

# WOLLONGONG CITY CENTRE

## HERITAGE TRAIL



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Wollongong City Council

# DISCOVER THE PAST

Before European settlement in the Illawarra, the region was home to the local Aboriginal people. This Aboriginal community had a well developed and complex society, and physical and cultural evidence of this remains today in the form of burials, middens and other sites. This Aboriginal history has also been preserved through traditional knowledge and dreaming stories which have been passed down through the generations.

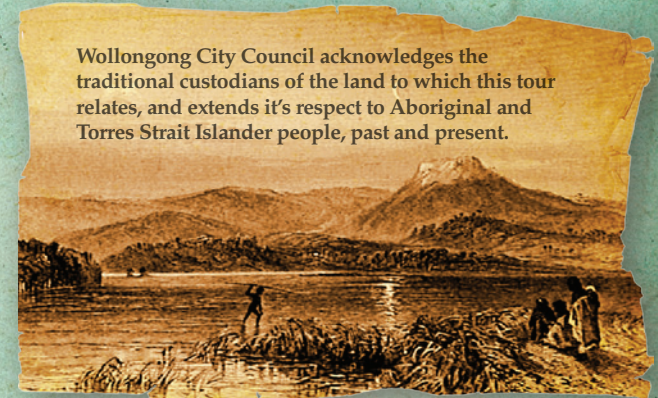
European settlement of Wollongong began in 1815 when Dr Charles Throsby established the first cattle station in Wollongong. He built a stockman's hut near Market Square, and this was a meeting point for the first Illawarra land grantees in 1816. In 1833 the area's first school was established and the following year the township of Wollongong was laid out on property owned by Charles Throsby-Smith – the nephew of Dr Charles Throsby.

The original township was bounded by Crown, Keira,

Smith and Harbour Streets. These remain major streets in our city centre today.

This trail provides an introduction to the historical sites of our City Centre. It includes some of Wollongong's most significant and historic landmarks post European settlement. The walk can take as long as 90 minutes, but you can break it up with a visit to Wollongong Art Gallery, the Illawarra Museum or one of the many cafés you'll pass on the way.

Wollongong City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land to which this tour relates, and extends its respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, past and present.



1. Old Wollongong Court House (1858)
2. Site of the first Court House, Police Station and Old Wollongong Gaol (1829-1835)
3. Site of Throsby's Stockman's Hut (and Early Settlement Monument) (1815-1816)
4. Little Milton (33 Smith Street) (1830's)
5. Former School of Arts (1862)
6. Wollongong Public School & Headmasters Residence (1885)
7. Allowrie Terrace (1859)
8. St Michael's Cathedral (1859)

9. Wollongong Court House (1890)
10. The former Government Savings Bank/Royal Bank (c.1890)
11. Wesley Uniting Church (1882)
12. Wollongong Town Hall (1887)
13. St Andrew's Presbyterian Church (1937)
14. Former Council Chambers (1956)
15. East Crown Street Shops (1870's-1889)
16. Former Wollongong East Post Office (1892)

17. Congregational Church (1856-1857)
18. Alice Villa (c.1881)
19. St Francis Xavier Cathedral (1849)
20. Former Post & Telegraph Office (Illawarra Museum) (1864-1882)
21. Sandstone Kerbing (1850's-1880's)
22. Market Square (1834)
23. St Mary Star of the Sea College (1873)



LAKE ILLAWARRA

TOM THUMB LAGOON

MOUNT  
KEMBLA

MOUNT  
KEIRA

This walking trail has been prepared with the valuable input and assistance of the Wollongong Heritage Advisory Committee.

Photographs provided from the collections of the Wollongong City Library and the Illawarra Historical Society.

### 1. Old Wollongong Court House

(Corner of Harbour Street and Cliff Roads)

Government Architect Alexander Dawson designed this Victorian building in 1858. It was restored in 1988 and is now managed by the Old Court House Management Committee. It is the oldest Government building in Wollongong.



