

Walks in Port Phillip

FORESHORE TRAIL



A guide to the cultural landscapes of a city

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TRAIL KEY

1. PERC WHITE RESERVE
2. PLUTO SCULPTURE
3. PRINCES PIER
4. PORT MELBOURNE RAILWAY STATION
5. STATION PIER
6. CENTENARY BRIDGE PYLON
7. SWALLOW AND ARIELL STEAM BISCUIT MANUFACTORY BUILDINGS
8. WOMEN'S WELCOME HOME ROTUNDA
9. LIARDET MEMORIAL
10. BAY STREET
11. LAGOON PIER
12. SOUTH MELBOURNE LIFESAVING CLUB
13. VICTORIA HOTEL
14. KERFERD PIER
15. HUGHENDEN
16. MIDDLE PARK EXERCISE STATION
17. WEST BEACH NATURAL HISTORY RESERVE
18. CATANI GARDENS
19. ST KILDA PIER
20. ST KILDA BREAKWATER
21. THE ESPLANADE AND SUNDAY MARKET
22. ESPLANADE HOTEL
23. ST KILDA SEA BATHS
24. STOKEHOUSE
25. DONOVANS
26. LUNA PARK
27. ACLAND STREET
28. ST KILDA MARINA
29. ELWOOD CANAL
30. POINT ORMOND HILL
31. ELWOOD COASTAL FOREST
32. ELWOOD SAILING CLUB
33. HEAD STREET

This trail celebrates the eleven-kilometre foreshore of the City of Port Phillip as it traces the coastline of Hobsons Bay from Sandridge to Elwood, delighting Melburnians with its extraordinary vistas and recreational treasures. For over 150 years this beachfront has been one of Australia's most popular urban destinations. Residents and visitors flock to this coast in their thousands on a fine day. Some come to swim and windsurf, others to roam the bicycle and walking paths or drop a fishing line, breathe the sea air or visit icons such as Luna Park, and Princes and Station Piers. Interpretation panels on the route also tell the stories of the Yalukut Weelam clan of the Boon Wurrung people.

Perc White Reserve (1) is a landscape typical of the vast reaches of Fishermans Bend swampland and sandhills that stretched to the Yarra and inspired the name 'Sandridge' for Port Melbourne. The Yarra River entrance has been extensively modified to create port facilities such as Webb Dock, part of Australia's largest container port. Walking paths extend around the dock area towards the mouth of the Yarra River and offer spectacular views of the city and Williamstown. Maritime Cove Community Park opened in 2017 at the end of Sandridge Beach.

The 5.9 km Solar System Trail starting at **St Kilda Marina (28)** with a model of the sun, finishes on Sandridge beach with a model of **Pluto (2)**.

Princes Pier (3) was completed in 1916 in time to send the troops off to the First World War. Originally known as New Railway Pier, it was renamed after the Prince of Wales visited in 1920. In 2011, after many years of refurbishment, it was re-opened to the public as a cultural and recreation space including restorations to the gatehouse and preservation of the pier supports as a striking visual reminder of the past.



Sailing boats moored in the Lagoon near Harper's Starch Factory, c.1910. pm0637.1-3

The red brick houses of the Fishermans Bend estate can be glimpsed from the trail. This was the first estate created by the newly formed Housing Commission after the war to house people relocated from 'slum' housing.

The *Leading Lights* artwork by Mark Weichard and Anthony Russo is located on the promenade between Station and Princes Piers. The 'leading light' beacons guided ships up the channel to the piers.

The restored **Port Melbourne Railway Station (4)**, a light rail service since 1987, is opposite Station Pier at Waterfront Place. It connected the port to the city in 1854 as the first passenger line in Australia.

The Port Melbourne foreshore has seen extraordinary development in the past twenty-five years with many newer residents of Port Melbourne occupying modern estates such as Beacon Cove.

Station Pier (5) was once a hive of commercial activity, crowded with ships delivering cargoes and passengers from all over the world. Over a million immigrants first set foot on Australian shores here. The *Spirit of Tasmania* and increasing numbers of international cruise ships now dock here. Located at the end of the pier is *Destinations*, a sculpture by Mark Weichard and Anthony Russo, which acknowledges immigration and bears the name and dates of ships that have arrived over the past 170 years.

