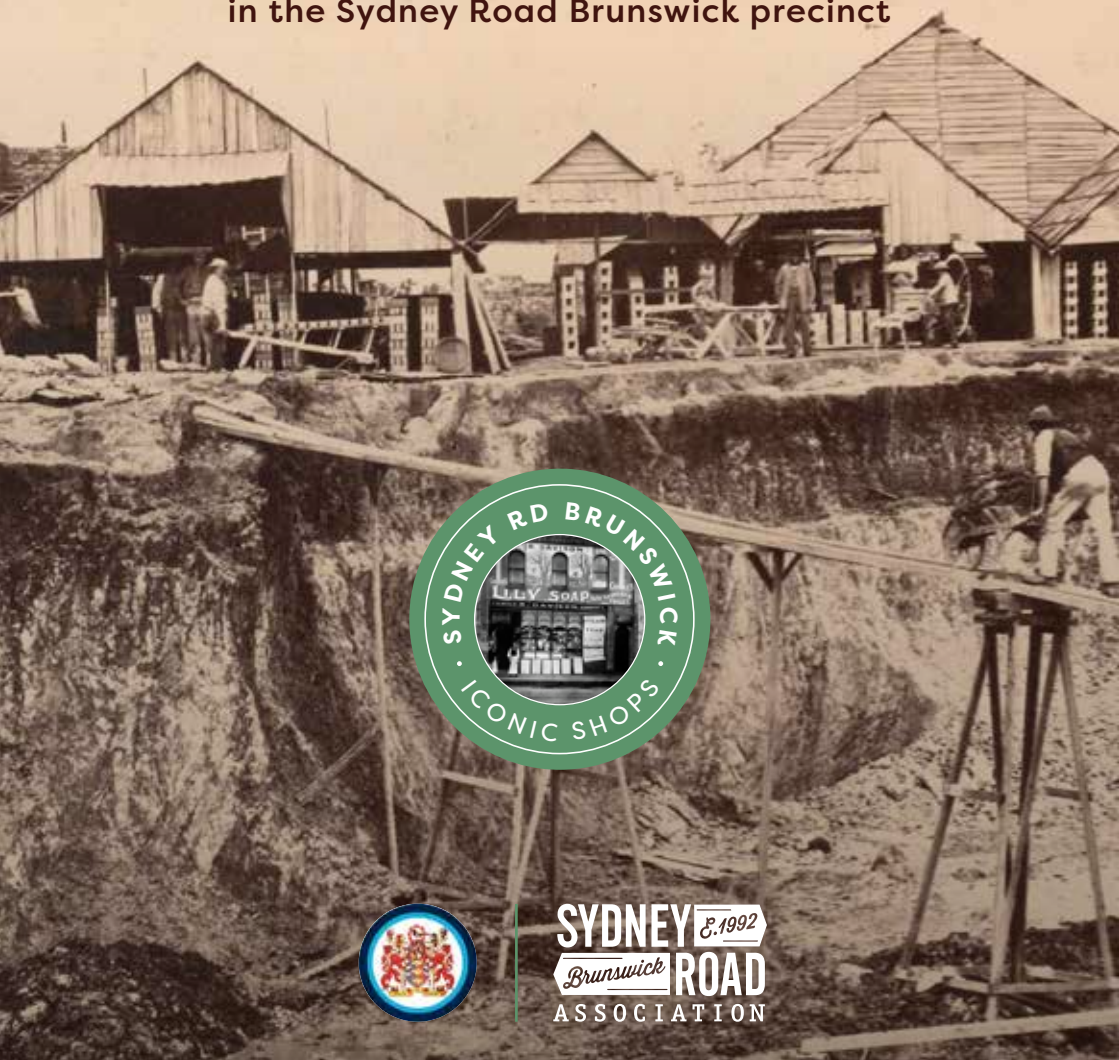


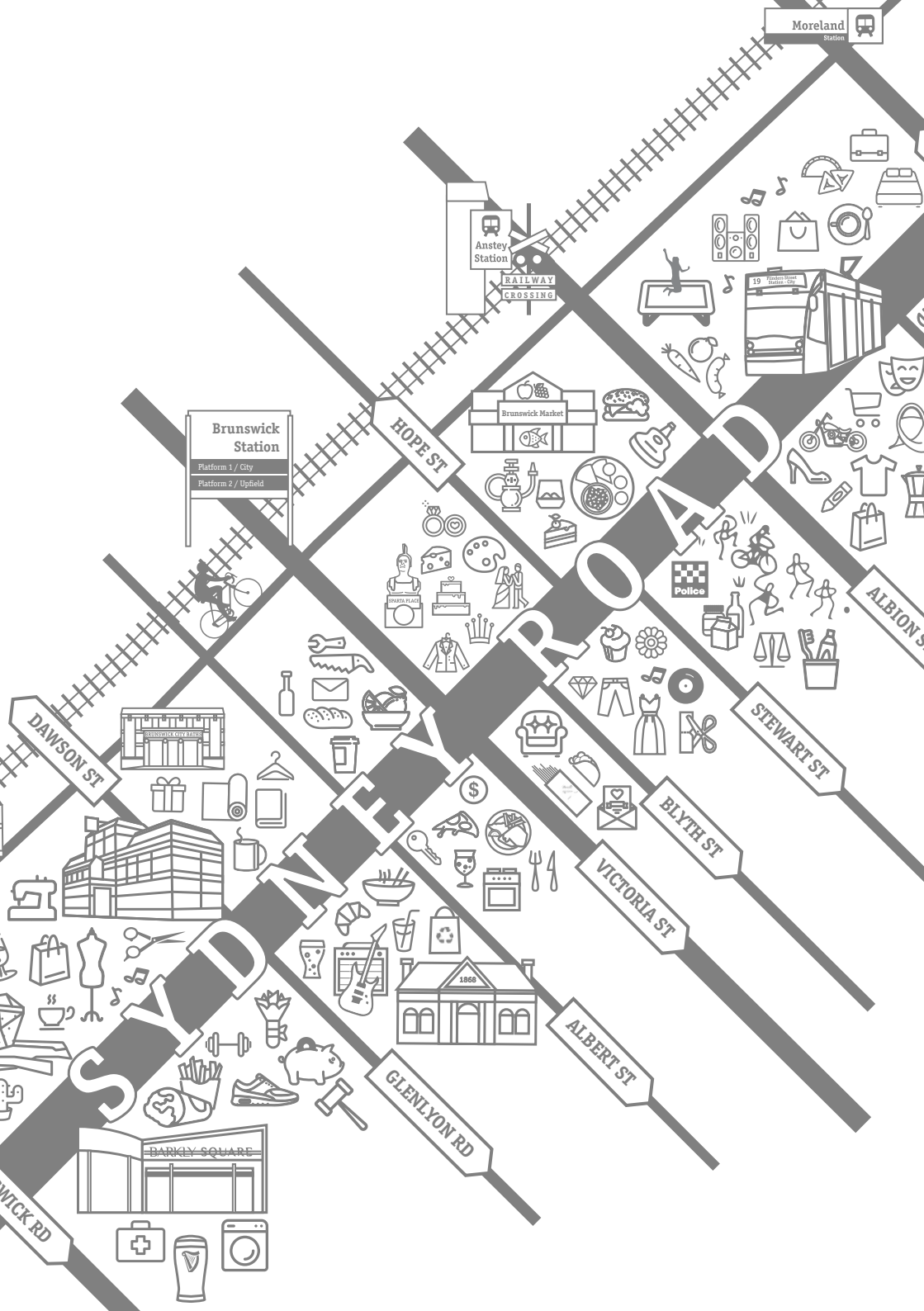
HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR

16, 26 April and 3 May 2025

Sparta Place to Barkly Square,
in the Sydney Road Brunswick precinct



SYDNEY EST. 1992
Brunswick **ROAD**
ASSOCIATION



In partnership with the Brunswick Community History Group, the Sydney Road Brunswick Association (SRBA) welcomes you to this Sydney Road Brunswick precinct Historical Walking Tour.

Led by local experts from the Brunswick Community History Group, tours take a leisurely walk around the Sydney Road Brunswick precinct, exploring locations of interest for a deep dive into the history between Sparta Place and Barkly Square.

