

CULTURAL
HERITAGE
in NPSP

Kensington Village *Historical Walk*

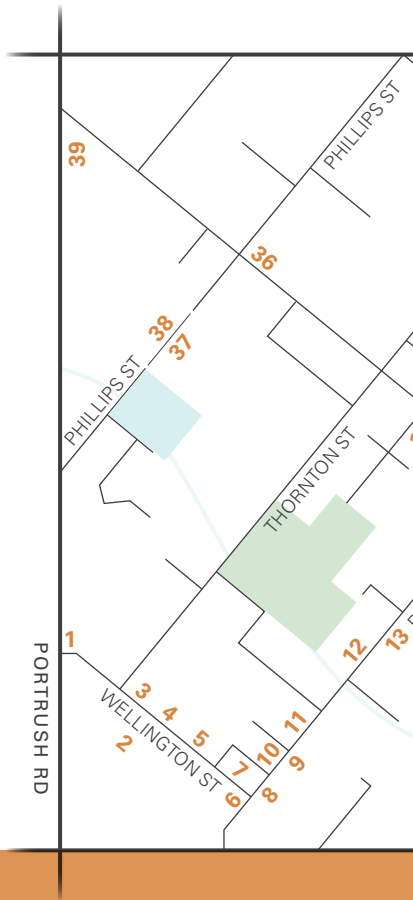


City of
Norwood
Payneham
& St Peters

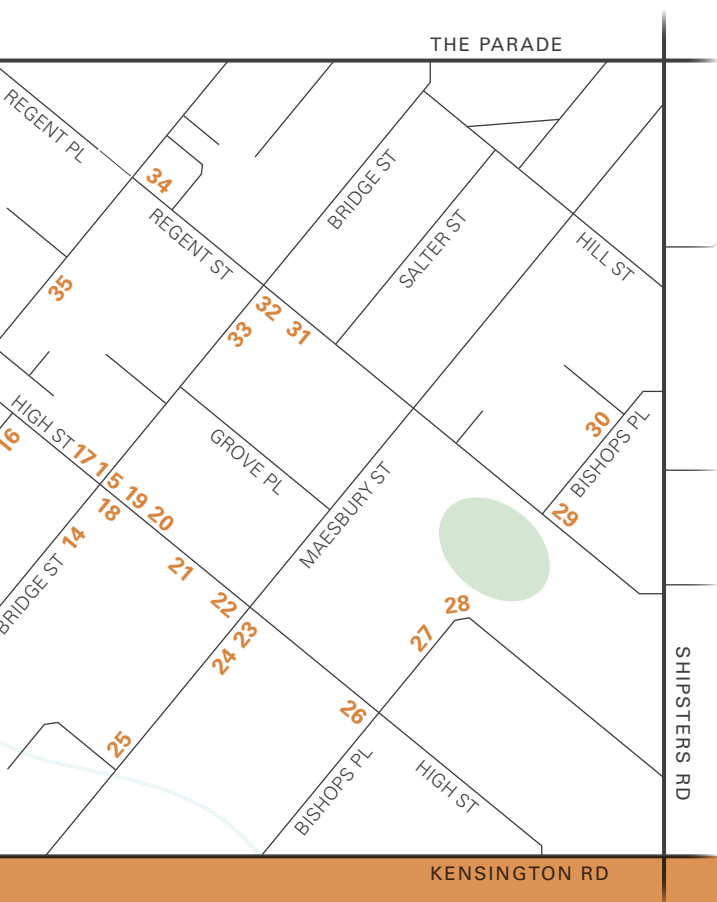


Kensington is one of Adelaide's oldest settlements and is unique for its early pioneer cottages and colonial architecture.

Cover image:
Heanes Boot Shop,
53 Bridge St



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The Guide

This guide has been prepared to assist visitors in appreciating one of Adelaide's most historic inner urban areas. First surveyed in 1838 Kensington Village possesses a rich legacy of early 19th century built heritage.

Discover those special places that are an essential part of the history of the area and contribute to its unique character.

A map has been provided to give an overview and to indicate the approximate location of each historic place listed by number.



21. Doctors Surgery

Start

Walk begins at the intersection of Portrush Road and Wellington Street opposite the Robin Hood Hotel.

Terrain

Mostly flat ground.

