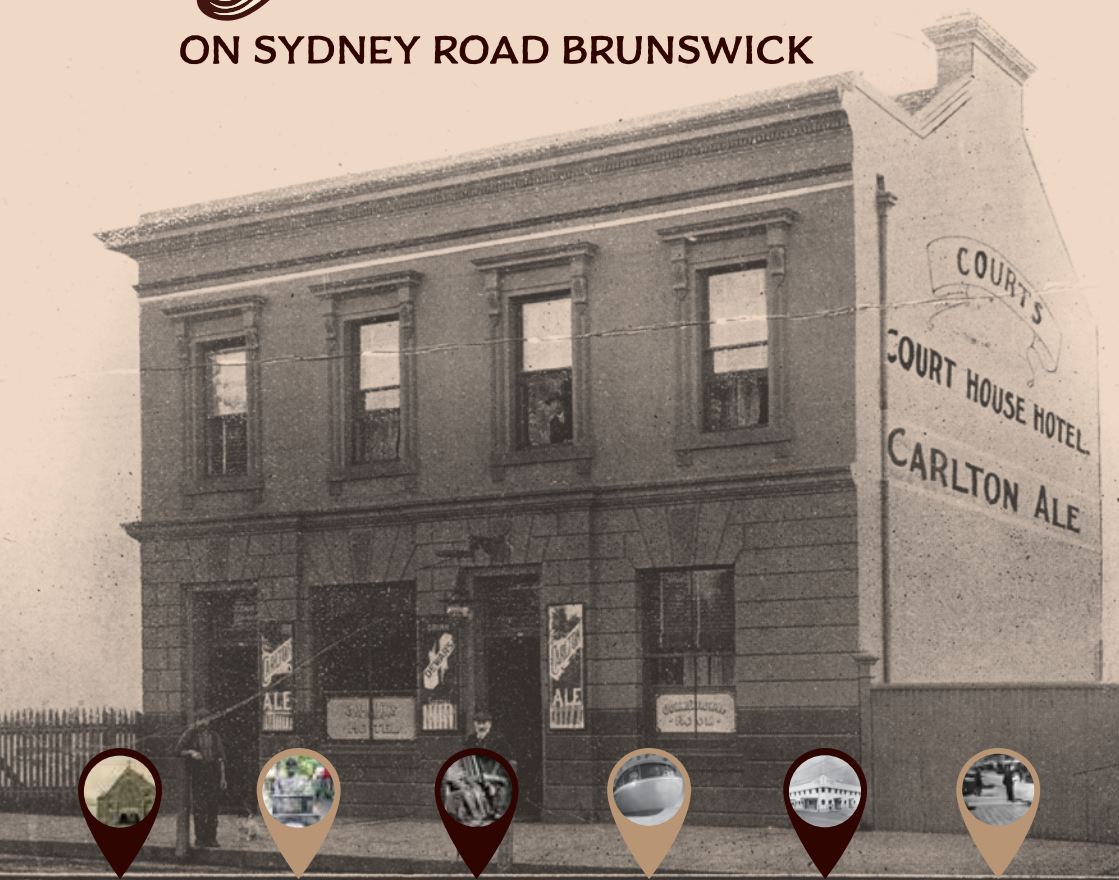


HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR

ON SYDNEY ROAD BRUNSWICK

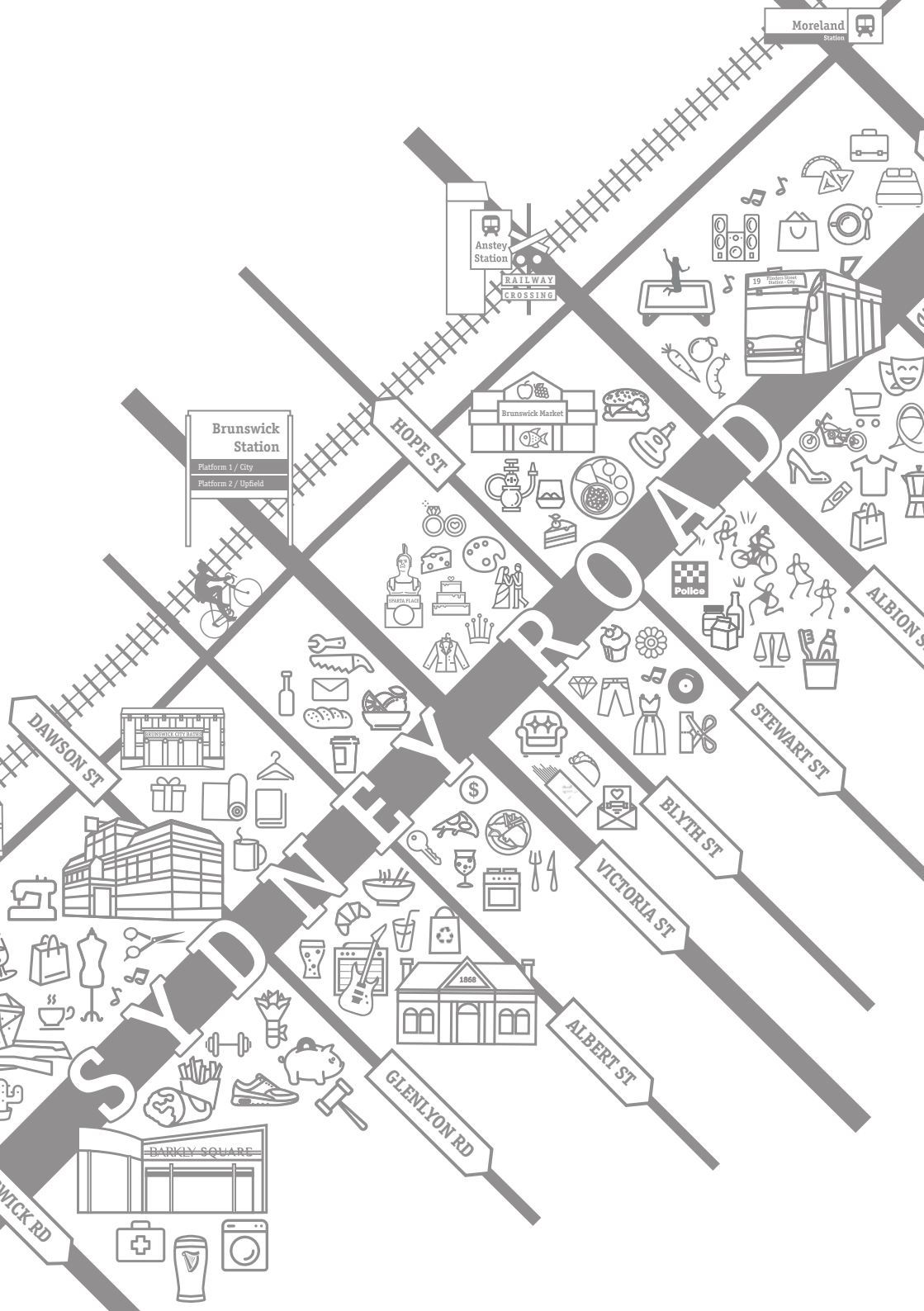


2, 9 & 16 September 2023

Victoria Street to Albion Street,
along Sydney Road Brunswick



SYDNEY EST. 1992
Brunswick ROAD
ASSOCIATION



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

Led by local experts from the Brunswick Community History Group, tours will take a leisurely walk along Sydney Road Brunswick, exploring the below locations of interest for a deep dive into the history between Victoria Street and Albion Street.

Stops on the walking tour include:

- Sparta Place
- Old Brunswick Market (now T.O.M.S Place)
- Site of Hooper's Store (now the Hardwick Building)
- Bridal Shops
- Franco Cozzo
- Mediterranean Wholesalers
- Baptist Church
- Former dental surgery
- Site of Whelan the Wrecker Yard
- Site of Padua Theatre (now IGA)
- Court House Hotel
- Brunswick Market
- Edinburgh Castle Hotel

STOP 1 Sparta Place

457-459 Sydney Road, Brunswick

You might wonder why there is a bust of King Leonidis, monarch of the ancient Greek kingdom of Sparta, in the middle of Brunswick.