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### 2. Site of the 1st Court House, Police Station and Old Wollongong Gaol

The first Wollongong Courthouse, Police Station and lock-up (1829-1835) were located near the corner of Harbour Street and Robertson Street. In 1860 a gaol was also built on the southern side of the 1858 Court House. The gaol closed in 1915 and was demolished shortly after. Archaeological remains of both of these sites have been retained beneath the existing dwellings.



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### 3. Site of Throsby's Stockman's Hut (and Early Settlement Monument)

The sandstone monument at this location marks the location of Charles Throsby's stockman's hut, where the first land grants in the region were allocated by Surveyor General John Oxley on 2 December 1816. The plaque was originally located in Port Kembla. It was moved here in 1954 after the Illawarra Historical Society proved it had originally been placed in the wrong location.



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### 4. Little Milton (33 Smith Street)

Believed to date from the 1830's, with additions around 1855, this private residence may be the oldest in Wollongong. It contains a two-storey servants and services building. The house was home to Wollongong's first Congregational Church Minister, the Reverend George Charter. The property was used by Dr Timothy Wood Lee and his family who added the surgery building to the front in 1886.



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### 5. Former School of Arts (64 Smith Street)

The former School of Arts (1862) is a Victorian Free Classical two-storey building on land donated by Charles Throsby Smith. It was used as the first TAFE College. It is now used as offices for the Wollongong Surf Life Saving Association.



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### 6. Wollongong Public School & Headmasters Residence

The school and its distinctive bell tower was designed by William Edmund Kemp and opened on 12 January 1885. The Victorian Gothic style school and headmaster's residence are still used for educational purposes.



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### 7. Allowrie Terrace (69-71 Church Street)

This 1859 grand Colonial-style home was the surgery and residence of Dr William Thomas until 1880 when Archibald Beatson became the new owner. It remained in the Beatson



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family until the late 1930s. The building has been heavily modified since, but retains its historic character.

### 8. St Michael's Cathedral

Designed by Edmund Blacket and opened 1859, this well proportioned stone Gothic church and the single-storey rectory (c. 1880) are listed on the State Heritage Register. The Parish Hall (c.1909) to the north of the main building, and the Church Hall (c. 1920) to the west both contribute to the historic and social significance of the site. The Church is located on Church Square, a spot set aside in the 1834 Town Plan of Wollongong.



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### 9. Wollongong Court House

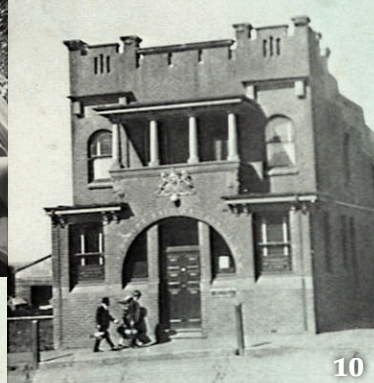
Designed by Colonial Architect James Barnet and constructed in 1890, this Victorian Italianate style building is still in use as Wollongong's Court House. An extension, in keeping with the original style, was added in the late 1960s.



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### 10. The former Government Savings Bank / Royal Bank (133 Crown Street)

This former bank building (c. 1890) is possibly the most intact example of a Federation style commercial building above the awning level in Wollongong. Along with its neighbours, it provides an insight into Federation period commercial architecture in Wollongong.



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### 11. Wesley Uniting Church

The 'Church on the Mall' (1882) was designed in the Gothic style by Robert Boyd. It was built in front of the earlier timber church which occupied the site from 1854. The porch was added in 1930 using stone from the Brighton Hotel which was demolished at this time. The church organ dates from 1871 and is classified by the National Trust.



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### 12. Wollongong Town Hall

This site has long been acknowledged as an important Aboriginal water hole and gathering place. This history is celebrated through the Gurungaty fountain, in front of the building. The site was dedicated as a burial ground in the 1834 Wollongong Town Plan but only received two burials before being relocated. In 1839 it was home to Wollongong's first public school. This was replaced by Wollongong Town Hall which opened on 3 February 1887. A new Town Hall, which was also used as the Civic Cinema, was added in Kembla Street in 1927. These two buildings were incorporated into a 1965 makeover. The Town Hall was saved from demolition by community action and renovated in 2010/2011. The building retains components of all of its earlier evolutions and the site has served the City as its Town Hall for over 125 years. An artistic impression of the façade of the 1927 Civic Theatre Building is displayed on the rear of the building, in the Arts Precinct.