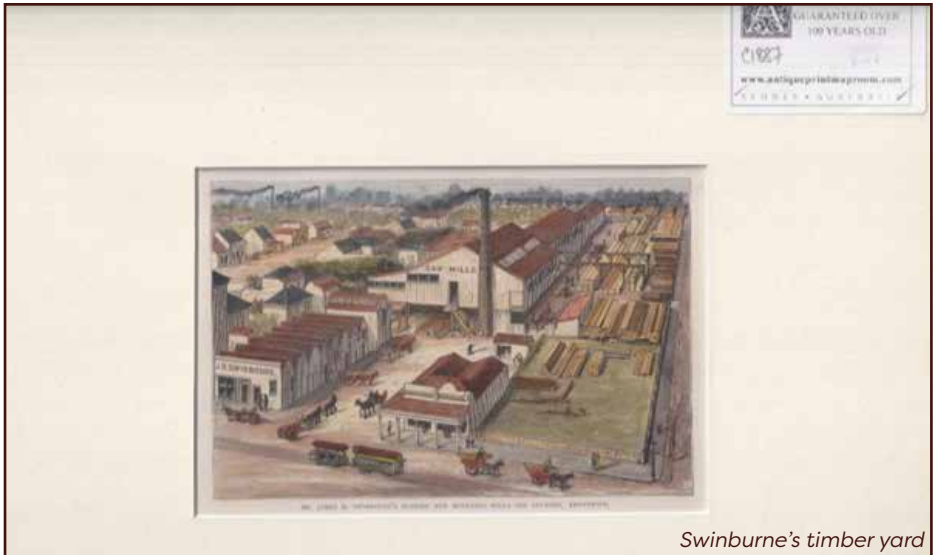
This series will focus on iconic shops in the Sydney Road Brunswick precinct, with stops and conversations that include:

- Hoopers Store (now the Hardwick Building)
- Mediterranean Wholesalers
- Maples Furniture Store (now Franco Cozzo)
- McDougall's Store (now Raffaele Ciuca Bridal)
- Woolworths Variety Store (now La Manna Fresh)
- Coles Variety Store (now Bunnings)
- Davison's Grocery Store (soon to be Azeemah)
- Tough's Ironmongers (now What the Putt)
- Miss R. E. Yon (now Record Paradise)
- McDougall's Store (now Second Hand Phones)
- Glew's Claypit (now Barkly Square)

STOP 1 Hoopers Store (now Hardwick Building)

459-475 Sydney Road, Brunswick

This building was constructed in 1908 for John H. Hooper, a Footscray businessman. It has an American style steel frame, manufactured in England. It was reportedly the first in Australia to use this style of construction. This site was previously occupied by J.H. Swinburne, timber merchant.



Hooper used it initially as a warehouse, and in 1937 it was extended and opened as an emporium. It was a key destination during the hey-day of Sydney Road as a shopping mecca. Later it was occupied by various retailers including Treadways, Walton's department and (briefly) Spotlight.

In 2005 the building was purchased by Mariana Hardwick – the doyenne of Melbourne's wedding dress designers. She renamed the building the Hardwick Building and set up her workshop, showroom and shop here. She planned to turn the complex into a one-stop wedding destination with an arcade of related shops.

Mariana sold the building in 2014, leasing back sections of it and in 2018 re-located to South Melbourne.

A new tenant is Clothing the Gaps; a Victorian Aboriginal owned and led social enterprise.



Above: Corner of Blyth Street and Sydney Road in about 1910 with Hooper's Store in the background. Credit: Brunswick Library.

STOP 2 Mediterranean Wholesalers

482 Sydney Road, Brunswick

Giuseppe & Carmela Madafferi opened a small delicatessen on Sydney Road Brunswick in 1961. By the 1970s it had expanded into the emporium that it is today. Although Brunswick no longer has a large Italian population, people come from all over Melbourne to stock up on Italian groceries and homewares. It claims to be Australia's largest continental foodstore.



Giuseppe Madafferi with some of the 250 pasta varieties available in Mediterranean Wholesalers. Photo from Mediterranean Wholesalers Facebook page.

STOP 3 Maples Furniture Store (now Franco Cozzo)

466 Sydney Road, Brunswick

Franco Cozzo immigrated from Sicily in 1956 and, after some other entrepreneurial ventures, set up a furniture store in North Melbourne. He later added shops in Footscray and Brunswick. North Melbourne closed some time ago, Footscray has been sold, and Brunswick has been closed for several months, and it is not known if or when it will reopen.

