

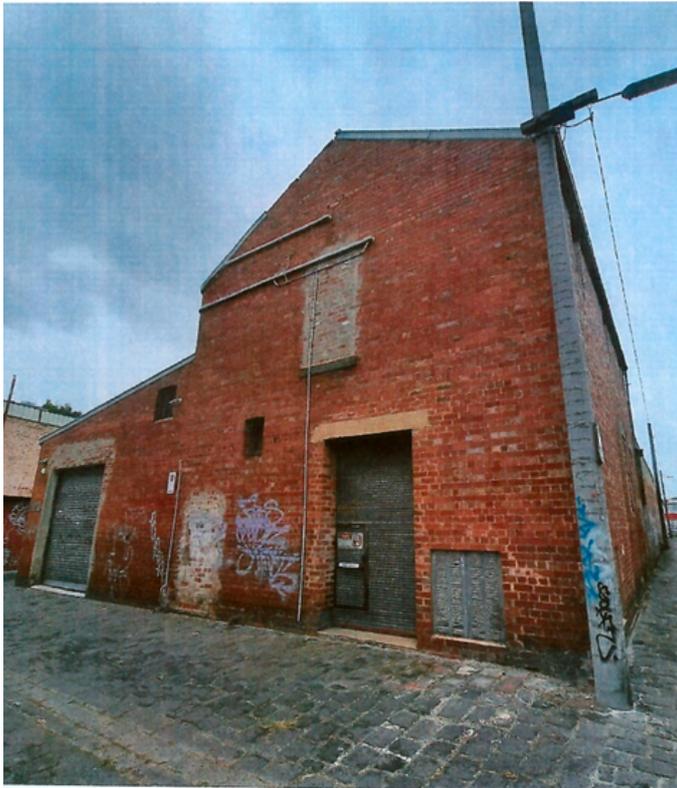


NEWSLETTER

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www.fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au

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Former Bakehouse - Built 1902. Original owner: James Willmott. Note: some of the original openings have been crudely bricked up and new access openings introduced. Photo: Terence Nott

FORMER BAKEHOUSE

390A QUEENS PARADE, NORTH FITZROY

Mr. James Willmott opened a retail bakery at 392 Queens Parade (then 384 Northcote Road) in 1887. He leased the premises for the first 20 years of operation. Then in 1906 he purchased the property at 392 and the land at 394-396 Queens Parade where he had the current two shops built in 1909. He purchased the land at 390A Queens Parade in 1902 and by the end of that year had built a bakehouse on this land in association with his retail bakery at 392 Queens Parade. In 1889 the Jewish Herald contained an advertisement for the Excelsior Bakery of Queens Parade, Clifton Hill. It described James Willmott as baker and pastrycook with Weddings and Birthday Cakes a Speciality. In 1940 an advertisement in the Advocate advertised the "IDEAL" SHORTBREAD CO. 392 Queens Parade....The Penny Shortbread of the Century....Delivered anywhere in Australia.

James Willmott died in 1933. Florence Willmott rented the shop on Queens Parade and the bakehouse at 390A to the Ideal Shortbread Co. from 1933 to 1948. The property was then sold to Thomas Ray O'Connell who continued to rent the property to the Ideal Shortbread Co. until 1966.

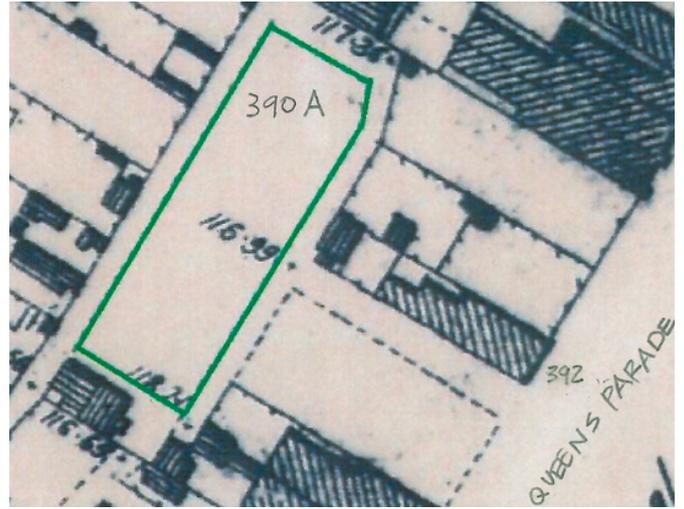
The former brick bakehouse building still stands at 390A Queens Parade, North Fitzroy. It is on the corner of three lanes a short distance up a wide lane

