

# OATLEY SANDSTONE

Oatley Heritage and Historical Society

Kim Wagstaff

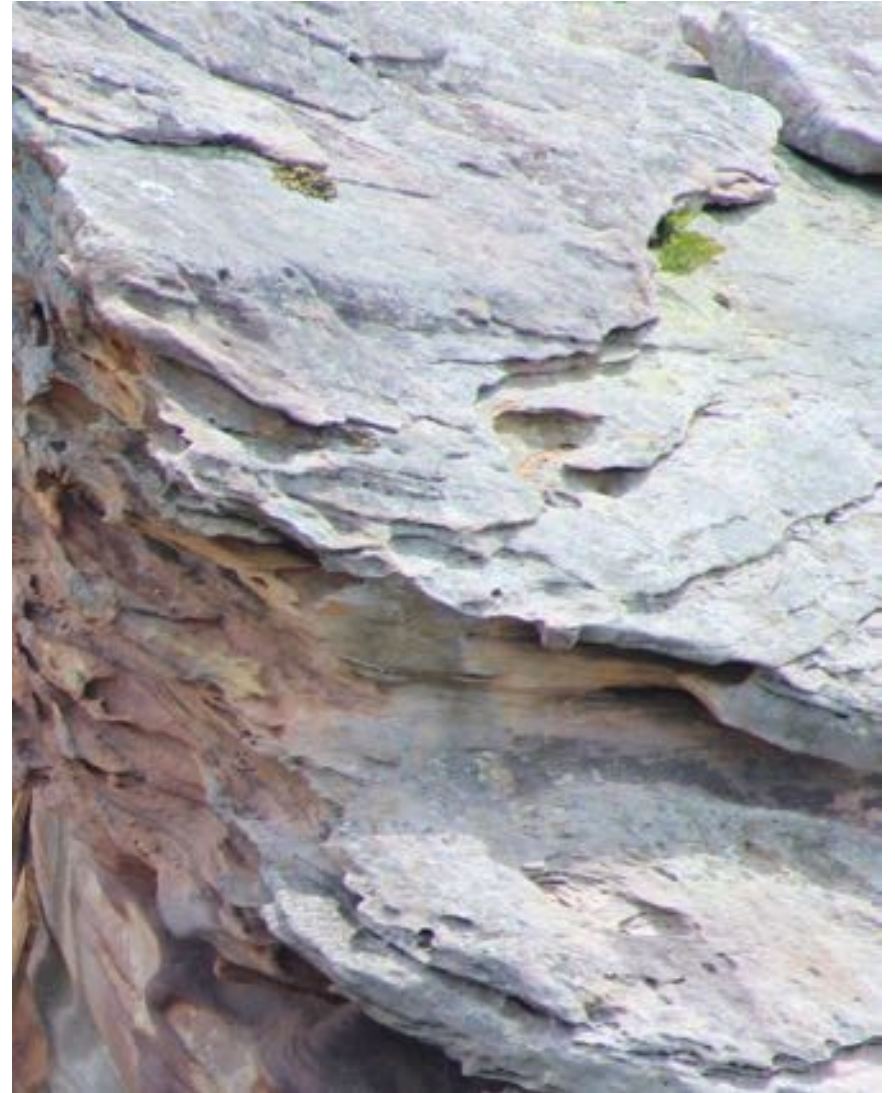
25 November 2016

# Introduction

- Oatley Sandstone
- Houses
- Notable buildings
- Public infrastructure
- Oyster farming
- Other features
- Waterfront tour

# Our sandstone

- Millions of years in the making.
- Hawkesbury sandstone makes up the bulk of visible rocks of Oatley area.
- Formed when ancient river sands were buried and cemented together.
- Subsequent erosion of the overlying shales exposed the sandstone and continued to erode them to give us the wonderful shapes and patterns we see today.



# Houses

## ***Holtcraig 10 Russell St*** (local heritage listed)

- Reputedly first 'substantial' house built on Oatley Bay.
- **Built about 1900 by Edgar Nicholas Williams**
- On cusp of land granted to James Oatley in 1833 and Charles Cecil Griffiths in 1884.
- Grand Federation residence on cliff above Oatley Bay baths
- House is on sandstone foundations with double brick walls, fibro shingle roof, bay windows, and verandah to front.





