## 2. THE SUBURB OF BOTANY



Botany suburb ([2] on the image above) extends from Southern Cross Drive in the north to the shores of Botany Bay in the south, and from the Kingsford Smith Airport in the west to the Sydenham-Botany Goods Line/Stephen Road to the east. Within its boundaries are a wide variety of residential and commercial buildings, as well as part of the Botany wetlands/Mill Pond site, Sir Joseph Banks Foreshore and an industrial precinct.

The first alienation of the land by European settlers was made to the north-west of the area now known as the suburb of Botany. These included Edward Redmond's 'Mudbank' in 1809 (135 acres), Mary Lewin's 30 acres known as 'Newcastle', Andrew Byrne's 30 acre 'Sea View' and the 35 acres to Thomas Walker located closest to the Cooks River. The major landholder in Botany however was Simeon Lord, who first purchased Mudbank and then was given a grant of 600 acres to ensure permanent access to the waters of the Botany Aquifer. Lord damned the watercourse and created a pond to supply water to firstly a flour mill and then the first factory in the colony to produce woollen cloth, which he sold to the Government.

Lord employed sixty convicts at his Botany site alone (Lord himself was an ex-convict – transported, somewhat ironically, for stealing cloth) and provided cottages and huts for his workforce on the western portion of his holding. After his death in 1840, Lord's sons Edward and George William began to subdivide

the Estate, Edward the western portion near the Cooks River and George the 600 acres of the Botany watercourse.

Booralee was laid out by George Lord as a 'village' set on the shores of Botany Bay. The lots were long and thin and arranged in a grid pattern. Several were sold and groups of cottages and huts built on them which were occupied by fishermen and their families and workers, the area becoming the focus of the local fishing industry until reclamation associated with the airport to the west and wider overfishing in the Bay took their toll.

Other significant uses following the closure of Lord's Mill and factory were the Waterworks and Darvall's Tannery.

The inadequacy of Busby's bore in supplying water to Sydney in the late 1840s led the government to utilise instead Botany's aquifer and freshwater wetlands, swamps and ponds for Sydney's water supply. This was facilitated by the resumption of part of Lord's land to enlarge the main pond and construct a pumping station in 1859 to feed water to Sydney town and the surrounding area. It remained the primary source of Sydney's water until the opening of the Upper Nepean Scheme, finally being decommissioned in 1886.

At this time access to this part of the district was difficult. At least three attempts had been made to build a 'Botany Road' but none actually led to the area now known as Botany. An informal track known as 'Mudbank Road' led to the shore of the Bay well to the west of the wetlands; a formal road built by decree of Governor Macquarie followed an eastern route to skirt the wetlands and meet the bay at the Village of Banks Meadow; and the 'Botany Parish Road' was prevented by the swamps from extending into the area. The only practical route until the 1860s was the deteriorated original Botany Road which followed roughly the course of today's Anzac Parade/Bunnerong Road, although a series of tracks cut across country to the area; or via a track that cut diagonally through the farms north of the watercourse and then crossed Lord's land at its eastern edge and joined the network of tracks from the eastern road. The other option was to travel to Sydney by water around the coast.

Due to much of its land being held by either the Crown or the Lord family, by the 1860s Botany's relative isolation and still sparse settlement meant its roads, public transport and utilities were deemed to be 'behind' those of Sydney suburbs. Land sales and residential development were therefore slow to take off in Botany, with traditional industries such as fishing and market gardening being the main activities for many years. This isolated quality was however advantageous to one particular industry, that of noxious trades. Tanneries, wool-scours and boiling-down works flocked to Botany after being pushed out of Sydney by the Noxious Trades Act of 1848. Botany was able to satisfy needs for flat, cheap land with the copious water supply and ready drainage that was demanded by these industries. By 1880 there were numerous noxious trades being carried out in Botany, as evidenced in St Matthew's Anglican Church's birth register, a single page of which lists fathers employed as woolwashers, tanners, gardeners, farmers, a boatsman, a toll-gate keeper, a timber merchant and a labourer.

The economy and population provided by the influx of market gardeners and noxious trade workers eventually led to the evolution of Botany from a small village to a town by the 1880s. This was helped by the establishment of two hotels, the Waterworks and the Captain Cook, plus local businesses such as butcher, baker and grocer in close proximity to the main intersection of Botany Road and Bay Street by the 1880s. Later businesses revealed growing affluence, including confectioners, a picture theatre and a billiards saloon, as well as services such as solicitors, hairdressers and dressmakers.

Despite the generally low level of education of the adults in the area, Botany is notable as the location of only the third non-denominational 'National' school in the state, and the first in the Sydney metropolitan area. This school was established in 1848 in temporary premises but closed in 1850. The current school opened in 1862, again in temporary premises (likely the Wesleyan Chapel) and in 1869 moved into the newly completed schoolhouse designed by architect George Alan Mansfield in his characteristic Gothic style.

Simeon Lord had sponsored the erection of the Wesleyan Chapel on his land for his workers and George allocated land for the erection of St Matthews Anglican Church in 1841 (rebuilt in 1862). George also provided the site for the School of Arts and Mechanics Institute, and these facilities provided the nucleus for the growing town which was increasingly less isolated due to better roads and in particular the introduction of the tram service in 1882. By 1888 the area was

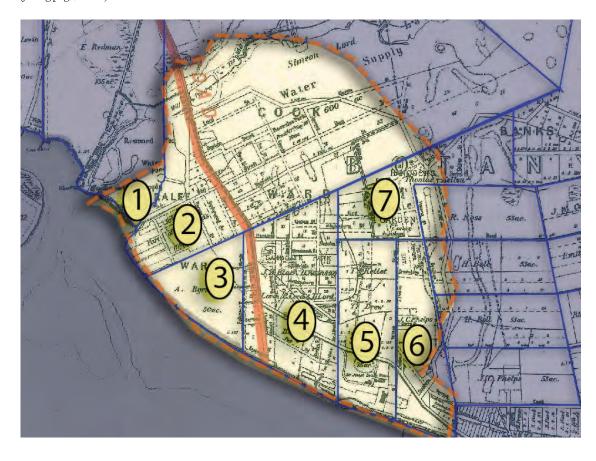
sufficiently populated and motivated to seek incorporation as a Municipality. The proportion of the suburb available for residential development increased significantly following the large-scale release of 'Lord's Estate' from 1863, with most of the area covered by modest detached cottages over the next 50 years. Some large-scale industries continued to operate, including noxious trades along the edge of the wetlands until after World War II, but these have now ceased and the main industrial activity today is associated with the freight-handling industry servicing both Kingsford Smith Airport and Port Botany.

