



Bayswater Historical Society

PRESERVE - PROTECT - PROMOTE

NEWSLETTER

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Noticeboard



1. Please note the location of the **Community Event on Sunday 30 April is Bert Wright Park.** The Bayswater Historical Society will have an information stall and display. Come along and chat with our members. Share your stories and knowledge about the history of Bayswater as you know it.
2. Members are encouraged to **participate in the 25 April annual ANZAC service at Halliday Park at dawn.**
3. **Sunday 28 May Public Opening** at our 114 King William Street Museum. 1pm – 4pm
4. **Sunday 25 June Public Opening** at our 114 King William Street Museum. 1pm – 4pm
5. **Sunday 23 July Public Opening** at our 114 King William Street Museum. 1pm – 4pm

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Note: Our Membership Year goes from 1 September - 31 August each year. A Membership Renewal notice is also attached for your convenience. If paying via EFT, please note member sub and your name. Thank you to all those members that have recently renewed their subscription. The Society is run by volunteers and depends on membership fees and donations. Contact the Secretary if you can support our aims by contributing in any way you are able.



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ANZAC DAY TRIBUTE – ODE FOR THE FALLEN



**They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.**

The lines above comprise the fourth stanza of the poem For the Fallen by Laurence Binyon and were written in the bleak early days of World War 1. By mid-September 1914, less than seven weeks after the outbreak of war, the British Expeditionary Force in France had already suffered severe casualties. During this time, long lists of the dead and wounded appeared in British newspapers. It was against this background that Binyon, then the Assistant Keeper of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum, wrote For the Fallen. This poem was first published in The Times on 21 September 1914.

Farewell Baywater Subway Bridge: A Local Icon

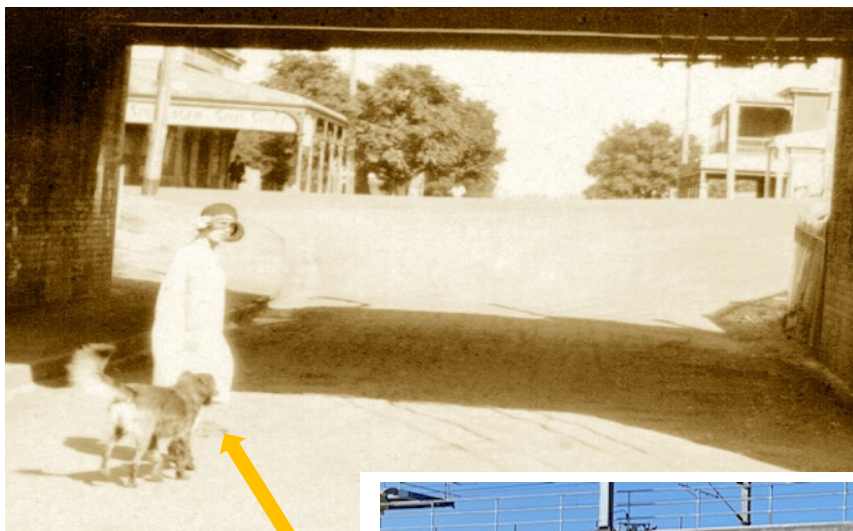
By: Lewis J. Cox

In 2023, residents and visitors will say a sad but needed farewell to the Bayswater Subway Bridge. Familiar with locals like a family member and close friend. Unkindly referred to at times as, “The Notorious Bayswater Subway Bridge”. Since 1928 hundreds of media reports of drivers misjudging the bridge height and damaging both vehicle and bridge began to wear it as a badge of honour.

Infamous History: Accidents since 1928 number many! Accurate records not available.

Over the years the residents have had a love – hate relationship with the bridge, regularly in the news and discussed over a coffee or beer at local venues. Everyone seems to have an opinion, and no doubt, when it is gone, mixed intense feelings will remain. Whether those feelings be, sadness or joy I am sure will cover a wide spectrum. Some may even miss the drama and news!

