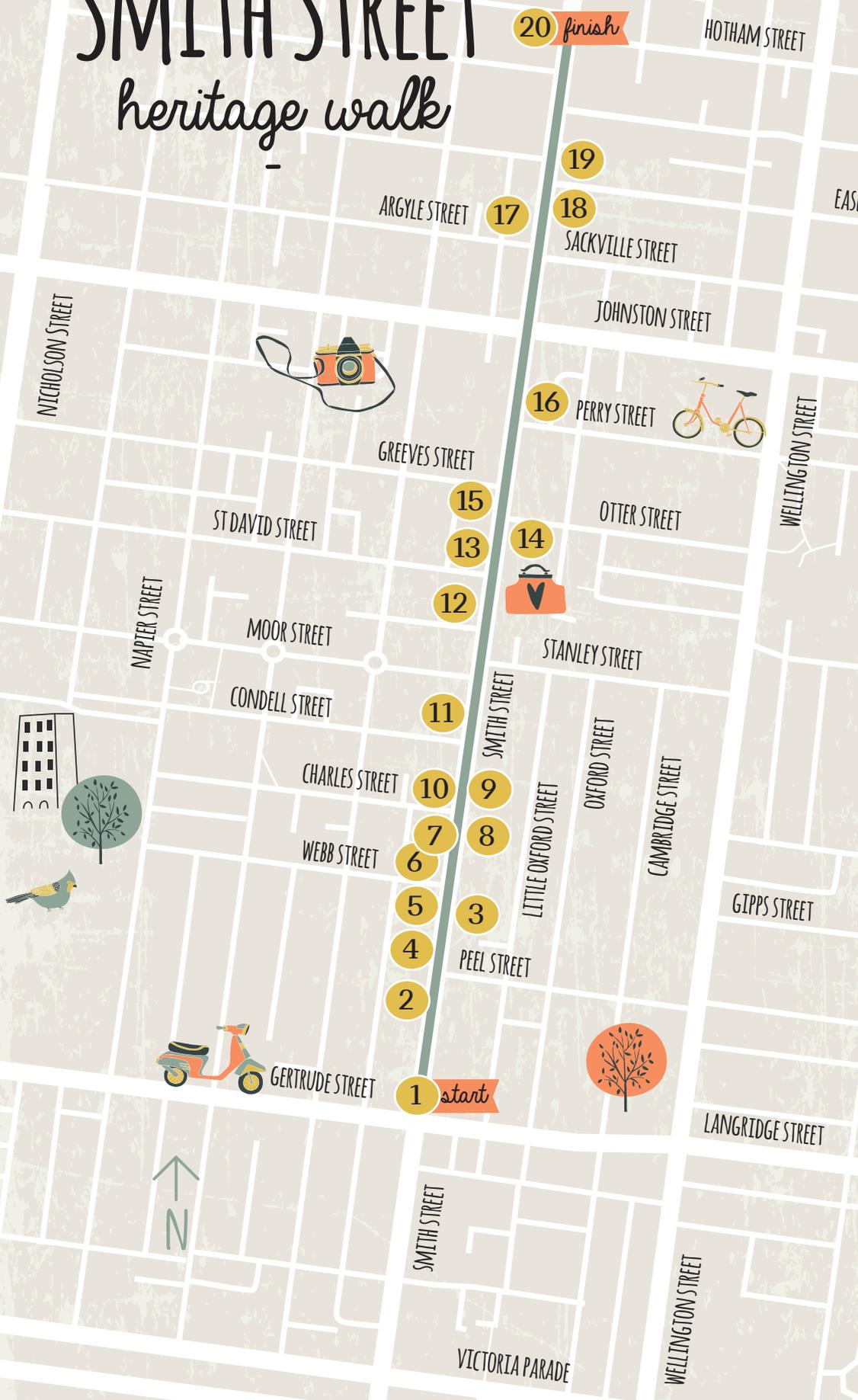


# SMITH STREET heritage walk



Smith Street was created in 1839 when Crown land north of Melbourne's town limits was sold as 25 acre allotments. The rural lots on each side of the street were subdivided during the 1850s. On the higher ground on the western side, Melbourne's gentry built brick and stone houses in large gardens, while on the east, small and close-packed wooden cottages proliferated on the steep Collingwood Slope where there were no building controls.

There was little commercial development in Smith Street until late in the 1850s. By the 1870s the first buildings were being replaced by more substantial premises. During the boom of the 1880s, Smith Street was already the district's premier shopping street when the 1887 cable tram service from the city to the Merri Creek brought an influx of customers to the large department stores, stocked with goods from Fitzroy and Collingwood factories.

Today, most heritage buildings are altered at street level while the style and decorative detail of the different periods remain intact on their upper storeys.