## ***Stoneleigh 6 Rosa St.***

- **Built in 1902 for George and Louisa Howard**
- By 1903 still only house between Wonoona Pde and Frederick Street.
- Is a rare surviving example of stone cottage from turn of century.
- Garage added recently - clad with real sandstone.





## “Sutton Lodge” 1 Myrtle St

- Building started **early 1900s** and continued over nearly 40 year period
- 3 bedroom house. All foundations, exterior walls and fences as well as garage are sandstone. Also extensive sandstone drains.
- All stone used came from the site.
- Two brothers from Glebe built house.
- Mike’s parents bought house 1956





← House  
Garage →  
Steps  
↓





Is



***Glenbrook - Clarendon - 92 Letitia St***  
(heritage listed)

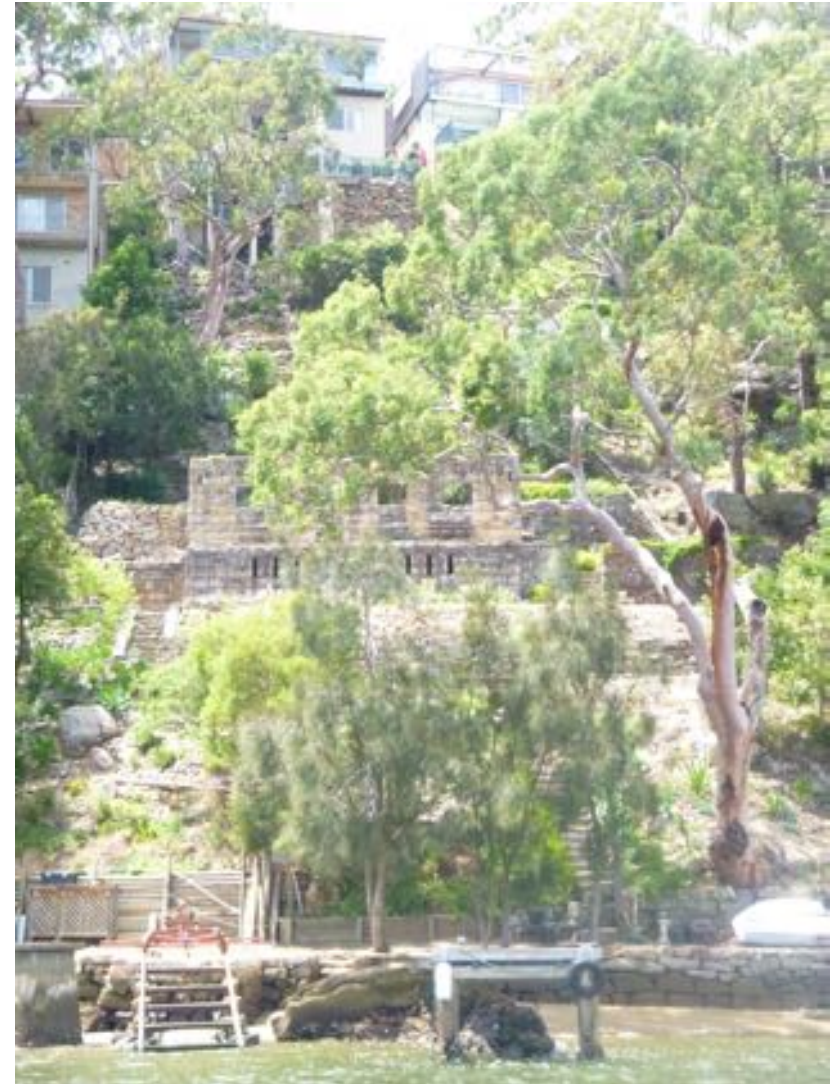
- **Built in 1912 for Albert Ashbury**, the house overlooks the Charles Street Reserve and has a southerly outlook towards Georges River.
- Many of the classic features of Californian Bungalow
- Built on a stone foundation, exterior was tuckpointed, bricks of 'liver' colour (highly fashionable), tiled roof finished with terra cotta ridging.
- Broad verandah with a stone-capped brick wall extends around two sides of building.





