

## The Quarries District

One of the main reasons for the annexation of additional land to the municipality of Fitzroy was to provide extra space for recreation, which was not available in the heavily built up 320 acres which comprised Fitzroy.

Between 1858, the year of the establishment of the Municipality of Fitzroy and 1860, there was considerable agitation for the annexation of additional land to the municipality. Finally on 30 July 1860, after the presentation of petitions for and against annexation, and much discussion about the area of land to be annexed and the boundaries, a proclamation signed by the Governor, Sir Henry Barkly and the Chief Secretary, William Nicholson resulted in the annexation of 480 acres (194 hectares), which would become North Fitzroy. The proclamation was printed in the Government Gazette on 3 August 1860.

It is hard to equate Alexandra Parade and present day North Fitzroy with the area north of the “sickly” Reilly Street drain of early Melbourne, which was described by the chronicler of early Melbourne, Garryowen, as “a most undesirable place, subject to extreme climatic conditions and not fit for habitation” which was made more desolate by a number of quarries.

However, within a comparatively short period of time this problematic region was transformed into the attractive suburb of North Fitzroy.

This walk commences at the north east corner of the Alexandra Parade – Nicholson Street intersection.

- 1 Reilly Street Drain.** The drain, which now runs beneath Alexandra Parade (formerly Reilly Street) and empties into the Yarra below the Eastern Freeway Bridge, marked the northern boundary of Fitzroy and was a notoriously polluted feature of the area in the 19th Century.
- 2 St. Brigid's Roman Catholic Church, 387 Nicholson Street.** The church was built in 1869 and extended with side aisles in 1873, to the designs of architect T. A. Kelly, who was a protégé of William Wardell, the architect of St. Patrick's Cathedral.
- 3 Uniting (Formerly) Methodist Church, corner of Nicholson and Church Streets.** This church was built in 1874 to the designs of architects Terry and Oakden, of polychrome brick, made popular by English architect John Ruskin. It was built to serve the needs of workers in the nearby bluestone quarries.
- 4 Simpson's Terrace, 500–506 Nicholson Street.** This terrace was built in 1884. It is one of the earliest terraces in North Fitzroy.
- 5 Brookes Crescent.** This was one of the original quarry allotments. It was subdivided and laid out in the 1850s, and was the subject of a preservation battle between the Housing Commission and local residents in the 1970s.
- 6 State Savings Bank Building, 720 Nicholson Street (corner Scotchmer Street).** Built in 1890 to the design of architects Wight and Lucas in an
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ornate boom style, it was extended in 1922.

**7 Remains of Railway Station Platform, Park Street near intersection with Rae Street.** This was part of the Inner Circle railway, which operated from 1888 and was later extended into the gardens.

**8 Railway Substation, Park Street, near the intersection with Rae Street.** Built in 1915 in response to the electrification of the railway system. It was constructed by Swanston Brothers, and designed in a neo Renaissance style. It has been converted into a home for elderly people.

**9 St. Georges Road, beneath which runs the Yan Yean pipeline.** The pipeline was built in 1854 to bring fresh water to Melbourne from the Yan Yean Reservoir near Whittlesea.

**10 Former Fire Station, near intersection with Park Street.** This was built in 1912, possibly to the design of architect Cedric Ballantyne. It replaced the timber fire station built on the same site in 1888, which had been designed by George Johnson. It has been converted into apartments.

**11 Former North Fitzroy Post Office, St. Georges Road at intersection with Taplin Street.** Built in 1888 as commercial and residential premises for Thomas Rogers, it became the North Fitzroy post office in 1908. The tower and ornate facade make it a prominent feature on its corner site.