Franco Cozzo became a cult hero in the 1980s due to his home-made advertisements shown on late night television. They starred the man himself urging people to visit his shops in “Nord Melbourne, Footscray and Brunsawick”. He delivered his enthusiastic endorsements in broken English, Italian and Greek. Successive waves of upper middle to upper class immigrant families have been his main customers – Italians and Greeks, then Turkish and Lebanese and more recently, Chinese. The furniture is made in Italy. Sadly, Franco Cozzo passed away in 2023.

The building was constructed in about 1892 as a set of six neo Gothic commercial buildings. The corner building was occupied by the Bank of New South Wales until 1896. From 1908 it was used by furniture manufacturers and retailers including Maples from 1913.

In 1980 the top storey was removed from the end section due to safety concerns and the original facades and verandas at street level have been replaced.

STOP 4 McDougall’s Store (now Raffaele Ciuca Bridal)

441-443 Sydney Road, Brunswick

There was a grocery shop on this site for more than 80 years. It was occupied by the McDougall family, who also had a shop further south in Sydney Road, and later by the well-known chains of Moran and Cato and Permewans until 1981, when the advent of large supermarkets spelled the end of smaller grocery stores.

After the closure of Permewans, Italian migrant Raffaele Ciuca set up his bridal shop here. His was one of the first such shops in this area and was rapidly joined by many others. For many years now this stretch has become the go to place for brides. Associated business such as florists, bonbonnières, photographers and patisseries also appeared to connect into the bridal shops.

Information courtesy of Brunswick Daily

STOP 5 Woolworths & Coles Variety Stores (now La Manna Fresh & Bunnings) 403-415 Sydney Road, Brunswick

Coles and Woolworths Variety Stores were a feature of Sydney Road until the 1980s. Sydney Road was one of Melbourne's premier shopping streets in the first half of the twentieth century. During this period the block between Albert and Victoria Street was known as the "Golden Block".

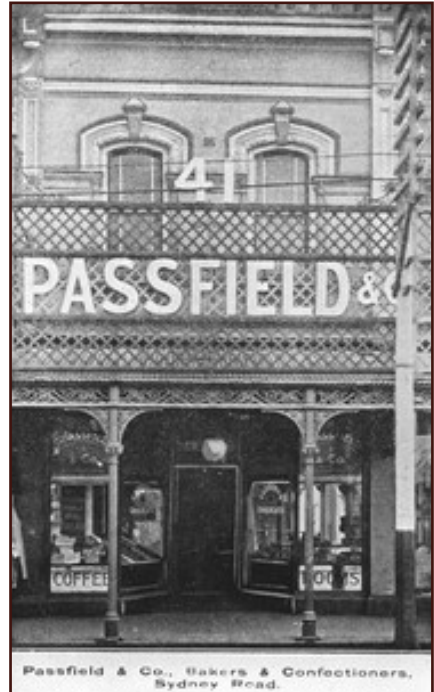
Woolworths (now La Manna Fresh) was on the site of Thomas Passfield's Hygienic Bread Factory which opened in 1888. Passfield was a successful businessman; a Brunswick Councillor from 1901-1910, and Mayor in 1902-3. He also had a larger bakery in Coburg and supplied bread to all the surrounding suburbs.

In 1937 the bakery closed and Woolworths occupied the site with its variety store. In 1980 Woolworths closed on this site and it became La Manna Fresh. Meanwhile Woolworths had built a warehouse on the site of Cornwell's pottery in Albert Street, and this is now the Woolworths supermarket.

G.J. Coles opened the first Coles Variety Store, in Smith Street Collingwood, in 1914 with the slogan "Nothing over 1/". The Brunswick store was the third in Victoria, and opened in 1923.

The Coles site was later occupied by Spotlight and is now Bunnings.

Below: Coles window display, Sydney Rd 1934. Credit: victorianplaces.com.au/brunswick-and-brunswick-city



*Above: Passfield's Hygienic Bakery
Credit: Brunswick Library.*



Right: Coles and Woolworths 1957. Credit: State Library of Victoria.

STOP 6 Davison's Grocery Store

(soon to be Azeemah)

307-311 Sydney Road, Brunswick

William Davison migrated from Scotland in around 1853, and settled in Brunswick. His son Robert owned this grocery shop. Later, generations of the family continued to live in Brunswick.