FHS COMMITTEE 2021

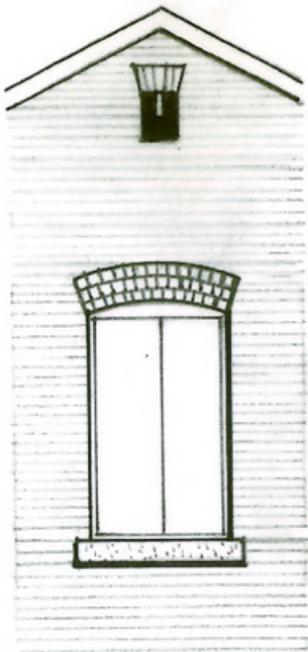
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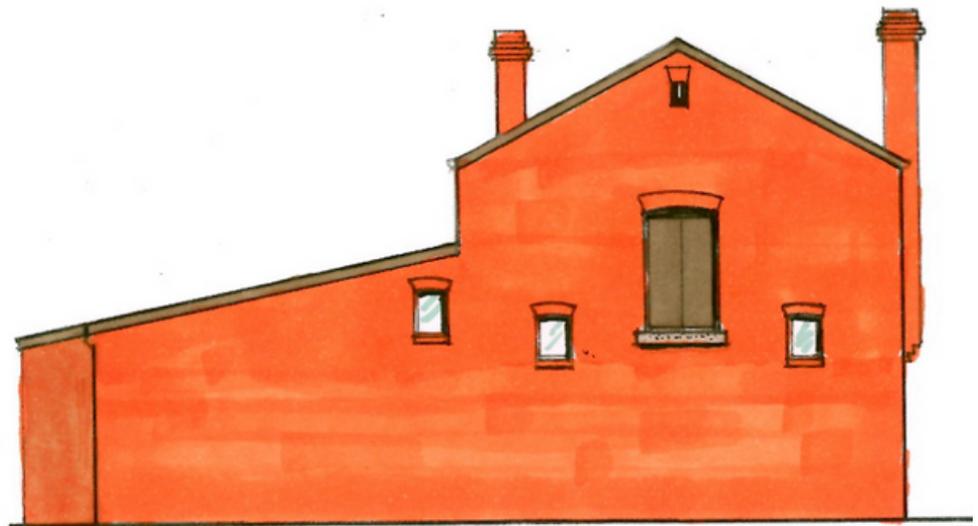
behind Queens Parade. The brick building consists of a gabled two storey structure and a skillion lean-to. Original windows and the upper level loft opening in the end gable have been altered. Two original brick chimneys have been removed and new openings have been made in the walls. Otherwise, the general shape and structure have remained little altered externally. A comparison can be made between the attached recent photo and the recreated drawing prepared by FHS member Terence Nott. The original timber stables building, next to the bakehouse, still feature in the Charles Pratt aerial photo of 1925-40.



Detail from MMBW Plan No. 50 of 1900. The land purchased by Willmott in 1902 is outlined in green. Note: his shop at 392 Queens Parade (north of the laneway) was already in existence.