- 12 Former Birmacley Margarine Factory, 125–127 Scotchmer Street.** Built in 1939, it is an important example of industrial art-deco design.
- 13 ‘Carnforth’, 242 Scotchmer Street.** Built in 1894 for John Ashton, a dairy man. With most of its original features intact, and with the dairy at the rear, it is an important example of the dairies which existed throughout inner suburban Melbourne before refrigeration became widespread.
- 14 Gas standard lamp and weather vane.** Located on the reserve at the intersection of St. Georges Road and Scotchmer Street, this is a remnant of the former gas lit street lamp system of North Fitzroy.
- 15 Gladstone Buildings, 169–187 St. Georges Road.** A row of ten two storey shops built in 1888 by contractor James Holden. The shop fronts were altered in the 1920s and the verandahs removed. A bust of William Gladstone, Prime Minister of Great Britain, stands in the pediment on the corner.
- 16 Church Of Christ, St. Georges Road.** Built in 1887 of polychrome brick. It retains most of the original features of the facade intact.
- 17 Reid Street Blue Stone Houses.** These are also some of the oldest houses in North Fitzroy.
- 18 270 Rae Street, former Temperance Hall.** Built in 1884 by contractor William Spurr, this building is a reminder of the strength of the Temperance movement in the 19th century.
- 19 274–286 Rae Street.** Constructed in 1880, this was the first terrace built in North Fitzroy. The recessed ground floor verandah is an unusual feature of terrace houses.
- 20 131 St. Georges Road, corner Brunswick Street North.** Built of rendered brick on a prominent corner site in 1877 for John Ward, the cast iron verandah was added in 1900. It was made by the Excelsior Ironworks at South Melbourne.
- 21 Hungarian Reformed Church (formerly St. Luke's Church of England), 121 St. Georges Road (corner Watkins Street).** Built in 1879 to the designs of architects Crouch and Wilson, the contractor was James Kennedy. It was consecrated in 1891 and is constructed of bluestone, with brick

dressings. Only two thirds of the intended length was built. The end wall is of weatherboard to facilitate completion. The chancel and vestry were added in 1910. The distinctive spire is a counterpoint to the spire of St Patrick's Cathedral visible to the south.

- 22 591 Brunswick Street.** A two storey town house (with later attic window) built in 1892 in an unusual transitional Victorian–Edwardian style.
- 23 123 Rae Street (corner of Freeman Street).** Built in 1887 as a butcher's shop and residence for Alfred and Betsy Caton. Of particular interest is the cast iron grille at street level which ventilated the basement. The original verandah and balcony have been removed.
- 24 Newry Street.** The section between Brunswick Street and Napier Street is an almost completely intact late 19th century Victorian streetscape of terrace houses.
- 25 497 Brunswick Street (corner York Street).** Shop and residence built in 1886 for Thomas Pinsent, a sign writer. The fern pattern on the cast iron verandah was registered by Cochrane and Scott in 1884. The original timber shutters on the shop windows are a rare survival.
- 26 61 York Street.** Built of rendered brick in 1876 for Michael Collins, this is one of the oldest houses in North Fitzroy.
- 27 Former National Australia Bank, 460 Brunswick Street (corner Alexandra Parade).** Built of rendered brick in 1884 as the Colonial Bank. It was designed by architects Smith and Johnson, and constructed by contractors Hoskins and Sons. The Queens Parade frontage was extended in 1901 to the design of J. Beswicke. The National Bank acquired the Colonial Bank in 1918. It is now used as offices. It is a classic Victorian bank building, well adapted to its corner site.



## Edinburgh Gardens & Alfred Crescent Precinct

In 1862, following annexation in 1860, the Fitzroy Council requested a grant of crown land for recreation purposes. In that year the Collingwood Cricket Club was allowed the use of six acres for playing. In 1868 the area set aside for recreation was named Edinburgh Gardens and the curving street on its northern boundary named Alfred Crescent after Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, the second son of Queen Victoria, who visited Australia that year. In 1872, the Fitzroy Cricket Club was formed and in 1877, a bowling green was established.

Attempts were made to excise areas of the gardens for other purposes, such as a school site, but by 1881 the area was permanently reserved for gardens and recreation. From 1883 paths were laid out with basalt edging following the lines laid out in the 1880s. Tree plantings commenced in 1883 and are largely still intact. They include the Elm Avenues bordering most of the paths, the English Oak Avenue opposite Rowe Street, and a grove of Holm Oaks near the Rotunda. One Holm Oak is recorded on the National Trust Register of significant trees.

