

You might recall Winn's Store in Hunter Street in the centre of Newcastle which opened in 1878. The Winn family owned this store and several members lived in mansions in Mayfield. Each was given a name that incorporated 'Winn'. The first of those houses we will see today is coming up next.

The new church you see now was built in 1937. Continue walking up Kerr Street, one of the oldest streets in Mayfield. Its quite narrow and when streets were planned in the mid to late 1800s trees definitely didn't come into the picture.

Morison's.

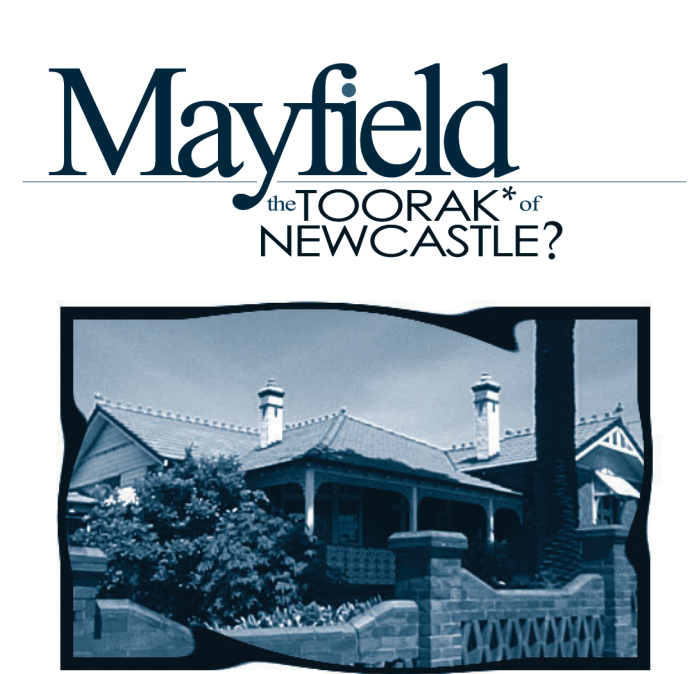
The original church on this site was dedicated in 1890 and included in its congregation prominent families such as the Creberts, Arnotts (yes, of the biscuits fame - more about them later), the Winn's and the Windeyer. We will see his home shortly. By the way, even up until the 1920s, many of the roads and tracks in the Mayfield area were made from white sand and Maitland Road was red gravel.

Let's start now by walking up Kerr Street which, in fact, was the original 'drive' up to the home of a Newcastle solicitor and later magistrate, John Windeyer. We will see his home shortly. By the way, even up until the 1920s, many of the roads and tracks in the Mayfield area were made from white sand and Maitland Road was red gravel.

The sculpture conveys stories of the past and symbolises Mayfield's renewal. Many of the names you see inscribed on the big yellow key will be mentioned in this walk. One of those people is John Laurio Platt. Find his story on the key. In 1822 he was granted 2000 acres on which he built a homestead and mill and tried unsuccessfully to grow wheat. We will see the site of his homestead later in the walk.

You are now standing where the tram terminus used to be located, an important link to the city of Newcastle. The tram service began in 1901 and the last tram left Mayfield in 1948. Spend a few minutes investigating the sculpture created by local artist Dallas Bray in conjunction with enthusiastic local residents.

TERMINUS
Cnr of Maitland Rd and Kerr Sts



“...discover some interesting things.”

Yes, that's right. Mayfield was one of Newcastle's most desirable and fashionable places to live, especially from the 1870s until the arrival of the BHP steelworks in 1913.

This walk begins at the big yellow key located on the corner of Hanbury St and Maitland Rd. It will help you to understand the changes that have occurred in Mayfield over the past century or so. You can discover aspects of Mayfield's past with help from your imagination and by observing traces in the landscape such as housing styles, remnant vegetation, street signs and alignment of roads. These can all tell us something about the ongoing creation and history of a place.

The walk should take a comfortable 2 hours to complete, and it doesn't have too many steep sections. Not only will you discover some interesting things about the suburb, you'll improve your fitness level as well! We've also provided you with a map (we don't want you to get lost), which will enable you to have a better idea of where the walk goes and how the bits of the Mayfield jigsaw fit together.

So spend a couple of hours following this walk, reading the brochure, and playing detective, so you can discover how Mayfield once acquired the title of the "Toorak of Newcastle".

*Toorak is a suburb of Melbourne that is widely regarded as Australia's most prestigious address.

Can you see that lone Cook Island Pine on that low hill? That was known as Ironbark Hill, where John Laurio Platt built his homestead in 1823. Tragically, Platt lost his two youngest sons to fire, and he and his wife then moved to Sandgate in the 1830s.

Imagine the clip clop of horses up what was the path or drive to this house. Julian Windeyer was a prominent Newcastle solicitor. The Windeyers, like other wealthy families of the time, had indentured servants, including girls as young as 13, who would work as maids. In 1914 the family moved to Toronto on Lake Macquarie. Many, if not most, of the wealthier people moved away from Mayfield around this time, as the suburb changed from semi-rural to increasingly industrial. Turn left into Bull Street, named after one of the pioneering families in the area. In fact, many of the streets in Mayfield are named after prominent citizens, usually men. You pass by 'Rose-Mount Villa' built in 1886. The suburb itself is thought to be named after Ada May Scholey, a daughter of John Scholey, a local property developer in the 1880s. However, it may be named after his mother, who was also called May. Continue up Bull St through the Woodstock St intersection. In a minute we will be able to look towards the Hunter River and its flood plain. Stand behind the bus shelter and take in the view.

