The current suburb of Leederville is bounded by Britannia and Anzac roads, Loftus Street, Leederville Parade and the Mitchell Freeway.

**HISTORY**

Leederville formed part of Boorloo – tribal land belonging to the local Nyungar people. Lake Monger, or Galup as it was known, was used by the Aborigines as a camp site. As the area was teeming with birds and other wildlife, the lake was also used for hunting and fishing.

1829-1870

Initial settlement was by private settlers William Leeder (after whom the suburb was named) and John Monger. Monger bought 200 acres close to Lake Monger, whilst Leeder acquired some 288 acres. By 1838 Leeder had established the Leeder Hotel in Perth and was leasing out his estate. His house was on the south-east corner of Lake Monger.

Between the years 1850 and 1868 the colony experienced an increase in the population due to the arrival of 10,000 convicts. This in turn resulted in demands for extra food production. The local wetlands and surrounding areas were largely used for market gardens, dairying, farming and poultry farms.

1871-1890 (Pre Gold Boom)

Living conditions were difficult due to the problems of poor drainage, cesspits and the continual flooding. Several of the lakes north of Perth were drained. Lake Georgina on the Leeder lands, located just south of the Leederville Oval, was drained which then permitted Newcastle Street to be extended westward.

With the completion of the Freemantle to Guildford railway line in 1881, the direction of the colony shifted away from the Swan River and promoted settlement to the west, north and east.

Residential development in the north, however, was not rapid before the 1890s. To the north of Vincent Street the district remained an area of large acreages with the majority belonging to the Leeder family.

1891-1919

The gold boom marked a significant period of development in Perth. In 1884 the Perth district population was just over 6,000. By 1911, the population had expanded rapidly to around 87,000 and Perth was experiencing problems with overcrowding.

The demand for housing led to the Monger Estate being subdivided in 1890. In 1891 the Leeder Estate sold 19 blocks of land, with five between the railway, Vincent Street and Monger's Lake being sold later that year. A third subdivision saw the creation of large garden lots ranging in size from 2 to 10 acres between Anzac Road and Bourke Street.

For residents living in the new subdivisions there were few established facilities and services. People obtained their water through the use of storage tanks and wells. Conditions improved, however, when the State Government (taking over from a privately-owned supplier) began to supply water by mains. By 1911 many Perth suburbs had access to good quality water supply.

The wetlands during this period were being cultivated by Chinese market gardeners. Some of these gardens were located along Oxford Street on what had once been Leeder lands.

A government reserve was created between Vincent and Richmond streets. The western section of the reserve became the site of the Leederville Oval, Leederville Post Office (1897), Leederville Primary School (1894), Town Hall and Police Station.

The 1897 PWD sewerage plans suggest that the predominant buildings were located along the western end of Newcastle Street and the area near Carr (then Leeder Street), Oxford, Vincent and Lotus streets, including the Leederville Hotel (1897).

In May 1895 the suburb became officially known as the Leederville Road District. In the following year, Leederville was made a municipality, as the area was deemed to have sufficient property to enable the payment of £300 in annual rates. The municipal area was divided into three wards – North, South and Central. Leederville also received its first mayor, James Stewart Bennett.

December 1897 saw the construction and implementation of a tramway network to assist workers by providing transport to their place of employment. Initially, the tramslines operated in the northern parts of the City. By 1900, however, the tram network had been expanded to include Loftus Street, along Newcastle and Oxford streets to Anzac Road.

Due to the City’s rapidly expanding population, parks and recreation grounds became of increasing value. In 1903, Lake Monger was made a reserve for public park and recreation. Leederville Oval was established in 1915 with tennis courts and cycle tracks as well as football facilities.

In 1914, the Perth, North Perth and Leederville municipalities came together to form ‘Greater Perth’.

1920-1946

The impact of the Great Depression was felt by many residents in the area, with some renters unable to meet the rent payments. Faced with the prospect of eviction, many resorted to living in very overcrowded conditions whilst others camped on crown reserves.

Changes to modes of transport saw motor taxis replacing horses and trams and railways carrying more passengers. With increased use of motorbuses and motorcars, some of the major roads had to be widened. Loftus Street was widened in 1926.

1947-1972

Post World War II saw another population boom and overcrowding once again became a problem. The difficulties arose from shortages of housing and building materials.

