

LARGE TEXT EXHIBITION GUIDE

A PLACE CALLED HOLLYWOOD

A Place Called Hollywood remembers a time and place where resilient and resourceful people created their own homes and communities. This special exhibition tells the stories of those who lived, worked and played in an unofficial “suburb” of Newcastle established just outside Jesmond during the Great Depression of the 1920s and 1930s. Using objects from archeological investigations, photographic records and memories of those who were connected to this place, this exhibition provides a point of reflection on today’s

housing crisis; and insight into everyday lives built on creative solutions.

A Place Called Hollywood is an exhibition by Newcastle Museum, developed with support from the NSW Government through Transport for NSW and Create NSW.

Project archaeology managed by Fulton Hogan and undertaken by Umwelt and Casey & Lowe. Videography by Toybox Media; 2D Design by Julie Stinson.

Newcastle Museum thanks the many community members who shared their stories as part of this project, including: Tim Adams, Elise Jakeman, Audrey Koosmen, OAM, Barbara McCarthy, John McNaughton AM, Susan Rees, Steven Ward and Lachlan Wetherall.

Newcastle Museum acknowledges the site that became 'Hollywood' as the traditional

Country of the Awabakal peoples; and recognises and respects the cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship that has been held with this land, and that they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession.

REMEMBERING HOLLYWOOD

The site where Hollywood's houses and gardens once stood has changed a lot since the 1960s. The area where Hollywood was is now part of the footprint of a major construction project led by Transport for NSW: the Newcastle Inner City Bypass Rankin Park to Jesmond Project. Over the last five years, archaeologists have been working to uncover what remains of the place people called home in the 'unofficial' suburb of Hollywood.

If you needed help, the people in Hollywood would be the first ones to help you out.

Barbara McCarthy, Hollywood Resident

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Why was it called Hollywood, anyway? Or was it Doggyville?

INFORMAL VILLAGES OF NEWCASTLE

Texas, Nobby's Camp, Platt's Estate – do you know these Newcastle places? From the early twentieth century, Newcastle and its surrounds experienced a surge in industrial activity and attracted workers from across the country. By the mid-1920s, however, this growth led to a disparity between available jobs and the increasing workforce, resulting in unemployment and housing strain. The situation worsened with the stock market crash of October 1929.

During this period, informal settlements emerged, blending into Newcastle's urban landscape. Over time, some informal villages of Newcastle became part of the suburbs we know today – like Carrington – and others, like Hollywood, disappeared.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

The people who moved to Hollywood in the 1920s had to build their own houses, gardens, and even shops. While rooms at Hollywood had temporary elements, such as hessian walls and dirt floors, special touches like beautiful Art Nouveau style tiles, ceramic figurines and fancy iron bedframes made houses feel like home.

AROUND THE KITCHEN TABLE

Knife, fork, plate, Vegemite, a cup of tea... the remains of the Hollywood kitchen table aren't so different from today. Putting food on the table wasn't always easy in the early years as people moved to Hollywood during the Great Depression, but affordable luxuries like Peck's meat pastes, beautiful crockery and local soft drinks were all discovered.

I didn't want for anything. It was just the most beautiful place to live in. The people that lived there were really decent people, they weren't just squatters that didn't work, they were proud of the place.

Audrey Koosmen

Hollywood Resident

MAKING HOLLYWOOD: HOUSING SOLUTIONS AND CHALLENGES

Moving to Hollywood offered a solution to housing problems – but life wasn't without its challenges in an 'unofficial' suburb, as local authorities were generally keen to disband the settlement. From water to sewerage and electricity, connecting Hollywood required patience and alternative solutions.

They never had garbage picked up... they even asked for a road to be graded to [get an] ambulance up there.

Steven Ward

Son of Hollywood Resident

THE GLAMOUR OF HOLLYWOOD

One explanation for the settlement's name? The young women of Hollywood were so glamorous that they looked like Hollywood film actresses of the day. Photos show that the residents of Hollywood were often well dressed and put a lot of effort into their personal appearance. Archaeological discoveries provide evidence of the items used to create the glamour of Hollywood – including perfume, combs and lipstick, and other elements of the residents' medicine cabinets; and a trove of well-crafted leather shoes.

PLAYING UP IN HOLLYWOOD

Archaeologists found evidence at the Hollywood site of lots of toys, which would have been used by the kids who grew up there. A “Ned Kelly” toy gun, dozens of marbles, dolls and even a tea-set show how much fun was being had playing up in Hollywood. Inkwells, pens and photos tell the story of what school days were like.

THE TWO-UP SCHOOL

Come In, Spinner! An attraction for many in the Hollywood area was the Two-Up 'School'. While local kids kept a lookout for the cops, it was game on near Hollywood.

WHAT REMAINS

The residents of Hollywood have long moved on, leaving behind the artefacts, memories and stories shared in this exhibition. What remains of Hollywood?