## ***Abandoned Stone house: 20 Marine Dve***

- **Started by Frank Naylor**, stone mason from Hurstville, **in 1930**.
- All stone hewn from rock on site and dressed
- Son Wilfred, a budding stone mason, started to help
- The depression hit the father badly and neither of them could afford the time
- Few years later Frank's health was very bad, and son's interest waned, until his death.
- **Sold in 1944**, about 60% structurally completed except for the roof, and has not been continued since.



20  
Marine  
Dve



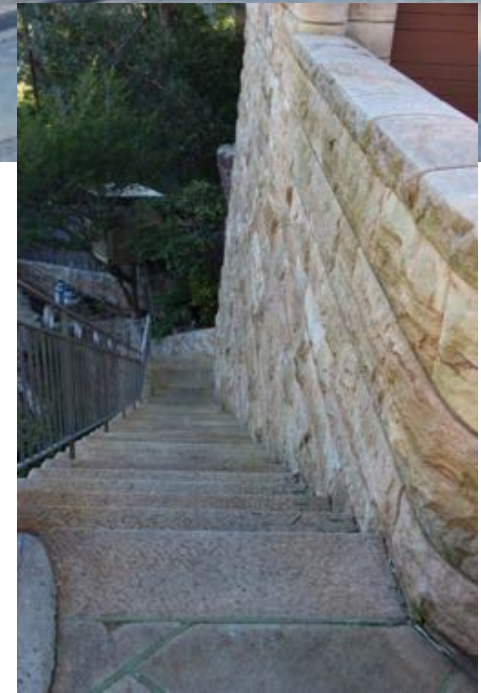
## “Nip” Telfers 56 Marine Dve

- Land **bought** by Roy Telfer, **1932**
- Frank Naylor (20 Marine Drive) contracted to build stone boatshed on site (**1938**). (Alternate story – Roy Telfer built boatshed)
- Two (or 3?) Italian stonemasons (ex Sydney Harbour Bridge) worked on property for >25 years
- Interrupted by WWII, brothers were interned, due to war with Italy.
- Quarried sandstone on site, cut blocks of same size, used “sparrow picking”, “keyholing” and “pintucking” the mortar.
- Built swimming pool, tennis court, house foundations and a garage at street level, and extensive landscaping





Street views



56  
Marine  
Dve

Terracing  
Boatshed  
Steps  
Pool



## ***Chiswell's 23 & 25 Annette St and 92 Rosa St***

- The brothers commenced building their homes in 1928 and moved in in 1930.
- Ernest's house at 92 Rosa Street was delayed to allow building materials for the first two houses to be brought in from Rosa Street rather than hoisted up the cliff from Annette Street.
- Each house was small and built to its own individual design although the houses had some features in common, **stone foundations**, tuckpointed brickwork, terra cotta Marseilles roofing tiles and **stone fencing**.



25  
Annette



23  
Annette



92 Rosa



old quarry?



## 38 & 38a Annette St – landscaping – Jack & Berta Gray

- It appears most of the backyard right down to the water was terraced with steps and paths and walls. Stone was most likely cut on site. The work would have been carried out in **1920s and 30s**





## 9 Russell St (on local heritage register)

- **Built** by Clif and Peg Peir **in 1938** on land purchased from Jack and Bertha Gray c.1932/3
- has original textured stucco external wall finish and a rock faced sandstone base course (foundations).
- Garden described - "The tumbling rockery.. gives the impression of rising from the outcropping of rock on which it is built"
- The street boundary has an original low rock-faced sandstone fence.



9 Russell  
St



# Notable buildings

## **Silvester's castle - Yarran Rd Cnr Southern St**

- Building started **before WWI** - Difficult to get to so work was slow.
- All stone quarried on site, superbly cut by Italian stonemasons.
- Mr. Silvester was considered eccentric -many theories about the purpose of the house - asylum for the mental or spy's lookout in case an enemy came up Georges River.
- Castle built around central quarry. Weatherboard cottage in middle, built on concrete piles, only accessed by a high plank.
- Building never reached roof height. Many changes ordered, parts demolished/rebuilt.
- Mid 1920s fire destroyed the wooden cottage. All fell into disrepair.
- Stones were scattered but often reappeared in nearby houses.