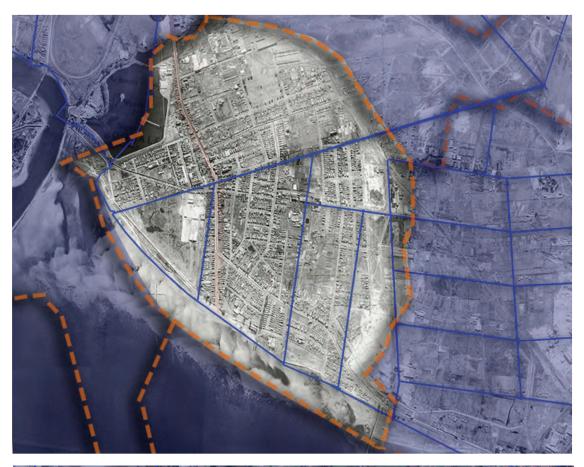
Botany, in 1909, showing the boundaries of the original land grants in blue. The original grantee/purchasers were as follows:

- 1. Edward Redmond
- 2. Simeon Lord
- 3. Andrew Byrne
- 4. J.H Black, D. Ramsay, F. Lord and E. Lord
- 5. T. Kellett and Drew
- 6. J. Phelps
- 7. Thomas Kellett

(facing page, top) In 1943

(facing page, below) In 2014



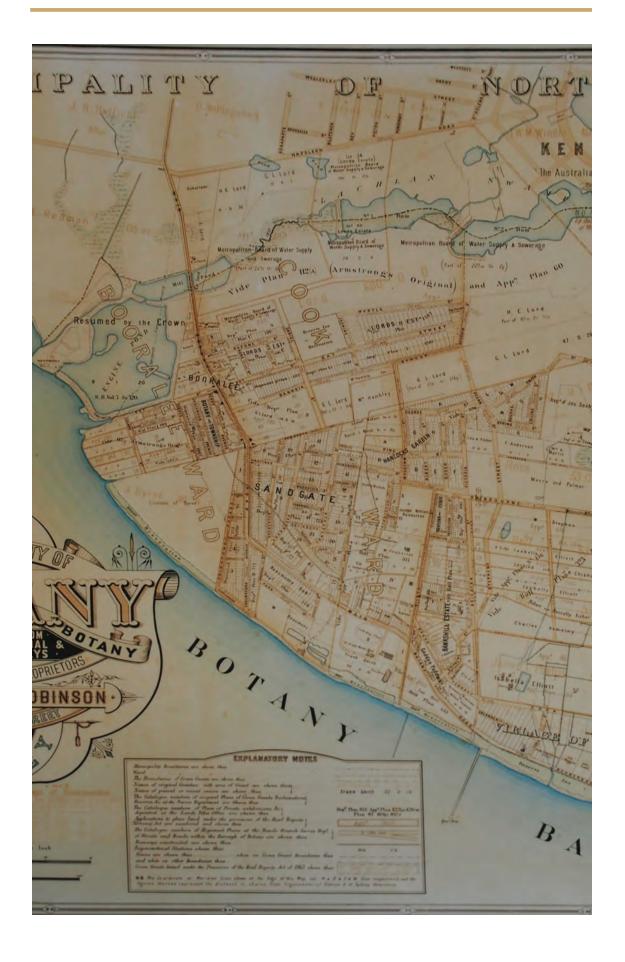




## **BOTANY SUBDIVISION PLANS**



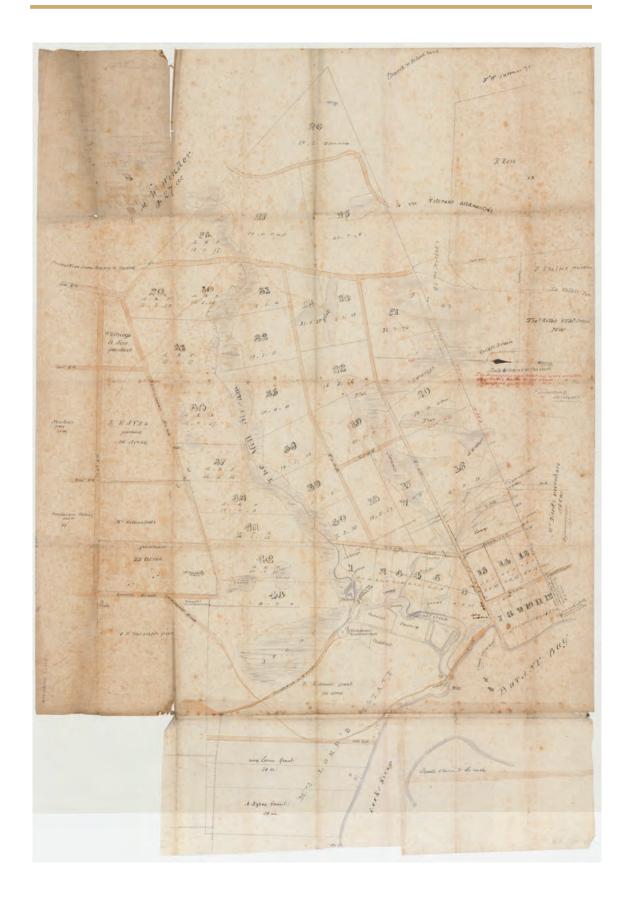
 $Overview\ of\ the\ location\ of\ the\ available\ subdivision\ plans\ for\ the\ suburb\ of\ Botany$ 

