



**Source 1: Gadigal and Wangal people of the Eora nation, Local notes, on January 26th, 2018**

<http://localnotes.net.au/?p=4495>

"... Shell middens can be seen at Whitehorse Point in Elkington Park, Balmain and in Rozelle on the foreshore at Callan Point. The middens are dated at approximately 4, 500 years old, and are recognised as significant by the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council and archaeologists."

**Source 2: Aboriginal People of coastal Sydney (Australian Museum website)**

<https://australian.museum/learn/cultures/atsi-collection/sydney/>

"... Aboriginal People of coastal Sydney collected and ate many different types of shellfish and crustaceans. Both men and women caught fish but each used different equipment: men used multi---

pronged fishing spears, called fizz---gigs by British colonists, while women used a hook and line. The men fished from rock platforms and canoes while the women fished only from canoes"

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**Source 3: White Horse Point coastline, photograph Helen Nicholson**



**Source 4: Alison Hore, Aboriginal cultural sites in Yurulbin Park under threat from Western Harbour Tunnel works, City Hub, 28 April 2021**

<https://cityhubsydney.com.au/2021/04/aboriginal-cultural-sites-in-yurulbin-park-under-threat-from-western-harbour-tunnel-works/>

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“ ... Four Aboriginal cultural sites are identified at Yurulbin Point\* – Long Nose Point, Yurulbin Cave, Shed Cave and Five Hands Shelter. At these locations, evidence of etchings and middens show the Gadigal and Wangal people, whose lands Yurulbin Point lay close to the border of, used the waterfront for fishing and conducting feasts. Deborah Lennis, D’harawal woman, local Elder, and cultural advisor to the CEO of Inner West Council, said there are sites of significance to be found along the harbour foreshore. “We lived there, we fished there, we were saltwater people,” she explained.” **\*Note:** Yurulbin Point is 1.5 km north of Elkington Park

## **Source 5: William Balmain**

<https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/archives/magazine/onthisday/26-april-1800>

“ ... William Balmain received a land grant of 550 acres on the west side of Cockle Bay, an area which was to become the suburbs of Balmain and Rozelle. Balmain was an Assistant Surgeon on the First Fleet, ... Senior Assistant Surgeon at Norfolk Island from 1791 to 1795 and returned to Sydney in August of that year to act in the position of Principal Surgeon. He ... remained in the Colony until 1801 when he returned to England.”

**Source 6: S.N. Hogg, Balmain: Past and Present, unpublished, April 1907, MS ML: 994.41/159, pp 6 – 7. An elderly resident in 1906 describing his memory of what Balmain was like in 1841.**

<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-294960525/view?partId=nla.obj-294960605>

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"... as we pulled our boats towards the shore ... I saw nothing but bush, bush everywhere if I remember aright the trees were not tall and straight, but rather of the nature of shrubs (ti---tree prevailing I think). Wild flowers grew in abundance ... plenty of birds ... snakes ... wallabies, bandicoots, and native cats I do not remember seeing one solitary house in Balmain in 1841, but in this, you tell me, my memory must have failed me, for it is on historic record that the very first steamer that ever plied between Sydney and the North Shore was built in our suburb in the early forties ... To me, indeed, it seems as though the stretch of water between the city and Balmain had shrunk considerably, and perhaps it has so in reality by the wharves on either side encroaching on the fair way."

**Source 7: Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842 -- 1954), Saturday 21 March 1914, p. 8**

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/15485753>

"... even after Balmain was thrown open for settlement progress was slow. In fact, for years Balmain remained as nothing more than a fishing ground for blacks [sic] and a picnic-place for the white inhabitants of Sydney. It is stated that the shores were covered with mussels and cockles, ... but it was not easy of access to and from the city. ... The first settlement at Balmain took place about 80 years ago. It was at Peacock Point.

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**Source 8: Cockatoo Island near Balmain, John Skinner Prout, 1825 -- 1876**

<https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/YRIZqDgn/jeQ2Rrkzq2jel>



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**Source 9: State Library NSW, Elkington Park and Spectacle Island, Views of Sydney and its streets, 1868--1881 / compiled by John Lane Mullins**

<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=836375>



# INNER WEST

Source 10: Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, Sat 6 October 1810, p 2

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/628088>

**GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL ORDERS.**

*Government House, Sydney,  
Thursday, 4th October, 1810.*

**A** VERY indecent and improper Custom having lately prevailed, of Soldiers, Sailors, and Inhabitants of the Town bathing themselves at all Hours of the Day at the Government Wharf, and also in the Dock-yard, His Excellency the GOVERNOR directs and commands, that no Person shall Bathe at either of those Places in future, at any Hour of the Day; and the Sentinels posted at the Government Wharf and in the Dock-yard are to receive strict Orders to apprehend and confine any Person transgressing this Order.