Ron Holmes  
1940s ↓





## 29 Southern St – built circa?

- House was owned by James Oatley's grandson
- Sandstone is only on the front wall – although piers under the house floor joists are rough sandstone
- Sandstone came from Silvester's castle.
- Doorways are low in height at the front of the house (set in stone)
- Was built as a fishermans cottage
- Was once the only house on the point. Houses below /nearby are old stables. No. 25 was the stable for No. 29.



29 Southern St – circa?



## 14 Ada St - Built circa. ??

- From 1925 to 1928, H. C. Silvester lived at 14 Ada Street.
- His house had the familiar "Silvester Castle" sandstone foundation and fence.
- He bought large quantities of goods at auction and stored them on his adjacent blocks.
- A treasure trove for children of the street to explore.



14 Ada St



# Notable Buildings

## Queens Hall - Circa 1905?

- 30A Russell street.
- Sandstone used in foundations and walls.
- Story is that Richard Stibb's grandfather built it.
- an early community building used as a dance venue **until at least 1922**
- Thought perhaps named after Queen Victoria who had died in 1901--- a memorial?



1910 →  
↓



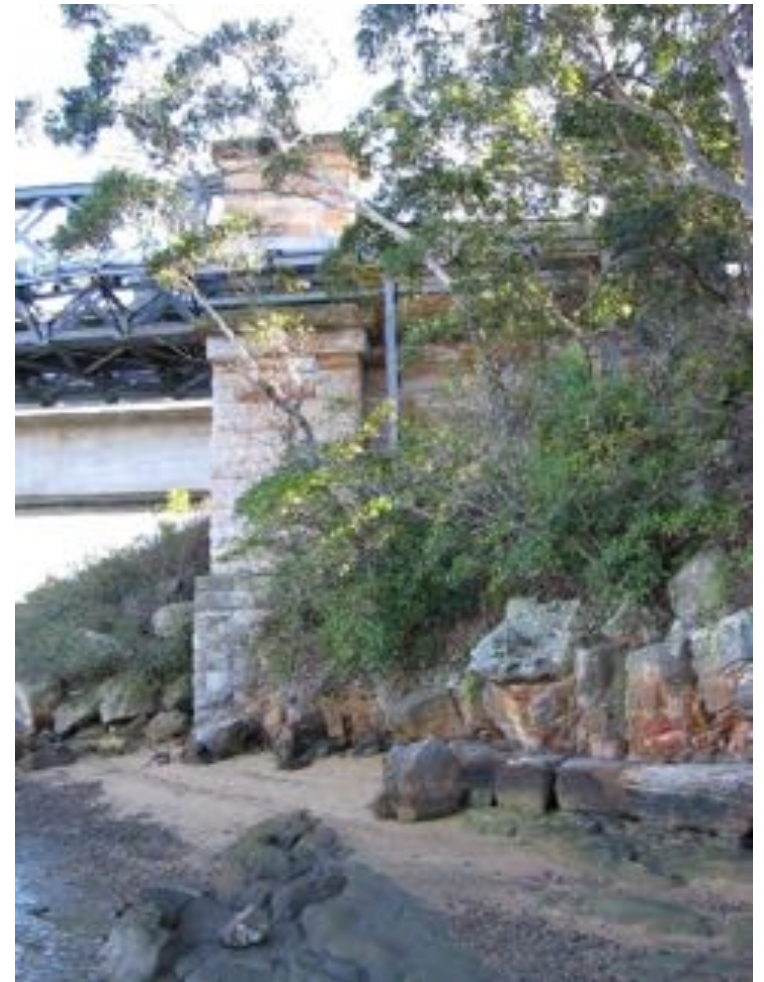
Modern day 2015 →

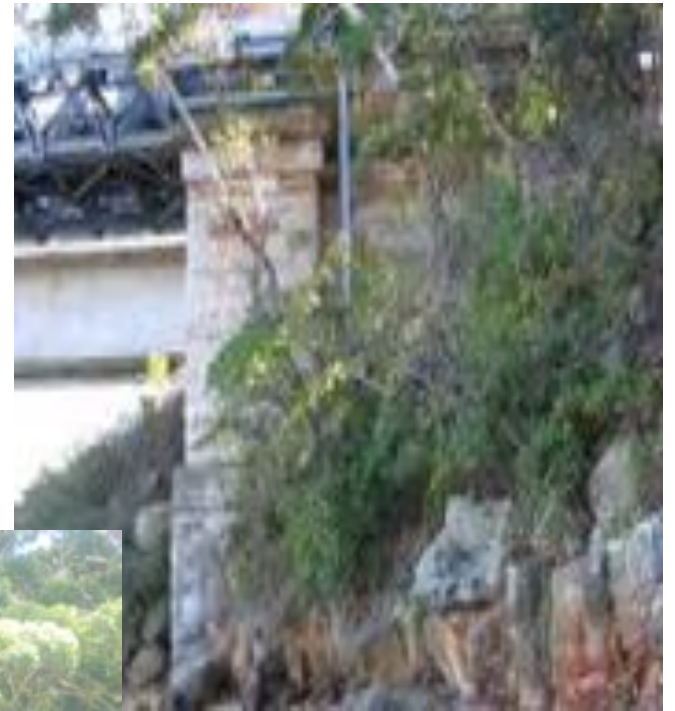


# Public infrastructure

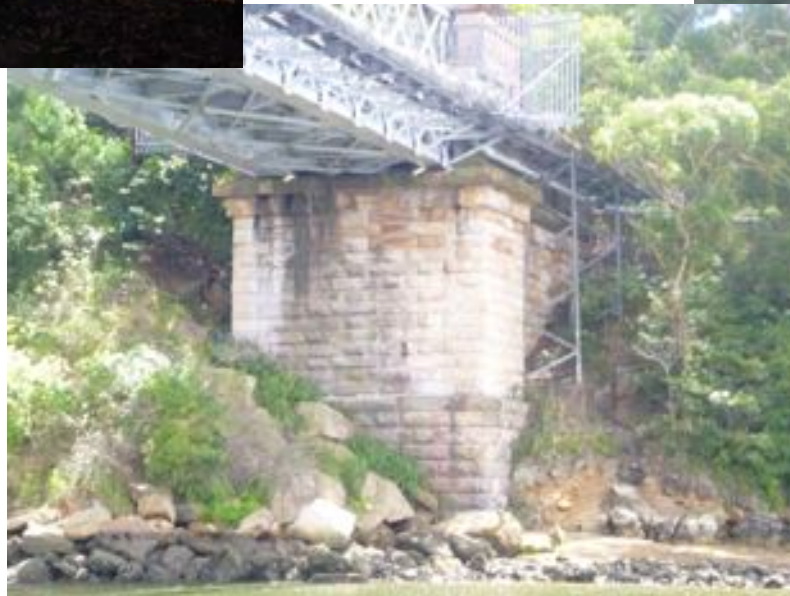
## Oatley-Como Rail Bridge - 1885

- One of 12 prefabricated lattice truss iron bridges ordered by John Whitton Engineer-in-Chief NSW Railway Dept.
