

Marrickville Metro Site Study: Teacher's Notes

This enquiry based site study and the accompanying historical resources were designed for the NSW Years 7 -10 History Syllabus. It provides all you require for a virtual site study although a site visit is highly recommended. The latter can be undertaken as a class or in the student's own time.

The study consists of:

- Teachers notes and resources
- Syllabus links – objectives and outcomes
- Historical sources for site study (online, pdf and xlsx)
- Powerpoint of maps (use, change and continuity of the area over time) and photos of the site (what remains of the sites earlier structures and use)
- Student worksheets and activities
- Extended bibliography of the Inner West Council's Library holdings for Vicars Woollen Mill (docx and xlsx)

A wide and diverse range of primary and secondary, visual and written sources are used in this site study that span from pre-European occupation of Australia to the modern shopping complex found on the site today. The sources are all referenced and an extended bibliography of Inner West Library resources is included to enable further research.

The primary objective is to enable students to develop skills to analyse and use of historical sources in order to undertake an historical inquiry and communicate their results with the focus on change over time. This aspect of the Marrickville Metro site study is applicable to both Stage 4 and Stage 5 NSW History students. Much of the content of the historical sources aligns with the Stage 5 History syllabus theme of the modern world and Australia.

Historical overview (source numbers in brackets)

Marrickville Metro Shopping Complex sits on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation who knew it as Bulanaming. It is in the Sydney suburb of Marrickville and in the vicinity of the Cooks River. Archaeological evidence of Aboriginal people in the area for at least 10,000 years has been documented although this was probably for longer than this. (1)

The Gumbramorra Swamp and the area on which Marrickville Metro sits was a source of food and resources for the Aboriginal people (1). A 1793 map by Watkin Tench calls the general area Kangaroo Ground and notes there is good land. (2) The curve of Victoria Road on the northern side of Marrickville Metro follows the curve of Gumbramorra swamp (5,18, 30, 31) which is sometimes shown hatched or shaded on early maps of Sydney. (3) Although the swamp was drained in the 1890s flooding of the site has still occurred occasionally. (31, 37)

A Second Fleet convict James Waine was granted 30 acres in 1795 and established an orchard. (3, 4) Good clay soil and the availability of water made the site suitable for farming (4, 6) and as well as brick making. (6, 7, 8)

In the 1860s Robert Koll established a tannery on the site, called Enmore Tannery. (10, 11) It was Koll who built the heritage listed Mill House located at 34 Victoria Rd today. (15, 16) It is listed in the Marrickville 2011 Local Environment Plan, the National Trust Register and is one of the oldest buildings in Marrickville.

Koll's tannery was sold in 1868 to Joseph Davenport and Thomas Alcock. (10) Davenport and Alcock expanded the tannery and also established a boot factory on the site. (12, 13, 14, 16) This became the principal boot factory in NSW producing over 100,000 pairs of boots a year and they received many prizes for their work. (14)

In 1893 Davenport and Alcock were forced to sell their tannery and factory and John Vicars purchased it. (17) Vicars had been running a mill in Sussex Street in the city before he relocated to Marrickville and with this move the business expanded. (17, 21) Vicars produced cloth from Australian wool (22, 23) and managed to pick up many government contracts. These contracts included supplying the government with blankets (20) and uniforms for railway workers (21). Vicars also had contracts to supply the army, navy and air force in WWI and in WWII. (23, 25, 26, 32) The company also produced woollen cloth for men and women's clothes. (22, 33)

Vicars employed many women especially during WWII when they advertised for girls between the ages of 14 – 18 for permanent positions (32, 34). In the 1950s and 1960s it also employed many new immigrants, especially from Greece (36).

In the 1950s as the use of road transport increased many industries relocated to middle and outer Sydney suburbs and government incentives in the 1970s accelerated this. (35, 37) Vicars Woollen Mill at Marrickville closed in the late 1970s. The buildings were demolished (38) and in 1987 Marrickville Metro opened (39).

In 2021 an expanded Marrickville Metro opened between Smidmore, Murray and Edinburgh St and the older shopping complex was upgraded (40). This extension incorporated the Shelley & Sons Cordial factory site that operated here from 1927 – 1986. (41, 42, 43, 45)

Recommended publications in the Local History section of the Marrickville Library

- Paul Irish, Aboriginal History along the Cooks River, Cooks River Alliance
- A History of the Municipality of Marrickville to Commemorate the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary 1861 – 1936 (Marrickville Council)
- Cashman, R & Meader, C, 1994, Marrickville: people and places. A social history of Marrickville, Newtown, Camperdown, Petersham, Stanmore, St Peters, Tempe & Dulwich Hill (Sydney)
- Cashman, R & Meader, C, 1997, Marrickville: rural outpost to inner city. A social history of Marrickville and the former municipalities of Newtown, Camperdown, Petersham and St Peters (Sydney)
- Whitaker, Anne-Maree, 2006, Pictorial History: Marrickville (Sydney)

Online resources

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/>

Paul Irish, Aboriginal History along the Cooks River, Cooks River Alliance

https://cooksriver.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2017/06/Cooks_River_Aboriginal_history_WEB.pdf

<https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/marrickville>

- with links to images

<https://marrickvilleheritage.org.au/2012/10/19/marrickville-a-suburb-history/>

<https://www.historypin.org/en/industry-in-marrickville>

St Peters Cooks River History Group (post 1788 chronological history of Marrickville)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsgOAt9RfmA>

