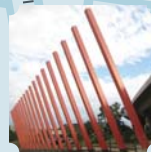


# Discover

the other side of the tracks **in**

# FLEMINGTON

*A walking guide to one of Melbourne's oldest suburbs*



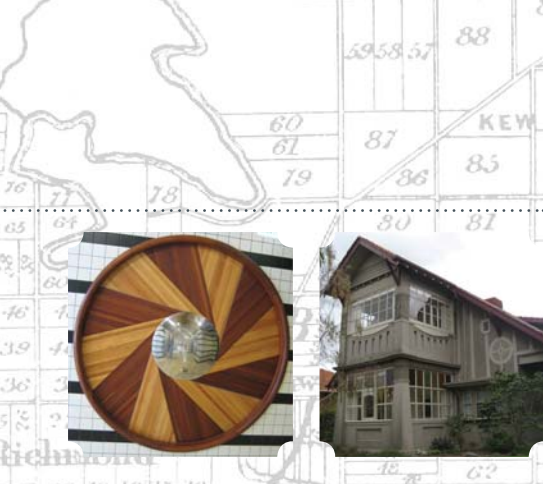


Every year, the eyes of the world turn to Flemington for the *'Race That Stops a Nation'*. Trains and trams take revellers to the Racecourse.

But for visitors and locals alike, the delights of Flemington only begin at the Racecourse.

A rich history and fascinating stories await those who venture past the trains, trams and racecourse and discover the heritage of *the other side of the tracks*.

This brochure aids self-guided walks by identifying and explaining key heritage features of Flemington, including Newmarket and Travancore. The route is for you to decide – let your feet go where your imagination takes you!



LEFT TO RIGHT:

**Samuel Charles Brees' painting (ca 1856) showing diggers passing Flemington Hotel on the way to the goldfields** COURTESY STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA

**Former municipal buildings** 22 BELLAIR STREET, KENSINGTON

**AW Stevens Sign** RACECOURSE ROAD

**Florist** PIN OAK CRESCENT

**Interior design** 12 HOLLAND COURT

**Early Travancore Art Deco** 56 BARODA STREET

About 4km from the centre of Melbourne, Flemington is bordered by the Maribyrnong River to the west and Moonee Ponds Creek to the east, criss-crossed by two tramlines, three railway lines and the thoroughfares of Racecourse and Mount Alexander Roads.

When first surveyed in 1803, Charles Grime described the area as rich pasture suitable for grazing. By 1833 John Batman claimed part of what is now Flemington, and by 1836 the first sheep was shorn here.

A bridge of logs was built over the Moonee Ponds Creek on the road to and from Sydney, and a small settlement formed.

By 1840 the Saltwater River Flat was first used for horse racing, subsequently hosting some of the largest events and gatherings in Melbourne.

The name Flemington appears to have arisen from Scottish pastoralist James Watson, who in 1847 was granted an estate covering most of what is now the township of Flemington. Watson's father-in-law managed an estate called Flemington in Scotland.

After the discovery of gold in 1851, up to 30,000 people a week passed through Flemington on their way north to the diggings.

In the 1850s the Newmarket Saleyards were established, joining existing local industries, including tanneries, mills and other factories, located here because of their proximity to the river and creek. Along with abattoirs established

in 1862, these led to Flemington (and adjacent Kensington) being renowned for their unique smells and sounds!

But at this time Flemington also spawned the largesse of Hugh Glass and his grand mansion and ideas. Victoria's wealthiest man by 1862, squatter Glass sponsored the building of Flemington's local school, church and railway. His later downfall resulted in the subdivision of the Flemington Estate, and the commencement of the building of the marvellous architecture from the Boom of the 1880s and 1890s.

Although his mansion and much of his legacy is now gone, the last part of Glass's estate to be sold became the heritage-listed Travancore art deco precinct.

The log bridge over the creek is now dominated by the red and yellow cheese sticks marking the entrance to Melbourne. The smell of millions of sheep and cattle are long gone. But it's not hard to discover the remnants of Flemington's past.

Flemington retains a remarkable array of Victorian architecture, including our impressive post office and civic buildings, workers' cottages and parts of the saleyards. The old sits side by side with a thriving and diverse local community.

Explore the past with the new. Cross the bridge. And discover the other side of the tracks.