- Masonry supports, earthen embankments and cast iron piers used to support bridge units. Piers are bell-shaped at bottom resting on sandstone bed of River.
- Northern Oatley abutment was constructed in sandstone quarry-faced *ashlar*.
- Northern rail entrance to bridge is flanked by sandstone walls.





↑ Walls on northern approach



# Mulga Rd Culvert

- **Built 1888** as part of *Mulga St* construction by Hurstville Council.
- The sandstone culvert and abutments are visible only from the south side.
- Origin of the sandstone blocks not known but possibly from ballast quarry nearby?
- The surface of the early culvert is now covered and built up (presumably when Mulga Rd was upgraded and sealed?)
- Road ~50% funded by (Ald) McRae by public subscription.



## Mulga Rd culvert

Note  
tapered  
blocks to  
allow for  
road grades  
above  
culvert





# OATLEY PARK

- **The Castle (or Kiosk) 1936**
- The Public Works Department, employing relief workers headed by Jim Lawrence (a ganger and stonemason), constructed the walls of the stone "castle" shelter shed (originally a kiosk) in August 1935.
- The relief money ran out in September with the roof unfinished.
- After considering options and costs Council chose reinforced concrete. (£350)
- This job commenced in October, finishing in May 1936, with the addition of a stone parapet.