The shop was a typical grocery store of the period, crammed with goods and adorned with many advertisements.

For many years this shop was Curly Joes, a restaurant and pizzeria much loved by Brunswick locals. Recently it was Basco restaurant and is now soon to be Azeemah.



Above: Daniel and Jane Tough, the original proprietors of the shop. Credit: Brunswick Library

STOP 7 Tough's Ironmongers (now What the Putt)

305 Sydney Road, Brunswick

Tough's Ironmongers operated on the corner of Sydney Road and Phoenix Street from 1884 until after the First World War, and their name still adorns the parapet.

Members of the Tough family emigrated to Victoria in the 1850s. They lived in Geelong initially where they had a sail, tent and tarpaulin making business. They moved to Brunswick in 1858 and established their ironmongery.

Later this site gained fame and some notoriety as the music venue Bombay Rock, famous for the range of rock bands which performed there, and the fights between patrons and criminal outlaws who frequented it.

Bombay Rock features in the film *Death in Brunswick*, represented as a dangerous and sleazy music venue. Also, the track *Beautiful People* (1979), by Australian Crawl, includes a reference to the Bombay Rock night club.

It ran from 1977 until destroyed by fire in 1991. The interior was rebuilt and it reopened under various names. It is now What the Putt, a mini-golf and entertainment venue.



Credit: Brunswick Library

STOP 8 Miss R. E. Yon (now Record Paradise)

159 Sydney Road, Brunswick

This was the shop and residence of Miss Ruby Ethel Yon; a dressmaker of Chinese heritage who lived and worked here from 1914 until her death in 1937. The shop was built in 1923, replacing an earlier building.

Miss Yon called herself a costumier, her advertising noting the 'smart' coats and outfits in 'the latest style', manufactured under her direction at the Sydney Road premises. In 1915 she married a grocer William Alexander Hoyling and was sometimes referred to as Mrs Hoyling.

Miss Yon's is an interesting story of Chinese migration. Her grandfather Ah Ket arrived in Australia during the 1850s gold rush. He did well and became a tobacco farmer in the Myrtleford area. Of his eight children, one was the mother of Ruby Ethel and the only son, William Ah Ket became a barrister – reportedly the first in Australia of Chinese descent. He was active in supporting the rights of Chinese Australians and opposing the White Australia Policy.



Credit: Peter Holmes

STOP 9 McDougall's Store (now Second Hand Phones)

123-125 Sydney Road, Brunswick

Members of the McDougall family from Scotland operated grocery shops in Brunswick from the 1850s. The one on this site was established first in 1858, and in 1891 they opened another shop on the corner of Victoria Street and Sydney Road.

The interesting building dates from the 1880s and is typical of the boom style architecture of this period. The polychromatic brickwork has been painted over, the veranda over the footpath was removed and the other veranda was enclosed.

The McDougall family operated the shop until the 1940s. After this it was a private house for some time and then used for a variety of commercial purposes including the office of *Il Globo* Italian newspaper, in the 1960s.



Credit: Brunswick Library

STOP 10 **Glew's Claypit (now Barkly Square)** 90-106 Sydney Road, Brunswick

The area now occupied by the shopping centre carpark was once a giant clay quarry, and was surrounded by brickworks. John Glew established the brickworks in 1857 after he had exhausted his claypits in the Phillipstown area, west of Sydney Road. Barkly Bricks and the Brunswick Brick And Tile Company were also located here at different times.

By the late 1970's the pit had been filled and the site was purchased by a consortium, which included Coles, and the shopping centre was planned.

The filled area (which was the pit) could not be built on, so this area was transformed into the carpark behind Barkly Square Shopping Centre itself.

Some members of the community objected to the shopping centre while others welcomed the construction of a large supermarket – which Brunswick lacked at that time. The centre opened in 1983 and has become a community focus

The centre has had a number of names – Brunswick Shopping Centre and Brunswick City Centre – but has reverted to the original name of Barkly Square. Locals often refer to it by the spoonerism of Sparkly Bear. A Sparkly Bear statue was installed in McDougall Street, but this was stolen in 2024.



*Franklins Supermarket
Barkly Square 1980s.
Woolworths is now at this site.*



*Glew's claypit and brickyard on what is now the Barkly Square carpark.
Credit: Brunswick Library.*

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