PTA and Metronet will be promoting a family-friendly community event at Bert Wright Park on Sunday 30 April 2023 from 10am – 1pm, to give the Bayswater Subway Bridge a well-deserved honourable and heartfelt send-off. The Bayswater Historical Society will have a stall highlighting the significant history and impact the Subway Bridge has had on the development and the local community.



Picture taken facing the
Swan River C. 1920



Picture taken facing the
Swan River C. April 2023

The Bayswater Subway (or Bayswater Bridge) is a road under rail subway near Bayswater railway station in Perth, Australia with a low clearance of 3.8 metres. It has become well known in Perth and has received significant media coverage for being frequently struck by tall vehicles. The PTA recorded that between 2014 – 2019 at least 36 vehicles crashed into the bridge.

The bridge was first proposed in 1898, but was not constructed until 1910, opening on February 14 of that year. It is different from the historic railway bridge over the Swan River that existed between 1897 and 1957, which at times had been referred to as the "Bayswater Bridge". The bridge was torn down in May 1969, due to its two-lane width not being enough, and it was rebuilt with four lanes underneath. In 2023, the bridge was replaced by a 4.8-metre-high bridge as part of the rebuild of Bayswater railway station.

Oh, what a beautiful subway bridge, but why the prominent red hazard markings?
Oh, that's why! 1234 accidents since 2020!



You've got to be joking. On 29 March 2016 what was the driver thinking?



March 2019, Instantly creating waste!



Bayswater rail bridge in 1969 (Supplied by State Library of WA)



3 May 2022, optimistic thinking?



**2017 - Warped: This truck came off worst after facing off with the Baysie Bridge.
Credit: Simon Santi/The West Australian**

So, rest in peace at Bayswater Subway Bridge you lived through over a hundred years of hits, near misses, and carnage and survived. You have been derided, debated, photographed, reported on and renowned as one of Perth's Western Australia most notorious local attractions. WA has beautiful local beaches and wildlife, but to call yourself a true "Sandgroper" you must have spent an eternity of time stuck in a traffic jam caused by an optimist driver who has once again jammed their vehicle into the Bayswater Subway Bridge.

Soon the Bayswater Subway Bridge will be replaced by a new modern structure, almost impossible for drivers to claim the honour of hitting the new Bayswater Subway Bridge. What will onlookers do when they are no longer able to discuss and have a laugh over the latest Subway Bridge incident?

In conclusion, while the replacement of the Bayswater Subway Bridge is being received well by most people, they will feel the loss and even grieve the passing of the Bayswater Subway Bridge. Notorious or not, this historical local landmark will be missed by one and all.

"The Bayswater Bridge is a part of our history and while it will be sad to see it go, the new 4.8-metre structure will make it easier for traffic and pedestrians". Maylands MLA Lisa Baker

References:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bayswater_Subway#:~:text=The%20bridge%20was%20first%20proposed,rebuilt%20with%20four%20lanes%20underneath

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-29/perths-notorious-bayswater-bridge-claims-another-truck-crash/11120554>

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<https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2022/03/Countdown-on-until-we-farewell-the-infamous-Bayswater-Bridge.aspx>

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Management Committee Reflections on Bayswater History

Why promote our local Bayswater History?

Put simply because it is interesting, it's our part of our culture, and importantly because we can learn from past mistakes and make better decisions in the future. Presently we have all been absorbed by the new Bayswater Railway Station development. The pulling down of our 1910 Bayswater Subway (or Bayswater Bridge) and creation of a new public transport hub has captured community interest and passion.

Watch the final demise of the Bridge here –

<https://www.metronet.wa.gov.au/news/latest-news/farewell-baysie-bridge>

As reported by Wikipedia and Trove, the bridge was first proposed in 1898, but it was not until 14 February 1910 that the bridge was opened. As part of the conversion of the Eastern Railway from narrow gauge to dual gauge, the original two-lane bridge was demolished in May 1969 and rebuilt with four lanes underneath. Bayswater railway station was rebuilt at the same time. Over 50 years later we have another rebuild.

