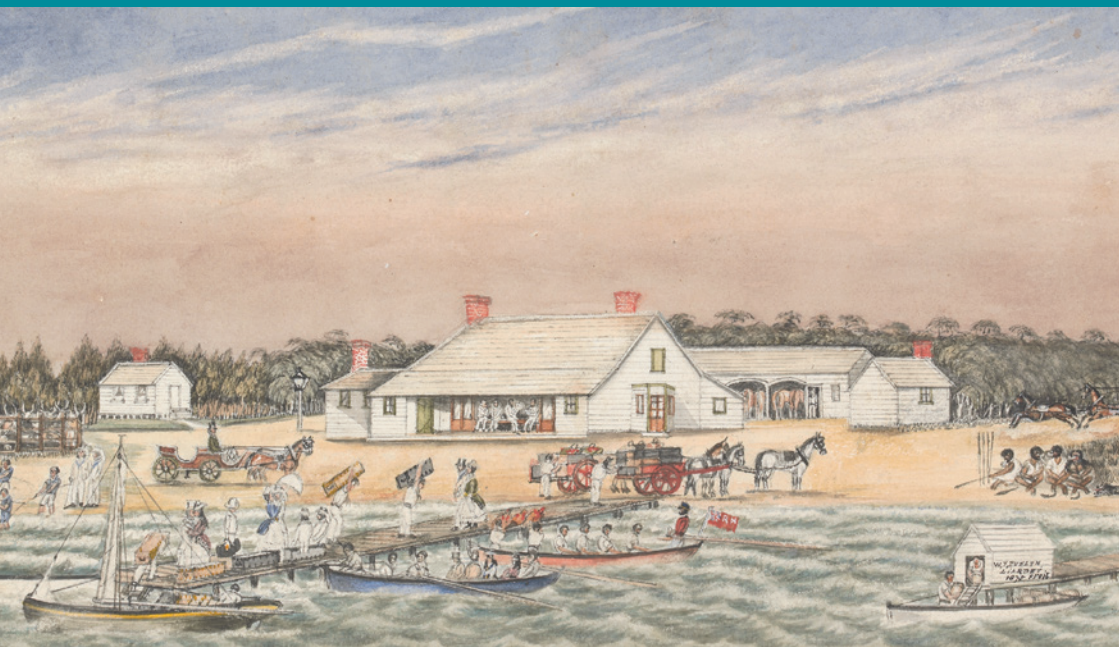


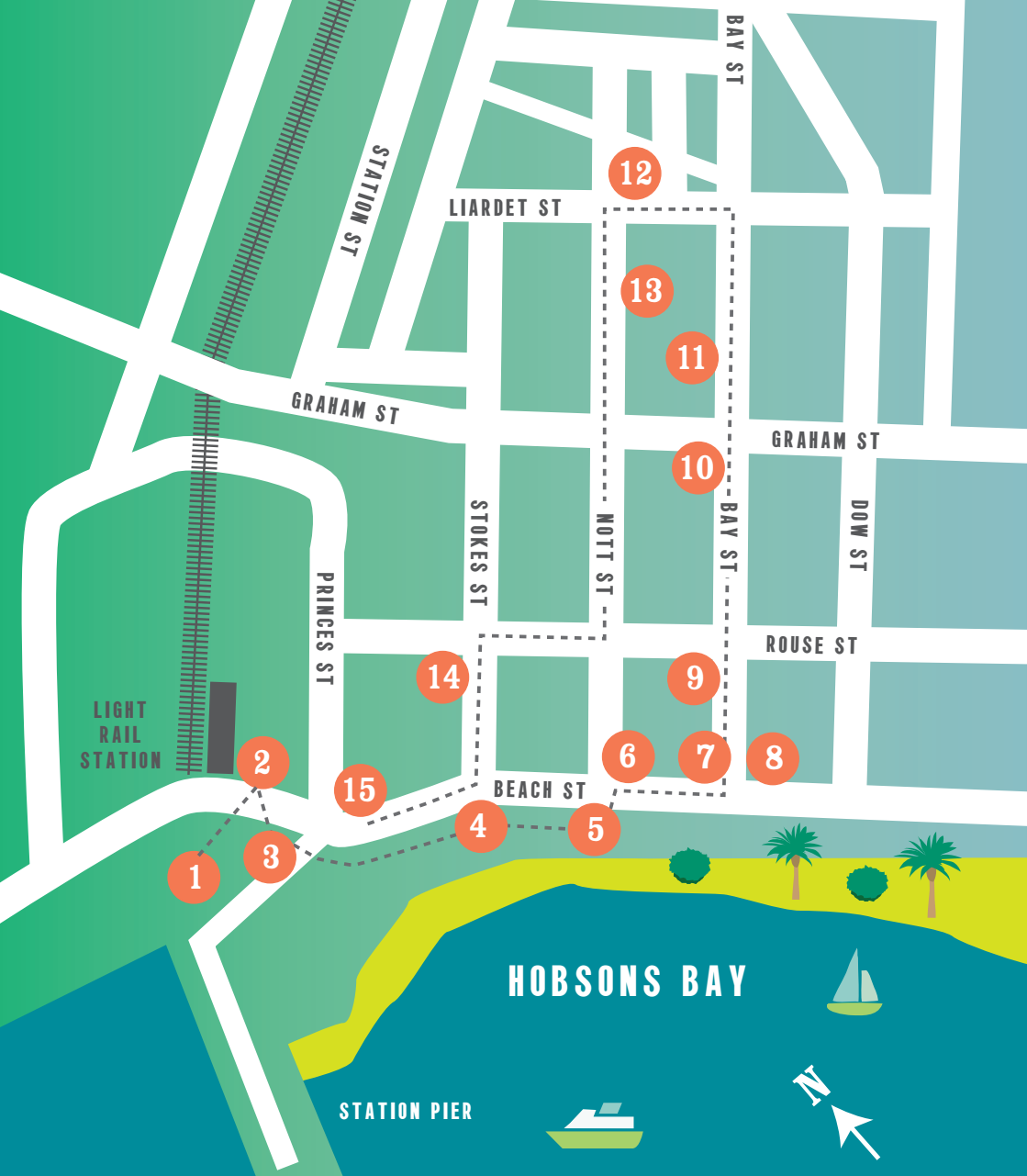
Walks in Port Phillip

IMMIGRANTS TRAIL



A guide to the cultural landscapes of a city

MEYER EIDELSON



TRAIL KEY

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|----|--|
| 1 | STATION PIER | 9 | MAIL EXCHANGE HOTEL |
| 2 | PORT MELBOURNE RAILWAY STATION | 10 | LAW AND ORDER COMPLEX |
| 3 | VICTORIAN CENTENARY BRIDGE PYLON | 11 | MARKET RESERVE SHOPS |
| 4 | THE ROTUNDA | 12 | LIARDET COMMUNITY CENTRE |
| 5 | LIARDET MEMORIAL | 13 | NOTT STREET TERRACES |
| 6 | SEAMEN'S INSTITUTE | 14 | SWALLOW AND ARIELL STEAM BISCUIT MANUFACTORY |
| 7 | PIER HOTEL | 15 | THE LONDON |
| 8 | MORLEY'S COAL DEPOT | | |