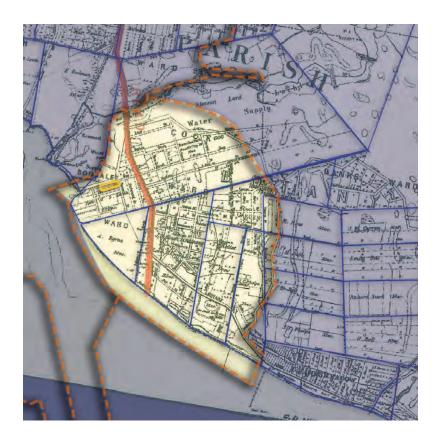






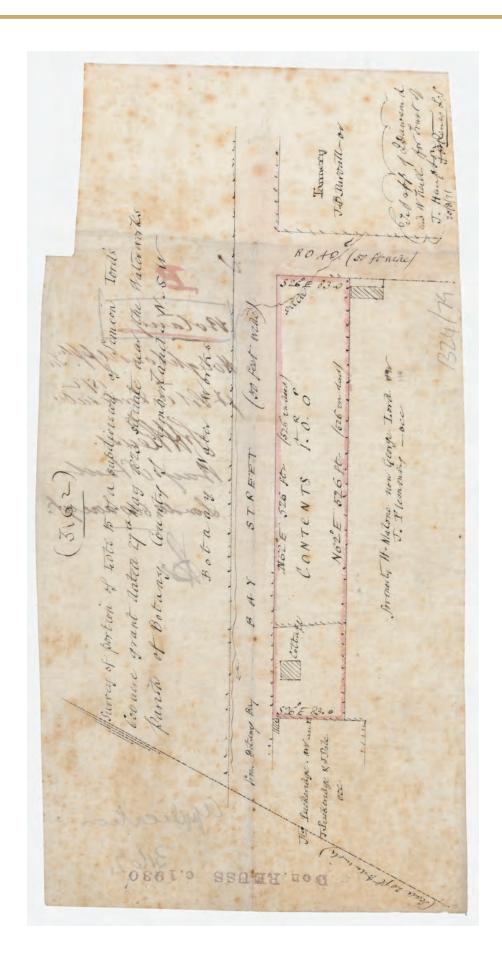
Plan for the first subdivision of Simeon Lord's deceased Estate by his son George Lord. Plan undated, but likely c.1854..





This land, facing Bay Street in Booralee, was part of the original Village of Booralee created by George Lord's first subdivision of Simeon Lord's 600 acres. It is not known if H. Malone was the original purchaser, but by 1858 the land (part of the original Lot 15) was being advertised as part of Malone's Insolvent Estate. The plan for the sale shows the location of a cottage on the site, likely one of the earliest in the village. Unlike most of the early cottages in the district, the advertisement states that the house was "a comfortable brick-built cottage, containing four rooms, &c." (Friday 30 April 1858, New South Wales Government Gazette, p.725). It was located at or close to 15 Bay Street, and is shown on the 1892/1910 Water Board Detail Sheets as "Gemma"; but was demolished after 1943 and the site is now an industrial building.