Time

Allow two hours.



Compiled by Denise Schumann 2007
(Source: D Manning 1986 & D Schumann 2007)

Early Settlement

Prior to European settlement, the area now known as the Adelaide Plains was occupied by the Kaurna. Kaurna territory was a narrow tract of land stretching from Crystal Brook in the mid-north to Cape Jervis in the south with the Mount Lofty Ranges forming a natural border to the east.

They organised their lives through a kinship system and their attachment to land. The physical features of their locality had bearing upon their spiritual life and beliefs.

In keeping with their lifestyle, they had few possessions and built no permanent structures but they did have identified sacred areas.

Within twenty years of South Australia being colonised many of the Kurna had died and the remaining survivors were relocated to a mission settlement at Poonindie, near Port Lincoln.

This mission was over 700km from Adelaide and was the final act which dispossessed them of their land. The Kurna left no written records and few traces of their material culture survived from this period of settlement.

There is some evidence that the Kensington area was a significant place for Kurna ceremonies and meetings.

Few British colonies had as many plans and theories for its establishment as South Australia in the 19th century. Enlightened citizens wanted to establish a new British colony free of the mistakes besetting the Empire.

In 1834 the British House of Commons passed an act to allow the new colony of South Australia to be established.

This act, often referred to as the Foundation Act, made provision for more than 300,000 square miles of land in southern Australia to become the territory in which British settlers could begin a colony with no convicts. A Board of Colonising Commissioners was established in England to control and administer land sales and emigration, while the British Government would be represented by an appointed Governor.

The British Government agreed to sanction the experimental colony on the stipulation that land to the value of 35,000 pounds had to be sold before settlement could begin.

The province of South Australia and its capital Adelaide were named, planned, advertised and largely sold before the first settlers and officials set sail from England in February 1836.

Colonel William Light and his survey party arrived in two small vessels off the coast of South Australia in September 1836 and by March 1837 he had completed the preliminary survey of town acres now the sight of the City of Adelaide about 12 kilometres inland.

Col. Light then proceeded with the surveying of the country sections on the Adelaide Plains to the east of the city. He surveyed the area between the Park Lands, the River Torrens and the Mt Lofty Ranges.

Many colonists had no choice but to wait for Light, who was operating under difficult conditions, to complete his survey of country sections as the taking up of preliminary land orders was dependent on the holding of city and country allotments.

In May 1838 the first ballot for lands was held and the South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register advised, 'The Working Classes and Small Capitalists' of land for sale in Country Section 289 which would be known as Kensington. It was named by Charles Catchlove after Kensington Palace, the birthplace of Queen Victoria, who was crowned in the month following the first land ballot.

The close proximity to Adelaide would ensure that this area would be a desirable and highly prized location.

In November 1838, Kensington was surveyed by J.H. Hughes. The surrounding sections including Norwood were not settled until later and so there was no pattern for connecting streets except for the existing tracks of Portrush and Kensington Roads.

The subdivision was also intersected by Hallett's Rivulet (Second Creek) and notices in the Register claimed that the creek would ensure the village a plentiful supply of water for nine months of the year.

Kensington remains unique for its diagonal lay out as Hughes' original survey followed directly the contours and gently rising inclines to the east and the line of Second Creek.

It was likely that the angle of the internal street grid was a deliberate choice, to avoid creek crossings and to provide maximum number of blocks with creek frontages. High and Regent Streets are the only two major streets of Kensington which are orientated to Adelaide and both are parallel to the general line of Second Creek. The lay out allowed for the creation of one hundred and fourteen allotments each of one acre for sale.

Early residents of Kensington included such notables as Colonel A. H. Freeling who held position of Colonial Engineer and Surveyor-general, the first Anglican Bishop to the new colony Reverend Augustus Short, Supreme Court Judge Edward Castres Gwynne, one of South Australia's first medical practitioners Dr Thomas Taylor and Commissioner of Inland Revenue Charles Wilson.

The arrival in 1844 of businessman John Roberts and his family gave impetus to development in the north-east section from High Street to The Parade.

Within a few years of settlement local brickyards provided building materials for the rapidly growing village. A high proportion of brick and stone buildings were erected in this early period and the centre of the village developed along Bridge Street which was the main street until the advent of the horse drawn trams in High Street in the 1870s.