### 1. **More than Australia's greatest racecourse, it's Flemington's Racecourse** EPSOM ROAD

The flats beside the Saltwater (Maribyrnong) River have been home to horse racing since 1840 and the Melbourne Cup has been run there since 1861. In 1886 Flemington Racecourse was the site of Australia's first cinematographic newsreel and in 1965 the place of international scandal when model Jean Shrimpton caused the Miniskirt Affair. From Epsom Road you can see the beautiful former Convalescent Jockeys' Lodge, built in 1897 to assist injured jockeys, and the famous rose gardens.



### 2. **Our grand old stables — Crown Street Stables** CROWN AND CORONET STREETS

There are a few stables remaining in the backyards and alleys of Flemington, a couple in Newmarket still in use, but none as grand or likely to be as old as those in Crown Street. The stables were constructed in 1886 by Joseph Cohen to accommodate six horses at the rear of a large, now demolished, timber house facing Coronet Street. Built of brick and gabled, the stables were used by horse trainers and later, during the First World War, by the Light Horse Brigade. They are now being converted into a community arts space. An oculus (eye window) looks out from the south, keeping an eye on the park.



### 3. **Recycling Flemington — 'Park View'** 512 RACECOURSE ROAD

Park View was built in early 1925 by self-taught blacksmith and jinker-builder Jim Byrnes, who owned a horseshoeing business a few doors away. The unusual Swiss Chalet style of the house and decorative features include rampant terracotta kangaroos on the gables and a kookaburra stained glass window. Many aspects of the house stem from the shortage and expense of traditional building materials between the wars, with the house constructed in solid concrete reinforced with old tram cables and other recycled materials. The iron panels in the unusual front fence are apparently recycled from the Flemington Racecourse Members' Stand, demolished in the 1920s.



### 4. **First past the post** 6, 8 AND 10 GLANCE STREET

Named after champion racehorses, Mentor, Lochiel and Carbine are three attached brick town houses in Glance Street. Mentor won the Melbourne Cup in 1888 (called the Centennial Cup that year to commemorate the 100th anniversary of White Australian settlement). Mentor was owned by Donald Wallace and trained by Walter Hickenbotham, who also owned and trained Carbine, the winner of the 1890 Melbourne Cup. Known as "Old Jock", Carbine was a New Zealand stallion popular with racing fans. Trainer James Thompson owned Lochiel, whose first important win was the VRC Newmarket Handicap of 1887. Lochiel beat Carbine in the 1889 Australian Cup. If the 1888 and 1890 winners had houses named after them, what happened to the 1889 winner?



### 5. **What is the New Market? Newmarket Saleyards** RACECOURSE AND SMITHFIELD ROADS

Established in 1856, the Newmarket Saleyards were just that – the new market for livestock (previously on the current Victoria Market site). By 1888, when Melbourne's population touched half a million, a similar number of animals passed each year through the markets. In the 20th century, it was the world's biggest livestock auction market. If you think traffic problems and air pollution on Racecourse Road are bad now, imagine the traffic jams and smell caused by several million braying bulls and bleating sheep. The market closed in 1985, making way for a new generation of locals in the Lynch's Bridge and Kensington Banks estates.



### 6. **Local Civic Aspirations — Flemington and Kensington Town Hall** 24-40 BELLAIR STREET

In 1882 Flemington and Kensington ceded from the former Municipality of Essendon and Flemington, formed 20 years earlier, but there followed many years of debate over the siting of our Town Hall. One temporary location was at New Hall at 323 Racecourse Road, where there is now a two-storey Asian grocery. The richly decorated Bellair Street premises opened in 1901, operating as a civic centre for only four years, as Flemington and Kensington then joined the City of Melbourne. The Town Hall held the Flemington Kensington Library until 1965.



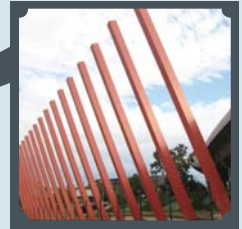
### 7. **See you for a drink at the "Doot" — Doutta Galla Hotel** 339 RACECOURSE ROAD

Owned by Flem-Ken councillor Thomas Miller and the social hub of Newmarket then and now. The Doot (established 1888-9 and designed by Harry Lording) is a unique part of our heritage; unique because it is remarkably well preserved; unique because it is still a living part of our community. Just as many hungry and thirsty stockmen did in the 1890s, residents and visitors to Flemington still enjoy this pub for great food and drink. Check out the Latin inscription behind the bar.

