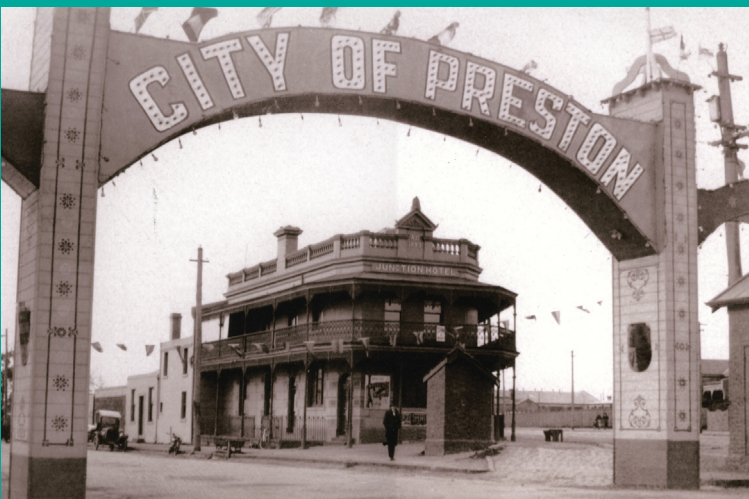


HISTORY ON HIGH

Dundas Street
to Tyler Street



History on High is a self-guided tour along High Street — Darebin's 'spine'. Each section of the tour provides a snapshot of Darebin's rich and diverse history, from its early white settlement to the thriving creative municipality it is today.

You can choose to visit all the sites in this guide in order, or do a few at a time, starting from any point on High Street.

This project has been produced for FUSE Darebin in collaboration with Darebin Libraries.

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land now known as the City of Darebin, and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.





1

Junction Hotel

2-4 High Street, Preston

There has been a Junction Hotel situated on this site since at least 1859. The first hotel was run by Edmund Sheldrake Plummer. This hotel was demolished and rebuilt in 1893 after the Ralph family took over. The present building dates from 1926. The photo shows the hotel in its second phase around 1900.

During the 1890s the hotel was the meeting place for the Preston Shire Council as well as having a room available for a morgue as required. Surprisingly many hotels had rooms available for use as a morgue and inquests were frequently conducted there.

The Planet Theatre, operated by the Star Theatre Company, was on the corner of Miller and High Streets (opposite the Junction Hotel)





2

Corner Miller and High Streets, Preston

The corner of Miller Street and High Street has had many uses over the years. Prior to 1900 it was a sales yard, selling stock to the surrounding tanneries and meat processing factories.

In the 1920s it had become empty paddocks and here can be seen hosting land auctions. Note the factory to the left of the tent still stands but all the chimneys have since gone.

In 1939 the Planet Theatre opened its doors on the site. That only lasted twenty years and became a motor repair shop and a furniture store before being demolished for apartments in 2012.