←1937

2016

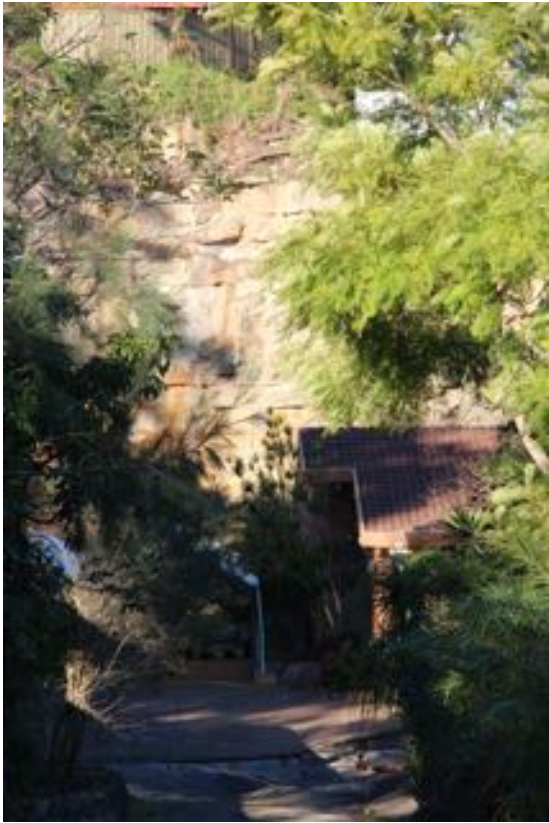




Steps to baths 1930s  
2016



Seawalls around baths



Possible quarry site Ogilvy St Peakhurst



Possible barge loading sites  
Salt Pan Creek

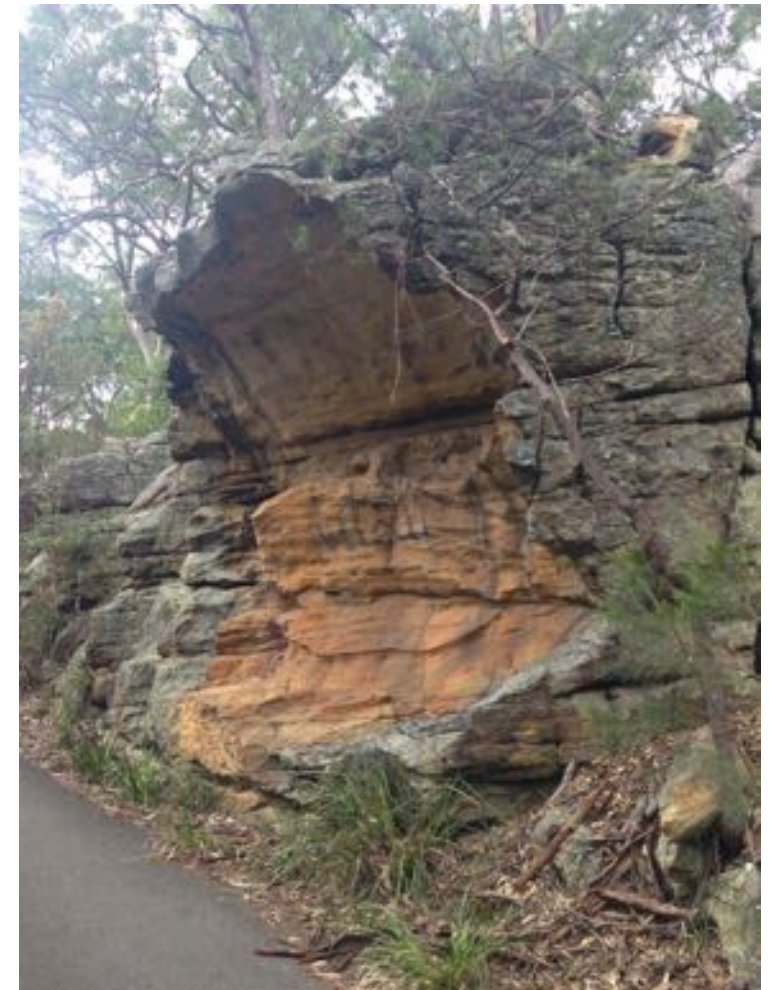
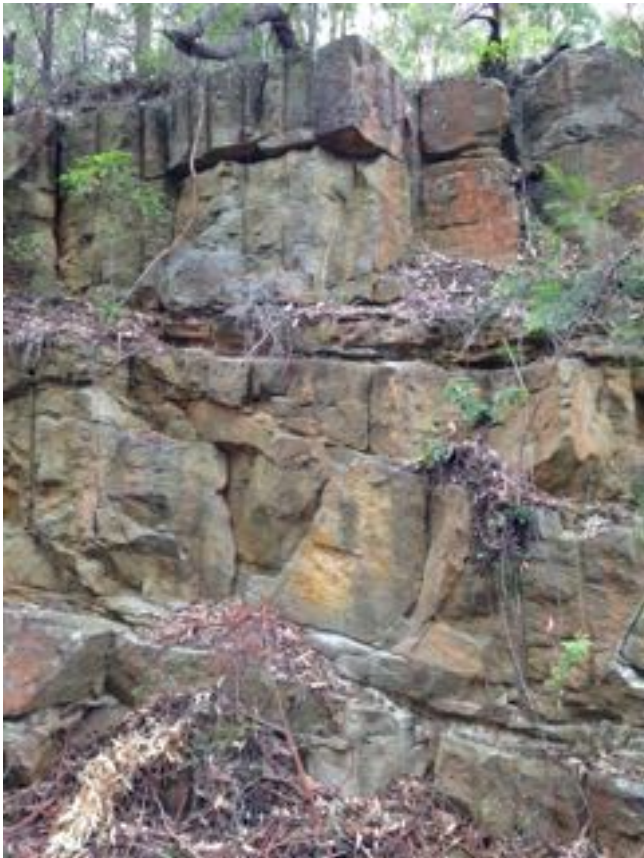