# FLEMINGTON

## Mains Bridge & Moonee Ponds Creek

Reputedly one of the first bridges in the Colony, there have been logs across the Moonee Ponds Creek here since the early 1830s. If you follow the walking/cycling path under what was once described as Mains Bridge and then Flemington Road Bridge, you can see the structure combines girders and piers of an 1870s iron bridge with reinforced concrete deck, piers and girders. Prior to 1913, when this became the first tramway bridge in Victoria with reinforced concrete girders, the old iron girder bridge was not strong or wide enough to take the tramline, so passengers had to walk 200 yards between connecting tram services!



## Canterbury Street Stables

47-53 CANTERBURY STREET, FLEMINGTON

Julius Gove, a horse 'exporter', purchased the house that used to sit in front of this building, built in 1903. He improved the property at the rear of the house to service his business including this stable. The residential character of the stables is evoked by the typical Edwardian period chimney. Architecturally this is a near complete example from a limited group of surviving 19th Century urban stables of this size. The stables are now used by the local community for a variety of purposes, and sited in a lovely park.



## Dover Street Pedestrian Bridge (1890)



## FLEMINGTON RACECOURSE

## It's Electrifying! Newmarket Railway Substation

NEWMARKET STREET, FLEMINGTON

Constructed in 1914, the Substation was designed by the Railways Department, adopting a neo-classical style on a grand scale for a utilitarian structure. The substation became operational in 1918 as part of the program to electrify the Melbourne suburban railway network. The three mature Canary Island palms in front of the Substation date from about 1930.



## 8. Moving Forward — Newmarket Train Station PIN OAK CRESCENT

Following the opening of the stockyards, Newmarket Station opened in 1860 on the new Melbourne and Essendon Railway Company Line, run by Hugh Glass (the owner of Flemington House). The current buildings were erected in 1925 to replace the uneven wooden platform and obsolete building. The associated rail sidings extended along land now occupied by housing in Newmarket Street and beyond, as far back as Ascot Vale Road. The venerable River Red Gum on the west embankment is most likely a self-seeded progeny of the indigenous "giant trees" early surveyors described as characteristic of the area.



## 9. Dewey Decimal Disease Prevention 44 PIN OAK CRESCENT

'Girdwood Hygienic Library' appears above the door to what is now a popular local cafe. Private lending libraries striving for greater hygiene arose from fears from the late 19th Century onwards of books being the carriers of disease. To give people peace of mind, each book in the Girdwood Hygienic Library was wiped down with formaldehyde to reduce the risk of germs spreading via fingers touching "contaminated" books. Such libraries existed until the 1950s, when greater health awareness coincided with increased funding for public libraries.



## 10. Still Serving Flemington — Flemington Post Office 2A WELLINGTON STREET

The land for our beloved Post Office was purchased in 1889 for £400, with the plans originally made for an estate agent. The Crown acquired the plans and only modified them slightly to build the brick and bluestone building in 1890, costing £4,061. This signalled the start of the shift of civic buildings from Mount Alexander Road, from where telegraph services are reputed to have operated from 1846. Mr Stephens was the first postmaster to work here, earning around £120 per year and living onsite in the upstairs residence. Next time you buy stamps, check out the stained glass windows depicting native fauna and flora and the heritage-listed counter.



## 11. The Long & The Short of It — Nathan's Terrace

4-14 WELLINGTON STREET/1-11 SHIELDS STREET

These two house rows were built for furniture retailer Samuel Nathan. The terraces are located on sloping ground rather than 'stepped' so the houses have a uniform cornice line, resulting in the villas at the lower end of the street having taller elevations than those at the top of the street. The Shields Street houses had one less room than the Wellington Street homes. The architect, William Wolf, was responsible for many ornamented hotels of the 1880s-90s.





### 12. Old Bill on the Hill — Flemington Court House & Police Station & Lock-Up 29–30 WELLINGTON STREET

This triangular wedge of buildings includes the former 'church-like' Flemington Court House, built in 1889, and the police station and lock-up constructed in 1889 and 1890 respectively. Designed by AJ McDonald (who worked on the post office), it embraces the 'Battle of the Styles' well known for public buildings at the time, with such influences as Italian Byzantine, Lombardic Romanesque and monasteries from the 13th and 15th centuries.



### 13. St Brendan's Church, School & Presbytery 105 WELLINGTON STREET

In 1885 James Urie (a glazing and plumbing supplier and one time Mayor of Flemington and Kensington) built the house on the Farnham Street corner, before the Catholic Church acquired it for a presbytery. Ironically, Mr Urie proudly laid the foundation stone for St Stephen's Presbyterian Church in Norwood Street in 1888. St Brendan's School was built in 1914 and the Church in 1923 after the Sisters of Mercy and their students transferred from the old Church Street site used since the 1880s. The mansions on Church Street were built in 1889.