*By Command of His Excellency,  
J. T. CAMPBELL, Sec.*

Source 11: Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, Tue 18 February 1834, p 2

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/2215434>

"Bathing is now the favourite recreation in Sydney. The ladies are provided for by Mrs. Bigges's accommodations, while every part---of the banks, both

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of Darling Harbour and round the Government Domain, is, morning after morning, thronged with the other sex.”

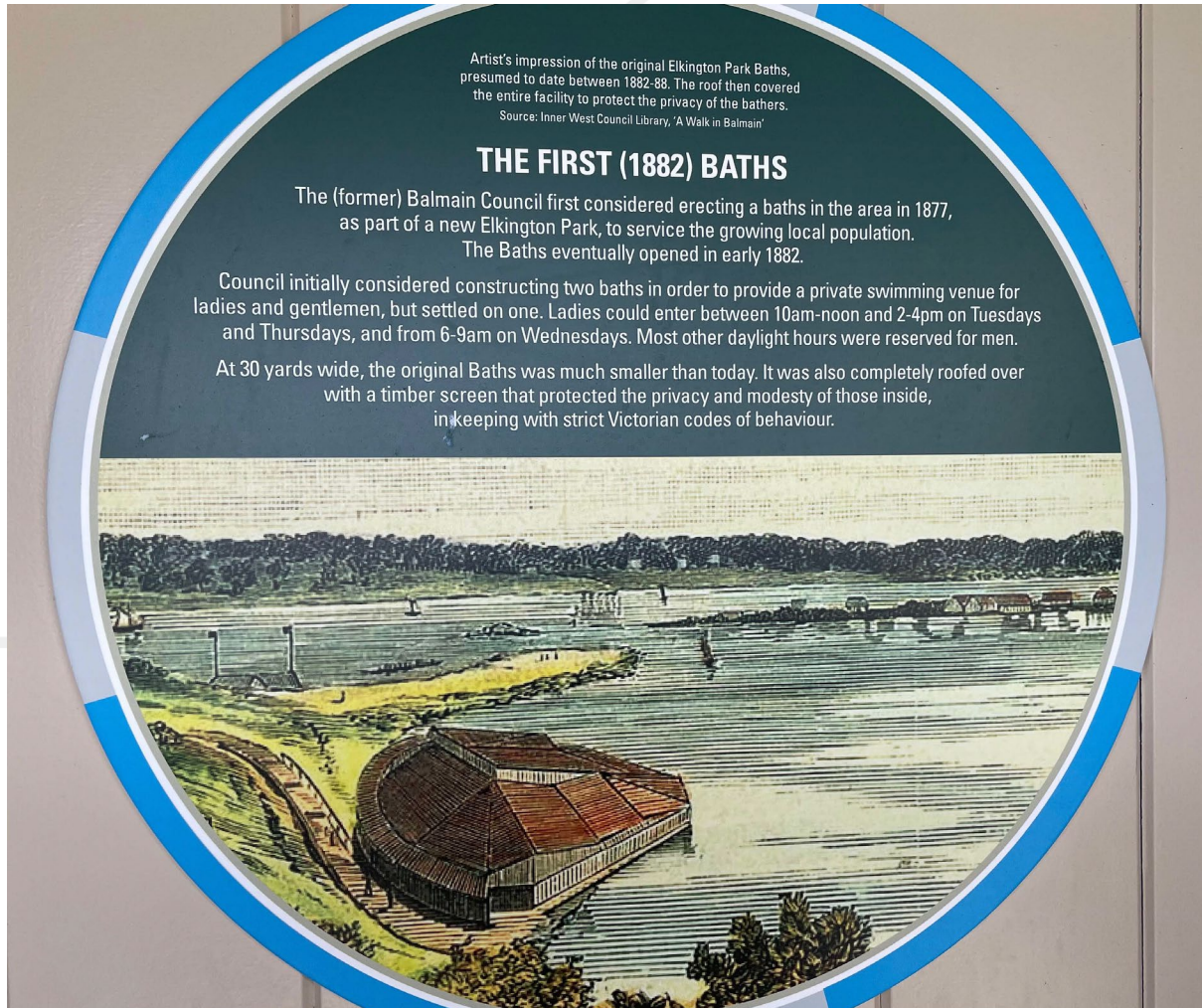
**Source 12: GBA Heritage, Dawn Fraser Baths, Conservation Management Plan, August 2018, p. 45**