However, despite the reservation of the area for recreational purposes, in 1888 a railway line connecting the inner circle line with the now demolished Fitzroy station cut through the gardens from north to south. Much of the subsequent tree planting was designed to screen the railway.

Alfred Crescent soon became one of the most desirable residential districts of North Fitzroy, with many substantial houses built in it.

This walk begins in Brunswick Street at the corner of Freeman Street.

- 1 Brick Gatehouse.** Located in Brunswick Street at the corner of Freeman Street, this was built in the mid 1890s.
- 2 The Fitzroy Cricket Club Grandstand, which overlooks the Peterson Oval.** It was built in 1888 to the design of architects N. Billing and Son. It is one of the oldest and most intact 19th century grandstands in Melbourne.
- 3 Timber Gatehouse.** Next to the grandstand is a reconstruction of the original pavilion which was burnt in 1996. The original building was constructed in 1900.
- 4 War Memorial.** Located near the timber gatehouse, the memorial was erected in 1919.
- 5 The Bandstand Rotunda.** This structure was constructed in 1924 to the design of architect Edward Twentymann. The classical design is based on the Tholos at Delphi.
- 6 Queen Victoria Statue Pedestal.** In 1902 a statue of the late Queen was erected on a masonry pedestal at the expense of George Godfrey MLC. The statue itself disappeared in the 1930s, and its whereabouts is still unknown.
- 7 Railway Lines.** These cross some of the planted pathways and are the remains of the line that was built through the gardens in 1888. A north/south walking/cycling path now follows the line of the track. The line through the Edinburgh Gardens led to the growth of a small industrial area in the streets to the south of the gardens. Two of the factories located in this area are at 42–46 McKean Street and at 21 Grant Street. Both have now been converted for residential use.
- 8 Alfred Crescent.** Bordering the gardens to the north, this street and those leading into it soon became a sought after residential neighbourhood, in which there are many notable civic and private buildings.
- 9 Former Fitzroy North Police Station, 7 Alfred Crescent.** This art-deco style building was built in the 1930s to the design of architect Percy Everett to replace the timber 19th century police station. It was used in the 1970s to store the police ‘Special Branch’ files which had allegedly been destroyed. It was later converted to residential purposes.
- 10 North Fitzroy State School, 9–11 Alfred Crescent.** It was built in 1875 to the design of prolific school architect Henry Bastow. The builder was Geoffrey O’Connell. It was
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altered in 1925 by the insertion of the present large windows which replaced the original paired arched windows.

**43 Alfred Crescent.** Perhaps the most striking house in North Fitzroy, it was built in 1887 as one of a pair with 41 for William Hobbs, a coach builder. In 1905, a subsequent owner David Watson, a dentist, engaged contractors Iwan and Co. to alter it to its present arts and crafts style. The ornate interior remained intact until the 1970s.

**67 Alfred Crescent.** Built in 1890 for Alfred Mills, a fruiterer, the house is notable for its unaltered condition.

**‘The Haven’, 75 Alfred Crescent.** It was built in 1890 for John McMahon, a tailor with a business in Brunswick Street, and a property investor. He was a Councillor and Mayor of Fitzroy, and a founder of the Fitzroy Football Club. It was designed by architect Olaff Nicholson and built by contractor John Masterton.

**96 McKean Street.** Built in 1892 by Henry Rowe, a builder, for himself. It is notable for its fine arcade with the roofline projecting over the upper balcony, rather than being concealed behind a parapet, which was more usual.