This Trail celebrates the contribution to the City of Port Phillip by immigrants and settlers. For many of these new arrivals, Station Pier was their first landfall in Australia after a long and hazardous journey by sea. This shipping trade has left its historic imprint on Port Melbourne, which retains many public buildings from settler days.

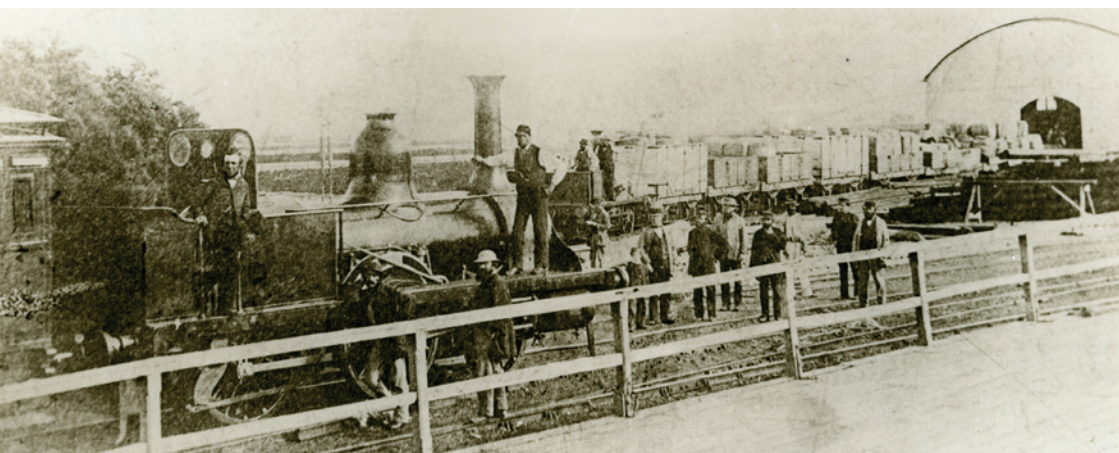
Settlers from Tasmania were the first to arrive in 1835, keen to open up the country to expand the wool trade. Other pioneering settlers followed, particularly English, Scottish and Irish, travelling in wind-powered ships on extraordinary journeys round the Cape of Good Hope and through the Rip.