1. Historic Corner Site

1. Historic Corner Site

*Cnr Portrush Rd & Wellington St
(left side from Portrush Rd)*

Formerly known as Church Row as it was in a direct line to St Matthew's Anglican Church on Kensington Rd (a main survey road). This block was the site of the first known house in this section in 1838 described as four rooms of construction occupied by John Marshall and his wife who arrived as part of Colonel Light's party on the Cygnet in 1836.

2. Baigent's School

4 Wellington St

Site of James Baigent's house and schoolroom from 1850 to 1877. This was one of the first schools licensed in the colony. Baigent was held in high regard as a teacher and the sons of many prominent colonists were educated here. His wife also conducted a school for girls. Following the creation of a public education system in 1875 Baigent and his wife retired to live in Fisher St, Norwood. (Cottage was demolished in 1982.)

3. Corner Store

Cnr Wellington St & Thornton St

Early colonial store and dwelling circa 1850s. This south-west area was the first part of Kensington to be settled. This building reveals the original construction such as the sloping roofline and the orientation of the shop doorway to the corner with Thornton Street. (Named after Edward Thornton a law clerk who owned six allotments.)

4. Settlers Cottage

9 Wellington St

First listed in 1855 in the Town of Kensington & Norwood Rate Assessments as 'a stone and brick construction'. Note distinctive bricks and detailing on parapet wall probably from local brick-maker Thomas Constable's brickfield located at the south-west end of Maesbury Street.

5. Freemason's Arms

19 Wellington St

This historic property operated as a sly grog outlet before it became a licensed ale house in 1850 known as the Freemasons Arms run by William Powell.

With the opening of the Robin Hood Inn it lost its license and Mortimer Burman bought it as a private residence.

His descendants owned the property until 1967. James Shaw the famous colonial artist (1815–1881) rented rooms for a time.

In 1859, the steamer *Admella* was wrecked off the south-east coast with the loss of 89 lives.

Mortimer Burman and James Shaw rode to see the wreck. Shaw later gave a painting of the *Admella* to Mortimer Burman in lieu of rent. (This painting is now on permanent display in the Art Gallery of South Australia.)



6. Historic Terrace Houses

6. Historic Terrace Houses

151–155 (& 157–161) Kensington Rd

Elegant 19th century bluestone terraced houses built by Sir Edwin Smith owner of The Acacias (Loreto College) as lodgings for his coachmen in 1882 (1892) notable for the attractive stucco detailing seen in window mouldings, quoins and chimney stacks.

7. St Matthew's Hall

Cnr Bridge St & Wellington St

St Matthew's Hall built of red brick at a cost of £1,000 in 1891 as a parish hall and Sunday school for the parishioners of the nearby St Matthews Church. The Hall was a focus for parish activity until the 1920s.

In 1976 it was incorporated into the elderly citizen's residential facility next door. (Originally formed part of important colonist Charles Wilson's famous estate Cwm Hir Lodge.)

8. Site of former Hambidge Residence

84 Bridge St

John and Ann Hambidge arrived on the Forfarshire in 1848 and purchased a large acreage that extended from Bridge St to Kensington Rd on which John built a two-storey house for his family.

His son, William, returned from the Bendigo goldfields with his wife and family and operated a timber and construction business from the site. William's three daughters (Helen, Alice and Milly) received art lessons from Matilda Wilson (an accomplished artist who lived at Cwm Hir Lodge) and later Harry Gill at the School of Arts.

The Hambidge property was surrounded by beautiful gardens in which William constructed a tennis court for his sons and a studio for his daughters. Gifted artists, the Hambidge sisters' paintings are now highly valued and are on display in the Art Gallery of South Australia.

9. Nurses Cottage

70 Bridge St

The remaining one of three early settler cottages built by Robert Nurse, a carpenter and farmer, who migrated from Norfolk, England in 1845. The roofline with its distinctive gable can be seen on the north-east wall.

Mr Nurse moved to Norwood where he established a large farm near St Ignatius Church. His grandson, Reginald Nurse became Mayor and established one of South Australia's most successful building and construction companies.



10. Cwm Hir Lodge (now demolished)

59 Bridge St

Former home of Charles Wilson (1818–1884) served as Commissioner of Inland Revenue from 1858 and patron of the arts. Regarded as SA's first naturalist, his extensive entomological collection is held by the South Australian Museum.