Changes in government policy relating to immigration meant new arrivals of migrants from Europe. These migrants were instrumental in changing the architectural landscape, with many of them renovating or building residences in styles similar to those they had left behind.

In 1948, a technical trade school was built in Leederville. It was part of an Army training scheme and was open for students by 1949. This is now the Leederville TAFE.

Around Oxford and Newcastle streets, new shops and office buildings replaced many of the older residences as council restrictions were eased.

Transport was changing in the 1950s with trams and trolleybuses being replaced by buses.

1973-2005

The advent of the Mitchell Freeway saw the suburb of Leederville virtually divided in half. The freeway followed the line of the lake drain past Lake Monger and northward. This meant a physical barrier to accessing Lake Monger from the east.

The Loftus Recreation and Community Centre was opened in 1988. This housed not only the Leederville/Wembley Community Centre but also the Leederville Library, and provided facilities for indoor sport and community activities.

In 1987 the Leederville shopping area on Oxford Street underwent redevelopment. During the 1980s and 1990s Leederville, along with other inner-city suburbs, saw property values increase rapidly. As older residents left the suburb, many of the older houses were either renovated or demolished and newer homes built on the site. Subdivision of the blocks meant the creation of new building lots. Changes were also reflected in the style of the houses built.

During the 1990s Oxford Street changed into a popular café strip. Many of the businesses underwent refurbishment and the area took on a cosmopolitan atmosphere.

The building of the Northern Suburbs railway line, ostensibly to provide rail transport for the outer suburbs, had a follow-on effect for Leederville. Residents have easy access to rail transport with the building of a railway station at the southern end of Oxford Street.

In 1994 the City of Perth was divided into four municipalities. The newly-created Town of Vincent constructed its council offices in Leederville, on the corner of Loftus and Vincent streets adjacent to the Loftus Centre.

**SOURCES AND FURTHER READING IN THE LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

**Books**

Leederville Oval: draft conservation plan prepared by Comindine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd el Leederville: Town of Vincent, 1999.

994.11 LEELeeederville Hotel heritage evaluation prepared by Hookie and Smith, 1998.

647.9509 LEELeeederville Town of Vincent Municipal Heritage Inventory

**Vertical Files**

Aramore

Businesses

Cafes and Restaurants

Chinese Market Gardens

Churches

Cinemas

Festivals

Hotels

Lake Monger

Leederville Family

Leederville History

Leederville Oval

Leederville Police Station

Leederville School

Leederville/Wembley Community Centre

Lofus Centre

Mitchell Freeway

Monger Family

Trams

Venable

**Oral History Interviews & Transcripts**

There are many interviews with former residents of Leederville in the collection. There are also interviews as part of a special project on businesses of Oxford Street.

**Local Studies and History Collection**

Town of Vincent Library

99 Loftus Street, Leederville WA 6007

Ph 9273 6090

People with specific requirements can ask to have this brochure provided in Braille, a language other than English, large print, on computer disk or audiotape.
1891-1919

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The Leeder family.

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1. St Mary’s Church
   Franklin and Shakespeare streets
   St Mary’s Church Leederville was built in 1893 on the site of the former Leeder homestead, following the death of Theresa Leeder. It was erected in two stages, the first comprising the southern portion of the church with the entry porch and nave. The second stage, completed in 1938, saw the addition of transepts, a sanctuary and an impressive bell tower. The first parish priest, Monsignor Maloney, is generally held to have been instrumental in the design and development of the church.

2. Aranmore Catholic College
   Franklin Street
   In 1903 the Sisters of Mercy founded Aranmore School in a six-roomed cottage on the corner of Marion and Shakespeare streets. St Mary’s Convent and School was built in 1933 with a primary school and high school section. St Mary’s Boys School was listed on the state’s Heritage Register in 2005.

3. Schools of Isolated and Distance Education (formerly Leederville Primary School)
   164 Oxford Street
   The Leederville Public School opened in 1894 in response to a petition from the parents of 99 children for a local school in the area. The school was built between 1896 and 1901, with attendance in 1901 rising to 257. Over the years the school expanded to meet increasing numbers. A ‘household management centre’ was opened at the school, and pupils from neighbouring schools would walk to Leederville for domestic science classes.