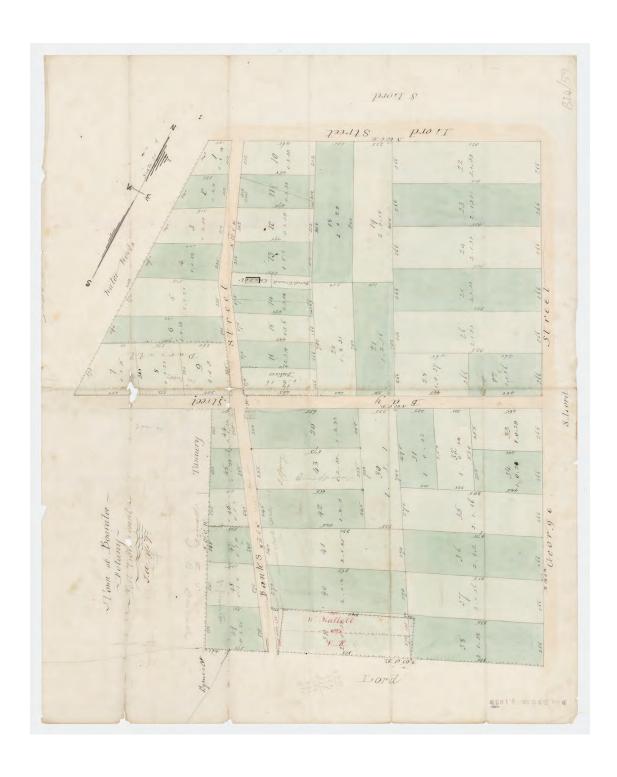


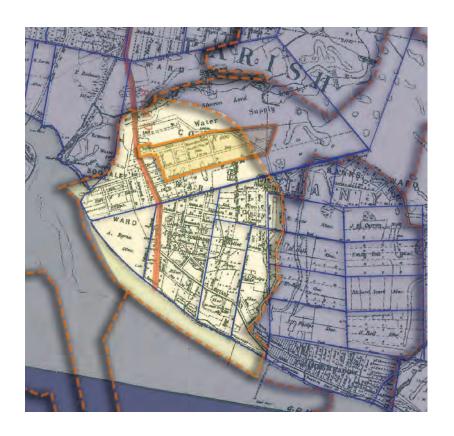






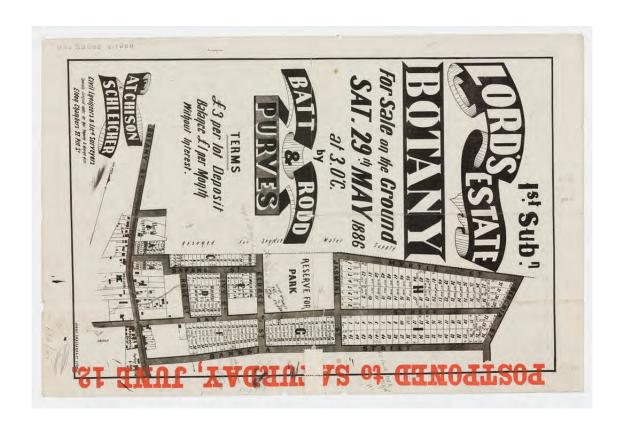
c. 1871 Bemi plan for the 1859
re-subdivision of the core of Lord's
Estate. The original sale had not been
successful, with most of the earlier lots
remaining unsold. The land reserved for
the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel can be
seen; also the site of the Lock-Up (Police
Station) at the southern end ("V.R.")



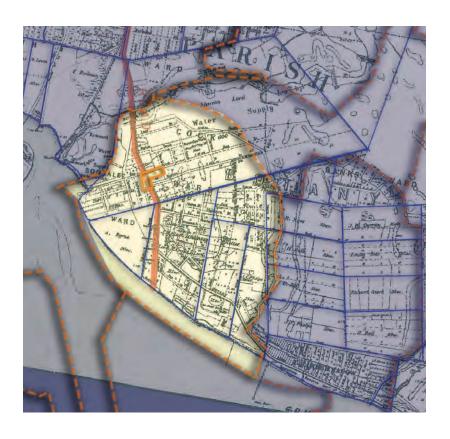




1886 advertisement for the sale of a large proportion of Lord's estate. It includes the reservation for Booralee Park.

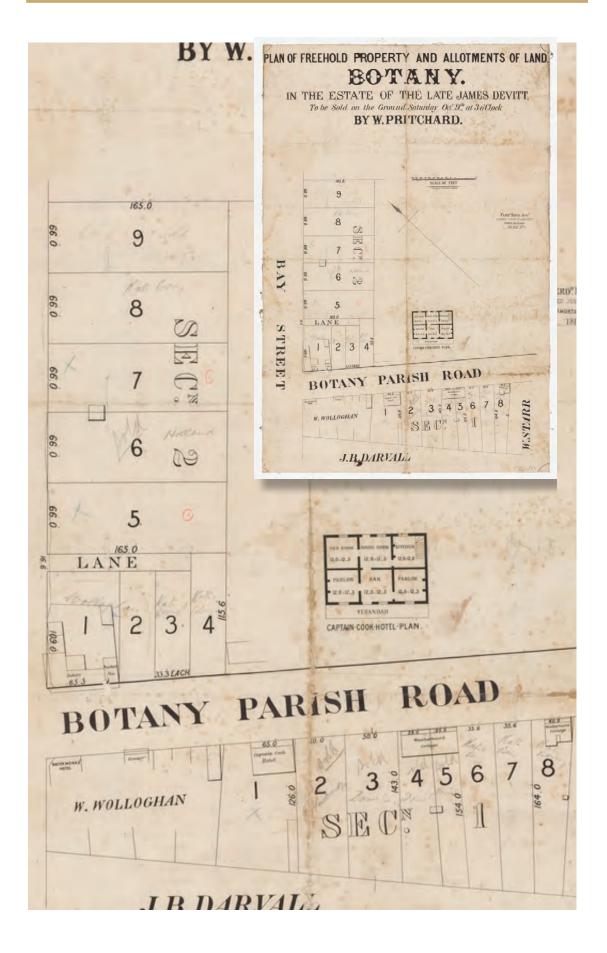








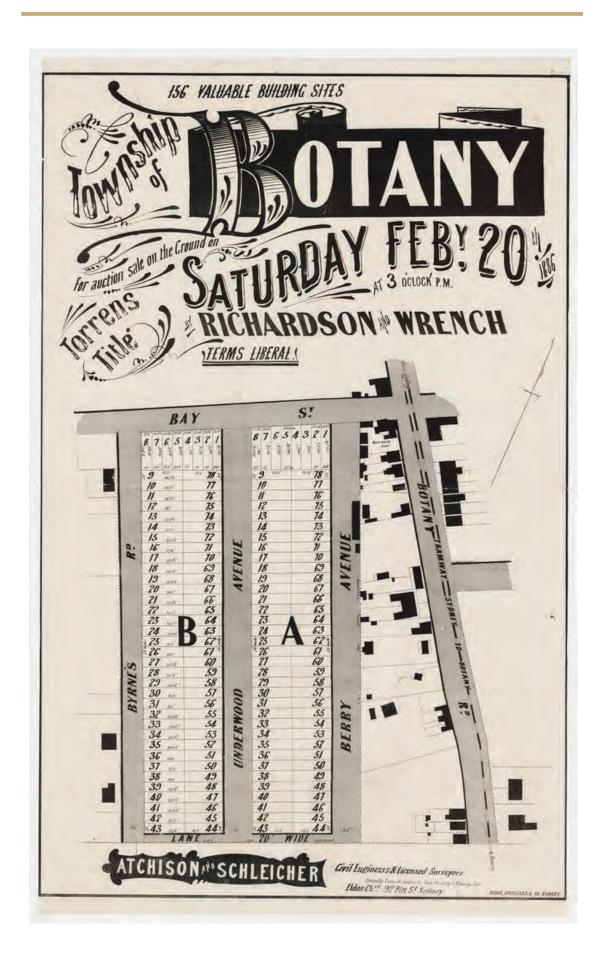
Advertisement for the sale of James Devitt's estate in 1863. This plan has been annotated with the names of purchasers, and also shows the location of the early buildings in the Botany Town Centre. Devitt had been the licencee of the Captain Cook Hotel and the flyer included a plan of the ground floor of the building, revealing its original form.