4

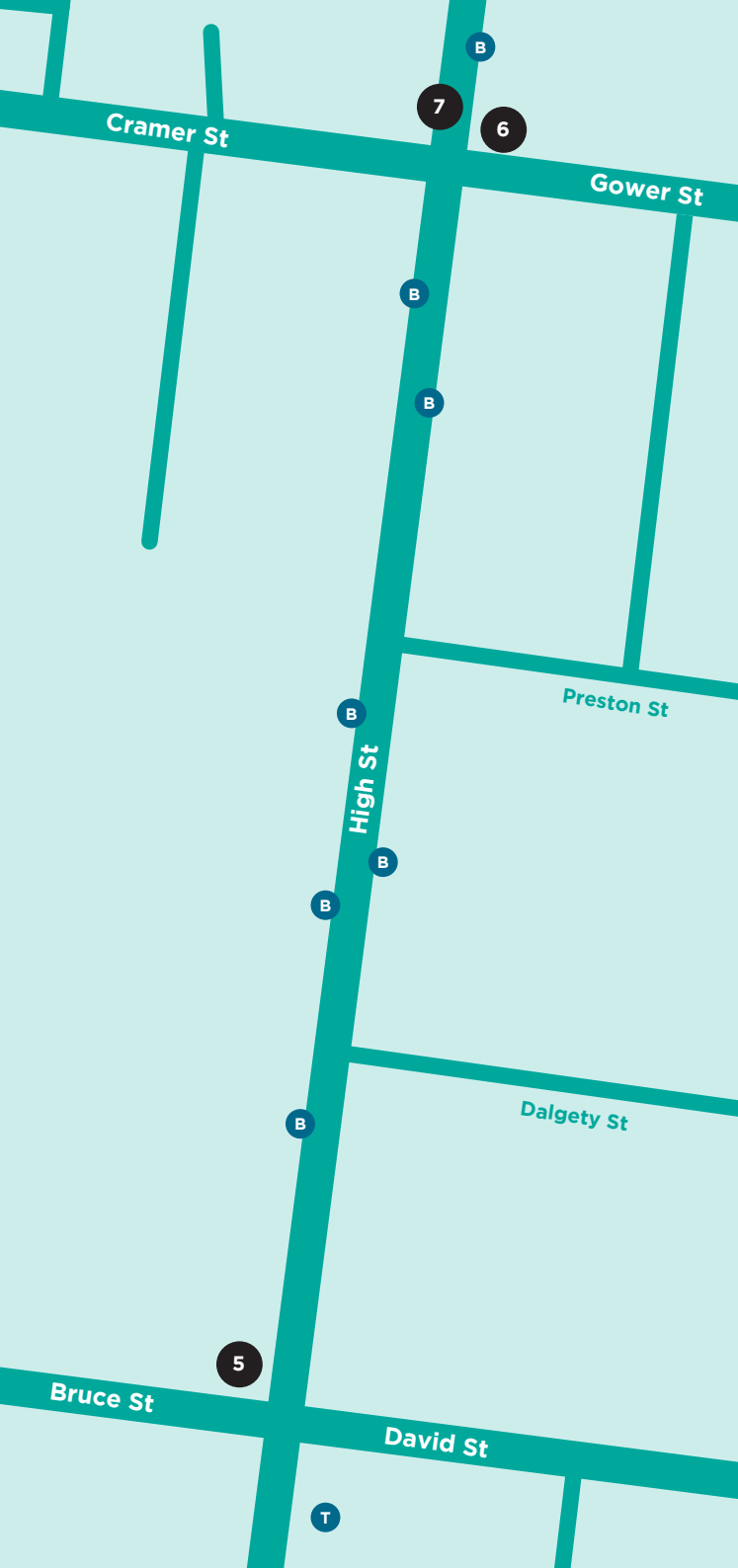
Businesses along High Street

High Street, Preston

The Howe's Leather company was just one of the many industries dotted along High Street between Junction and Bell Streets. With Hutton's meat processing plant and a number of small tanneries and abattoirs along its length, South Preston was known as 'Porkopolis' and notorious for the foul smells emanating from the nearby factories.

On the east side of High Street near Yann Street stood Frederick Yann's blacksmith's business. He operated there from 1878 until 1911.