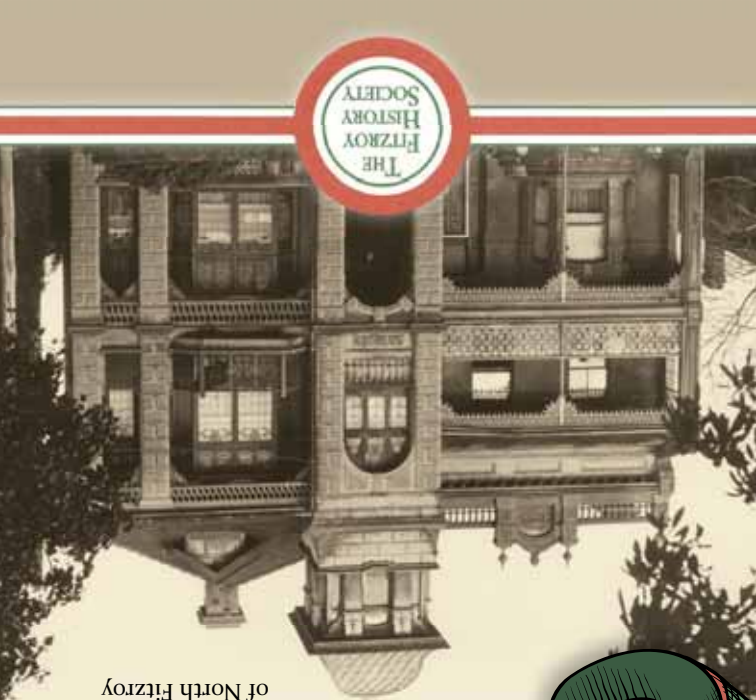
**‘Hinton Villa’, 77 McKean Street.** Built in 1882 for Henry George, this is an excellent example of an intact polychrome brick single storey terrace house.

**‘Dentonville’, 151 McKean Street.** Built in 1887 for John Denton, an auctioneer, the house is distinctive for its double storey arcade and for the unusual feature of the widow's walk above the parapet. Behind the house is a hall built in 1894 and used as an auction hall and ballroom. A stable block is at the rear.

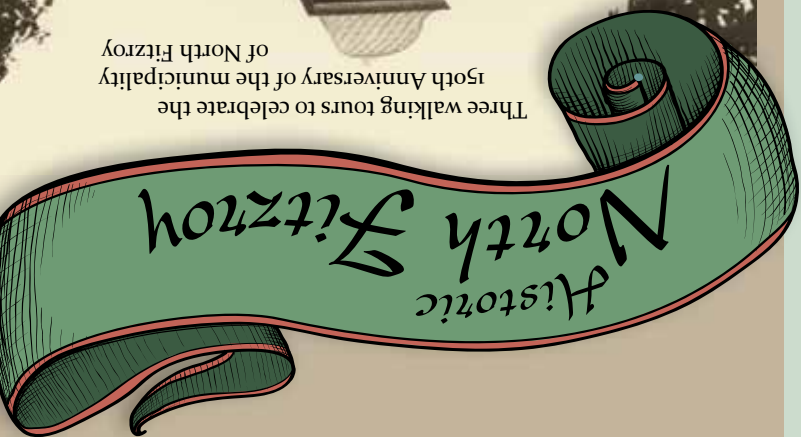
**16–20 Rowe Street.** This three house terrace was built in 1888 for Henry Bond. It is a fine example of an arcaded terrace with a parapet and recessed loggia. It is unusual in having Corinthian capitals on the columns at both levels.

**Fitzroy High School, corner Michael and Falconer Streets.** It was built between 1915 and 1925 and was the scene of protest and occupation in 1992 when it was closed by the Kennett government. The striking and innovative recent extension have made it a landmark.





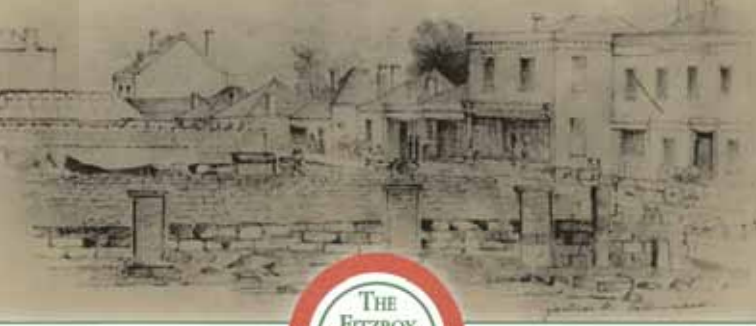
Three walking tours to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the municipality of North Fitzroy



The Fitzroy History Society caters for anyone interested in the history of the Fitzroy area. New members are welcome. You don't have to live in the area to be a member of the Society.

