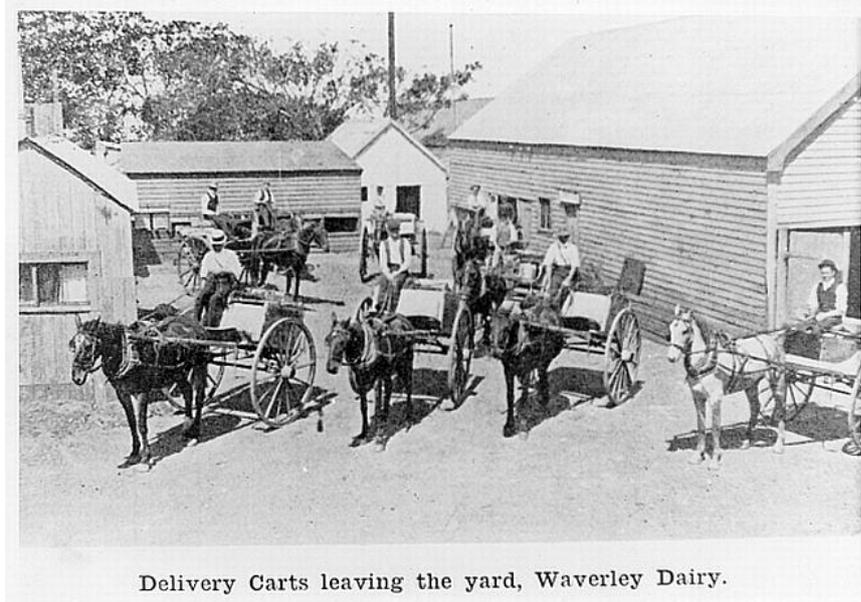


"Milko!" Dairies in Waverley

From the mid-19th century to late 1950s the Waverley area was an important milk-producing and distributing district, home to large dairy herds and major milk runs. With a ready market for milk and other dairy produce in Sydney, this local industry flourished.



Delivery Carts leaving the yard, Waverley Dairy.

There was little or no direct control of dairies by Waverley Council prior to 1886. In that year the NSW Government passed the *Dairies Supervision Act (1886)* which gave local councils the power to supervise the production and distribution of milk. In Waverley, the Council appointed Michael Season as an Inspector and Robert Orr as a Registrar for the area, responsible for, amongst other things, the local dairies.

In June, 1887 Inspector Searson reported that there were 16 dairies in the area in good order and four others were making the necessary improvements. Other dairymen were warned that unless they complied with the Act's regulations their licences would be cancelled and their distribution of milk stopped.

In 1917 there were 11 dairies and 80 milk vendors operating in the Waverley local government area. Thirteen years later the number of dairies had decreased to two and the number of milk vendors had increased to 234.

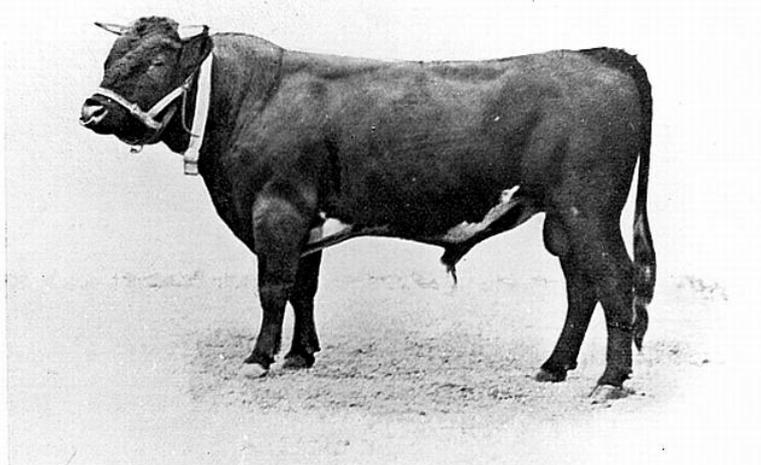
By 1931 there were no dairies or milk vendors operating in the area, apparently the distribution of milk had been completely taken over by the large milk distribution companies. By 1936 Dairy Farmers' Co-op Milk Co. Ltd had a Waverley branch at 35-45 Spring Street, Bondi Junction.

There were many local dairies, including: Clarke's Dairy, Farrelly's Dairy, Ashworth's Dairy, Lawson's Dairy, Johnson's Dairy, Mackenzie's Dairy and Peel's Dairy. Here is the story of two of these, one of the earliest dairies - Mackenzie's Waverley Dairy and one of the last - Peel's Dairy.

Mackenzie's Waverley Dairy

Mackenzie's Waverley Dairy was established by Alexander Kenneth Mackenzie (1829-1884) who first established his milking herd in the 1860s. Mackenzie's was one of Waverley's largest dairies and their land extended from Bondi Road along Denham Street to about Tasman Street. Their milking sheds and yards were extensive and the

open country around the dairy afforded good grazing for the cows. At its peak 200 cows were milked by hand daily.



Mr. F. A. Mackenzie's Jimmy 4th. Third in Milking Shorthorn Class.
Two Years, Royal Show, 1909.

On 8 January 1884 Mackenzie was killed in a horse-drawn coach accident near Port Macquarie which was reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. He is buried in Waverley Cemetery, grave 125, C.E. select, section 1. The Mackenzie family had first arrived in Australia from Scotland in December, 1822 and had been pioneers in the Bathurst district before moving to the Bondi area.

