Park. Portions 87 and 114 are Crown Land, Reserve No. 751670, and have a 132kV powerline overhead. Portion 115 is also Crown Land, Reserve No. 93317. Portions 86 (street numbers 194-198), 113, 88, 116 and 117 are residential blocks. ([emapping.bmcc.nsw.gov.au](http://emapping.bmcc.nsw.gov.au) search “194-198 Winbourne Road, Hazelbrook” and other numbers.)