The Gold Rush in 1851 brought a huge influx of eager immigrants from all over the world. Post-war migration saw hundreds of thousands of immigrants, many from southern and eastern Europe, first setting foot on Australian shores at Station Pier, seeking refuge from persecution, war and economic hardship. Later arrivals from Asian, African and many other countries have added to the diverse multicultural community that enlivens the City of Port Phillip today.

This walk starts at Beach Street, Waterfront Place at the entrance to Station Pier (1) opposite the former Port Melbourne Railway Station. The Federation bench, made from Station Pier timbers, celebrates the contribution to the City of Port Phillip by the many settlers who made landfall after courageous and difficult journeys.

Nearby is *Destinations*, a sculpture commemorating immigration. It bears the names and dates of ships which have arrived over the past 170 years.

The pier, originally built in 1854 as Railway Pier, was the 'passenger gateway' to Melbourne and the arrival point for hundreds and thousands of hopeful migrants after the Second World War. Countless arrivals who passed down the gangplanks and through customs recall this structure as their first memory of Australia.



Steam train to Sandridge, c1860s. pm0514.1-4

Station Pier is still a busy working pier. A large number of international cruise liners still dock here each year and the *Spirit of Tasmania* ferries its passengers to and from Australia's island state. Today's shipping schedules however are a faint echo of the frenetic activity of the past when ocean transport for people and freight was common. Gone are the enthusiastic crowds that came to throw streamers at the glamorous liners or board the paddle steamers for picnic cruises down the Bay to Sorrento and Queenscliff.

If you have time, take a walk along the pier to the far end. Station Pier is open to the public throughout the year during daylight hours for pedestrians except on cruise ship visiting days (see Port of Melbourne website). You are now exploring the largest wooden structure in the Southern Hemisphere. The first terminal where passengers embark to Tasmania is the former customs shed where crowds of immigrants with their families were assessed on arrival.

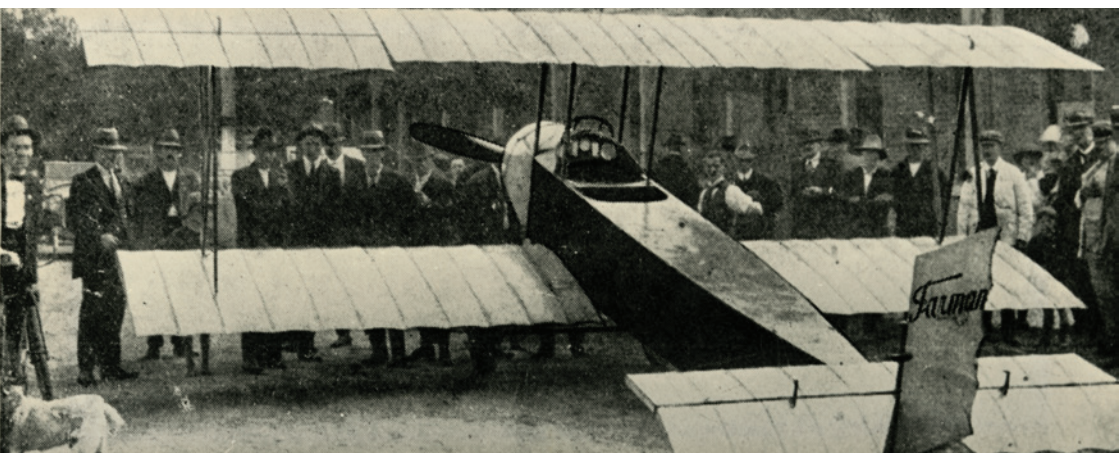
FROM WORKERS' SUBURB TO PENTHOUSES

Leave the pier and cross Beach Street to the historic Port Melbourne Railway Station (2). It is now a station for the light rail tram route 109 (stop 129 - Beacon Cove). Once the area near the piers was a vast industrial site. Between 1996 and 2006 it was radically transformed into the modern suburb of Beacon Cove by Major Projects Victoria and Mirvac.