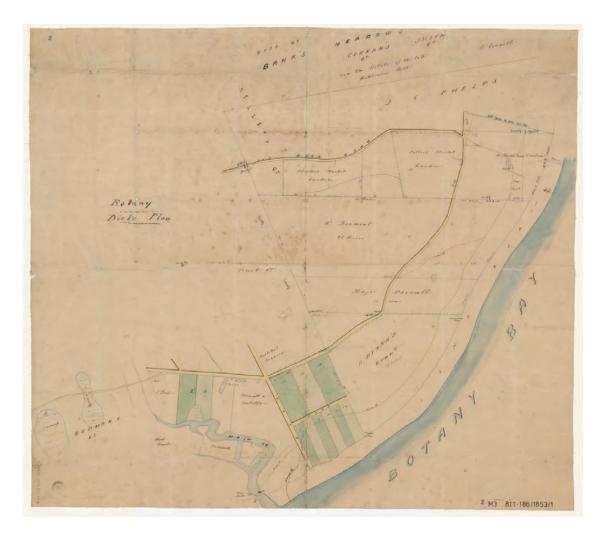
Advertisement for the sale of the land formerly occupied by tanners Darvall and Castella. The plan includes the footprints of buildings along Botany Road at that time. The site had been offered as a single (or potentially two) lots with the tannery buildings in 1869.



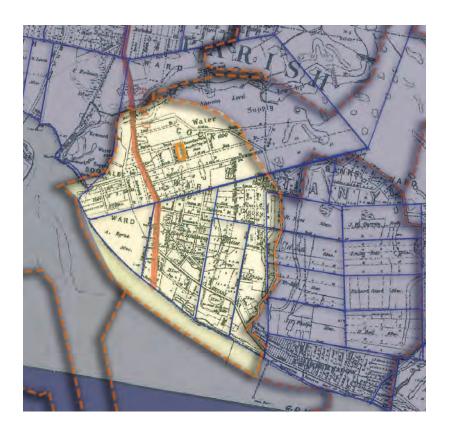




A sketch plan prepared by Surveyor Dick in 1853 showing the early subdivision of Booralee, the Sir Joseph Banks site and the Emu Park.

