

FORESTWAY (OR ARNDALE)

Given the longevity of residence of many people who live in Frenchs Forest, Forestville and Allambie Heights, many residents still refer to the Forestway Shopping Centre as Arndale. This of course was its original name when it was opened in November 1964, a year later than Warringah Mall and Dee Why Square. Not surprisingly, the name bestowed on the centre was the name of the company that developed and owned the site, Arndale Properties. This UK property company named their centres in much the same way as Westfield, although the name of Westfield came from a small lane in Blacktown, the location of its first property acquisition. The name, Arndale, came from a more prosaic source, being a combination of the names of the two owners, Arnold Hagenbach and Sam Chippindale. They established the Arndale Property Trust in the early 1950s, made their first property acquisition in 1954 and opened their first shopping centre in Jarrow in 1961. Arnold was a member of a family that ran a famous chain of bakers shops in and around Leeds and Sam was a real estate agent but the negotiator of the duo. Arnold liked Australia and at one stage owned a farm near Wagga Wagga.

However, the name Arndale in England became synonymous with shopping centres in the 1960s. Eventually there were 22 Arndaes all over England and one in Scotland. They were largely successful but aroused a lot of criticism both for the knocking down of old buildings and being very much enclosed centres. The most famous and one that still retains the Arndale name is in the centre of Manchester but it has been considerably refurbished. The Arndale Property Trust was eventually sold to P & O. However in 1963/1964, the Arndale Property Group expanded into Australia with a shopping centre at Frenchs Forest and one at Kilkenny in Adelaide. The Adelaide centre still retains the Arndale name and its ownership is now in the hands of Centro. The Frenchs Forest centre has long since been sold by the Arndale Property Trust and from 1996 has been owned by the General Property Trust.

Arndale, or now Forestway, has been extended or refurbished approximately every ten years and has two supermarkets in the form of Franklins and Woolworths. An interesting link with the past has been the presence of Woolworths, as Hagenbach and Chippindale, in the building of their retail empire, had an arrangement with Woolworths (UK) to be the preferred anchor retailer.