

## What put the sparkle into Diamond Bay?



*Diamond Bay 2007*

The name Diamond Bay certainly has a sparkle to it, but how did this area, now known for its dramatic cliff top walk, earn its gem-like name? Many theories have been put forward over the years, from the simplest, that it was named after an early landowner called 'Diamond', to the regal, that it was named for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1896.

The only solid fact is that the name was first used officially in 1863, so any naming has to have occurred before that date. In a *Report and Map of the Harbour Defences*, dated 3 January 1863, in the NSW Parliament Votes and Proceedings of that year, the bay is named 'Diamond Bay'.

Even early Waverley Council historian, B.T. Dowd, author of *The History of the Waverley Municipal District 1859-1959* concluded that 'the origin of the name Diamond Bay is obscure.' The Geographic Names Board did not officially register Diamond Bay as a place until 16 July 1976. It is identified as: 'a bay about 1 km S by W of Macquarie Lighthouse and about 3 km E of Point Piper'.

In the late 19th century and early 20th century it was a quite remote area, with little at Diamond Bay, except Peel's Dairy and Barracluff's Ostrich Farm.

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. Here 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.

From 1889 to 1918 the Diamond Bay area also housed exotic residents at Barracluff's Ostrich Farm, where two prize ostriches named Duke and Duchess ruled the roost.



*Ostriches and chicks at Barracluff's Ostrich Farm*

One of the most intriguing theories about Diamond Bay is that there is an early map, somewhere in the Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, which might hold a clue. The map supposedly shows, when viewed from the sea, the old property boundary fences forming a 'V' shape to the edge of the cliffs. When this is seen together with the natural 'V' shaped cliffs, a diamond shape is formed, which is visible from a boat at sea. The research, and the mystery, continues.

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