By 1907 a 125-stall automatic milking machine had been installed, there were facilities to produce both bottled and bulk milk, and it had a fleet of delivery carts which supplied both the city and suburbs.

Mackenzie's Waverley Dairy had a breeding stud as well as a dairy and their milking Shorthorn breed had an excellent reputation with the Royal Agricultural Society. In 1910 the champion bulls were Jimmy 1, Jimmy 111, Jimmy 1V and Jimmy V. The fate of Jimmy 11 is unknown! Hunters Corner, on the corner of Denham Street and Bondi Road, was used as a cultivation paddock and also the run for the stud bulls.

In 1910 A.K. Mackenzie's son, Frederick Alexander Mackenzie (1860-1938), took over the business and that year the Royal Agricultural Society's Annual enthusiastically endorsed the quality of the business:

'Arrangements in connection with the milking and the distribution of the milk at the Waverley dairy are excellent. The milk is in the customers' jugs as early each day as it could possibly be if they kept their own cows; in fact, the promptness of the supply from this establishment has induced many people who formerly kept their own milker to give up and purchase their milk instead.'

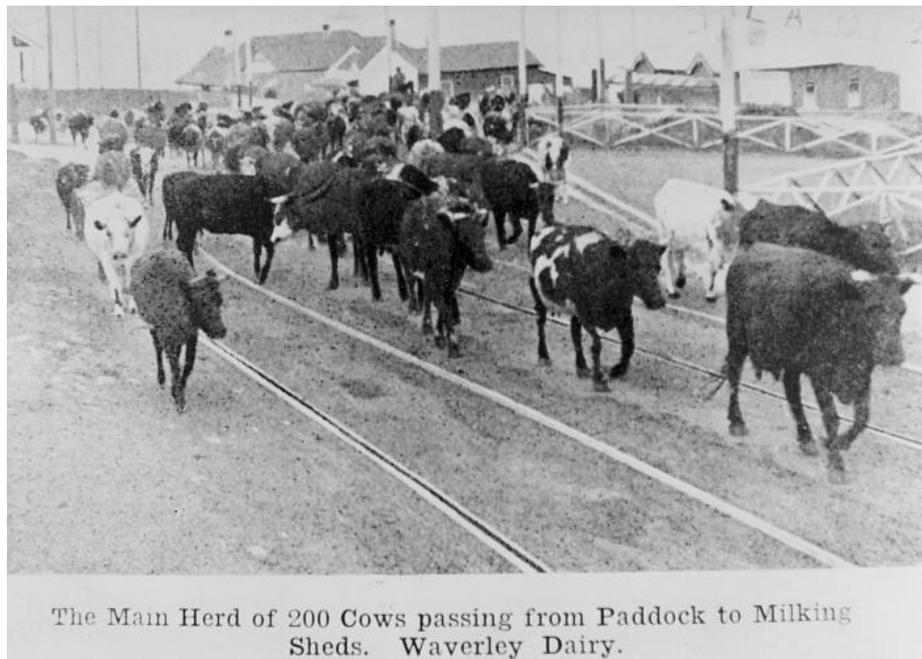
Mackenzie's Waverley Dairy was one of Sydney's largest dairies, supplying milk to large institutions such as Sydney Hospital. In later years, as the paddocks were built over by houses, the cows were herded to a large flat paddock on the on the point between South Bondi and Tamarama where they grazed overlooking the ocean. In the evenings those milking cows coming back to the dairy, via Fletcher Street and into Denham Street, was a common sight. That large flat grazing paddock is now Marks Park.

The Mackenzie Estate was first subdivided for sale in 1919, with further land sold off in 1921. The Mackenzie family then resided in 'Boonara', a home a little west of Denham Street (which later gave Boonara Avenue its name) and 'Gaerlock' (which later gave Gaerloch Avenue its name), a little further west of this again on Bondi Road.

Today the Mackenzie family's name is remembered at Mackenzies Bay, a small cove between South Bondi and Tamarama. Locals refer to the point between Mackenzies Bay and Tamarama as Mackenzies Point although this is not an officially recognised name.

Peel's Dairy

Peel's Dairy was in Diamond Bay Road, Diamond Bay/Vaucluse roughly on the site of the current Diamond Bay Bowling Club. Its land was slightly larger than that occupied by the Club.



It was a quite remote area, in the late 19th century and early 20th century there was little at Diamond Bay, except Peel's Dairy and Barracluff's ostrich farm. The Dairy's original address was Old South Head Road, as it pre-dates the building of Diamond Bay Road and Isabel Avenue, which later bisected the original Peel's Dairy site. The business was registered in the name of John F. Peel and Sons and later in its history, on the Peel's Dairy site, are dwellings for a Len Peel and R. Peel.

Peel's Dairy actually had no cows, but was a distribution point for country milk brought into Sydney by train and then trucked to Diamond Bay where it was reloaded onto horse-drawn carts, and later trucks, for local delivery. The trucks had wooden louvers, to keep the milk churns cool, as they travelled through the neighbouring suburbs of Vaucluse and Rose Bay.

Reminiscences of locals include leaving jugs out for the milkman to fill and hearing the cry 'Milko!' as the dairymen made their rounds. When deliveries were done by horse and cart Peel's Dairy had large stables on site. The dairy closed in 1958.

Published by Waverley Library from sources in the Local History Collection, 2010.