Stand on the former railway platform and appreciate the interaction of the old and the new. This railway line was the first in Victoria and was built to connect the port to the city in 1854. At one time the port and railways created employment for most of the men in Port Melbourne and many of Port's factories were built nearby for easy access to the piers.

A PIONEERS' MEMORIAL DESTROYED

Return to the beach promenade and walk south along Beach Street. The magnificent Victorian Centenary Bridge (designed to overpass the rail line) with its art deco detailing was needlessly demolished here in 1991. Only a lone art deco pylon (3) remains as a



Major Harry Shaw's Farman Sport biplane,
Fisherman's Bend Aerodrome, 1920s. pm2095.1-2

souvenir of its splendour. This bridge, built during the depression by 'susso' or depression labour, celebrated 100 years of settlement.

The art deco motifs of Centenary Bridge echoed those of the new and glamorous ocean liners and were intended by the Harbor Trust to create a fitting gateway to the State. The destruction of the bridge was part of a grand design by government and developers to create a luxury housing enclave that never eventuated. The Port Melbourne foreshore has been the subject of fierce debate as the local community struggled to preserve heritage in the face of intensive development.

LEST WE FORGET

The Women's Welcome Home Committee built the picturesque **Rotunda (4)** in 1918. Large crowds gathered at the Port Melbourne piers to see troop ships of young soldiers depart for both world wars. For families of the many that never returned, the view from the piers was often their last memory of their sons and brothers. Stand in the rotunda and imagine the music of brass bands performing here as surviving ANZAC troops disembarked at Station Pier; home at last after one of the bloodiest conflicts in history.

AN OVERACTIVE IMMIGRANT

A **memorial (5)** to Port Melbourne's first permanent settler Wilbraham Frederick Evelyn Liardet, 1779-1878 is located on the foreshore opposite Nott Street. Liardet arrived with his wife Caroline and nine children in 1839 and erected a tent on the beach opposite what is now Bay Street. They had the extraordinary energy typical of many new immigrants. Within a year they had built a hut, a jetty, a watch tower and a rough road to the city for a daily mail run to Melbourne, dug a well, created a ferry service to Williamstown, and established the Pier Hotel.

Liardet later painted early scenes of Melbourne that are now national treasures. His small tea-tree jetty was the forerunner of busy Town Pier at the end of Bay Street (1849-1950s). The Port Melbourne Yacht Club is now built on the site. Wilbraham had a gift for hitting every recession and wealth eluded him.

The building on the corner of Nott and Beach Streets housed the **Seamen's Institute (6)**, once a refuge for the crews of ships that brought immigrants from all over the world. During the last war it was a hive of activity as it accommodated refugees from south-east Asia fleeing from the Japanese invasion. By the beach, the two tiny ablution blocks have historic multilingual signs e.g. *LADIES - DONNE - RYNAIKIA*.

The **World War One Memorial Fountain** is evidence of the historic importance of this area in Australia's war effort. Over a third of Australia's troops departed from Port Melbourne's piers for the two world wars. It has been a regular site for ANZAC services.

THE OLD SETTLEMENT

Turning left (east) down Bay Street takes us past many public and private buildings of the original 'Sandridge Borough' settlement.

The building on the corner of Bay and Beach Streets (7) is the **Pier Hotel** on the site of the timber Pier Hotel built by founding settler Wilbraham F E Liardet in 1840. It was described as a magnificent house – 'Brighton on the Beach' – and was an instant success in the young colony as a fashionable resort.

Opposite on the south side of Bay Street is **Morley's Coal Depot** (8) which stored coal for fuelling the ships in port and the nearby Gasworks. This rugged 1872 bluestone building, named after the first Sandridge Mayor William Morley, is classified by the National Trust.

Next to Morleys is **The Local**, originally the Royal Mail Hotel, one of the few surviving pubs that clustered around the Town Pier at the bottom of Bay Street. In 1876 there were an astounding 48 hotels in this small Borough. The pubs evoke the port town where sailors and workers slaked their thirst, where unions were essential, where common hardship formed an ethos of community support and mateship, and where allegiance to the Port Melbourne Football Club was supreme.

