

RICHMOND'S VICTORIA AVENUE

HAWKESBURY LIBRARY SERVICE - LOCAL STUDIES FACT SHEET



Plane trees Richmond, 2021.
Photo: M. Nichols, courtesy Hawkesbury Library Service

Brief history

Avenues of trees were popular throughout Australia, particularly for commemoration. In 1897, a decision was made to establish an avenue of trees in the Hawkesbury, to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria's long reign.

From 1872, Richmond Council was the local governing body and in 1897, it was raised in a meeting that the Council should celebrate this momentous event. An avenue of trees was to be created across Ham Common and was to be named Victoria Avenue in her honour. Council agreed with the suggestion and plans were to be put into place.

The following year it was reported that Richmond Council were intending to plant 100 trees from the corner of Windsor and Bourke Streets, to about halfway across the Common, approximately Clarendon. It was decided to plant Plane trees as they reportedly grew quickly, were hardy and low maintenance. Richmond's Town Clerk, Charles Guest was tasked with the assignment.

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One hundred and fifty trees were ordered, the date for the event set and special guests invited. Locals were also encouraged to plant trees. The event to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, took place on the afternoon of Tuesday, 30 August 1898. A good crowd was in attendance, despite the non-stop rain and Victoria Avenue was declared opened.

Richmond's Mayor, Edward Stevenson, planted the first trees on the left, on the way out of Richmond, followed by the Mayor and Mayoress of Windsor, Mr and Mrs John Jackson Paine, who planted two on the right-hand side.

Additional trees were arranged to be planted at a later date and within a fortnight it was reported that the majority of the trees were planted and fencing, for protection, constructed. However residents of Richmond were concerned when the Windsor community had not started planting trees from their end.

In the early days, the trees struggled to survive. In 1899 some of the trees had to be replaced because of the hot weather. The Plane trees that had been planted in Chapel Street were about ten years old and were impressive comparison to those trees in Victoria Avenue. The local newspaper reported that the new trees were not being tended and needed mulch or manure round the roots.

The trees were planted during a very dry period. Australia experienced the Federation drought between 1895 until the early 1900s and the dry conditions obviously have an effect on the trees. By 1903 there were reports of more dead trees but again, they were replaced and the expense met by a number of local residents.



**Damaged plane trees as a result of a storm, 1956.
Photo: R.D. Power, courtesy Hawkesbury Library Service.**

Eventually the trees grew and thrived and became a notable feature of the town. In 1956, a storm with cyclonic winds hit Richmond, unroofed buildings and uprooted huge trees including several of the Plane trees, which had to be removed. The older and more substantial trees are situated between Bourke and Hobart Streets but over the years additional trees have been planted along the Hawkesbury Way. The name Victoria Avenue seems to have been lost in time.

Resources

- Richmond Council Minutes (microfilm) shelved at RLFILM RIC
- Historical newspapers can be accessed via Trove online covering 1800s-1961 <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper> For 1965+ local newspapers are available on microfilm.

Prepared by Michelle Nichols Local History Librarian 28/4/2021

Contact Information

ADDRESS

Hawkesbury Library Service
Hawkesbury Central Library
Deerubbin Centre (Ground floor)
300 George Street
WINDSOR NSW 2756

HOURS

Monday to Friday 9am-7pm
Saturday 9am-1pm
Sunday 2pm-5pm
Closed Public Holidays

LOCAL HISTORY CONTACTS

(02) 4560 4466 or 4560 4460
history@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au
<http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/library>
<http://www.facebook.com/HawkesburyLibrary>

Access the catalogue <https://aurora.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/library/>

RICHMOND'S VICTORIA AVENUE

HAWKESBURY LIBRARY SERVICE - LOCAL STUDIES FACT SHEET



Plane trees Richmond, 2021.
Photo: M. Nichols, courtesy Hawkesbury Library Service

Brief history

Avenues of trees were popular throughout Australia, particularly for commemoration. In 1897, a decision was made to establish an avenue of trees in the Hawkesbury, to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria's long reign.

From 1872, Richmond Council was the local governing body and in 1897, it was raised in a meeting that the Council should celebrate this momentous event. An avenue of trees was to be created across Ham Common and was to be named Victoria Avenue in her honour. Council agreed with the suggestion and plans were to be put into place.

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