**Commence the walk at the corner of Smith and Gertrude Streets.**

Yarra City Council acknowledges the assistance of the Fitzroy History Society and Louise Elliot in compiling this walk (2018)

SEE OVER FOR  
*walk*  
*details*

start



1

### FORMER FORESTER'S HALL

64-66 Smith Street  
(Cnr Langridge Street)  
Collingwood

Constructed in 1868 with the name and date of the building in low relief on the curved central pediment. This stuccoed brick and bluestone public building was the home of the first Victorian branch of the "Ancient Order of Foresters" established in 1850. Friendly Societies and Lodges were prominent organisations at this time, offering health benefits and other welfare services to members before government took on such responsibilities. This building was a major social institution in the area, used by the local court and public company meetings.



2

### STANFORD BLOCK

119-129 Smith Street  
Fitzroy

Built in 1883 by American businessman and philanthropist T. W. Stanford who after making his fortune by importing Singer Sewing machines embarked on ambitious shop developments in inner-Melbourne that included the Stanford Buildings on the corner of Smith and Johnston Street Collingwood. The Stanford Block in Fitzroy is a handsome building with two three-storey shops in the centre (one initially occupied by Henry's Ackman's furnishing business) and two narrower double-storey shops at each end. It was designed by the architect William Pitt before his extensive work for Foy & Gibson. Pitt, a Collingwood councillor in 1888-94 and Mayor in 1890-91, had an illustrious professional career that included designing the Princess Theatre on Spring Street, the Rialto and Olderfleet buildings on Collins Street and the Victoria Brewery on Victoria Parade.



3

### GRACE DARLING HOTEL

114 Smith Street  
Collingwood

Built in 1854 was designed by prominent early architect George Wharton. It is one of the few unaltered gold rush era hotels in inner Melbourne. Like other hotels it provided venues for social activities and public meetings such as the first committee meeting of the Collingwood Football Club in 1892. This is one of Collingwood's oldest buildings as most constructed before 1880 were built of wood and later replaced by more durable brick buildings. This bluestone hotel with its sandstone window surrounds is still intact. It is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register.



4

### FORMER FOY AND GIBSON LADIES STORE

145-163 Smith Street  
Fitzroy

This building was designed by William Pitt as the high point of Foy and Gibson's dominant commercial presence in Smith Street where behind the long row of shops on the Collingwood side, all the red brick factories and warehouses of the Foy and Gibson industrial complex are now listed on the Victorian Heritage Register. This building's three-storey upper floor façade is still intact beneath the elaborate parapet and central pediment, as is the ornate architectural detailing below the bow windows and the mullioned windows between them. The Ladies' Store was constructed in 1911 next to the now demolished Men's Store built in 1895 at 135-143 Smith Street. It was and linked to Foy and Gibson's commercial buildings on the Collingwood side by a pedestrian tunnel under Smith Street which is no longer publicly accessible.



5

### FORMER UNION BANK

165-167 Smith Street  
Fitzroy

This building designed by architects Inskip and Robertson was constructed in 1889-1890 at the height of the boom. The first of the Union Bank's suburban branches, it is an excellent and almost intact example of an ornate boom style Victorian bank. The detailing of the façade is varied and eclectic, including Greek key patterning and sill panels with relief mouldings. The two-storey arcaded bank manager's residence facing Smith Street is clearly distinct from the bank itself which has its formal pedimented entrance on the Webb Street corner opposite the more conservative classical architecture of the National Bank. This building is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register.



6

### FORMER NATIONAL BANK

169-171 Smith Street  
Fitzroy

Designed by the architect Leonard Terry, this building was constructed in 1872. Terry designed a number of other important bank buildings as well as churches. This superbly executed, harmonious and well-proportioned building is largely intact. It is notable for its two unpainted stone façades set on its bluestone base course, and also the upper level wrought iron window guards. Together with the more elaborate boom style Union Bank opposite, this classical National Bank provides a distinctive formal framing of these two corners, promoting their identity and purpose as public institutions.



7

### FORMER PATERSONS

173-181 Smith Street  
Fitzroy

This 1911 building was designed by the architect Arthur Fisher. The symmetrical three-storey façade above the shopfronts is still intact, with large bay windows on either side and a wide, five-sectioned mullioned window between them on each level. This 'free style' Federation building has an elaborate cornice with low-relief decoration below it and matching decoration on the parapet. Patersons continued advertising its earlier home furnishing location on the corner of Smith and Moor streets as 'the cheapest place on earth'. The building has now become apartments after more recently housing artists' studios and galleries for four decades.