Walk down Bay Street to the corner of Rouse Street. Here is the **Exchange Hotel** (9). Large numbers of early immigrants were from Ireland, seeking refuge from poverty and conflict. For example, 191 orphaned Irish girls arrived in Hobsons Bay on the Lady Kennaway in 1838.

On the south side of the road is the original **Sandridge Post Office and Mail Exchange**. The adjacent 1912 Naval Drill Hall was the first built by the Australian Navy after its formation. The 1860 Mail Exchange was one of the colony's busiest in an era when all mail arrived by ship after long sea voyages. In fact Bay Street had its beginning in the mail track to the city created by the Liardet family.



Entrance to Station Pier, 1950s. pm1434

Continue to the corner of Bay and Graham Streets to view the historic law and order complex (10). It comprises the police station, currently McCluskys lawyers, with its tiny but grim bluestone lock up in the rear. Next door is the 1860 Court House, now a café bar. If you can, check out the beautiful roof inside.

Cross Graham Street. The Rex Hotel is the social club home for the Port Melbourne Football Club. Note the **Market Shops 191 to 219 Bay Street (11)**, built on the Borough Council's market reserve in the 1880s. The corner building at **222 Bay Street** was the former Port (cinema) Theatre from 1913 to the 1950s.

At Liardet Street, turn left to the **Liardet Community Centre (12)** corner **Nott Street** named after Port Melbourne's community-minded founder. The building was once the Temperance Hall in the days of intense campaigning against the demon drink. The Liardet Community Centre is the meeting place of multicultural seniors groups and English classes. The City of Port Phillip has a mixed population from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Opposite at **147 Liardet Street** is the former Port Melbourne fire station.

A ROOF OVER THEIR HEADS

Turn left at **Nott Street** and proceed to **Rouse Street**. Note the Victorian workers' cottages (13) on the left at **Queens Terrace (144-132)** and **Jubilee Terrace (130-118)**. The Goldrush caused a spectacular increase in the population of Melbourne and it was not uncommon for large families to occupy such tiny homes in the late 1800s. In more recent times, walk-up and high rise public housing, such as that opposite the cottages, has often provided accommodation for new arrivals to this country.



*Anna Maria with her son Nick in 1961 at Station Pier
Courtesy Rosa and Vince Coluccio*

THE SMELL OF BISCUITS

Turn right at Rouse Street and walk to Stokes Street. On the corner of 53 Stokes Street is the original building of the **Swallow and Ariell Steam Biscuit Manufactory (14)**, founded in 1854 to make ships biscuits. At one time most Port Melbourne families had a member working for 'Swallows'. Few older residents would not recall the smell of fresh biscuits, once considered an essential characteristic of Port Melbourne. '*Swallows Juniors*', which commenced in 1957, was an iconic TV show for many baby boomers.

The complex eventually occupied almost the entire block but is now converted to residential apartments. It is the oldest, largest and most intact food processing complex in Victoria. The factory did not miss a single day in biscuit production for 137 years until it closed in 1991 earning a listing in the Guinness World Records. Opposite is the 'counting house' at 60 Stokes Street, which housed the offices of 'Swallows'. On the corner is St Joseph's hall and church. **Turn left and walk down Stokes Street** towards the beach past the decorative entrance of 'Swallows' with its historic facade and emblem.

At Beach Street turn right and return to Station Pier, the starting point of the walk. Perhaps finish with a coffee or snack at **The London Hotel (15)**, an establishment over 150 years old.



Swallow and Ariell's delivery van, 1940s. pm1290

START TO FINISH	Station Pier, Port Melbourne
LENGTH	Four kilometres
TIME	70 - 90 minutes
BIKE STATION	103 Beach Street, Station Pier, Port Melbourne
REFRESHMENTS	There are numerous cafés, pubs and bistros at Station Pier and in Beach and Bay Streets.

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**.

To book a guided walk, phone the Guided Walks booking line on **03 9209 6522**.

*Cover image: Liardet's Beach and Hotel in their heyday
Artist: W F E Liardet, 1875
Watercolour with pen and ink, gouache and pencil
Courtesy: State Library of Victoria*

Images are from the Port Phillip City Collection unless otherwise indicated.