The Society conducts a lively program of events each year, including walks and talks. It also plays an active role in researching, documenting and preserving Fitzroy's heritage.

The Fitzroy History Society is grateful to Yarra City Council and Yarra Libraries for their continued support.



### Rushall Crescent & Queens Parade

North Fitzroy was deliberately planned by government surveyors to have wide streets on a grid pattern in order to avoid the narrow streets and often cramped housing of Fitzroy, which had been subdivided by private developers.

In the 1850s the surveyor-general, Captain Andrew Clarke, proposed a plan for a new suburb to be called "Merriville". This was inspired by the plans for the New Town of Edinburgh, designed in the early 19th century. Captain Clarke's plan incorporated wide streets and garden areas. However, Captain Clarke's plan was not implemented. This may have been due to the later construction of the Yan Yean pipeline which brought fresh water to Melbourne, and running beneath St. Georges Road, cut through Captain Clarke's projected street plan.

**1 Edwardes Place at the intersection of Michael and Falconer Streets.** This has a number of double storey brick terraces with cast iron verandahs overlooking a small park.

**2 259 Scotchmer Street.** A double fronted Edwardian villa associated with the book *Monkey Grip* by Helen Garner.

**3 39 Kneen Street.** This was built in 1891 for John Meckiff, who before commencing his own contracting business was the Clerk of Works to David Mitchell, father of Dame Nellie Melba. The single storey arcaded design is unique in North Fitzroy and rare in Melbourne.

**4 Rushall Station.** Was built in 1926-1927. It is on the Epping line. It was from here that the Inner Circle line ran to Royal Park and the city.

**5 The Eastern Side Of Rushall Crescent.** Opposite the Old Colonists Homes there are many fine examples of polychrome brick villas and single fronted houses dating from the 1890s.

**6 Rushall Park, Old Colonists Homes.** This complex of 142 self contained homes is sited on more than four acres lying between Rushall Crescent and the Merri Creek. The Homes were established in 1869 by George Coppin, an actor, theatrical entrepreneur, politician and philanthropist, who saw the need to provide for those colonists who, through misfortune, were not able to provide for themselves in their old age. This is private property and cannot be entered without prior approval.

**7 Rushall Crescent.** This location displays some significant architecture, amongst which are 39 and 41 Rushall Crescent. This pair of houses, named Clifton and Preston, exhibits some of the most pronounced features of boom style architecture. They were built for James Green in 1890. The heavily ornate arcaded facades are noteworthy. The columns supporting the arcades are made of cast iron.

**8 'Strome', 78 Rowe Street.** It was built in 1895 for Florence Symms. It is a fine example of a polychrome brick house, which with its two cypress trees in the garden makes a striking element in the streetscape.

**9 The North Side of Rowe Street, between Michael and Delbridge Streets.** This street contains a number of brick villas built in the 1880s and 1890s.

**10 Presbyterian Church, corner Michael and McKean Street.** Prominent church architect Evander McIver designed the church in 1892 in a Romanesque style. This was unusual in a period when Gothic was considered to be the appropriate style for churches. The Sunday School fronting onto McKean Street was built in 1934 to the designs of another prominent church architect, Lawrence Warner, who was also a noted organist.

**11 'Hatherlie', 224 McKean Street.** This house was built in 1889 for Samuel Lazarus, financier and real estate investor. He is best known for the diary he kept of his life on the Ballarat goldfields in the 1850s. He was also the foreman of the jury at the trial of Ned Kelly. At the side of the house is a small gable roofed addition which contrasts with the style of the main part of the house. This house forms a pleasing composition with the adjoining terrace houses at 218 and 220, which are of similar polychrome brick design.

