

Currans Hill

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The area of Currans Hill is situated to the South West of Sydney; approximately 60 kilometers from Sydney's central business district. Currans Hill is a residential estate consisting mainly of freestanding houses. The population of the area as at the latest census of 2006 was 4,977 and many of the residents consist of young families. Currans Hill's southern border is along Narellan Road out to the west and is bounded by high voltage lines to the south. Currans Hill is located within the Local Government Area of Camden.

The suburb was named after Michael Curran who was an early resident of Currans Hill. In the 1800s agriculture and farming land was vital for prosperity. At that time the Camden area was a thriving agricultural community. Rail and tramways made connection and trade between Sydney and the Camden area possible. The Camden Tram, *Pansy* was a popular means of transport for the residents of Currans Hill. *Pansy's* main route was from Camden to Campbelltown with several suburb stops on the way such as Kirkham, Narellan and Currans Hill.

There is a recreational lake and a number of large reserves connected with cycleways and walking paths. There is a primary school, a community hall and a corner store. A Christian High School and Church are also found in the locality. The area of Currans Hill is in the Macarthur Region and its neighboring suburbs include Mount Annan, Narellan Vale, Smeaton Grange, Harrington Park, Catherine Fields, Eschol Park, Blairmount and Campbelltown.

The original custodians of Currans Hill were the Muringong clan (a smaller clan of the Darug People).

In the July 2008 edition of *The Camden Advertiser* an article was published on Currans Hill's hidden history. In 1944 the renown Australian film maker Charles Chauvel transformed rural Currans Hill "into a makeshift battleground to film one of Australia's greatest wartime deeds."¹ The scene of the bombing of Tobruk was a significant part of the film and was set in Currans Hill. "In 1944 the rural suburb [Currans Hill] was the ideal blank canvas Chauvel needed for 'The Rats of Tobruk', originally known as 'The Fighting Rats of Tobruk', starring Chips Rafferty and Peter Finch".² The Currans Hill residents at the time were so elated that they assisted in the construction of the sets. After the filming was completed the filming set was replaced with a drive in cinema.

In the period between 1960 to 1990 a drive in theatre was located in what is now known as Narellan Vale located behind Mt Annan shopping centre. In the 1990s Currans Hill was converted from a farm land area to a residential suburb and subdivided into medium sized residential lots consisting of public and private housing.

¹ Stillitano, Illiana "That's a jolly good show chap", *The Camden Advertiser*, July edition 2008, p 17.

² Ibid.