4. Leederville Post Office (former)
   cnr Oxford and Vincent streets
   The Leederville Post Office, built in 1897, features a terracotta and iron facade. It was constructed in the Federation Arts and Crafts style. The Leederville Post Office, built c.1904, was the post office was state Heritage listed. Leederville’s postal buildings; CBC Leederville buildings, was listed on the state’s Heritage Register in 2005.

5. Oxford Hotel
   368 Oxford Street (cnr Anzac Road)
   In the 1890s the family of John O’Neill purchased land at Oxford Station. The Oxford Hotel was built in 1893, just months short of its Centenary. The site was taken over by the Distance education service.

6. Luna Cinema (formerly New Oxford Theatre)
   cnr Oxford and Vincent streets
   In the 1920s theatre going and watching the ‘talkies’ were popular amongst West Australians. Demand was high for such entertainments and one of the earliest venues was the New Oxford Theatre, built in 1927. The cinema included an open-air picture garden and offered a varied program featuring vaudeville, musicals, plays and films. The picture gardens closed in 1964. In 1966 the cinema was renamed the Nickelodeon, then in 1972 renamed the Olympia and for the next seven years showed mainly Greek and Italian films, reflecting the changing community. After some refurbishment in 1979 the cinema reopened as the New Oxford showing family type films and later R-rated films. In the mid-1980s the cinema was renamed the Luna Cinema and independent films, and in the 1990s was renamed the Luna Cinema.

7. Leederville Hotel
   742 Newcastle Street
   A two-storey brick and iron building constructed in 1897 (architect unknown). The first licensee was Charles Winter. In 1914 the hotel was purchased by the Swan Brewing Company Ltd. Extensive alterations and additions were made in 1928 and again in the 1960s. The Swan Brewery sold the hotel in 1980 to a group of owners as tenures in common. The owners have changed many times in the subsequent years.

8. Leederville Oval
   246 Vincent Street
   Originally part of the wetlands, the land was first vested in the Leederville Municipality as a Reserve in 1897. Known as the Recreation Grounds. In 1915 Leederville Oval was developed and a timber and brick grandstand built. It was opened as the home for West Perth Football Club on 24 July 1915.

9. RAAF Air Training Corps, Drill Hall & Mechanics Institute (former)
   314 Vincent Street
   The Leederville Mechanics Institute was built in 1909 to provide the working man with educational training material and a place to meet for lectures. With World War I and the introduction of compulsory military training, the building was acquired by the Defence Department for use as a drill hall in 1913. Extra land was acquired adjoining the hall site for a parade ground. Around 1979 the Leederville Drill Hall was taken over by the RAAF for use by the Air Training Corps, who remained there until 2000. The site was developed into 58 apartments, 4 townhouses and 6 commercial tenancies, completed in 2002. The Drill Hall is listed on the State Heritage Register and National Trust Register.

10. Lake Monger
    Although cut off from Leederville by the building of the Mitchell Freeway, and then placed within the boundaries of the Town of Cambridge when City of Perth was restructured in 1994, Lake Monger has a significant place in the history of Leederville.

   The original wetland was a traditional Aboriginal camping, hunting and fishing area, named Gapul. To the European settler it was known as Large Lake and then in 1831 it was named Monger’s Lake after JH Monger. This was changed to Lake Monger in 1932. The Monger’s Lake Board was gazetted in 1895 to manage the lake. In 1904 the clearing of reeds and the construction of a dam saw the lake reach its height of popularity. There were swimming, boating and fishing activities. During the Depression the lake reached its height of popularity. There were swimming, boating and fishing activities. During the Depression the lake reached its height of popularity. There were swimming, boating and fishing activities. During the Depression the lake reached its height of popularity.

   The lake has been managed since 1995 by the Department of Environment and Conservation. The lake is managed as a healthy ecosystem with revegetation and improved water quality.

11. 245 Vincent Street
    Built in 1915 by Albert Bourne. This is a typical example of a weatherboard cottage. Owned by the Bourne family until 1973 when it was purchased by the City of Perth, as a consequence of the widening of Loftus Street. In 1995 ownership was transferred to the Town of Vincent. In 2000 the house was renovated by Aboriginal youth, under a skills training program, and refurbished for leasing.