WINDEYER HOUSE (1880)
Cnr Kerr and Bull Sts

We'll see lots of laneways in our walk today. Why do you think they were needed? Here's a clue: 'night carts'. As you walk up Kerr St have a look down Berkeley Street. Let's now have a look at the home for which Kerr St was the 'driveaway.'

This once impressive home was built for William Winn in 1878 on a 2 acre block bounded by Highfield Street. It had stables and a coach house. Like many of the larger homes in Mayfield successive owners have subdivided the property and constructed flats around the original home. In 1940 Colin Glass, a local chemist, who was locally renowned for his baby wind medicine, purchased the house. Crossing Crebert St we walk further up Kerr Street.

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Cnr of Kerr and Crebert Sts
WINNONAVILLE (1878)

We hope that you have enjoyed this walk, and that you have learned a little more about the history of Mayfield. Many hours went into the production of this brochure, and difficult decisions had to be made about what to include and what to leave out. As such, the walk can only ever be a partial history of this fascinating suburb.

We have tried to weave together stories that show that there are many layers to the history of Mayfield, but many of these layers are invisible, having few if any 'traces in the landscape'. Little evidence remains of the Goori people (a local name for Indigenous people) who lived here for many thousands of years, and who were displaced in the early 1800s.

Women's history is also often difficult to 'see' in the landscape. So, while we have aimed to give you a good sense of some of the major aspects of Mayfield's past, please remember that there are many other stories that have been left out.



CIPS
This brochure has been produced by The University of Newcastle's Cultural Industries and Practices Research Centre (CIPS) for Mayfield Main Street.



If we have whetted your appetite for making your own explorations, please visit the Mayfield Web Site:
www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/collections/archives/int/mayfield.html

Further Information Correspondence to be addressed to:
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As the *Newcastle Morning Herald* stated in 1914 'we shall then see in Newcastle the birth of what will certainly become the most extensive secondary industry in the Commonwealth'.

BHP was established on its present site in January 1913, choosing Newcastle because of its water, coal and labour resources. The good residents of Mayfield at the time apparently had little idea of the size and scale of the steelworks that were to be located here, instead imagining a small foundry. But as you can see, the industrial complex that developed was huge!

Cross to the other side of Bull St and walk up to the little verge near the white fence. By the way the house called the 'Hermitage' at number 64 was once owned by the actor John Doyle, aka 'Rampaging Roy Slaven'. This amazing view, from the highest point in the suburb, allows us to see the extent of the huge industrial complex that began to be established after BHP arrived in 1913. The presence of the steel-making company heralded enormous changes to the area, beginning the transformation from a semi-rural suburb favoured by the wealthy to a worker's dormitory suburb.

Can you imagine what it must have been like to have been so young and so far away from their families, living in an isolated orphanage? Being teased and taunted by the local kids, who held the view, no doubt shared by some of their parents, that these 'orphans' were 'second-class citizens'. In 2002 about 20 of the 'orphans' held a reunion. Many of these men had not seen each other for 40 years. During the 1930s Depression this site was also an unemployment camp, housing hundreds of people in makeshift dwellings and tents. Like the orphans, the unemployed were often made to feel less than welcome. The site is now part of the Steel River Project.

His eldest son stayed on in the house, eventually selling it and the land to the Australian Agricultural Company in 1839.

In 1933, the Catholic Church bought the property and established the Orphanage, which in 1952 became the home for 31 boys ranging in age from 4 to 14 who had travelled unaccompanied from the UK to Australia. These boys, many of whom were, in fact, not orphans, were sent to Australia under the Child Migration Scheme

Changes to the semi-rural nature of the suburb occurred rapidly, and air and water pollution soon became established as characteristics of the suburb. Following the expansion of BHP, a number of subsidiary and allied firms located on adjacent land, creating the huge industrial complex that exists today.

Many families left Mayfield for more desirable locations, and Mayfield became a dormitory suburb for workers at the steelworks and associated factories, as well as a place of low cost rental housing. A transient sub-population has more recently existed in the suburb, with many university students living here.

However, there are many Mayfield residents of longstanding and a new influx of householders followed the closure of the BHP steelworks, in 1999. Not only were there demographic changes that resulted from BHP's development on the site, massive changes occurred to the River and its flood plain.

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THE HUNTER RIVER
Source of Life

Prior to 1913 the landscape you are looking at now would have been very different. You would have seen much more of the river including Platt's Channel, which along with much of the flood plain, its wetlands and paperbark forests was buried under tonnes of fill. You might have even seen the white sands of Shelley Beach, a popular recreational spot for locals. It's buried too, though the happy memories of the old timers remain. In fact, up until the 1920s, the river at Mayfield was used for all kinds of water-based recreation including swimming and boating, though one had to be wary of sharks!

On the flood plain of the River, away from salt water intrusion, Chinese people tended their market gardens. Of course, the river was very important for Aboriginal people, who took advantage of its wildlife resources. These original occupants were displaced early to the margins of settlement, living around where Braye Park is today.

The River was also an important transport corridor enabling the movement of goods between Newcastle and Mayfield. It is difficult to imagine now, but the residential areas of Mayfield were connected to the Hunter River at the termination of Tourle, Kerr and Ingall Sts, and wharves had been built to allow the passage of people and goods on and off ships. The River played an important role in the lives of Mayfield's residents until the extensive infilling of river land and the construction of factories from the 1920s.

Turn back now and walk along Bull St (can you can see the industrial sculpture of the steelworks?) then turn right into Woodstock Street and head down the street about a hundred metres.