[https://hdp-au-prod-app-innerwest-yoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/4216/5940/5163/Dawn\\_Fraser\\_Baths\\_Master\\_Plan\\_draft.pdf](https://hdp-au-prod-app-innerwest-yoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/4216/5940/5163/Dawn_Fraser_Baths_Master_Plan_draft.pdf)

“...the construction of enclosed harbour pools for public recreation commenced in Woolloomooloo Bay in the 1820s. During the second half of the 19th century and the early years of this century [20th century], there were more than 20 public swimming baths constructed in Sydney Harbour and along the Parramatta River. ... There are no intact early 20th century harbour side public baths in Australia, with the exception of the Dawn Fraser Pool. Those that remain in Sydney are generally much modified or have been replaced with concrete enclosures and brick amenities blocks.”



**Source 13: Artists impression of the original 1882 White Horse Point Baths, interpretation panel, photograph Helen Nicholson**



**Source 14: Balmain Ladies' Swimming Club, Australian Town and Country Journal, Sat 26 March 1887, p 40**

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/71679018>



“This club, which was established, a few weeks ago, consists of fully forty members. ... The first appearance of the new Club in public was at the Balmain Swimming Club sports, when Madame Laurie and one of the young ladies gave a display of fancy swimming. Several of the members of the ladies’ club also took part in the ladies’ race.”

**Source 15: Elkington Park Baths, Balmain Observer and Western Suburbs Advertiser, Sat 23 June 1888 p. 4**

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/rendition/nla.news-article132303233.txt>

“As the Balmain Borough Council will on Tuesday next have under their consideration the tenders for the additions to the above baths, it is not, perhaps, too late to suggest ... Another and more important alteration ... would permit of the ladies having the use of the new portion of the baths every day, except perhaps on Saturday afternoon and Sunday mornings. This could easily be arranged by a lifting partition being fixed at the boundary of the present baths. ... We have heard a good deal about ladies’ baths and swimming contests, and we hope the aldermen will show some gallantry, by providing for increased accommodation for the fair sex at the baths in both the modes suggested above. The division of the baths would not inconvenience the male dolphins, and the partition could be made of say sheet---iron.”



**Source 16: Balmain Ladies S. C. Carnival, Australian Star, Thur 21 February 1895, p 8**

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/227101668>

“The first aquatic sports of the recently formed Balmain Ladies' Swimming Club was held at the Elkington Park Baths yesterday afternoon. The attendance was large, and numbered close on 300 spectators, all of whom with the exception of a few officials and the representatives of the press were ladies.”

**Source 17: Attendants at Ladies' Baths, Daily Telegraph, Mon 7 November 1898, p 4**

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/239477660>

“The recent drowning accident at Elkington Park Baths, Balmain, whereby a young lady lost her life, brings forcibly to mind the necessity that exists for the employment of competent lady swimmers ... In some instances there were absolutely no lady attendants, and in others those employed in that capacity were unable to swim at all arrangements now being made to have a particular day in each week set apart for ladies only, so that the girls of our public schools might have greater facilities for acquiring and developing the art of swimming, ...”

## Source 18: Elkington Park Baths 1900 – 1920 interpretation panel, photograph Helen Nicholson

The 1900 pool from White Horse Point.  
The pavilion was designed to hold 2,000 spectators.  
Source: Inner West Council, ref.1000005150

### THE BATHS 1900s-1910s

Public interest in water recreation and competition grew in the late nineteenth century prompting construction or expansion of pools across New South Wales. Competing venues soon rendered Elkington Park Baths as small and poor quality.

In 1900 Balmain Council approved a £1,000 expenditure for upgrades. The roof and support posts were removed and the pool was expanded to provide a swimming length of 68 yards. The boardwalks were lined with changing booths and a two-storey pavilion was constructed on the southern side, providing enough room for around 2,000 spectators.

By 1910 a third expansion of the Baths was completed costing £1,600. The Baths' north-west corner was extended around 62 feet. This accessed deeper water in the Parramatta River, to the benefit of swimming and water polo events, alleviating crowding. However, the alignment of the boards and pool was not perpendicular making the course difficult to navigate, and the pool was considered shallow. The Baths' patronage and use for carnivals dwindled by 1914.