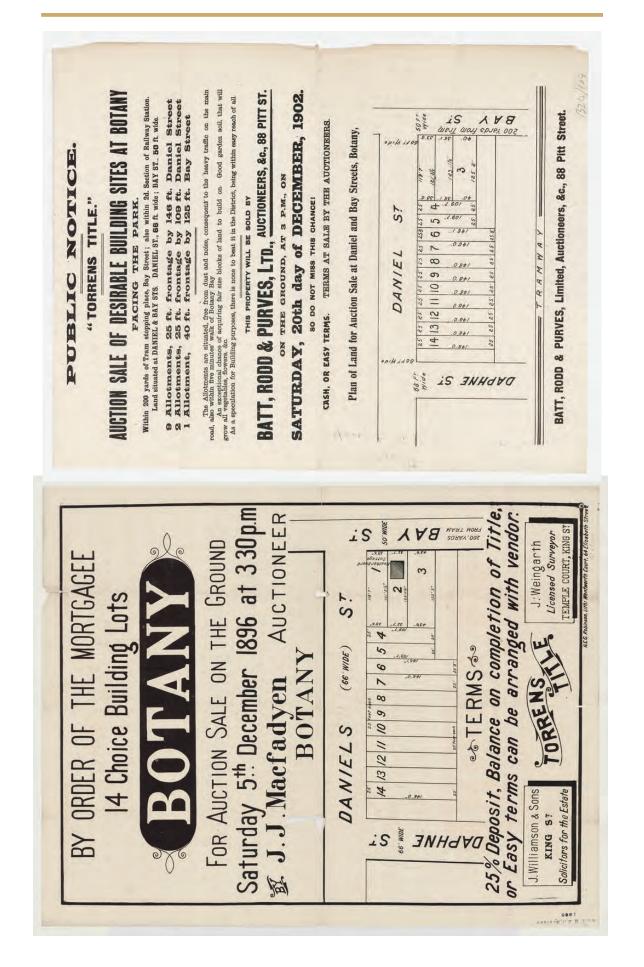


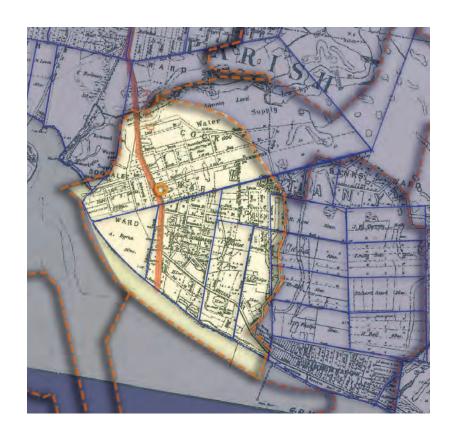




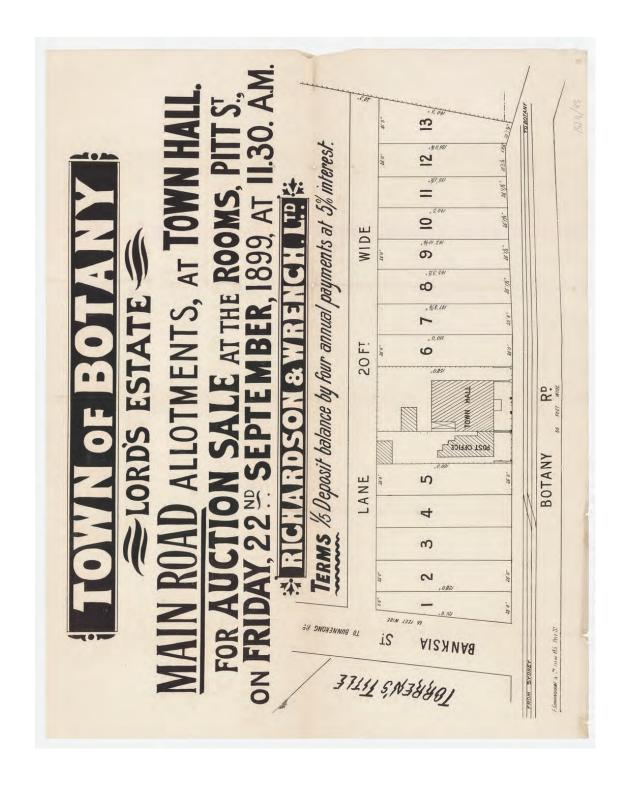


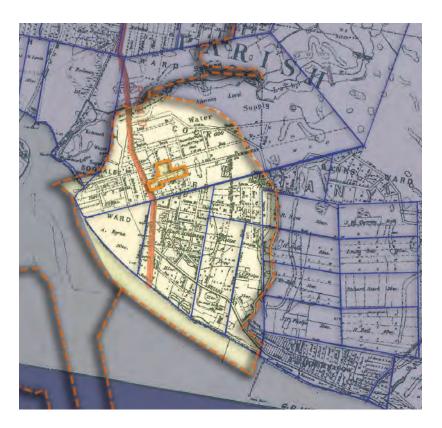
1896 plan for the sale of land opposite Booralee Park. The land was re-advertised in 1902. The plans show the location of a weatherboard cottage on the site.





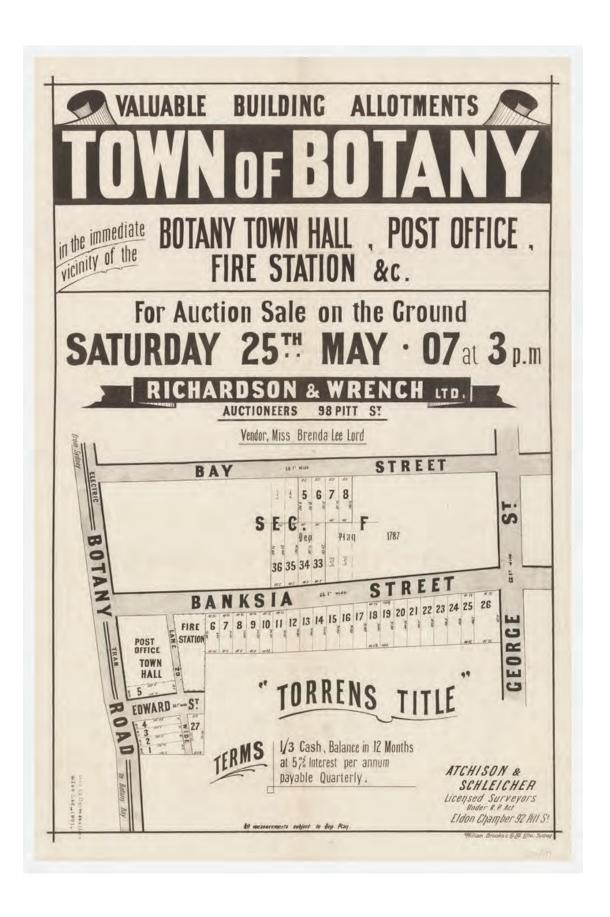


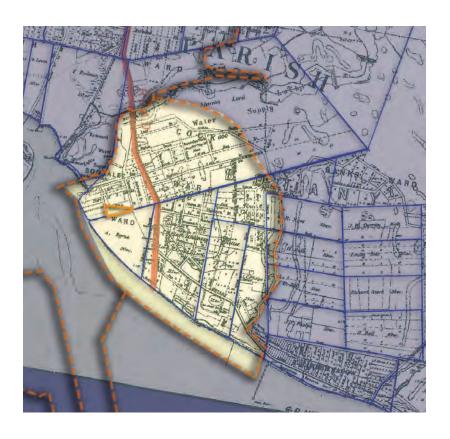




1907- 171h residue

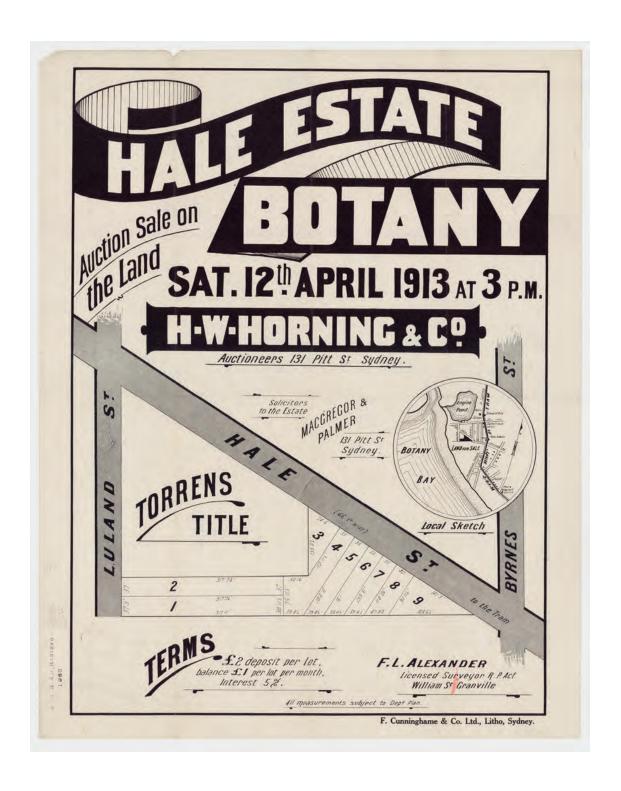








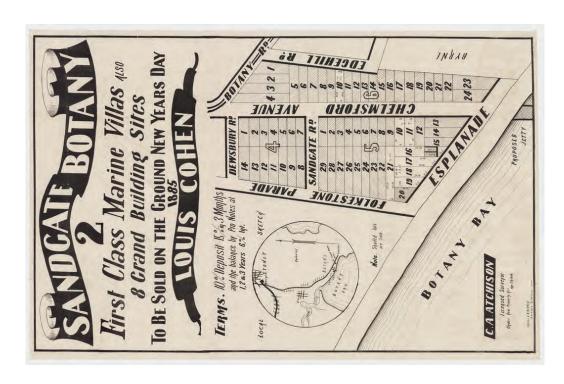
The Hale Estate was formed from the residue of one of the lots affected by the SWSOOS pipeline. It was offered in 1913 and again in 1916.