The magnificent **Centenary Bridge**, an overpass built in 1934 for the 100th anniversary of settlement, spanned the railway lines at Station Pier. Its art deco detailing reflected the streamlined ocean liners of the time. It was demolished in 1991. There remains only a single **pylon (6)** as a souvenir of its splendour.

At the corner of Stokes Street and Rouse Street is the first building of the **Swallow and Ariell Steam Biscuit Manufactory (7)** founded in 1854 to bake ships' biscuits. At one time most Port Melbourne families had a member working for 'Swallows'. The smell of fresh biscuits is fondly remembered.



Station Pier, 1901 - 1911. pm1972

The Rotunda (8) was built in 1918 by the Women's Welcome Home Committee. Bands played here as ANZAC troops disembarked from the nearby piers. Over a third of Australia's troops departed from Port Melbourne's piers for the two world wars.

Beyond the Rotunda is the **memorial (9)** to the first permanent settler in Port Melbourne. Wilbraham Frederick Evelyn Liardet arrived with his wife and nine children in 1839 and established a range of small businesses including a ferry service, mail run and resort hotel. They built the Pier Hotel, a track (now Bay Street), a jetty and watchtower.

The World War I Memorial Fountain is evidence of the historic importance of this area in Australia's war effort. Annual ANZAC Day services are held here.

Bay Street (10), opposite the Port Melbourne Yacht Club, was the route of pioneer Wilbraham Liardet's mail run and contains many historic buildings of the original settlement. Its pubs and shops attract a lively weekend crowd.

Lagoon Pier (11) marks the entrance to a saltwater lagoon that once extended more than a kilometre inland. After the lagoon was filled in, local fishing families continued to shelter a boat fleet at Lagoon Pier and to operate a local fish market. Parks and apartments now occupy the site of this former waterway.

Further along Beach Street is *Port Stories*, an installation by Dianna Wells and Helen Bodycomb that shares stories of Port residents.

Opposite the pier at 9 Beach Street is Sandridge Bay Towers, once the Harper's Starch Factory. Through the front gate you can see the giant chimney stack amongst the modern apartments.

At 52 Beaconsfield Parade near Foote Street is the former Brigidine convent 'Kilbride'.

South Melbourne Lifesaving Club (12) with change facilities is opposite Withers Street. Nearby is the Plum Garland memorial playground, located on the beach itself. On the north corner of Kerferd Road is the magnificent former **Victoria Hotel, (13)** now apartments.

Kerferd Road Pier (14), next to the Albert Park Yachting and Angling Club, was built in 1877. Enjoy the marvellous view and chat to the fisher people who come from all suburbs of Melbourne.

On the bluestone sea wall opposite Mills St is the sculpture *Tommy's Story* by Bill Perrin, celebrating Tommy who swam to work at the wharves every day during the Great Depression. On Beaconsfield Parade are three adjacent boom-time mansions of the late nineteenth century.

Hughenden (15) nearest to Mills Street is the former 1890 mansion of J R Buxton of the real estate firm, and later the Danish Club until 2007.

The **Middle Park exercise station (16)** includes seating, conveniences and a garden. The Middle Park Baths, erected on this site in 1892, was one of a number of sea bathing facilities along the foreshore. It was later replaced by the former Middle Park Lifesaving Club, which was demolished in 2006.

At the corner of Pier Road and Beaconsfield Parade is the **West Beach Natural History Reserve (17)**. A 300 metre boardwalk of recycled plastics leads you around the Indigenous saltmarsh landscape restored by community plantings.

Next to the reserve is the West Beach Bathers Pavilion. Erected in 1928, the pavilion is one of three built in the 1920s to cater to St Kilda's burgeoning population. After years of careful restoration, it is now a restaurant and café featuring an historic display.

Continue along Pier Road beside **Catani Gardens (18)**. Divert for a walk into these six hectares of elegant landscaped gardens reclaimed initially from the sea between 1890 and 1916 by Carlo Catani.

The Cenotaph, designed by G H Alsop, was erected in 1925 as a memorial to St Kilda's fallen servicemen and women.

The Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron, which was instituted in 1876, provides training for children learning to sail.

St Kilda Pier (19) is a highly popular destination for Melburnians. The Victorian kiosk at the further end was once known as 'Kerby's Kiosk' and used as a meteorological station. It was rebuilt after a 2003 fire and provides promenades and striking views of Hobsons Bay.

The **St Kilda Breakwater (20)** at the end of the St Kilda Pier was built for the Olympic Games in 1956. It is now home to a Wildlife Management Cooperative Area that protects a colony of fairy penguins, water beavers (rakali) and reef life.