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**Source 19: Women in bathing suits on Collaroy Beach, 1908, photograph by Colin Caird**

[File:Women in bathing suits on Collaroy Beach, 1908, photographed by Colin Caird.jpg - Wikimedia Commons](#)





**Source 20: Our Fair Swimmers. Ladies and their Clubs. How the Sport is Progressing, Australian Town and Country Journal, Wed 27 November 1907, p 29**

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/71598992/5717728#>

“There is no more glorious, healthy, or invigorating pastime than swimming a fact that is thoroughly appreciated by large numbers of the fair sex in Sydney and suburbs. ... with the result that there are several ladies' clubs flourishing in and around the city. Though it is certainly arguable, it seems a matter for regret, that the various Sydney ladies' clubs have decided to exclude the "mere man" from witnessing their displays and carnivals ...”

**Source 21: The Pool, Swimwear and women's rights**

<https://www.abc.net.au/education/the-pool-swimwear-and-womens-rights/13955264>

“In the early 1900s, women and men were not allowed to swim in the same pool, and separate time slots were given to women and men. Women also had to wear restrictive swimwear that covered them from neck to feet.”

**Source 22: Elkington Park, Plan of Management, Leichhardt Council, Adopted October 2004, p. 25**

<https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au>

“Elkington Park is located on the foreshore of Sydney Harbour at the confluence with Parramatta River, on the northern side of Balmain. The park

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is bounded by Glassop and White Streets to the south, Fitzroy Avenue to the east, and 500 metres of coastline that adjoins Sydney Harbour (Parramatta River) to the north.

Elkington Park is a direct result of the request for a public swimming pool by local residents. In May 1880 four acres of land 'near White Horse Point' were purchased by the then Balmain Council from

E.W. Cameron. During this time there was rapidly increasing popularity in recreational bathing and the Balmain area required suitable accommodation to construct a tidal bath. ...

The tidal pool was originally named White Horse Baths, taking its name from the nearby point. This was renamed Elkington Park Baths in November 1883 after Mayor, Alderman Elkington who originally worked to secure the land from the Cameron Estate. In 1968 the pool was again renamed as The Dawn Fraser Pool, after the well known Australian Olympic and Commonwealth Games swimmer, a Balmain local and once a trainee at the pool. The park, however, has retained the current name Elkington Park."

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**Source 23: Detail taken from Balmain water frontages, Carieville Estate, White Horse Point adjoining Elkington Park / for auction sale on the ground by Richardson & Wrench Ltd, Saturday 13th March 1897 at 3 o'clock ; J.M. Cattle, draftsman, 90 Pitt St**