# Other OP features



# Oatley Park features

## Road cutting showing drill holes



# Oatley Bowling Club – Circa 1960

By September 1960, the retaining wall for **No. 1 green** had been completed and plans were well advanced for completing further sandstone retaining walls.



The lower  
(or No.2  
green)  
retaining  
wall



# Myles Dunphy Reserve



# Oyster farming - Neverfail Bay



Wyong St seawall ↓

Gads →



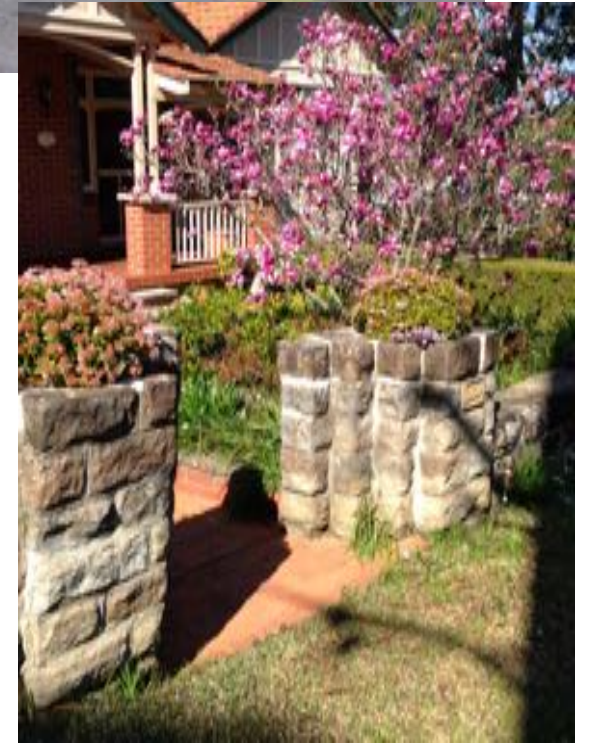
# Letterboxes



# Letterboxes



# Fences











## Decorative/Misc



# Modern/recent