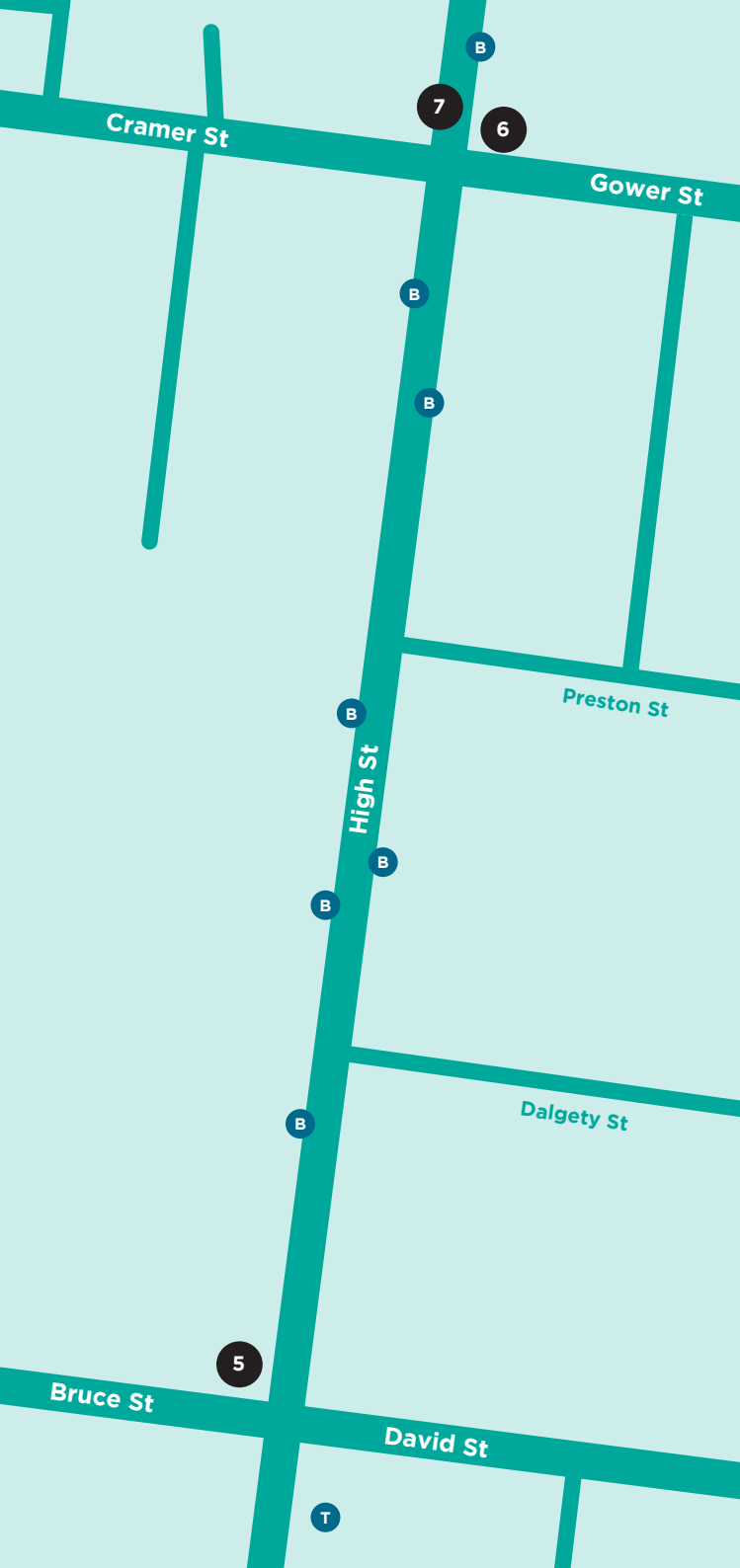
5

High Street looking north

315 High Street, Preston

Taken around 1930 from just below Bruce Street, you can see two rows of brand new single fronted shops built during the previous decade. Most of these shops are still standing.

Prior to their construction this section of High Street was still largely paddocks with the odd house or small weatherboard shop and even a single roomed National Bank of Australia.



