

“GLADSTONE”

The President has received a lengthy article from Mrs Eunice North of Fairy Meadow with a description of the house named Gladstone which was demolished some after World War 11.

This house was formerly the home of William Osborne who died in 1900 at the age of 78. William was the second of four sons of Dr John Osborne (1791-1850) of Garden Hill whose grant issued in 1831 comprised 640 acres astride what we now know as Crown Street West. Known as Glen Glesh when John Osborne bought the promise of the grant from John Thompson about 1829 or 1830, John Osborne changed its name to Garden Hill. Whilst the portion north of Crown Street continued under this name, that on the south became known as Mangerton. William evidently inherited all or part of the Mangerton side and built the house called Gladstone. This house was situated on the corner of Crown Street and Gladstone Avenue, set well back from the latter and facing east, with a circular driveway entered from Gladstone Avenue, plus a rear side entrance from Crown Street.

Mrs North writes that the house was beautifully situated, “commanding a spectacular view from the verandah straight down Crown Street to the ocean and southwards over the Tom Thumb Lagoon to Port Kemia. Tom Thumb Lagoon, in those days, was a fisherman’s paradise with an abundance of bream, whiting and flathead” with “the night glow of the Aborigines’ campfires around the lagoon.”

In later years, the Gladstone Avenue frontage was subdivided, leaving the side entrance from Crown Street to the rear of the house as the only access. That entrance is still there as the approach to the “doctors’ car park” under the big fig tree, adjacent to the land occupied by the Masonic Club. Early photographs show that fig tree on the southern side of the house.

Readers who would like to read Mrs North’s article may find it printed in full in the Voice of the Seniors, issues 29 to 32, located in the Local History section of our City Library.