8

### FORMER COLES

170-172 Smith Street  
Collingwood

In 1914 George Coles opened a variety store at 288 Smith Street, Collingwood. In 1919 he constructed his first variety store at this site, from here his retail empire began. In 1936 the original store was replaced with a single-storey shop with an extensive basement for retailing and receiving. The upper level façade was demolished in 2009.

## SMITH STREET heritage walk

SEE OVER FOR  
walk  
details



9

### FORMER COLLINGWOOD POST OFFICE

174 Smith Street  
Collingwood

The former Collingwood Post Office was established in 1868. Later, Smith Street's now unrivalled commercial role was recognised when this elaborate facade surmounted by a prominent clocktower and flagpole was added to a public building as a public statement in 1892. Designed by John Marsden of the Public Works Department, it has a deep arcaded loggia on two levels either side of the entry bay which is flanked by double columns supporting a central pediment beneath the intricately detailed parapet. This building is notable for its flamboyant mannered form with Italian Baroque influences. It is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register with a reference to its 'unusual and playful manner'.



10

### VICTORIA BUILDING

193-207 Smith Street  
Fitzroy

This very ornate row of shops was architect Norman Hitchcock's most ambitious commercial project. Constructed for John Woods in 1888 at the height of the boom, the building was later reduced in size by the demolition of its two northern bays and the loss of the third floor pavilions at each end. The first floor facade is still intact, with most of the cement render still unpainted



11

### FORMER HANNAFORD'S PIANOS & ORGANS

219-225 Smith Street  
Fitzroy

Albert Hannaford opened his new 'music salon' in June 1911 after moving from Brunswick Street. Hannaford's Pianos and Organs building has an elaborate and unusual Art Nouveau design. Its upper level oriel windows at each side of the building have lush plaster foliage beneath the semi-circular cornice which is repeated on the recessed panel beneath the parapet. This upper level is still intact.



12

### WOOLWORTHS

243-255 Smith Street  
Fitzroy

The imposing Victorian façade fronting the entire block between Hodgson and St David's streets is actually three structures built at different times: Ackmans 'Monster Furnishing Arcade' on the south built in 1884 by T. W. Stanhope, the Fitzroy Coffee Palace designed by Anketell Henderson which opened in 1879 as a temperance alternative to Smith Street's many hotels, and the Shepherds Arms Hotel on the northern corner. Henry Ackman was a pawnbroker at 163 Smith Street in 1875, then became a second-hand dealer repairing and manufacturing household furniture. After his death, his son bought the Coffee Palace and added a fourth storey to unify the two. By 1915, Emmanuel Ackman had acquired all the titles for the entire block between Gore and Smith streets, and engaged the University architect, J. S. Gawler, to design a series of integrated industrial buildings, thereby creating another major commercial/industrial complex in Smith Street. But as a result of debt and declining business during the Depression, the Ackman and Foy & Gibson enterprises were combined in 1939, and all Ackman's Fitzroy properties were sold. While one Foy & Gibson building still survives, the butchered façade of Ackman's grand building is all that remains of an outstanding achievement.



13

### SHOP

257 Smith Street  
Fitzroy

Designed by W. J. Grassick in 1915 for H. Ackman Pty Ltd, this building is a fine example of Edwardian architecture (1900-1915) which still has part of its original shopfront at ground level. The face brickwork of the upper floor facades is intact, as are the cement-rendered gable ends with their decorative shields that face each street on either side of the hexagonal corner turret with its hexagonal sheet metal roof.



14

### FORMER CROMARTY'S STORE

284 Smith Street  
Collingwood

In 1889, new owner James Guest demolished Cromarty's woodshop at the corner of Otter Street and built this tall two-storey shop as a landmark structure. While the verandah, like all Smith Street verandas in Collingwood, has been removed and the shopfront is no longer original, the upper level is intact with its dominant parapet. On each facade the balustraded parapet has a golden horseshoe within the pediment. On the Smith Street entablature the name Cromarty is still faintly discernible. The ES&A Bank became the owner of the grocery shop during the depression of the 1890s. In 1905 Moran and Cato succeeded Bushell, the tea merchant, as the occupant.



15

### FORMER MORAN & CATO

279-281 Smith Street  
Fitzroy

The Moran and Cato partnership began in July 1881 when Frederick Cato arrived to join his cousin, Thomas Moran, who had a grocery store on Brunswick Street. Cato's home was behind the corner shop in the Stanford Building in Collingwood. With business thriving, he opened another Collingwood grocery in 1905 before moving to this new building in Fitzroy. Cato, as the firm's manager after Moran's death, was one of the first to adopt six o'clock shop closing, having already introduced a

weekly half-day holiday. By 1935 this family grocery chain had 170 branches in three states, making it Australia's largest. Today, the firm's name is still displayed on the white tiled parapet on both facades of this Edwardian two-storey red brick shop and warehouse on the Greeves Street corner. Its upper elevations are vertically defined by the cantilevered chamfered pilasters that emphasise the corner location where there was once a return veranda. The horizontal mouldings of the cement sill, string course and entablature to both elevations are still intact, crisply detailed but restrained.

