



The Council seal first appeared in our records on 7th May 1867. The impression is quite small and plain, about the size of a 20c piece, containing only the words "Municipality of North Willoughby Common Seal". The Council Minutes record that "the seal whereof an impression in wax is set at the foot hereof be the common seal of the municipality".

By 1872 the seal had changed slightly although still the same size. The wording on the seal now said "Borough of North Willoughby". Mr Les Forsyth points out that the wording was apparently changed to comply with the Municipalities Act of 1867. A Borough had to have a population of at least 1000 and an area of less than nine square miles, while a Municipality had to have a population of 500 and an area of less than 50 square miles.

On 16 May 1887 Mayor Fleming, put forward a motion and the "Council decided to provide and adopt an impress seal as a corporate seal for the Borough in lieu of the present seal for sealing wax". The new seal was still plain and the wording had not changed. However it was larger, about the size of a 50c piece, and the wording "Borough of North Willoughby" was now running around the outside encasing the words "common seal".

In 1890 the floral emblem was used in the middle of the seal for the first time with "Borough of Willoughby" (rather than North Willoughby) and "Waroongah our home" written in the circular belt forming the outside of the seal. The seal was now larger than it had been previously.

In 1907 the seal was changed again with the words "Waroongah our home" being deleted. This was about the time that the name for the suburb of Wairoonga was settled on. In the 1907 version "Municipality of Willoughby" replaced "Borough of Willoughby".

Willoughby became a City on 17 November 1989 and the city crest was altered accordingly. The wording "The Council of the City of Willoughby" replaced "The Municipality of Willoughby". The Council crest had the masonry emblem added to symbolise city status. It was used in the Willoughby flag, first flown on 12th May 1990. The City flag was designed by local resident and vexillologist, John Vaughan. A new City seal was acquired in August 1990.

The flowers in the crest were used in art works produced around the turn of the 19th century. One of these is the 1897 illuminated tribute to Mayor Howard Fleming on the occasion of his retirement from Council. This appears to be the artistic work of Claude Leplastrier, a former alderman and Mayor of Willoughby who wrote the 1915 history of Willoughby *Willoughby's Fifty Years*. There is a suggestion of wildflowers decorating a large illuminated address, which Leplastrier created for his campaign secretary in 1901, when he unsuccessfully stood for Parliament. Although there is no proof, one wonders if the design of the floral emblem was the work of this talented man.

The first evidence of the Council crest with wildflowers being used on Council stationery was in 1927. The crest was then more stylised than the current one, outlined in mid-blue on a white background. The use of wildflowers in crests and letterheads was popular in this period with businesses and other organisations.

John Pert in Grace Warner's book *Artarmon Past, Present and Future* mentions the plentiful wildflowers that used to flourish throughout the North Shore bush: waratahs, boronia, flannel flowers and Christmas bells. So abundant was the waratah that the long slender stems of the plant were used for basket making and large bundles were taken to Sydney each week and sold for that purpose.

The North Shore was a popular picnic spot in the late 19th century and early 20th Century particularly those parts accessible by boat. Mr. Les Forsyth also mentions in his books the profusion of wildflowers in the bush throughout early Willoughby, as does Eric Wilksch in his book *The Naremburn Story*.





Flowers on the Willoughby Crest

WARATAH - *Telopea Speciosissima* CHRISTMAS BELL - *Blandfordia Grandiflora*

SYDNEY RED GUM/ APPLE GUM - *Angophora Costata*

FLANNEL FLOWER - *Actinotus Helianthi* NATIVE ROSE - *Boronia Serrulata*

Two significant pioneering industries of the area are represented in the crest; the tanning industry represented by the leather belt; and the brick making industry represented in the city crown.

In July 1999, Council adopted "a new graphic device to support and enhance the Council's Crest Logo and form the base of a cohesive branding program for the City"



In the form of a stylised waratah, the colours are dark green for the "leaves" and red for the rising circles. The image also creates a decorative "W" standing for Willoughby. A waratah is also the central element in the Council Crest.

May 2013



Willoughby City Library Services