**12 'Colville', 223 McKean Street.** This house was built in 1885 for Albert Lee Tucker to the design of architect Olaff Nicholson. Albert Tucker, grandfather of artist Albert Tucker, was a Councillor and Mayor of Fitzroy, and later a member of Parliament. From 1913 to 1991 it was known as Cameron House, when it was owned by the Presbyterian Church and used as a home for unmarried mothers. It is now a private residence.

The plan on which North Fitzroy was subsequently subdivided was designed by Captain Clarke's successor, Clement Hodgkinson. Like the Clarke plan, it was angled on Heidelberg Road (Queens Parade), a major transport route which had been in existence since the 1840s, and which had to be taken into account in any later subdivision.

Although the small garden areas of the Clarke subdivision were not implemented, their loss was more than compensated by the inclusion of the Edinburgh Gardens in the Hodgkinson plan.

Queens Parade soon developed into a major shopping and business locality.

This walk starts at the corner of Michael and Falconer Streets.

**13 'Moss Vale', 225 McKean Street.** Built in 1893 for Henry Hyams, this is another good example of a polychrome double storey terrace house with a cast iron verandah. The house contributes to the pleasant enclave of substantial and well preserved late Victorian houses in the section of McKean Street between Michael Street and Rushall Crescent.

**14 227 McKean Street.** This is a notable double fronted brick house with a bay window, built for R.B. Ashton, a dairyman. Although built in 1901, from its style it looks earlier.

**15 Terminus Hotel at the intersection of Brennand Street and Queens Parade.** This hotel, built in the 1850s, is one of the original buildings of North Fitzroy. The bluestone surrounds of the doors and windows are a distinctive architectural feature.

**16 Former United Kingdom Hotel (now a fast food outlet).** On a prominent site at the intersection of Queens Parade and Heidelberg Road, this building is an excellent example of art-deco architecture. Although not part of North Fitzroy, it is a significant feature in the local streetscape.

**17 376 Queens Parade.** One of the long-standing businesses established was the Kingdom Cycle Works. This was founded by Theodore Sabelberg. The shop was built in 1904 and remained a cycle shop until well into the 1970s. It is now a restaurant.

**18 The London Chartered Bank, 370 Queens Parade.** This was built in 1889. The architects were Oakden, Addison and Kemp. It is the most notable example of Queen Anne bank architecture in Melbourne and with its tower is admirably suited to its corner site. After various bank mergers it became the ANZ Bank in 1970 and is now a hairdresser's salon.

**19 4-8 Michael Street.** These three single-fronted terrace houses were built in 1883 for George Lowe, a butcher in Queens Parade. The terrace has fine

details especially on the front windows, with side lights, stained glass top lights over the front doors and an unusual Greek key pattern in the iron lace on the verandahs. Each house has a one-room second story at the rear, giving a tower effect.

**20 Ryan's Buildings, 304-326 Queens Parade.** A row of rendered brick double storey shops built in 1889 by Jeremiah Ryan, a farmer from Bacchus Marsh, who was a major property developer in North Fitzroy and Clifton Hill. In tribute to his extensive property holdings, he was referred to in newspapers as "the king of Clifton Hill".

**21 Former national bank at the corner of Queens Parade and Delbridge Street.** Constructed in 1886 to the design of architect W.A. Tyree, it was built in a transitional boom classical style, where the strict rules of classical architecture were not adhered to, although classical motifs were used. Of particular interest is the recessed loggia on the first floor level, and the sculptural group on the pediment.

**22 17 Delbridge Street.** Built in 1890 for Mark Allen, a photographer, this house is an excellent example of an arcaded double storey house with a parapet. An unusual feature is the band of tiles above the upper arcade.

**23 J. H. Porter Iron Store, located within the Council Depot, 111 Queens Parade.** J. H. Porter of Birmingham was a leading manufacturer of pre-fabricated cast iron buildings in Great Britain in the 19th century. They were exported throughout the world. This store has a rectangular frame of cast and wrought iron, and is clad in heavy gauge corrugated iron. The roof is a segmental arch of corrugated iron. The store is believed to be the only remaining example in the world of a Porter store still standing, and consequently is regarded as being of world heritage importance.

