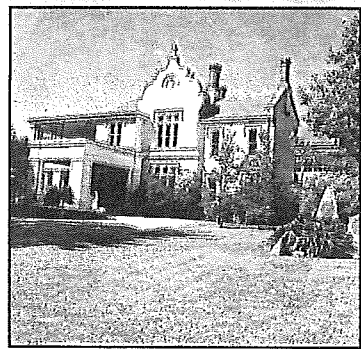


property confidential

LEAVING HISTORY BEHIND

The historic Hopewood mansion (pictured below) on Centennial Rd, Bowral, just over an hour southwest of Sydney, has been sold for \$4,250,000 after it was passed in at auction last December. The owners are Michael Anderson and his wife Suzie. Anderson is the CEO of Austereo national commercial radio network, which owns Triple M, and his wife runs a French antique business. The two-storey mansion was built in 1884 and became the country estate of the flamboyant merchant Lebbeus Hordern in 1912. It has 4.4ha of gardens, which are open daily to the public for a small fee. The sale was conducted through Raine & Horne Bowral's Donald Birrell. The couple and their three children previously lived in Bronte.

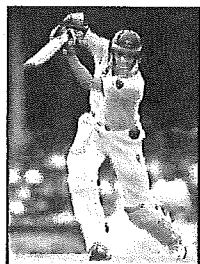


MOVING FORECAST

It looks like a move is in the stars for astrologer Karen Moregold who is putting the Glenorie home she describes as a "nature retreat" on the market for \$980,000. Moregold, a former contributor to Good Morning Australia and current New Idea astrologer, built the house almost two decades ago. She has lived there with her three children since her husband died. The four-bedroom house has a pool, high ceilings and views of the bush. A studio at one end of the house can be utilised as a fifth bedroom. Karen Allmark of Inconjunction Real Estate is handling the sale. Details, 0413 187 660

HUSSEY INTO BAT FOR AGENCY

L.J. Hooker looks like it is on a good wicket. It recently appointed Australian Test and one-day star Mike Hussey (pictured) to be the new brand ambassador for the company's Australian operations. New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming was appointed to the same position for Hooker's New Zealand business. The role will involve marketing campaigns throughout the year, within the company as well as externally. At one stage, Hussey, known as Mr Cricket, was the top-ranked one-day international batsman in the world.



CASTING OFF FROM FAIRLIGHT

Trevor Barnabas has his sights set elsewhere as he puts his duplex in Fairlight up for auction on May 5. The world champion sailor's three-storey home has a harbour view. Alicia Ross-Ryan of Ray White Manly is overseeing the auction. Bidding is expected to be in the \$3 million range. Although he is now retired, Barnabas's career soared in the 1970s when he won titles at state, national and international levels. His son Trent has since taken up the sport. Details, 0416 045 584.

# Growing strong

This suburb is a stepping stone for buyers, reports ANGELA SAURINE

An array of affordable housing is a big draw card attracting buyers to Mount Druitt, about 40km west of the Sydney CBD. The suburb is divided by the railway line, the south side known as "old Mount Druitt" and the other side "new Mount Druitt".

It has a number of facilities, including a TAFE college, a hospital, a Westfield shopping centre, a library and several parks. It is on the western line of the Cityrail network and is a busy interchange between bus routes operated by the private Busways and Westbus transport companies.

Popular entertainment venues include Rooty Hill RSL and Mount Druitt Workers Club, at neighbouring Dharruk. Elliott Shiner First National agent Angela Elliott says Mount Druitt is a popular rental area and therefore attracts a lot of investors.

"There are also a lot of first-home buyers because it is affordable," she says. Former Housing Commission brick homes start at \$180,000, while a two-storey house with four bedrooms and an inground pool sells for about \$500,000. Many people move there from the Penrith area and the Hills district, and when they move they are usually upgrading to Glenmore Park or closer to the city. "For a lot of people it's a stepping stone," Elliott says.

Mount Druitt is popular with younger families — about 50 per cent of residents are aged between 20 and 45. But the suburb has a history dating back to convict Australia.