DETAIL

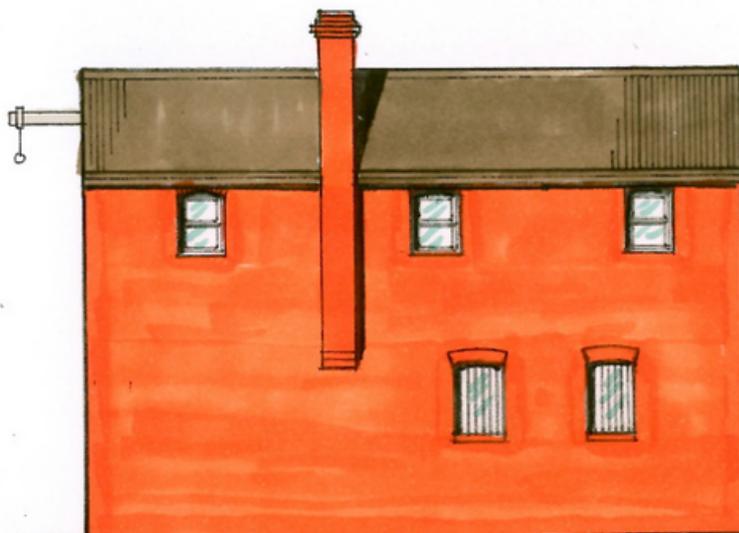


NORTH EAST ELEVATION

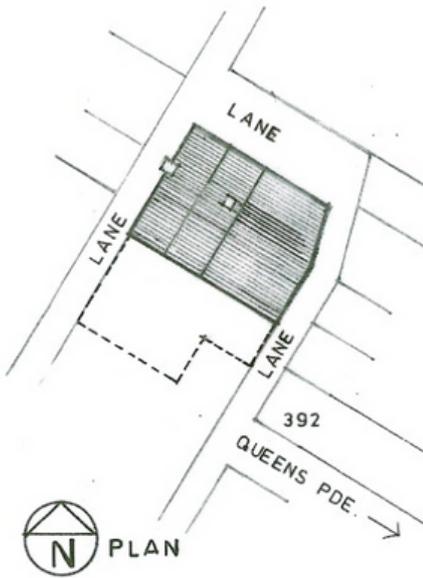
**FORMER BAKEHOUSE
390 A Queens Parade
North Fitzroy**

This drawing of the original appearance of the former bakery is based on site measurements taken at site, on a physical examination of the remaining existing brick building, on the c.1925-40 aerial photo of Clifton Hill by Charles Pratt and on the RTA aerial photo of 1957.

Terence Nott © 2020



NORTH WEST ELEVATION



**FORMER BAKEHOUSE
390 A Queens Parade
North Fitzroy**

This drawing of the original appearance of the former bakery is based on site measurements taken at site, on a physical examination of the remaining existing brick building, on the c.1925-40 aerial photo of Clifton Hill by Charles Pratt and on the RTA aerial photo of 1957.

Terence Nott © 2020

By 1957 the stables had been demolished and by c.1962 a warehouse building had been erected on this site.

Until recently the bakehouse had been leased to a range of tenants and a portion of it is still being used as an electrical substation by Citi Power. There is a recent proposal by developers to build several three storey units, at 390A Queens Parade, and to alter parts of the brick bakehouse. Although the building and the adjoining properties are included in a Heritage Overlay, the property at 390A, which includes the bakehouse has been left ungraded. There is pressure to have the important historical bakehouse listed as contributory.

It is unknown when the original two storey building at 392 Queens Parade was removed. It was present in the RTA aerial photograph of 1957. My recollection is that the land remained vacant up until the present single storey brick shop was built by Ivor Otley in 1993. Ivor ran his Fitzroy Stained Glass business from the shop until it changed to a take away food outlet (c.2008).

THIS INFORMATION WAS COMPILED BY FITZROY HISTORY SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEMBER, TERENCE NOTT, ARCHITECT. HE HAS RELIED ON RESEARCH CARRIED OUT BY LOCAL HISTORIAN VIRGINIA NOONAN AND BY NATICA SCHMEDER OF LANDMARK HERITAGE PTY.LTD

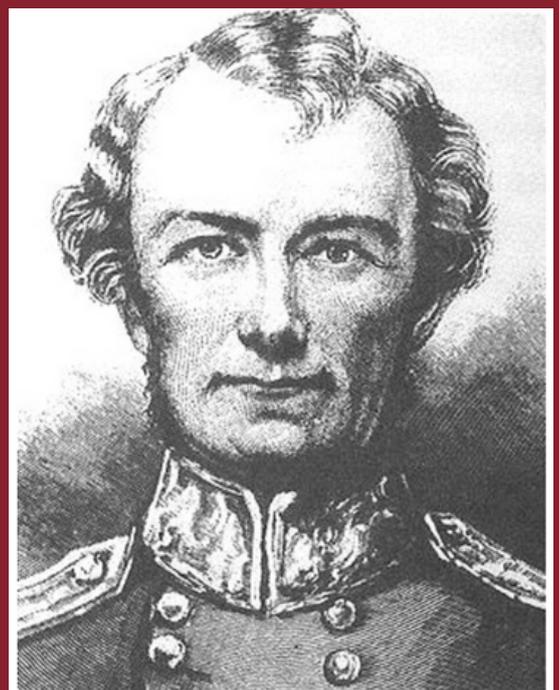
FHS EVENT - LA TROBE AND EARLY FITZROY

Charles Joseph La Trobe arrived in Melbourne as Superintendent of the Port Phillip District in 1839 and left as Governor of Victoria in 1854. In this time Melbourne flourished and Fitzroy grew into Melbourne's first suburb.