Displayed in his home were many significant artworks shipped from England. His wife Matilda was an important colonial artist, one of the first to paint native flora and he assisted Dr Richard Schomburgk, of the Botanic Gardens, to compile a catalogue of specimens for the Paris Exhibition (1881).

The Wilson's historic home with its significant botanical gardens was demolished in the 1920s and later became Schofield's Dairy.



12. Heanes Boot Shop

11. Second Creek Bridge

Bridge St

Built in 1858 by Stanton and Elwell for £96, a brick vault construction, it was an important crossing over Second Creek (Hallett's Rivulet). An earlier wooden footbridge was destroyed by severe floods.

12. Heanes Boot Shop

53 Bridge St

This early shop and dwelling was built in 1847 for Samuel Heanes a bootmaker from Okehampton in Devonshire. Stones from Second Creek were used in the construction of the cobble and pug workshop which was at the rear of the building. By 1853, Heanes had built a cottage of four rooms and enlarged the shop.

The shop front was rebuilt in 1878. Samuel Heanes served as a councillor representing Kensington for 12 years and was a member of the Volunteer Rifle Movement. The Boot Shop traded for over 133 years until his grandson Alfred Heanes retired in 1981.



13. *Rising Sun Inn*

13. Rising Sun Inn

60 Bridge St

The historic Rising Sun Inn was built in 1848 as an ale house with a 'tap room' run by William Beck. Beck had been in the 'service' (part of the African slave trade) of a Dr Edward Irving in America and had travelled to England with him. He then arrived in Australia and worked for the pioneering Henty family in Victoria before making his way to Adelaide.

He married an Irish girl named Sarah Cullen. Known in the village as 'Black Beck' in 1849 he pioneered the first means of public transport between Kensington and Adelaide. Beck's spring cart made a round trip charging 6 pence each way. In 1868, brewer Sir Edwin Smith bought the inn and added a handsome bluestone facade and parapet.

The Inn closed its doors in 1883 when Smith transferred the license to his new establishment at the corner of High & Bridge St. The old inn became a private residence. In 1951, R.P. Tilbrook manufactured the only locally made South Australian motorcycles from here.

In 1983, the building was restored and traded once more as a historic inn. Legend has it that there was a murder in the cellar and that to this day there is an eerie presence near the cellar. The original line of the inn and walling can be viewed from the side of the building.

14. Settlers Cottage

52 Bridge St

A brick skillion colonial cottage of the 1840s with corrugated iron steeply pitched roof and rendered walls. First owned by a man named John Hutchins.

15. Heart of Kensington Village

Intersection of Bridge St & High St

By the 1850s this intersection had become the bustling centre of village life. There was George Aldridge's store and bakehouse which was on the south-west corner with Henry Hughes' butcher shop directly opposite. On the north-east corner was Outlaw's drapers shop.

The advent of the horse-drawn tram service in 1878 saw High St become the main thoroughfare.

The horse-drawn trams travelled from Adelaide to The Parade, then to Regent St and the tram depot, along Shipsters Rd to Kensington Rd, then down High St, past the Rising Sun Hotel and back down The Parade to Adelaide. This was the first street tramway system in Australia.

16. Row Cottages

Richmond St

A row of workers cottages built in 1881 of bluestone and brick. The street is remarkable for its quaint character. In the 1930s during the Depression it was known as 'incubator lane'. At the far end is the beautiful Borthwick Park.



18. The Rising Sun Hotel

17. Hughes Butcher Shop

61–63 High St

Built in 1873 for Henry Hughes, this shop and dwelling had slaughter yards next door in Bridge Street. Henry Hughes served as Mayor of Kensington & Norwood from 1873-1875. The first public lamp illuminated by kerosene was erected beside Hughes' shop in the 1860s. The cabbies would congregate on this corner jostling for passengers necessitating the appointment by the council of a special constable to maintain order at the rank. The Hughes family continued to own the butcher shop until 1951 when it became Rosefields Smallgoods.