Soldier and pioneer Major George Druitt sailed to Australia in 1817 on board the Matilda with 440 officers and men to help manage convicts. He oversaw the construction of roads and was given 40ha of land in the area now known as Mount Druitt. Strathfield South was also originally named Druitt Town in his honour. The railway station opened in 1881 and the old station master's residence, built 20 years before Mount Druitt station, is a historic landmark in the area.

Electric train services began in 1955, with then premier J.J. Cahill presiding over the opening. More recently, a Housing Commission development started there in 1966 and the shopping centre opened in 1973. Royalty came to Mount Druitt in 1982, when the Queen opened the local hospital.

Eser Usta moved to Mount Druitt as a child and has seen many changes in the area over the years.

"I grew up riding bikes in the bush but now it's all houses," he says. "We have also seen the growth of the shopping centre."

Usta is a member and past president of Mount Druitt Rotary Club, whose members include local hairdressers, bus company owners and builders.

The suburb, along with Blacktown CBD, is one of two main centres in the Blacktown Council area. Blacktown City is home to more than 280,000 people — making it the third-largest local government area in Australia.



Long period of growth... Mount Druitt is affordable and convenient.

Picture: BOB BARKE

so you want to live in...

## MOUNT DRUITT



\$185,000

19/28 Luxford Rd

**FEATURES** > A quiet two-bedroom apartment conveniently located in a smaller complex close to Westfields shopping centre. Features include a single bathroom and a spacious lounge room and dining area. It also has a study space, balcony and a lock-up garage. Close to transport, schools and restaurants.

**INSPECT** > By appointment

**CONTACT** > Ben Price Real Estate, 9832 3535

**REALESTATE.COM.AU** >

Property ID 103928464



\$349,000

20 Sage St

**FEATURES** > This neat three-bedroom brick-veneer home has a landscaped front garden, built-in robes in two bedrooms, a timber kitchen, airconditioning and large separate lounge and dining rooms. It also offers a lock-up garage, shutters on all windows and a renovated bathroom with a bidet.

**INSPECT** > By appointment

**CONTACT** > Elliott Shiner First National Mount Druitt, 9675 3344

**REALESTATE.COM.AU** >

Property ID 103921592



\$569,000

4 Browning Close

**FEATURES** > A spacious five-bedroom home, it features three bathrooms, a luxury kitchen, formal lounge, family room, and a game room upstairs. Tiled throughout, it also has airconditioning, an inground spa, upstairs balcony and a double lock-up garage.

**INSPECT** > By appointment

**CONTACT** > Australian National Real Estate Mount Druitt, 0420 381 350

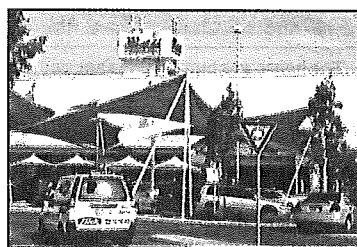
**REALESTATE.COM.AU** >

Property ID 103944659

## fact finder



Distance from Sydney CBD: 45km  
 Neighbouring suburbs: Rooty Hill, Dharruk, Minchinbury, Colyton, Whalan,  
 House-to-unit ratio: 53:47  
 Median house price: \$321,000  
 House capital growth past 12 months: -4%  
 House capital growth past three years: 7%  
 Predicted house value in five years: \$658,000



Major attraction... Westfield Mount Druitt

Predicted unit value in five years:

\$445,000

Owner-to-rent ratio: 68:32

Transport: Mount Druitt is close to the M4 and M7 Westlink motorways. It is on the

institutions including TAFE NSW-Western Sydney Institute, Mount Druitt College, Nagle College in Blacktown, and Christ Catholic College. There's also Rooty Hill Primary and Rooty Hill High School in nearby suburb Rooty Hill.

**Facilities:** The area's major commercial facility is Westfield Mount Druitt, which is located on Carlisle Ave. There is another shopping precinct called Mount Druitt Village and the Shoppers Outlet Centre. Other services such as a hospital, council operated swimming pool and library are located close to the railway station.

**Recreation:** There are plenty of parks in area, including Mount Druitt Town Centre Reserve, Kimberley Park and the Blacktown Olympic Park. The Blacktown City Rugby League and Sports Club is at