In November 1987, the then Brunswick City Council signed a sister city relationship with Sparta which was reaffirmed through a renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding in November 2009.

The relationship recognised the fact that at the time many Brunswick residents came from the Laconia region of Greece – the site of ancient Sparta. In the late 1990s Council closed off this laneway, formerly part of Tripovich Street, and renamed it Sparta Place – commissioning the bust of King Leonidis at the same time.

The other public art installations in Sparta Place, comprising various kitchen utensils, were also commissioned by Council and reflect the day to day life of Brunswick residents of Greek ancestry.



Picture credit: Peter Holmes, 2021.



STOP 2 Old Brunswick Market

1 Tripovich St, at end of Sparta Place



This imposing Spanish Mission-style building was used as a market for 5 years from 1930-1935, namely Brunswick's second market. The first one being an open air market in the style of the Queen Victoria Market, operating on the corner of Dawson and Saxon St from about 1890 to 1915.

This new market was privately funded and built at a cost of 12,000 pounds. As well as fruit and vegetable stalls, it had a grocery section run along supermarket lines with customers entering via a turnstyle and selecting products themselves. This was ahead of its time and people preferred the more traditional shops in Sydney Road.

The building was later used by the Belleland Box Co. before being converted into some of Brunswick's most interesting and unusual apartments.

This site is now T.O.M.S Place.

STOP 3 Site of Hooper's Store

459-475 Sydney Road, Brunswick

This was constructed in 1908 for John H. Hooper, a Footscray businessman. The building has an American style steel frame and may have been the first in Australia to use this style of construction.

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. These did not succeed. In 2014 Mariana Hardwick sold the building, leasing back sections of it, and in 2018 re-located to South Melbourne.



Picture credit: Brunswick Library. Corner of Blyth St & Sydney Rd with Hooper's in the background



STOP 4 Bridal Shops

Sydney Road, Brunswick



Picture credit: raffaeleciuca.com.au.



Picture credit: Richard Dobbie.



Picture credit: @bonitacouture (Facebook).

Sydney Road has a long history of dressmakers and clothing factories generally, but it was only in the 1980s that this section of the road became the go-to place for brides to be.

Raffaele Ciuca (441-443 Sydney Road Brunswick) was probably the first of these and was followed by Elide Valente and her sister who moved their business Bonita Couture (1/440A Sydney Road Brunswick) from Preston to Brunswick. Elide had arrived from Italy as a 16 year old in 1969 and trained as a dressmaker at Emily MacPherson College. Ines Colosimo was also an Italian immigrant and opened Croce Colosimo Couture (560 Sydney Road Brunswick) with her partner Mario Croce in the early 90s.

The appearance of wedding dress shops quickly attracted other associated businesses such as florists, bonbonnières, photographers and patisseries.

STOP 5 **Franco Cozzo**

466-474 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, but may reopen.

Franco Cozzo became a bit of 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 immigrant families have been his main customers – Italians and Greeks, then Turkish and Lebanese, and more recently, Chinese.

Madeleine Martiniello has made a delightful film “Palazzo di Cozzo” which can be borrowed from Brunswick Library and tells the story of Franco Cozzo, his family and his customers.

The building was constructed around 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 verandahs at street level have been replaced.

STOP 6 Mediterranean Wholesalers

482-500 Sydney Road, Brunswick



Giuseppe Madafferri with some of the 250 pasta varieties available in Mediterranean Wholesalers.