Tim Gatehouse, Peter Yewers and Mike Moore will speak on La Trobe the person and his relations with the Melbourne City Council of which Fitzroy became a ward in 1851.

La Trobe laid the foundation stone for our venue St Peters Eastern Hill in 1846 and with his wife were regular worshippers at the Church. The present vicar, Dr Hugh Kempster, will offer a tour of the church focussing on the links with the couple.

**Date: Sun 25 July at 2pm (COVID Restrictions Permitting)
Venue: St Peters Eastern Hill Church Hall, 15 Gisborne Street East Melbourne (Near the corner of Albert Street)**



Booking Details to be confirmed in our 'July edition' or by email.

GASLAMP LIGHTING

INTRODUCTION

The world's first large-scale record of street lighting is in 1667, when under King Louis XIV, the French government began installing lanterns on all streets. Oil-fired lanterns with glass windows were suspended from a cable over the middle of the street, placed twenty yards apart. A much-improved oil lantern, called a réverbère, (street-lamp) was introduced between 1745 and 1749. These lamps were attached to post tops.

The first widespread system of street lighting used piped coal gas as fuel. The first public street lighting with gas was demonstrated in Pall Mall, London on 28 January 1807 and in 1812, Parliament granted a charter to the London and Westminster Gas Light and Coke Co, and the first gas company in the world came into being. Less than two years later, on 31 December 1813, Westminster Bridge was lit by gas. Following this success, gas lighting spread to other countries.

LIGHTING IN MELBOURNE STREETS

Melbourne's earliest lighting was provided by innkeepers, who were required by law to have a lamp (presumably oil-fired) burning outside their premises from sunset to sunrise. The populace of Melbourne, particularly women, were regularly faced with unsafe conditions with long gaps between the ineffectual innkeeper's oil lamps, where potholes, drainage channels and generally uneven street surfaces posed dangers.

“By the mid 1860's, the city at night was not simply a difficult terrain to negotiate, but had become a domain subverted to the immoral misrule of prostitutes, sailors and thieves.” A refrain at the time was that *“a light is as good as a policeman”*.

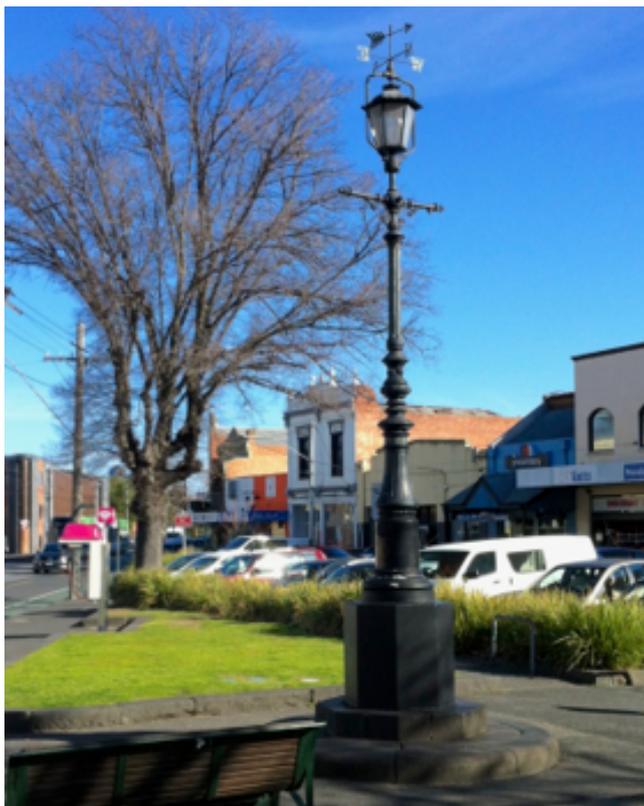
“Lighting did not however, simply equate with authority and moral control. As the window shoppers and revellers of Bourke Street east had become accustomed to for some decades, lighting was the shining torch not only of moral control and urbanity, but of mercantile growth and capitalism.”

The Melbourne Gas and Coke Company (est. 1850) produced coal gas for both street lighting and residential use, however gas supply did not begin until January 1856 due to shortage of labour and other disruptions caused by the Victorian gold rush. The erection of public street gas lamps commenced in August 1857, with 414 gaslights erected by the end of the decade.