It is interesting to read the 1910 news reports involving discussions between the Chairman of the Roads Board (Henry Halliday) and the Public Works government officials. While the bridge had just been opened there remained several ongoing operational concerns. The main issue not addressed was effective community and business access and practicality of use. That is, practical access from both west and east sides of the line. It is fascinating to note that over 100 years later at Community Consultation meetings facilitated by our government to ensure our new Bayswater Station would be fit for purpose, that similar issues were raised.



Bayswater Railway Station C 1900

What have we learnt from the history of the Bayswater Subway Bridge?

Lack of thorough planning involving locals with a focus on community impact and practical use can soon render any development not fit for purpose. With a low clearance of 3.8 metres, the bridge received significant media coverage for being frequently struck by tall vehicles. Over time the old Bayswater Subway Bridge became celebrated for all the wrong reasons. As exemplified by a news report in May 2019, ironically noting that low clearance safety flashing signs that were put on the bridge in September 2014, fell off the bridge, landing on a vehicle and breaking its windscreen.

As part of the rebuild of Bayswater Station, the bridge has been replaced by a new 4.8-metre-high bridge. The Bayswater Subway Bridge was demolished during a 14 to 17 April 2023 closure. Despite being the best-known bridge in Perth for being hit, the Bayswater Subway is not the lowest road-under-rail bridge in Perth. The Sutherland Street bridge, in West Perth has a clearance of 3.7 metres and the Seventh Avenue Bridge, in Maylands had a clearance of 3.3 metres before it was rebuilt. The Bayswater Bridge is different from the historic railway bridge over the Swan River that existed between 1897 and 1957, which at times had been referred to as the "Bayswater Bridge".

Our local community all await the completion of this new public transport development structure. Will it live up to the promises of our state government? The Metronet website states, The New Bayswater Station (**Biraliny**) will improve connectivity with the Midland Line, Forrestfield-Airport Link and Morley-Ellenbrook Line connections providing a new level of public transport service to Perth's north-eastern suburbs.



The Noongar place name for Bayswater is **Biraliny** and the narrative is 'The track where the Merenj (food plants) is located'. While this complex project marks the first part of the Morley-Ellenbrook Line, it also looks to balance priorities identified during stakeholder and community consultation, such as improving connections across the railway, allowing for increased bus services to the station, improving cycling and pedestrian movements and creating a rail bridge and station that fits within and complements the town centre. The station will have two entrances and two single escalators, providing access to each island platform and an accompanying set of stairs and lifts, while including passenger amenities.

At a reported cost of \$256m will the new station be worth it? Will the stated outcomes of the development be achieved? Have we learnt from over 100 years of history? The local community opinion is mixed. Some are looking forward to a new beginning and business opportunities. Some are planning and anticipating super profits, some are sceptical and remain anxious about the impact on overall community lifestyle and well-being. Honest reflection and history will tell.



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<https://yourneighbourhood.com.au/contact-us/>



Bayswater Pub (right) and a view of Bayswater Railway Station from what was then a new Whatley Park Estate.

Acknowledgements:

- Glen Cookson & Lewis J. Cox - Reporters
- Copy Editor - Glen Cookson
- Editor - Wayne Swindells
- Proof Editor – Lewis J. Cox
- For printing this newsletter - Lisa Baker
MLA, Member for Maylands

Photos:

- Glen Cookson
- Bayswater Historical Society
- State Library of WA

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Leighton (Halliday) House
114 King William Street Bayswater

The Bayswater Historical Society Inc. was formed in 1991. It is a non-profit organization which aims to preserve the history of Bayswater district; protect the records and objects relating to the area; promote public interest in and support for the preservation of historic records, buildings, and sites. Leighton (Halliday) House is Bayswater's historic home and is used as the Society's base and museum.

Historical Bayswater is the society's newsletter and welcomes contributions such as stories and photographs relating to the history of Bayswater to be included in future issues. Please forward all enquiries addressed to the Secretary.