18. The Rising Sun Hotel

46 High St

This beautiful Victorian sandstone building was built in 1882 as a showy new hotel by Kent Town Brewery magnate Sir E.T. Smith. It was designed by architect William McMinn as a 34-room hotel incorporating three shops and is the most prominent building in the village. In 1893 publican, Louis Rothenberg, hanged himself at the foot of the stairs when his race horse 'Dust Storm' died during the Tattersalls Cup.

For some reason the hotel never proved to be popular and in the local option poll of 1909 it lost its license and became a boarding house.



20. Dalton's Chemist Shop

19. Historic Shop

65 High St

The street level section of this shop dates from the early 1850s and was first owned by pioneer developer John Roberts. In the 1878 it was purchased by George Outlaw, a draper, who added the second storey probably in response to the building of The Rising Sun Hotel and the growing commercial importance of High Street as the main street of the village.

20. Dalton's Chemist Shop

67 High St

Built by John Roberts, this shop was occupied in 1854 by Charles Dalton, described as a surgeon, from Suffolk in England. Dalton and his family arrived in South Australia on the Alice Maud.

He established a chemist shop and operated the first postal service for the newly created Town of Kensington & Norwood. He carried on the business until the late 1880s. His son, also a chemist, was employed by F H Paulding. The building typifies early colonial architecture with brick dentils, casement windows and simple hipped roof. The building next door, also built by John Roberts, was briefly used as a schoolroom in 1856.

21. Doctor's Surgery

50 High St

This building dates from 1842 and was first occupied by colonial solicitor Charles Fenn. In 1851, Dr Thomas Taylor purchased the cottage and adjoining block and set up a surgery. The arched portico on the western side is believed to have been the entrance and is indicative of very early colonial architecture. Dr Taylor served as Mayor in the 1860s and carried out major alterations to the property.

In 1867 Dr John Benson bought the practice and endeared himself to the local community. He ministered to all whether they could afford his services or not. He died in 1877 from pneumonia and the community were so devastated the Sisters of St Joseph donated a section of their land for the erection of a memorial fountain.

During this period the Victorian facade with its gable entrance, was added to the front. Dr Sprod took over the practice and was appointed as the first health officer in the municipality.

Doctor Thomas Borthwick succeeded him and lived here from 1886 until 1924. He was prominent in the fields of public health and bacteriology as there were increasing outbreaks of typhoid and cholera due to the contamination of water supplies from effluent. He is recognised for his services to the community with the local park named after him. Drs E & F Borthwick continued the medical practice until late 1947.

22. Historic Shop

54 High St

Built in 1882 for Dr John Sprod it was rented and later owned by Chemist Joseph Woodman. It is on part of the site occupied in the 1840s by E.C. Gwynne (later Supreme Court Judge) which also housed a schoolroom. The detailing of the present building is typical of the 1880s and it continued to operate as a chemist shop into the 1930s.

23. Old Congregational Chapel

Cnr High St & Maesbury St

Dating from 1848 this is one of the most significant heritage buildings in the village. Built at the instigation of the influential John Roberts, a staunch Congregationalist, who opposed the notion of State funding for churches and schools, it replaced the earlier Village Church of 1844.

Charles Perry who would later construct the first Norwood Town Hall tendered for the work. The foundation stone was laid in April 1848 by William Giles, Manager of the South Australian Company and an ardent Congregationalist.

The Church opened in October 1848 and Rev John Strongman was the first pastor followed by Rev Henry Cheetham who served the community from 1852–1871. It was then used by the Bible Christians until 1903 when it was bought by the Seventh Day Adventists who raised the height of the roof, increased the size of the porch, replaced the windows and sent the original bell to a mission on Samoa.

In disrepair it was purchased and refurbished by internationally renowned stain glass artist Cedar Prest. Maesbury St takes its name from John Robert's 'Maesbury House' built in 1844.

24. Kensington Pioneer Park

This Congregational burial ground was consecrated in 1849. The first burial was two year old Eliza Mitchell on 28 February. The Reverend Cheetham's body was brought here from Milang for interment in 1881. The last burial was Emily Hughes in 1962. The cemetery was closed by government proclamation on 28 October 1964 and Borthwick Park was created by the Norwood Apex Club.

25. Pioneer Cottage

63 Maesbury St

Site of brick pioneer cottage of the 1840s constructed by Thomas Constable. It was one of the first to be built in the village. It featured a hipped corrugated iron roof, concave verandah and casement windows. In 1865 it was bought by David Packham who had established a chaff mill on adjacent land (now Kensington Mews). Packham was responsible for the mining of Stonyfell Quarries.