<https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3963693>

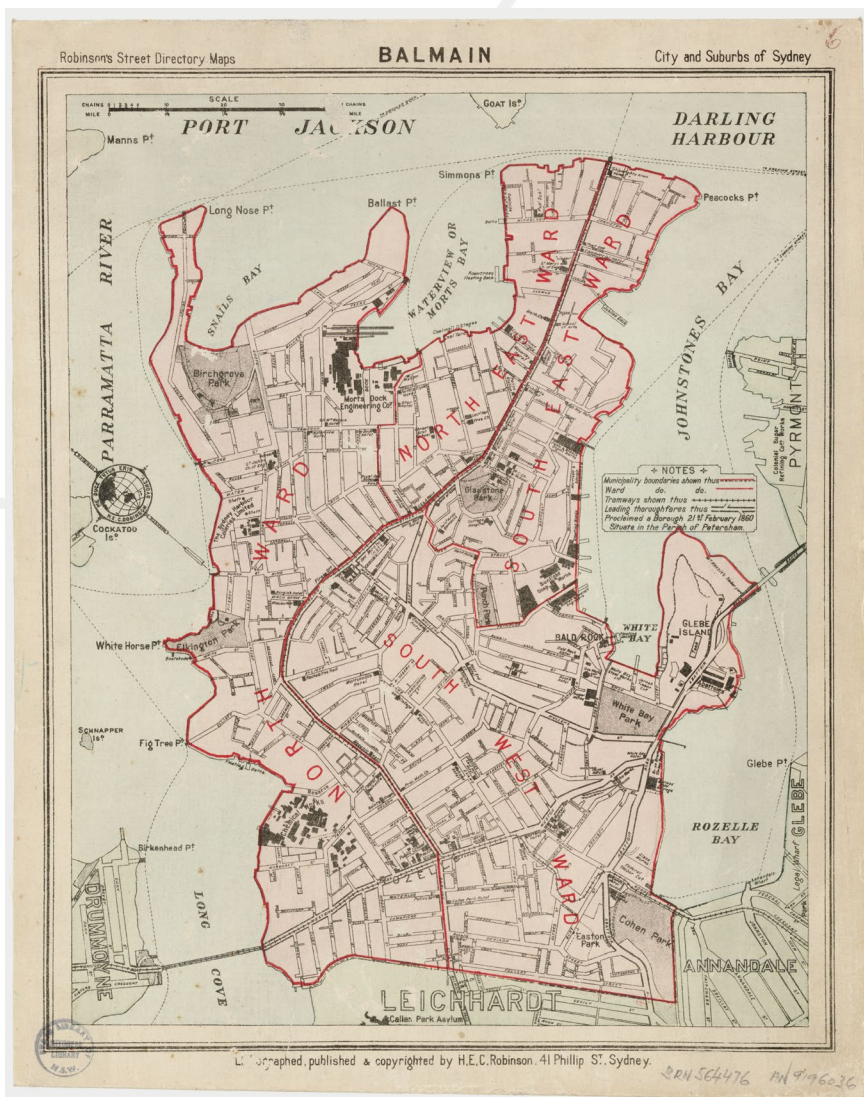




# INNER WEST

**Source 24: Balmain [Cartographic Material] / Lithographed, Published & Copyrighted by H.E.C. Robinson. H.E.C. Robinson, 1906, Maps/1184a**

<https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/74VKDX4GXyRO#viewer>



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**Source 25: White Horse Point & Drummoyne from Balmain, NMA**

**1986.0117.0333, Josef Lebovic Gallery collection no. 1, 17 April 1906**

<https://collectionsearch.nma.gov.au/icons/images/kau2/index.html#/home?usr=CE>



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**Source 26: State Library of Victoria, John Henry Harvey, Balmain Colliery, ca. 1920**

<http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/75633>

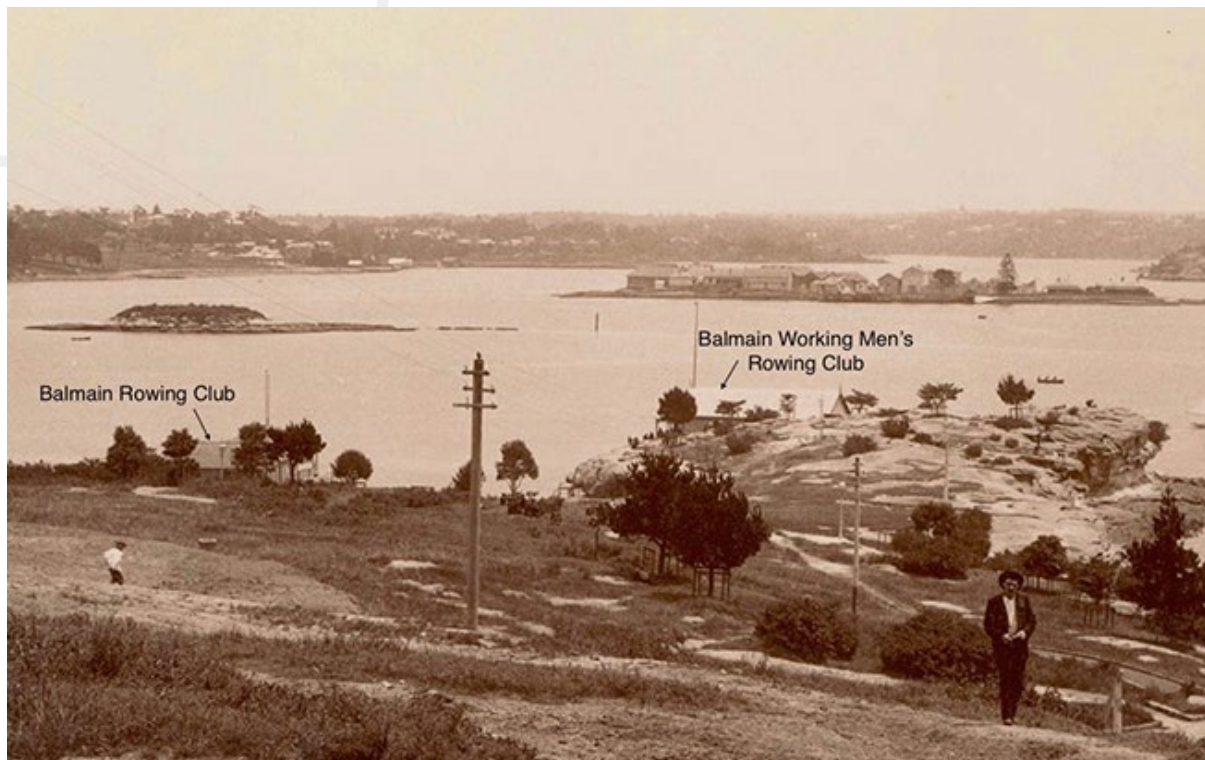


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**Source 27: Balmain's own coal mine, NSW DPI Primefact 225, 2007**