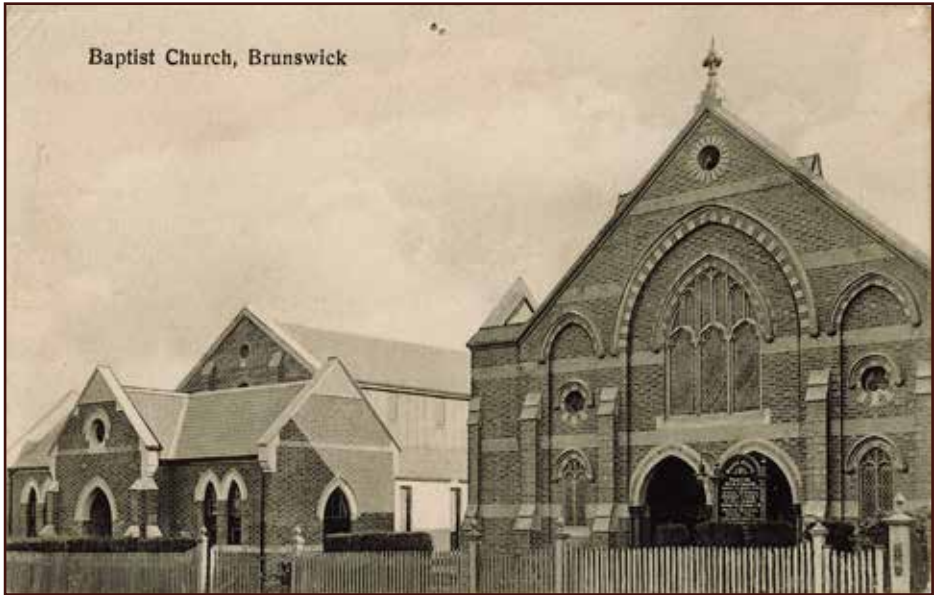
Giuseppe & Carmela Madafferri opened a small delicatessen on Sydney Road Brunswick in 1961. By the 1970s it had expanded into the emporium that it is today. Although Brunswick no longer has a large Italian population, people come from all over Melbourne to stock up on Italian groceries and homewares.

Heralded as Australia's largest Continental foodstore.

Picture credit: @mediterraneanwholesalers (Facebook).

STOP 7 Brunswick Baptist Church

491 Sydney Road, Brunswick



In 1859 George Burton and John Wallis were worshipping at the Wesleyan Methodist Church further down Sydney Road when they decided the Baptist denomination was more in line with their beliefs.

They began organising services at Burton's house and in 1861 Burton donated the land in Sydney Road, and a small church was built. This was then extended as the services proved very popular.

George Burton continued his generosity, donating more land and 25,000 bricks for extensions to the west.

In 1889 the foundation stone for the chapel was laid and the front section was added. In 1893 a meeting hall and Sunday school were built on the south side of the main church.

These can be seen in the photograph, but were demolished in 1966.

STOP 8 Site of a former Dental Surgery

503 Sydney Road, Brunswick

This ten room dentist surgery and residence was built in 1905 for Dr. F.W. Kiel who had set up a dental practice in Blyth Street in 1898. It was built in the Queen Anne/ Australian Federation style and is a rare intact example.

A residential building like this is unusual in Sydney Road. The building is now used by the neighbouring Baptist Church, for Baptcare's refugee support services – continuing the tradition of Brunswick of providing support and a home to new migrants.



STOP 9 Site of Whelan the Wrecker Yard

605 Sydney Road, Brunswick

Whelan the Wrecker operated in Brunswick from 1892-1992. The firm carried out the demolition of some of Melbourne's finest buildings, retrieving some elements for re-use. As well as a tip near the Merri Creek, the firm had a large yard behind 605 Sydney Road where renovators, scavengers and builders could buy a range of rescued items.

Whelan's went into liquidation in 1992, the yard was sold and developers put in plans for a large apartment complex in 2000.



STOP 10 Site of the Padua Theatre

614-618 Sydney Road, Brunswick



The Padua was the largest and grandest of Brunswick's many cinemas. It was built by Hoyts on the site of a historic house named Padua, and opened in 1937. The architects were H. Vivian Taylor, Soilleux and Overend, representing the epitome of luxurious cinema design for the time. It had seating for 2,000 people.

The theatre was very successful during World War Two, when the government wanted to keep crowds out of the city due to the danger of bombing, encouraging suburban cinemas to run extra sessions.

During the early 1950s its success continued with live performances and appearances by sporting teams and champions, as well as movies.