## SMITH STREET heritage walk

SEE OVER FOR  
walk  
details



**16** ALBION HOTEL  
314 Smith Street  
Collingwood

The Albion Hotel was built on land on the corner of Perry Street that was previously owned by John Pascoe Fawkner when he was a Collingwood councillor as well as an MLC. It was sold by his widow to Patrick Coyle who built this hotel in 1874. It has two remarkably intact street elevations richly-decorated with grapes and vine leaves. Decorative cast iron protects the two small balconies, one above the splayed corner entrance, the other facing Smith Street. The adjoining row of shop houses was also built by Coyle as a handsome contribution to a particularly fine sequence of Victorian buildings up to and including the Stanford Building.

**17** FORMER  
MACROBERTSON  
CONFECTIONERY  
FACTORY WORKS

377-391 Smith Street  
Fitzroy

MacPherson Robertson began making boiled sweets in his mother's Fitzroy bathroom in 1880 after serving a confectionary apprenticeship. This rapidly became a successful business with factories replacing houses in the largest industrial complex in Fitzroy. By 1900, MacRobertson Confectionary Manufacturers Ltd was the largest confectionery business in Australia. Covering most of the block bounded by Argyle, Gore, Kerr and Smith streets, it was known as the 'great white city', a complex of white-painted buildings with several thousand white-uniformed employees. While Robertson's workforce had clearly demarcated male and female roles, he was sympathetic to unionism, encouraging the separate Female Confectioners' Union and in 1919 accepted a closed shop.

The MacRobertson buildings in Smith Street were built in stages. As the firm's public face, they had Robertson's characteristic signature on the glazed tiles of the central building's parapet.

(a) 377-379: The single storey building at the southern end (c.1925) has the taller section of the parapet flanked by pilasters with ricketed caps. Beneath the stuccoed cornice, the windows have capped ventilators either side, and concrete lintels and sills.

(b) 381-383 Smith Street: The central pre-1930 three storey office building between the adjacent two-storey factories has brick pilasters separating the windows and their concrete sills. The pilasters stop below the parapet with the brick frieze where the firm's recognisable logo is superimposed on the glazed tiles.

(e) Façade 385-391 Smith Street: The northern building is the oldest of the group. Built by 1920, it has cornices at the first floor level and below the parapet with continuous stuccoed lintels along Smith Street up to the corner of Kerr Street.

**18** ROBERT BURNS HOTEL  
376 Smith Street  
Collingwood

Built in 1860, this is a typical early pub with a splayed corner entrance and large window openings at street level and six-paned sash windows for the bedrooms above. While the original render has been removed to expose the warm colours of the early brickwork, the hotel is substantially unaltered. A balustrade, which may not have been original although probably quite early, seems to have been removed from the stuccoed parapet.



*finish*

**20** MACROBERTSON'S  
GARAGE & WORKSHOP

421 Smith Street Fitzroy

MacRobertson's extensive garage and workshops takes up almost all the block bounded by Smith, Leicester, Gore and Rose streets.

It comprises on the south and west a single storey hipped roof building with concrete lintels over steel windows. A two storey brick building abutting this faces Smith Street with brick chamfered pilasters dividing the façade into irregular bays. It has a cornice at first floor level and a larger cornice below the brick parapet.

At each corner and on either side of the main vehicle entrance the pilasters extend above the parapet and have ricketed concrete caps. A stuccoed panel over the first floor loading bay above the vehicle entrance would once have displayed the firm's logo when the MacRobertson brand was a household name throughout Australia.

**19** SHOP & RESIDENCE  
378 Smith Street  
Collingwood

This remarkable two-storey 1885 shop with identical elevations to Smith and Easey streets was designed by architect Norman Hitchcock who, in 1888 at the height of the boom, designed Fitzroy's Victoria Building. Built by grocer Robert Kennedy, this ornate shop and residence is a striking contrast with the much simpler hotel built 25 years earlier across the street. At each corner of the shop there are fluted pilasters with Corinthian capitals beneath the cornice. Pilasters also frame the two sets of three windows beneath pediments that project out above bearded mascarons. The entablature has on both sides a sequence of ornamental swags surmounted by the main cornice.

SMITH STREET  
*heritage walk*

For further  
information contact  
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Historical Society,  
[collingwoodhs.org.au](http://collingwoodhs.org.au)