[http://www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/109307/balmains-own-coal-mine.pdf](http://www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/109307/balmains-own-coal-mine.pdf)

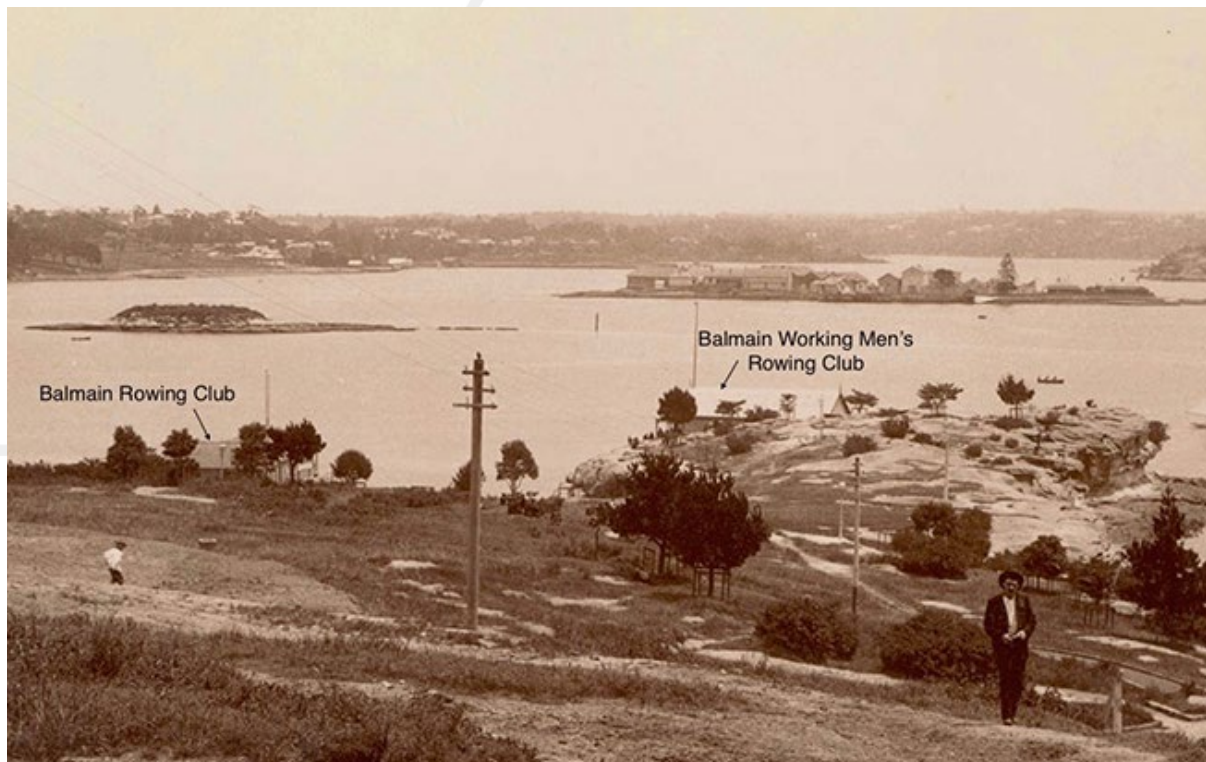
"... Balmain, for many years, had its own coal mine. The surface works were on the site to the north of Birchgrove Primary School. The mine, at first known as the Sydney Harbour Colliery, started operations in 1897 and the last coal was mined in 1931. The mine was the deepest ever worked in Australia and later produced methane gas, but was not a commercial success. It had poor working conditions and suffered several disastrous accidents. The property was sold in 1955 and the shafts filled in and sealed two years later."



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**Source 28: Balmain Working Men's Rowing Club, c. 1900 (formerly Enterprise Rowing Club)**

<https://www.rowinghistory-aus.info/club-histories/balmain-working-mens/formation>



# INNER WEST

**Source 29: Rock cut steps to now destroyed Balmain Working Men's Rowing Club, White Horse Point, photograph Helen Nicholson**





**Source 30: Balmain Working Men's Rowing Club, c. 1900 (formerly Enterprise Rowing Club)**

<https://www.rowinghistory-aus.info/club-histories/balmain-working-mens/devastation-at-white-horse-point>

"... the storm which swept through Sydney on 19th September 1917 totally destroyed the Enterprise Rowing club shed ... The loss was such a severe blow to the old established Enterprise club that it could no longer resume its position amongst the clubs on Sydney Harbour. Over the 31 years of the clubs existence new and more liberal ideas as to the class rules had taken all the sting out of the old--time rivalry between the members of the two Balmain clubs at "Whitey". ... All that remains of the historical shed are a few stone footings that sometimes come into view at low tide. Its old neighbour and rival, the Balmain Rowing Club, still stands proud in its original timber shed built in 1882."