He built a residence at number 61 in 1869 and served as Mayor of the Council from 1878–1880. He entered parliament and became the Member for East Torrens from 1894 to 1896. He owned the Maesbury Street properties until his death in 1912.

26. Giannonis House

66 High St

Antonio Giannoni purchased this house in 1864. He is recognised as the first Italian to settle in South Australia after he arrived on the *Recovery* in 1839. He established a horse cab and undertaking business. His son Peter operated as a cabinet and coffin maker from this site and later became Mayor of Kensington & Norwood.

27. Terrace Housing

39–49 Bishops Pl

A neat terrace of houses built in 1880s. The tenants were mostly employees of the Tramway Company. Bishops Place between Dankel Ave and Regent St was acquired for school grounds and the houses were demolished including Bishop's Court which had been occupied by Bishop Augustus Short from 1847 to 1851.

These terrace houses were restored by the SA Housing Trust in 1976.



28. *Bishops Place*

28. Bishops Place

Cnr Dankel Ave & Marryatville Primary School

Bishops Place took its name from 'Bishops Court' — the house Bishop Augustus Short (first Anglican Bishop of Adelaide) rented from John Roberts on his arrival in the colony in December 1847. Bishop Short quickly set about the task of raising funds to build St Matthew's Church on Kensington Road which opened for worship in December 1848.

Bishops Court and several other historic properties were demolished in 1971 to provide more playing fields for the Marryatville Primary School.

Dankel Ave was named after George Dankel who arrived in the colony from Brunswick in Germany. A local butcher, the civic minded Dankel served as a ward councillor and his son became Mayor in 1937.



29. Fomer Horse Tram Depot

29. Fomer Horse Tram Depot

Regent St, Bishops Pl and Shipsters Rd

The stables and sheds of the Adelaide & Suburban Tramway Company were situated here from 1876–1909 until the electric trams began. The old horse trams ran on a single line from The Parade up Regent St and returned along Shipster's St and High St to join the double track to Adelaide in front of Clayton Church. The grounds of Marryatville Primary School along Shipsters Rd were the horse breaking paddocks for the company.

Tram St perpetuates the name of land previously used as resting paddocks for the horses and was also where horses were broken in and trained. The land was subdivided in the 1950s.

30. Electric Converter Station

11 Bishops Place

This two-storey brick dwelling was erected in 1929 as a converter station for the electric trams which were introduced across Adelaide. The little cottage at number 3 was built in 1880 for William Jones, who is listed in the directories as a 'tram driver'.



33. *Blacksmith's Workshop*

31. Victorian Residences

40–42 Regent St

Pair of stone residences with substantial basement rooms built 1877 typical of early Victorian architecture.

32. Historic Shop & Residence

36–36a Regent St

Bluestone shop and residence built by Josiah Roberts a butcher in 1881. Butcher John Wright took over the premises from 1885–1890 when George Dankel, continued operating the business. In 1895 George represented the Kensington Ward and in 1913 was elected to the Federal Parliament as the member for Boothby.

33. Blacksmith's Workshop

36 Bridge St

James Pappin, a blacksmith, coachbuilder and farrier, arrived from Cornwall in 1850 and operated his business from this site. A new bluestone shop front was erected in 1874. The business operated until the 1940s.



34. Kensington Hotel

34. Kensington Hotel

Cnr Regent St & Thornton St

Henry Scott opened the Kensington Arms Inn in 1840. It was described as being near a track formed by teamsters bringing stringy bark to Adelaide from the forests on The Tiers. Mr Scott offered wines, spirits and malt liquors of the very best quality as well operating a general provision store adjacent to the inn. In 1849, it was rebuilt and named the Globe Hotel.

The present bluestone hotel with brick quoins and splayed corners were designed by architects Thomas English and George Soward and dates from 1882.

35. Thornton Street

Named after pioneer settler, Edward Thornton, who owned six of the original allotments and who ran a private school in the early years of the village in the 1840s. His residence was located on part of what is now Borthwick Park and was owned by the family until the late 1890s.



