

RANELAGH

3 DARLING POINT ROAD, DARLING POINT

Situated at the southern end of Darling Point Road, the house *Ranelagh* was built by Andrew Lenehan in the early 1850s.

The house was built of stone and comprised three stories, the upper two featuring broad cast iron balconies on three sides. In order to break up the square, uniform appearance that these balconies created, a false porch was built into the front façade to the main entrance.

Andrew Lenehan remained at *Ranelagh*, which he had named after a Dublin suburb, until 1864 when the house was occupied by the company director and parliamentarian John Frazer.

Frazer, born in 1827 in Ireland, arrived in Sydney in 1842 and established a wholesale grocery business, *John Frazer and Co.*, in 1847. By the time he retired in 1869, *John Frazer and Co.* was one of the largest mercantile houses in Sydney. During the 1860s Frazer involved himself successfully in land speculation and was a man noted for his philanthropy. In 1874 he entered NSW Parliament as an MLC, and remained a member until his death in 1884.

During the early 1880s *Ranelagh* was occupied by another successful businessman, the financier and company director James Ewan, a director and later Chairman of both the *Australasian Steam Navigation Company* and the *United Insurance Company*. He was also John Frazer's brother-in-law and, from 1869, a partner in *John Frazer and Co.*

Ewan, although never entering parliament, was described as an *ardent politician* and was prominent in the public life of Sydney, serving as a magistrate, a member of the Benevolent Society and a director of Sydney Hospital.

Politics and politicians played an important part in the life of *Ranelagh*. In 1885 *Ranelagh* became the home of Julian Emanuel Salomans. Salomans, one of Sydney's most distinguished barristers, had served briefly in parliament between 1870-71. In 1881 he was made a QC and in 1886 he was gazetted Chief Justice of NSW, however he resigned this position before being sworn in. The next year he re-entered Parliament and remained there until his death in 1899, after serving twice as the Vice-President of the Executive Council. A prominent leader of Sydney's Jewish Community, Saloman was knighted in 1891.

The departure of Saloman from the house in the late 1880s brought to a close *Ranelagh's* golden age. By the turn of the century it had been converted into a boarding house under the ownership of a Mrs Barnett, and in 1934 it was being advertised as a smart guest house boasting modern appointments, hot and cold running water to all bedrooms and a tennis court, all from 10/6 per day.

Ranelagh remained a guest house until at least the end of the 1950s, but its age and the ever-increasing need for land for home unit development meant that it had finally run out of time. In 1967 the house was demolished to make way for the block of units which bears its name.



Ranelagh c1958

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