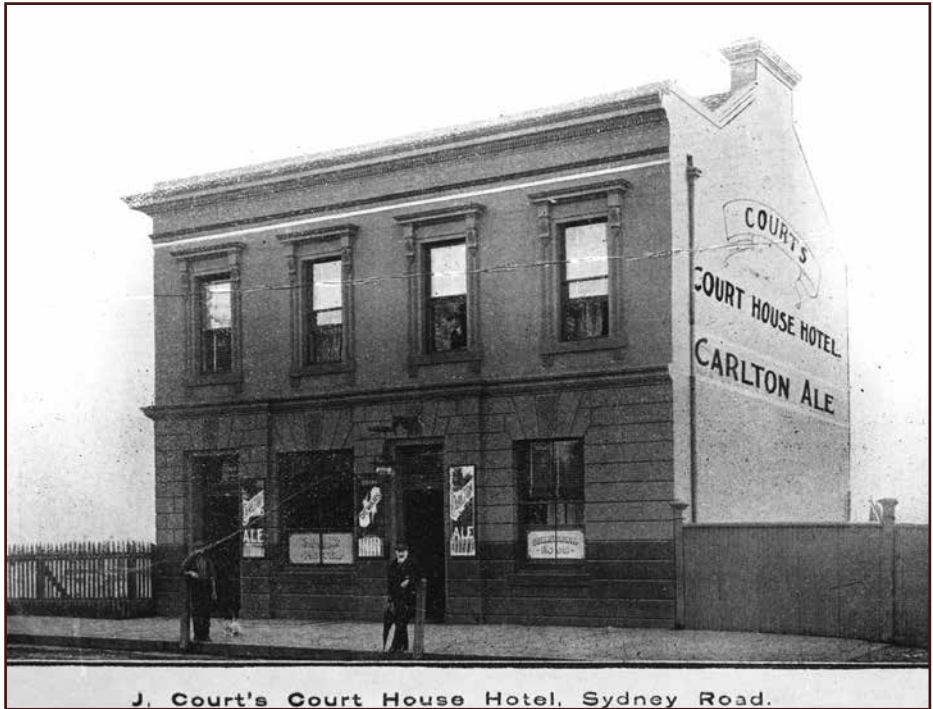
The arrival of television in 1956 had a catastrophic effect on suburban cinemas, and in 1968 Hoyts closed the Padua and sold the building. It was subsequently leased to Tony and Franco Zecolla who renamed it the Metropol, showing Italian films to an appreciative audience. Tony later founded the Palace cinema chain.

By 1980, Italian speakers were able to watch movies on SBS so the Zecollas relinquished the lease. The building stood empty for two years before a large crack appeared. It was declared unsafe and demolished in 1982. A sad end to what was once a proud icon of Brunswick.

This site is now occupied by IGA.

STOP 11 Court House Hotel

615 Sydney Road, Brunswick



The hotel was built in 1858 opposite the Court House and the first Municipal Offices, which are both now occupied by the Brunswick Police Station.

It was originally a two storey brick building, but was rebuilt in the 1920s. Pictured above is the original building.

The first licensee was Alan Staley; a Brunswick Councillor from 1868-1872 and Mayor in 1872-3.

STOP 12 Brunswick Market

655-661 Sydney Road, Brunswick



There has been a fresh food market on this site only since the 1970s, with the site vacant for a number of years before the market was built.

The undercover market shopping offers fresh fruit and vegetables, a Halal butcher, a well known shoe maker (John's Shoes), tech repair shop, and most recently extremely popular Japanese restaurant and takeaway, Tochi Deli.

The site was once owned by notorious gangster Tony Mokbel and was just sold in 2021.

STOP 13 **Edinburgh Castle Hotel**

681 Sydney Road, Brunswick



This hotel is the oldest original hotel building in Brunswick. Some other hotels are older, but have been rebuilt. Edinburgh Castle was built in 1854 as one of a large number of hotels to provide refreshment to diggers heading for the Central Victorian goldfields.

Its location on Brunswick Hill was a big advantage as the area to the south was subject to flooding. Patrons could avoid the floods by coming along Albion Street either from the Merri Creek or Essendon.

Caroline Chisholm had her “shakedown” accommodation for diggers in Essendon at the western end of Albion Street.

Major alterations were carried out in 1939, at which point the original bluestone was covered by plaster and concrete.

It is now well known as a live music venue.

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