36. Brick Buildings

29 High St

This corner and the premises facing Phillips Street was the site of Charles Blades Butcher Shop & yards. There has been a butcher's shop on this corner for over a hundred years since the 1860s. The present brick building was erected about 1920.

37. Devils Half Acre

Phillips St

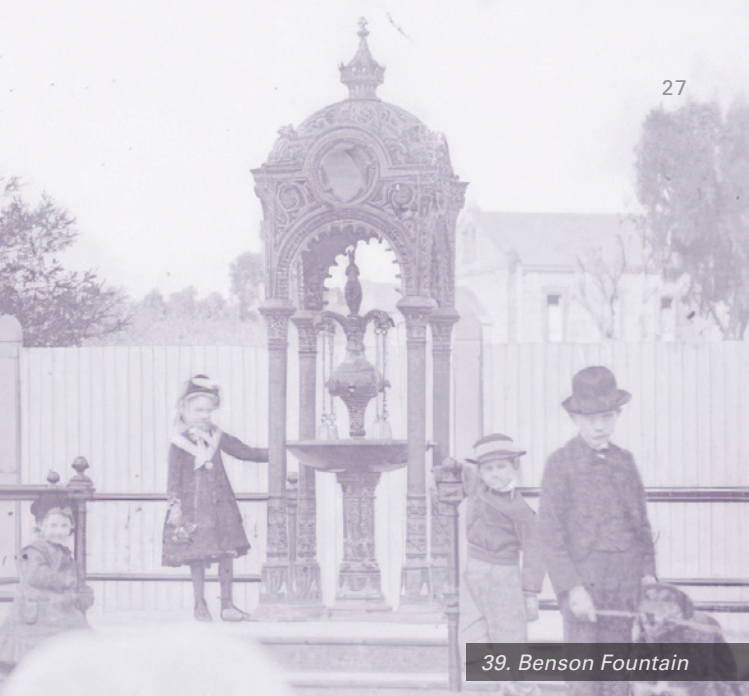
A name given to this area probably associated with religious discrimination at that time against the Catholic community who lived in the cottages near the Sisters of St Joseph's Convent. The Norwood Swimming Pool was officially opened on the 23 February, 1957 by the Premier Sir Thomas Playford. It was the first public pool erected after WW2 and was built over Second Creek which was diverted into underground pipes. The legendary Harry Gallagher conducted coaching sessions in the Olympic sized pool while Dawn Fraser swam exhibition laps in 1960 prior to the Rome Olympic Games. The Norwood Pool has become a much-loved icon in the local community.



38. St Joseph's Convent & Chapel

Phillips St to Portrush Rd

The provincial home of the Order of the Sisters of St Joseph, the Institute was founded in South Australia by Father Julian Tension Woods and Mother Mary MacKillop in 1866. In 1872 after Mary MacKillop's excommunication order was lifted the Sisters of St Joseph moved from Norwood to an eight roomed house and a cottage on this site on a triangular piece of land which had belonged to Elizabeth Main. The foundation stone for the Kensington Chapel was laid on the 8 September 1875. The chapel was on the ground level with sleeping quarters for the Josephites above and below. By 1905 it was apparent that the convent would have to expand and so the main double storey building facing Portrush Road was officially opened by the Catholic Archbishop, John O'Reilly on 24 June 1906. Mother Mary MacKillop lived at Kensington from 1872-1883. She died in Sydney on 8 August 1909. The cry for her sainthood began in 1926.



39. Benson Fountain

39. Benson Fountain

Cnr High St & Portrush Rd

Dr John Benson served the Kensington and Norwood community for ten years and in that time gained the loyalty and admiration of a large number of people. Tragically he died of pneumonia on the 8 July 1877 aged 39 years. On the day of his funeral shops were closed and flags were flown at half-mast. The mile-long funeral procession of many carriages and hundreds of mourners from all sections of the community followed the hearse from his home at 50 High St to St Bartholomew's Church, Norwood and then to West Terrace Cemetery.

The fountain was erected by public subscription in 1879 on land given by the Sisters of St Joseph who respected the much loved Dr Benson. The memorial fountain was unveiled by Lady Elizabeth Smith wife of Sir E.T. Smith then Mayor of Adelaide (formerly Mayor of Kensington & Norwood). Note: the early Australian coat-of-arms long before the advent of Federation.

Notes



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City of
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