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**Source 3: The Sydney suburb of Balmain & Cockatoo Island. Aerial photo taken for the military in 1951. Smoke from White Bay power station at bottom. Australian Gas Light Co Balmain gasholder right of centre. The windlass and stack of the Balmain Colliery (in operation 1897--1945) can be seen top left opp. Cockatoo Is.**

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/angeljim46/8337835240>





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**Source 32: Milton Kent aerial views of Balmain, Cabarita, Castle Hill, Leichhardt, Petersham and St Leonards, ca. 1948--1949 / 1. Factory and Harbour swimming pool, Balmain**

<https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/YEGm8qVn>



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**Source 33: Elkington Park Baths, Government Printing Office 1 -- 31279,  
Original negative held by State Archives & Records Authority of New South  
Wales. Record Identifier 9ALqQE5Y**

<https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/9ALqQE5Y/22Wz74RLVWmad#viewer>





**Source 34: National Box Company, Elkington Park Plan of Management, Leichhardt Council, Adopted October 2004, p. 26**

<https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au>

“The area along Fitzroy Avenue was previously owned by the National Box Company. Operating since 1925, it incorporated the area below Fitzroy Avenue and Punch Street later to become part of Elkington Park. The company used the site as a place for timber milling and timber box construction. This industry, as with the coal and ship building industries once prevalent in the Balmain area, relied heavily on the waterfront location of Balmain for the transport of materials and products by ship.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that The National Box Co. used a wharf facility in the day to day activities of the company which was located where the current Fitzroy Avenue Jetty stands. During the early 1970’s The State Government purchased the site from the National Box Company.

The site was in turn acquired by Leichhardt Council in 1982. In the 1980’s redevelopment of the picnic area on the upper level of Fitzroy Avenue took place. A sandstone seawall and foreshore path were also installed as a result.”

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## Source 35: National Box Company & Elkington Park Baths

<https://balmainassociation.org.au/newsletters/contents/336September2015.pdf>



# INNER WEST

**Source 36: Fitzroy Ave Reserve (formerly the site of National Box Company),  
photograph Helen Nicholson**



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**Source 37: Tribune, Wed 25 January 1950, p 3**

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/209393345>

“While the price of a swim in Elkington Park Baths, Balmain, has risen 100 per cent, the maintenance has sadly deteriorated. Last weekend, after two swimless days due to filthy oil covering the surface of the baths, angry citizens demanded that the manager ring the Lord Mayor immediately and ask him to come down (which he did). Far from being shocked at the filthy condition of the baths, or ordering a remedy, the Mayor blandly ordered a notice to be placed at the entrance, reading: “Persons bathing in these baths do so at own risk.”

**Source 38: Tribune, Saturday 18 February 1950, page 7**

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/209393833>

“Although Balmain is surrounded on three sides by water, there isn't a decent swimming pool in the municipality. Successive Councils have bowed the knee to private enterprise and today the foreshores of Balmain are occupied mainly by timber yards and oil companies. ... the sole swimming baths in the area—Elkington Park—has to accommodate 29,000 people ...”



**Source 39: GBA Heritage, Dawn Fraser Baths, Conservation Management Plan, August 2018, p. 53**

[https://hdp-au-prod-app-innerwest-yoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/4216/5940/5163/Dawn\\_Fraser\\_Baths\\_Master\\_Plan\\_draft.pdf](https://hdp-au-prod-app-innerwest-yoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/4216/5940/5163/Dawn_Fraser_Baths_Master_Plan_draft.pdf)

“The Dawn Fraser Baths is a public tidal baths in the Parramatta River. It opened in 1882 as an original feature of the newly established Elkington Park and was the first Municipal baths in Balmain. The Baths has been operational to the present day. It has been modified many times over its life span, most notably in 1888, 1900, 1910, 1926, c.1984, 1993---95 and 2015, when the Baths were expanded and new facilities were constructed. The southern pavilion built in 1900 survives relatively intact. The pool’s current format was established in 1926, when the entry building, western shed and northern pavilion were constructed, the latter having been sympathetically replaced in 1993---95.

The Dawn Fraser Baths is highly significant as the only surviving example of a fully enclosed, public tidal baths from the late---19th and early---20th centuries in Australia. This type of baths was once a common Sydney Harbour recreational and sporting facility and is a remarkable survivor from that time. It is a landmark in the Parramatta River and Sydney Harbour.”