St Peters Cooks River History Group (Marrickville industrial heritage)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIU_Bv87EPw

Vicar's Woollen Mill

<https://www.marrickvillemetro.com.au/media/files/MarrickvilleMetro/12/12a5703b-337d-4003-aa27-0c8509f5597a.pdf>

Public art at Marrickville Metro <https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/live/living-arts/public-art-projects/marrickville-metro-public-art>

<https://www.marrickvillemetro.com.au/community/a-little-piece-of-history>

Online calculator to convert pre decimal currency to today's currency value

<https://www.rba.gov.au/calculator/annualPreDecimal.html>

Online calculator to convert area and length to current metric area and length

<https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/metric-conversion-tool>

Oral history podcasts with Arthur Shelley (Shelley & Sons Cordial Factory)

<https://localhistory.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/nodes/view/5918>

NSW Years 7 – 10 History Syllabus links: Stage 4

The Marrickville Metro site study supports the Stage 4 key inquiry question: How do we know about the past? It also provides a complete site study as mandated in the NSW History Syllabus.

Student objectives

- Develop knowledge and understanding of the nature of history and significant changes and developments from the past, the modern world and Australia
- Develop knowledge and understanding of ideas, movements, people and events that shaped past civilisations, the modern world and Australia
- Develop skills to undertake the process of historical inquiry
- Develop skills to communicate their understanding of history

Historical concepts and skills

- Analysis and use of sources: students use a range of primary and secondary historical sources to understand the history of the site, and investigate source reliability and purpose
- Continuity and change: understanding changes in the area from pre European occupation to the modern shopping complex there today
- Comprehension: read historical texts and study photographs to sequence historical events
- Perspectives: interrogate an early 20th century history of Marrickville source
- Significance: appreciate the significance of manufacturing and industrial heritage in the area
- Explanation and communication: students develop a narrative of the site using historical sources and design a mural reflecting an aspect of its history

Student outcomes

- Describes the nature of history and archaeology and explains their contribution to an understanding of the past HT4-1
- Sequences events, people and societies from the past HT4-2
- Identifies the meaning, purpose and context of historical sources HT4-5
- Uses evidence from sources to support historical narratives and explanations HT4-6
- Identifies and describes different contexts, perspectives and interpretations of the past HT4-7
- Locates, selects and organises information from sources to develop an historical inquiry HT4-8
- Uses a range of historical terms and concepts when communicating an understanding of the past HT4-9
- Selects and uses appropriate oral, written, visual and digital forms to communicate about the past HT4-10

Related Life Skills outcomes: HTLS-1, HTLS-2, HTLS-3, HTLS-5, HTLS-6, HTLS-7, HTLS-8, HTLS-9, HTLS-10, HTLS-11, HTLS-12, HTLS-13

NSW Years 7 – 10 History Syllabus links: Stage 5

The Marrickville Metro site study provides a complete site study as mandated in the NSW History Syllabus and supports all the Stage 5 key inquiry questions:

- What were the changing features of the movement of people from 1750 to 1918?
- How did new ideas and technological developments contribute to change in this period?
- What was the origin, development, significance and long-term impact of imperialism in this period?
- What was the significance of World Wars I and II?
- How did the nature of global conflict change during the 20th century?
- What were the consequences of WWII? How did these consequences shape the modern world?
- How was Australian society affected by other significant global events and changes in this period?

Student objectives

- Develop knowledge and understanding of the nature of history and significant changes and developments from the past, the modern world and Australia
- Develop knowledge and understanding of ideas, movements, people and events that shaped past society, the modern world and Australia
- Develop skills to undertake the process of historical inquiry
- Develop skills to communicate their understanding of history
- Develop a lifelong interest in History

The following historical skills and concepts are incorporated into the site study

Continuity & change: investigate the use and occupants of the site from pre 1788 to the large shopping complex today

Cause & effect: increase of female employment in manufacturing and industry with WWI and WWII; post 1945 migration and employment

Significance: understand the importance of industrial history and impact of industries on shaping modern Australia

Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts: sequence historical events using a wide range of sources

Analysis & use of sources: interrogate a wide range of primary and secondary sources to assess their reliability and usefulness to communicate aspects of the site's history

Explanation & communication: select and use evidence to communicate about the past

Student outcomes

- Explains and assesses the historical forces and factors that shaped the modern world and Australia HT5-1
- Sequences and explains the significant patterns of continuity and change in the development of the modern world and Australia HT5-2
- Explains and analyses the causes and effects of events and developments in the modern world and Australia HT5-4
- Identifies and evaluates the usefulness of sources in the historical inquiry process HT5-5
- Uses relevant evidence to support historical narratives, explanations and analyses of the modern world and Australia HT5-6
- Selects and analyses a range of historical sources to locate information relevant to an historical inquiry HT5-8
- Selects and uses appropriate oral, written, visual and digital forms to communicate effectively about the past to different audiences HT5-9
- Selects and uses appropriate oral, written, visual and digital forms to communicate effectively about the past for different audiences HT5-10

Related Life Skills outcomes: HTLS-1, HTLS-2, HTLS-4, HTS-5, HTLS-6, HTLS-7, HTLS-8, HTLS-9, HTLS-10, HTLS-11, HTLS-12, HTLS-13