Kerferd Road Pier, South Melbourne. Postcard. 1900-1910. sm0598. 1-3

Inland on **The Esplanade (21)** is the popular Esplanade Market, held on Sundays. Opposite the market is the **Esplanade Hotel (22)**, established in 1854, an icon beloved of Melbourne's artistic and musical community.

Further along The Esplanade is the Catani Clocktower, completed in 1932 in memory of the Chief Engineer of Public Works who reclaimed and redesigned the St Kilda foreshore and gardens.

Sea Baths (23) have existed on St Kilda Beach since the 1850s. The redevelopment of the St Kilda Sea Baths with its Moorish domes was completed in 2001. Steps lead from the central courtyard to the public rooftop patio for a spectacular view.

In 2016, the **Stokehouse (24)** was rebuilt as a five star Green Star restaurant after its original home in a turn-of-the-century teahouse was destroyed by fire. Next door, the rebuilt St Kilda Lifesaving Club opened in 2017 and includes a Changing Places facility. One of the three former dressing and public bathing pavilions is now **Donovans (25)** restaurant, established in 1997.

Heritage listed **Luna Park (26)** celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2012. The original 'Mr Moon' entry face was reconstructed in 1999. Next door is the recently refurbished Palais theatre, once one of the largest suburban picture palaces in the world.

Acland Street (27) is famed for its cake shops, cafés and street life and once a favoured destination of post-war Jewish immigrants.

Marine Lighthouse Reserve has good views of the bay and a skate park. The 5.9 km Melbourne Solar System Trail starts here with a model of the sun. **The St Kilda Marina (28)** involved the reclamation of 16 hectares of land to meet the growing demands of boating enthusiasts. Moran Reserve and playground is a popular recreational area.



Hegarty's Ladies' Baths, St Kilda Beach, c1910. sk0611.1-2

Elwood Canal (29) is the site of the former Elster Creek that drained into the Elwood swamp near the foreshore. 'Elster' is German for magpie, reflecting the many birds that sought worms in the swampy flats. In 1835 the schooner *Enterprize* dropped anchor here before proceeding to settle at Melbourne on the banks of the Yarra River near William Street.

Point Ormond Hill (30) has a fascinating history. A **Yalukut Weelam** midden site was unearthed nearby in 1974. In 1839 a quarantine station was established when the Glen Huntley 'fever' ship arrived. Those who died of typhus were buried in St Kilda's first graveyard on the hill. A coal mine, abattoir, and rifle range all operated in the vicinity. A memorial plaque laid by descendants of the Glen Huntley survivors can be found fifty metres east of the hill beside Ormond Reserve Road.

Continue walking along the leafy trails from Point Ormond. An **extensive urban coastal forest (31)** has been created here with shady trails and nooks. The plants recreate the original landscape before settlement in 1835. Many native birds, possums, insects, and even foxes, live in this bushland.

The former Elwood Bowling Club, near the **Elwood Life Saving Club**, is now a café with a large public playground. Further south along the beach is the **Elwood Angling Club** and **Elwood Sailing Club (32)**.

Finish on the beach at the **Head Street (33)** outfall platform where artist Tony Hutchinson has depicted the history of Hobsons Bay in coloured tiles. The platform is above a giant diversion drain that diverts stormwater from Elwood to prevent flooding. Head Street is the boundary between the City of Port Phillip and the City of Bayside. Nearby is the Federation bench, made from historic Australian timbers, which celebrates the marvellous foreshore of the City of Port Phillip as it curves around the coastline of Hobsons Bay from Sandridge to Elwood.



The Red Bluff Pt Ormond. Book plaque. From a pencil drawing by Mrs Elizabeth Parsons about 1875. sk0834

START	Perc White Reserve, Port Melbourne
FINISH	Head Street, Elwood
LENGTH	Eleven kilometres (approx.)
TIME	Three hours
REFRESHMENTS	There are numerous cafes on the route

Visit heritage.portphillip.vic.gov.au for more information about cultural heritage programs and activities in the City of Port Phillip.

You can also contact us by phone via our ASSIST centre on **03 9209 6777**.

This edition published 2018

Council respectfully acknowledges the Yalukut Weelam Clan of the Boon Wurrung. We pay our respect to their Elders, both past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

Cover: Railway Pier, Port Melbourne. Postcard. pm0037

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