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### 13. St Andrew's Presbyterian Church

The original St Andrew's was built in 1839 on the corner of Church and Crown Streets and formed a key feature of the town until it was replaced by this building in 1937. It was designed by Adam, Wright & Apperly Architects and is an adaptation of the Italian Romanesque style. It features a 26m high Art Deco Bell tower which, curiously, was never fitted with a bell.



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### 14. Former Council Chambers (Wollongong Art Gallery)

Designed by Reginald Magoffin and built in 1956 as the City of Greater Wollongong Council Chambers, this Stripped Classical building was designed in the shape of a Crown. In 1989 the building was converted into the Wollongong Art Gallery.



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### 15. East Crown Street Shops

87 Crown Street (a) is one of the city centre's earliest surviving commercial buildings and dates from the 1870's. The site is listed on the State Heritage Register. The veranda was restored in the 1980's and now operates as a Café. On the opposite side of the street, the commercial buildings at 70 (b) and 72-74 (c) Crown Street (built in 1888 and 1889) provide further examples of Victorian commercial architecture.



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### 16. Former Wollongong East Post Office

Listed on the State Heritage Register, this 1892 two-storey building housed the Post Office and Post Master's residence. It was one of the last buildings to be approved by the Colonial Architect James Barnet and is a notable example of Victorian Free Classical architecture. It ceased operating as a Post Office in 2000, and was converted to legal offices.



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### 17. Congregational Church

This early Victorian Classical building with primitive Gothic windows opened in 1857 and is the second oldest church building in the City Centre. The church was designed by George Waring. It features impressive stained glasswork, and its benefactors include John Fairfax (founder of Fairfax Media).



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### 18. Alice Villa (117 Corrimal Street)

Built around 1881 this substantial Victorian Filigree residence is a rare surviving example of a larger residence in the CBD. The building served for a period as a private hospital and has since been converted for use as offices. It's now used by the Multicultural Communities Council as office space and a day respite centre.



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### 19. St Francis Xavier Cathedral

This Victorian Gothic style Catholic Cathedral is the oldest surviving church building in Wollongong's City Centre. Construction was completed in 1849. The cathedral has been altered and added to considerably since this time but retains its original character and charm.

### 20. Former Post & Telegraph Office (Illawarra Museum)

The museum building commenced construction as a small single storey Telegraph Office in 1864. A Post Office was added in 1870, completing the basic ground floor plan of the current building. The second storey was added in 1882 and served as the Postmaster's residence. During the early years of World War II a freestanding air raid shelter was built to the rear of the property. The building now houses the Illawarra Historical Society Museum.



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### 21. Sandstone Kerbing

Located along Market Street opposite the Museum is the last remaining section of sandstone kerbing within the CBD. These are believed to have been installed throughout the CBD between the late 1850's and the 1880's. The associated guttering is also known to be retained beneath the existing road surface. Part of the remaining kerb and gutter was pulled up and relaid in 2006-2007. The remaining portion is retained in its original condition.

### 22. Market Square

Forming the focus of the 1834 Wollongong Town Plan, this square was at the centre of the early township's commercial life. As the town population increased, businesses lined the perimeter of the square. Church bazaars, religious meetings and agricultural displays took place here. At one stage four hotels were located around the perimeter. The original band rotunda was built in 1896, to commemorate the centenary of the landing in the district of Bass and Flinders, on 26 March 1796. The original rotunda was demolished and a replica later built by the Illawarra Historical Society.



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### 23. St Mary Star of the Sea College

This site was first developed as the Travellers Hotel in 1828. In 1835 the two storey Royal Marine Hotel was built. In 1855 it became a private school known as Denison House Academy. In 1876 the old hotel building became a Catholic convent and a chapel was added in 1886. In 1929 the chapel was converted to accommodate boarders at the College, and a new chapel and convent wing (see photo) were built to the north east of the original buildings. The site remains a Catholic high school for girls to this day. Components of the 1835 hotel building are understood to be retained within the now heavily modified buildings.



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