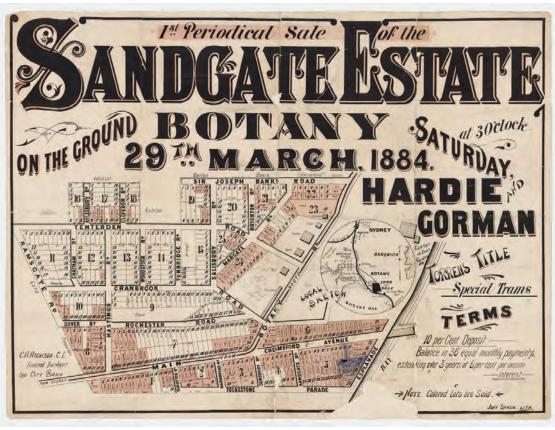


The Sandgate Estate was a large development released in stages from the 1884.

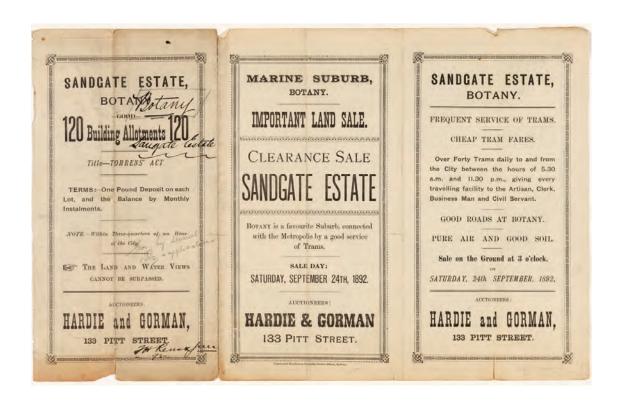


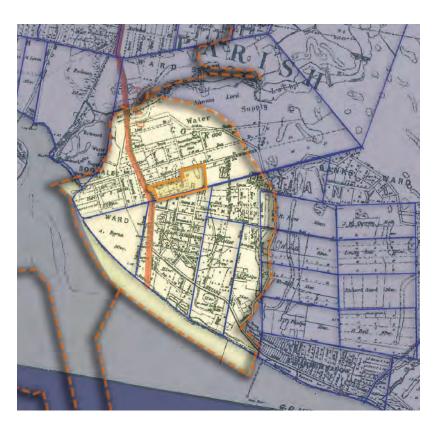










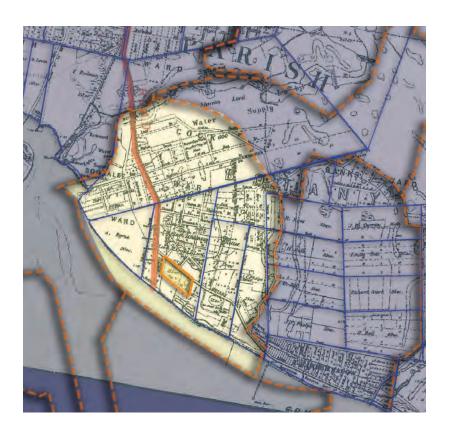


1928 - town hall



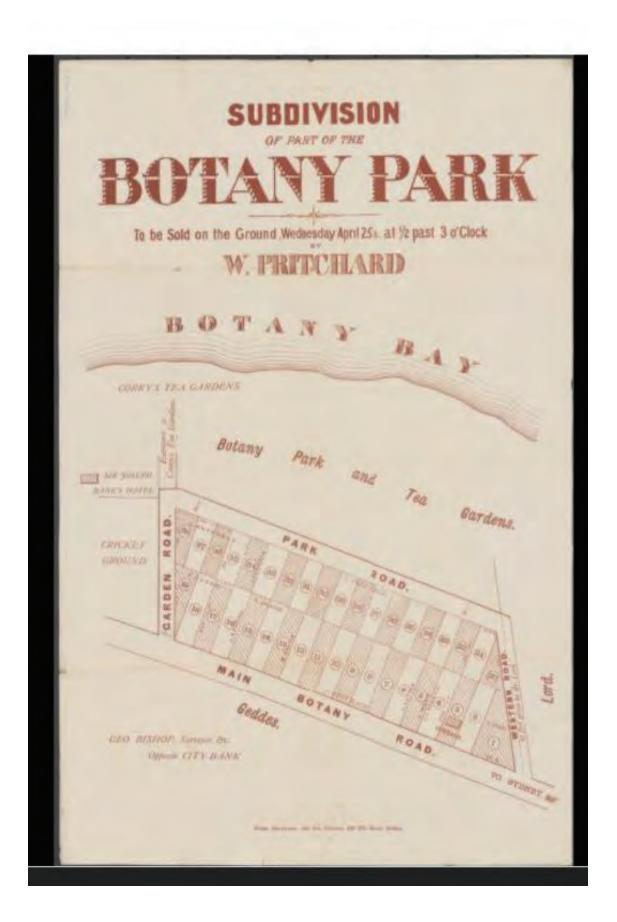
estate







1880 sale of "Botany Park" located between Botany Road and Correy's Tea Gardens. Note the location of an earlier cottage on lot 3 (bottom right corner of the land).