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**Source 40: Dawn Fraser Baths, Elkington Park & Fitzroy Ave Reserve, from White Horse Point, photograph Helen Nicholson**



**Source 41: National Trust Heritage Awards 2022 winners, TKD Architects win President's Prize for their work on the Dawn Fraser Baths.**

[https://issuu.com/nationaltrustsaustralia/docs/heritageawards22-winners\\_issuu](https://issuu.com/nationaltrustsaustralia/docs/heritageawards22-winners_issuu)

“The President’s Prize is awarded at the discretion of the National Trust President for a project that warrants particular attention and recognition.





Lifting and strengthening the structure in response to rising sea levels, this years winning project is described as a forward--thinking environmental response, and a project of its time and circumstance, extraordinary in both concept and execution."

**Source 42: Sarah Fanny' Durack (1894 – 1956), Sport Australia Hall of Fame**

<https://sahof.org.au/hall-of-fame-member/sarah-fanny-durack/>

"Fanny Durack was Australia's first female Olympic medallist, winning gold in the 100m freestyle at the 1912 Stockholm Games. Sydney born, she broke 11 records between 1912 and 1918. ... She swam at a time when women were not allowed to race at meets if male spectators were present. In fact, large signs were displayed outside baths forbidding men to enter when the women were swimming. Fanny was also hampered by the restrictions on the costumes girls could wear at the time There were a variety of swimsuits used by the swimmers. Many reached down to the mid-thigh while some were sleeveless. Durack wore the heaviest costume of all – a woollen sleeveless garment with a skirt. ..."

**Source 43: Annette Kellerman (1886 -- 1975), Sport Australia Hall of Fame**

<https://sahof.org.au/hall-of-fame-member/annette-kellerman/>

"Annette Kellerman was born in Marrickville, New South Wales, in 1887, the daughter of two professional musicians. She high-kicked her way though the social barriers of the Victorian era, paving the way for women to compete in Australian and international sport. Annette, along with fellow

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Australians Fanny Durack and Mina Wylie did more to popularise swimming (especially for women) than any other people in the early years. ... Annette moved on to Hollywood, where her first movie, 'Neptune's Daughter', grossed \$1,000,000. In each of her succeeding movies the public expected new stunts. ... At the height of her popularity, Annette was arrested on a Boston beach for indecency – she was wearing one of her fitted one-piece costumes. The resulting newspaper headlines and outpouring of public indignation were a death-knell for Victorian attitudes towards women's swimwear. ... She claimed that her greatest success was in helping free female swimmers from the cumbersome Victorian neck-to-knee costume."

**Source 44: Million Dollar Mermaid movie trailer, 1952, National Film & Sound Archive (Beth Taylor)**

<https://www.nfsa.gov.au/collection/curated/million-dollar-mermaid-trailer>

"... Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's Million Dollar Mermaid is based on the life story of Annette Kellerman. ... The clip features examples of synchronised swimming, a sport which Kellerman pioneered. ... The UK title was The One-Piece Suit, honouring Kellerman's pivotal role in popularising the modern one-piece bathing suit. By 1911 the term 'Annette Kellermann suit' was American terminology for a one-piece swimsuit and she lent her name to a range of swimsuits from 1914 to the 1930s, incidentally becoming a prototype for movie stars marketing their own clothing lines."



**Source 45: Dawn Fraser AC MBE, Sport Australia Hall of Fame**

<https://sahof.org.au/hall-of-fame-member/dawn-fraser/>

“Dawn Fraser was one of the most iconic and most decorated athletes in Australia sport history while demonstrating the larrikin behaviour to match her ability at the same time. Her record in the pool included eight Olympic medals, six British Empire and Commonwealth gold medals and setting 23 individual world records and 12 as part of a team. Dawn’s dominance of the 100m freestyle was part of her legacy claiming the Olympic title at the 1956 Melbourne, 1960 Rome and 1964 Tokyo Games, the first swimmer to win gold in three successive games of either gender. She was the first woman to break the minute for the 100 m freestyle and held the record for the event for sixteen years.

Dawn first started swimming at the age of four at the Balmain Baths in Sydney before competing seriously by the age of eleven. ... Dawn signed then and there to train with Gallagher’s squad at the Balmain Baths. ... [in 1951] she joined the Balmain Ladies Amateur Swimming Club.”

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**Source 46: Australian Women's Weekly, Wed 30 March 1960**

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/rendition/nla.news-article51390965.3>