### 14. Our Cloud in the Sky — Debney Housing Estate RACECOURSE ROAD

For most of Wellington Street, looking towards the east you can see a huge white/blue 'cloud' structure on top of the Holland Court Housing Commission block. This is a third lift, completed in 1995 by Ashton Raggatt McDougall architects as a small replica of Oscar Niemeyer's St Francis of Assisi cathedral in Brazil, and is meant to 'suggest real recreation functions such as a swimming pool, a gym, or even a restaurant.' Since being built in the 60s, the Housing Estate, adjacent to Debney's Park, has enhanced the multicultural mix of Flemington.



### 15. A Gateway to Flemington — Flemington Primary School Gates 200 MOUNT ALEXANDER ROAD

The gates of Flemington Primary School were originally the entrance to Flemington House (established 1854-1856), an opulent mansion set on the grounds of what is now described as Travancore and comprising an artificial lake under the mansion, a Corinthian colonnaded portico and a huge ballroom. Flemington House was built by Hugh Glass, a squatter and early Flemington pioneer. The property was later owned by Henry Madden, who renamed the house and estate Travancore. Madden exported horses to a British army post in the Kingdom of Travancore, India (present day Kerala).



### 16. An Improvement on the Iron Pot — Flemington Primary School 200 MOUNT ALEXANDER ROAD

When opened in 1923, Flemington State School was described as one of the finest in the Southern Hemisphere, and its hilltop location commanded views out to the Bay. The new building's 10 classrooms were designed to accommodate 768 pupils (although only 570 attended in 1924). Conditions were a vast improvement on an earlier school, built in the 1850s on the other side of Mount Alexander Road, and known as 'the iron pot' because its corrugated iron structure was intensely hot in summer.



### 17. Higher density with style — Shirley Court Flats 55 MOOLTAN STREET

Fashionable higher-density living before higher-density was in fashion. While Melbourne expanded, GH Limb built Shirley Court Flats in 1939, the first multi-unit housing in Travancore. Proving that density can be stylish, the flats combine gabled and curved forms, as well as neo-Tudor, Moderne and Bungalow housing styles. The flats were designed by James Wardrop, the architect of the Shrine of Remembrance.



### 18. One park, many uses TRAVANCORE PARK

Wetlands and billabongs; grazing land; ornamental gardens for opulent mansion; golf-course; dog park. These are just some of the many uses that what is now known as Travancore Park has put to over the centuries. As part of the gardens of Flemington House, it was reputedly home to kangaroos, emus, deer, llamas and camels! When Travancore was subdivided in the 1920s, it came complete with its own 9-hole golf course. Today Travancore Park is valued open space for residents and the favourite exercise ground of many a pooch.

*Find out more about Flemington, its history and people,  
and suggested walks, at [flemingtonheritage.org.au](http://flemingtonheritage.org.au)*

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#### VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Find out more about Flemington, its history and people, and suggested walks, at [flemingtonheritage.org.au](http://flemingtonheritage.org.au). The website is intended to grow over time, with contributions sought from the local community. Email your ideas to [info@flemingtonassociation.org.au](mailto:info@flemingtonassociation.org.au).

#### ABOUT THE FLEMINGTON ASSOCIATION INC.

The Flemington Association is a residents' group acting on behalf of all of Flemington, including Newmarket and Travancore. The Association has a heritage committee, who try to record and promote the history and heritage of the local area. Email [info@flemingtonassociation.org.au](mailto:info@flemingtonassociation.org.au) for details.

The Association has been incorporated since 2009, but has been in existence for over 40 years and arises from earlier community groups, such as the Flemington Ratepayers' Association, formed over 125 years ago. More information on the Association can be found at [flemingtonassociation.org.au](http://flemingtonassociation.org.au).

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#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

This flyer was made possible by a community grant from Moonee Valley City Council.

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1850-51 Melbourne Parish Map, HG De Gruchy & Co, courtesy of the University of Melbourne.

Samuel Brees' painting, courtesy of the State Library of Victoria.

#### FRONT COVER LEFT TO RIGHT:

**Flemington Racecourse Gates** EPSOM ROAD

**Flemington Primary School** 200 MOUNT ALEXANDER ROAD

**Newmarket Terrace** 57-75 PRINCES STREET

**Melbourne Gateway** MOONEE PONDS CREEK

**Doutta Galla Hotel** 339 RACECOURSE ROAD

**Flemington Post Office** 2A WELLINGTON STREET

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