In 1858, a letter to the Editor of the Argus by a Scot was published describing the management of gas lighting in Edinburgh. Amongst several details concerning the suitability of gas lamps and lamp types, he quotes that the lamps there are lit by lamplighters each responsible for daily cleaning and lighting 130 lamps half-an-hour before sunset and extinguishing by sunrise.



Old lamp standard, with electric light, outside the Labour in Vain on Brunswick St, Fitzroy.



While many lamp standards remain on the corner of Fitzroy streets, no lamp heads remain. Above photo: Intersection St Georges Rd & Holden Sts, Fitzroy North. This electric light was fitted in the late 1980s and includes an unusual weather-vane.

In Melbourne (1897) lamps were lit at sunset, but extinguished by 11pm. One lamplighter complained that by the time he had finished lighting the lamps, it was necessary to start putting them out.

Demand for gas was great in the late 1850's and the Melbourne Gas and Coke Company laid new mains to supply many of Melbourne's inner suburbs.

In 1894 a new incandescent mantle named the 'Welsbach' mantle was introduced into the lantern which burned at a far higher temperature and hence level of lighting than the old mantle. At the same time, less gas was required to produce this improved illumination. This gave an impetus to the acceptance of gas lighting at a time when the electric light began to be accepted as an alternate source of lighting.

GASLAMPS IN FITZROY

The Collingwood, Fitzroy and District Gas and Coke Co. was established in 1859 following a meeting of businessmen at the Grace Darling Hotel in Smith Street, and commenced supply from its works in North Fitzroy in May 1861. The company were empowered to supply gas within a six-mile radius of its works on a grant of land at Smith and Reilly Streets.

The clipper ship 'Clanranald' brought out amongst her deadweight cargo a large quantity of iron work, intended for a new gasometer erected by the Collingwood and Fitzroy Gas Company. The gasometer was the largest out of England and the weight of the iron work, together with a number of iron pipes for the same company, was approximately 380 tons.

Gas lamps were mounted on ornate cast iron standards first manufactured in Europe, presumably England.

"Large, heavy, ill-made lamp standards duly arrived. The castings were of the coarsest description, and the flaws and chinks filled with lead".

Later cast-iron standards used in Fitzroy were manufactured in Victoria. Examination of the standards reveals the following manufacturers;

1. ANDERSON & RITCHIE. The company was founded in 1905 and their foundry was located at 143 Rose Street Fitzroy, later relocating in 1994 to Coolaroo Victoria and continued manufacturing Malleable iron castings. Their name was cast into each standard along with "EDWARDS LIGHTING ENGINEERS BALLARAT VIC" who also had an important input into street lighting in Ballarat, and are still in operation in Ballarat today.

2. PHILLIPS MCWALTER & CHAMBERS

Victoria Foundry are listed in the Parliamentary report 'Melbourne International Exhibition, 1880-81 as "suppliers of lamp pillars and globes' to that Exhibition.

Gaslights were placed generally on the kerb line immediately at the intersection of the busier streets as shown on early MMBW plans. The benefit of street lighting to the community was realised from the commencement of lighting by gas. From 1899 to 1902, members of the public requested, and Fitzroy Council debated on a number of occasions the need for additional lamps throughout the municipality.



A typical gas light standard. The upper column has been removed and the remaining standard filled with concrete. Electric lights were mounted on replica gaslight standards around 1990 each with a single light source and mounted on a 4-6 sided glass lamp head.

After discussions in Council on relocating one light from the intersection of St Georges Road and Scotchmer Street, Council voted for a new gas lamp to be erected at the intersection of Brunswick Street north and Queens Parade, and to be fitted with a four-burner light.

There was no automatic lighting of the gas lamps, and each was lit each evening by a lamplighter operating from a ladder. The glass surround to the light source required cleaning prior to lighting, as products from the combustion of the gas formed a layer of 'soot' on the glass reducing the effectiveness of the light. Lamplighters occasionally fell while cleaning the glass. From time to time the lamplighters throughout Melbourne demanded higher wages, and in 1872 formed an association for their "mutual benefit and protection". The association initially numbered twenty-one members increasing to thirty within the month. They went on strike shortly afterwards, for by 30th September, a newspaper reporter likened the lack of street lighting in Melbourne to a "terrible disaster" due to the strike. For a time the Fitzroy lamplighters were appointed as contractors, but in 1901 the four Lighters were made employees of the Council as were all other daily paid municipal workers. The Lighters wages were increased in that year from twenty shillings to 22 shillings per week.