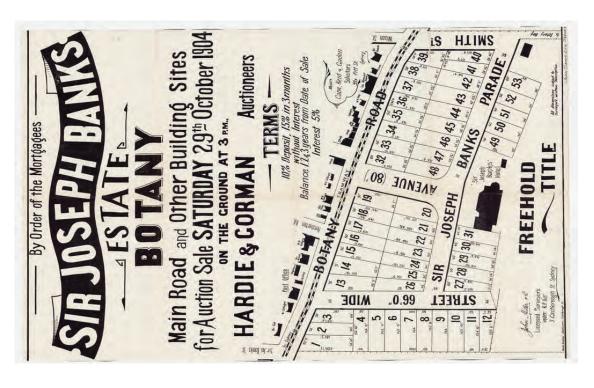


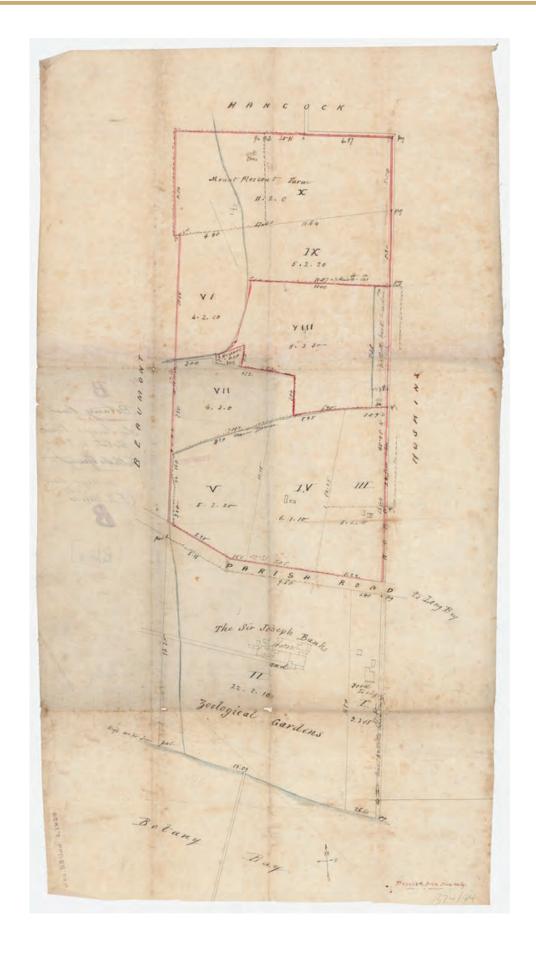




The sale of the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel grounds was a protracted process, with releases in 1902 through to 1936. A sample of the many flyers is shown here. and overleaf.

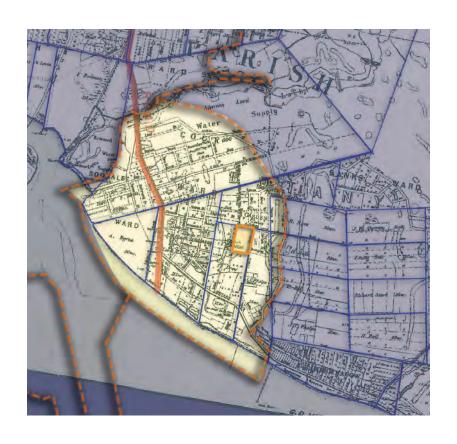




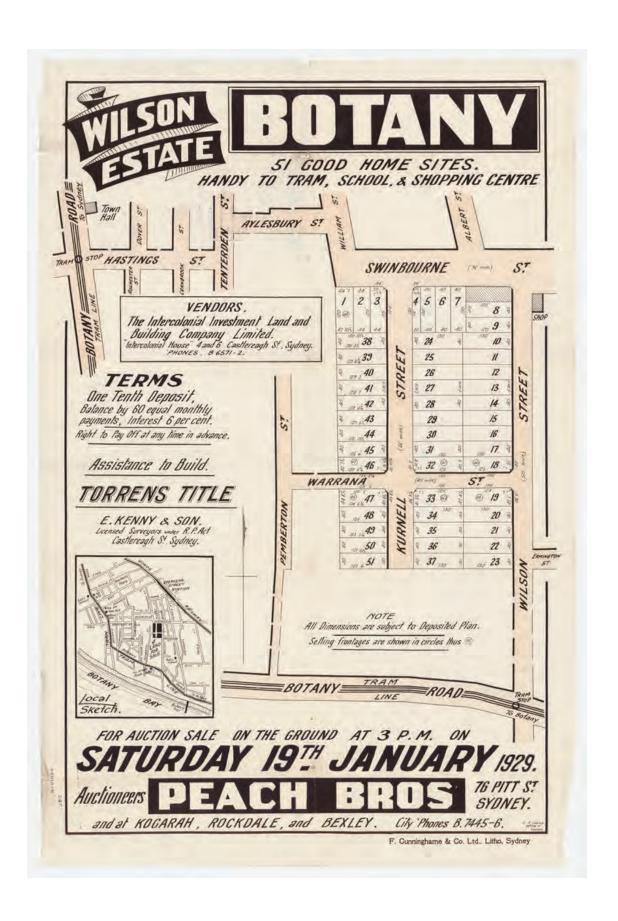


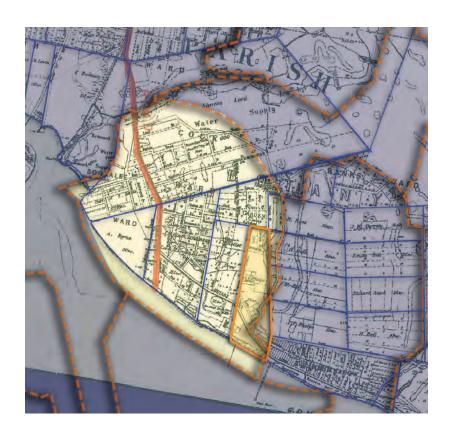


Early (n.d.; 19th century) plans of the original use of Kellett's land (left) and the grounds of the (sir Joseph Banks Hotel (above)











1868 sketch of the proposed subdivision of J. Phelps' land into large lots, known as the Banks Hill Estate.