While electric street-lights were first introduced in 1894, gas lighting of Fitzroy's streets remained until at least 1911 as budget items in Fitzroy Council documents show that in that year Council approved payments to both Electric Supply Company and Metropolitan Gas Company for the coming year.

WRITTEN BY PETER WOODS

MACROBERTSONS CHOCOLATE FACTORY WALK



Image from 1905 from the corner of Johnston Street and Smith Street looking north. Many buildings remain (but have been modified)

Fitzroy History Society was given a treat with approximately 35 people on MacRobertson's walk on Sunday 18th April. The walk was ably guided by Doug Loveless who entertained and informed us all of the bustling industry and the care for employees of the 'White City'.

Doug Loveless had spent two years as an Employment and Safety

officer at MacRobertson's in Fitzroy before transferring with them to the new Ringwood factory in March 1967. MacRobertson's was bought by Cadbury in June 1967. At the height of production around the 1930s MacRobertson's occupied 25 acres in Fitzroy with 18 buildings, employing around 5000 people. The Company was the highest taxpayer in Australia at the time.



MacRobertson's head office, 214 Argyle St.

Our walk started at the head office (photo). Doug recollects his first day standing on the roof of his car to marshal hundreds of women who applied for the 50 jobs available in factory 2. He hired the people and completed the paperwork that night only to be confronted by a manager from factory 3 the next day ordering him to sack 50 women. After remonstrating with the manager over the on/off nature of employment practices the manager stated "I am only interested in factory 3 not factory 2". Doug set about to change these circumstances. Another anecdote was

was that on day 2 of his employment in MacRobertson's lane, opposite the head office, he caught an employee drinking. It was 11am in the morning. He tried to sack the man only to be stopped by a sea of people who said he was unsackable as he was one of the illegitimate sons of Macpherson Robertson. These were the beginnings of the rich history Doug shared with us as we walked the 'City'.

The building on the corner of Gore St. and Rose Street Doug regaled many stories about how chocolate was made, and new products were invented. He explained the different uses of each of the buildings. At 403 George Street we heard the story of how a sales representative for MacRobertson's was murdered and robbed in his home in 1913.

At the end of the walk, we were kindly invited to visit one of the warehouse buildings conversion into apartments that exemplified the massive changes in the area from industrial site to residential buildings.



The tour in front of Arthur Trotter's house, shot on 7 January 1913.

CITIZEN HISTORIANS PROJECT

If you are interested, have previously attended one of our Workshops on 'Researching your House' or have started researching into the life of your house and have come across a stumbling block we would like to hear from you.

The Project aims to assist researchers find and document information about their houses. There are many online resources where you can readily find interesting facts.

The Fitzroy History Website

www.fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au/research/ contains a Resource list for searching and Lina Favrin, Local History Librarian with Yarra Libraries is always ready to help.

So have some fun in exploring and benefit the local history collection with a history of your house by completing the template also on the website and emailing to

fitzroyhistorysociety@yahoo.com.au

WALKING TOURS AND PODCAST SERIES

SPONSORED BY EWING TRUST

Fitzroy History Society has been scoping, preparing scripts, and narrating the podcast recordings in a series of at least 6 walks around Fitzroy neighbourhood.

We are excited about this project and look forward to launching of the series.

They will enable members and others to conduct self-guided walks utilising the audio podcast of valuable information all for your enjoyment and learning.

So, take observations at your own pace or listen at anytime and anywhere.

The walks are being progressively released online over the next 12 months. You can download the latest walks from:

<https://library.yarracity.vic.gov.au/browse-and-borrow/yarra-libraries-podcast>

Check our website for further details.



INSTAGRAM

In addition to our website and Facebook, FHS now has an Instagram page to promote the history and cultural heritage of Fitzroy and North Fitzroy.

Download the Instagram App and follow us on [@fitzroyhistorysociety](https://www.instagram.com/fitzroyhistorysociety) for images of Fitzroy and North Fitzroy past and present.

You might also like to follow us on Facebook.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is \$20 per person, per year. If you would like to join, please complete the form found on our website:

www.fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au and follow the instructions on the site.