6

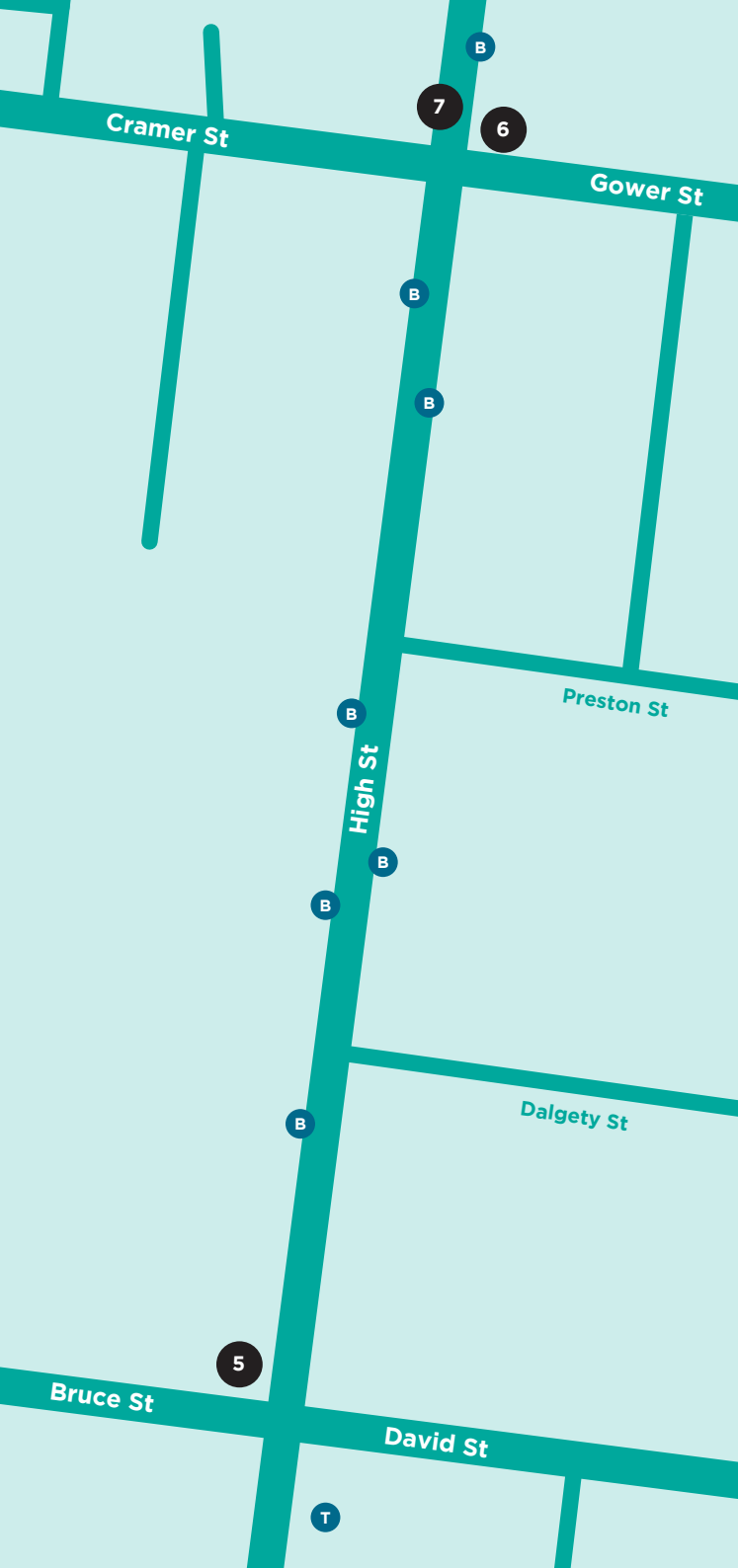
Star Theatre

346 High Street, Preston

Original Star Theatre (later named St James Theatre)

The Star Theatre opened on 28 September 1922 (Melbourne Show Day). The main attraction was the silent adventure romance *The Mark of Zorro*, which starred Douglas Fairbanks and was accompanied by an orchestra. Prior to this, films were screened in the Shire Hall. From the 1920s until the late 1930s cinemas prospered and others opened, but with the arrival of television in 1956, cinemas gradually closed down. The Star, by then named the St James Theatre, operated until 1965. The Star Theatre Company also operated the Planet Theatre, at 1 Miller Street (see Stop 1).

The only remnant of the Star Theatre is the back brick façade (just near the Salvation Army), which now features a mural by a local artist.



7

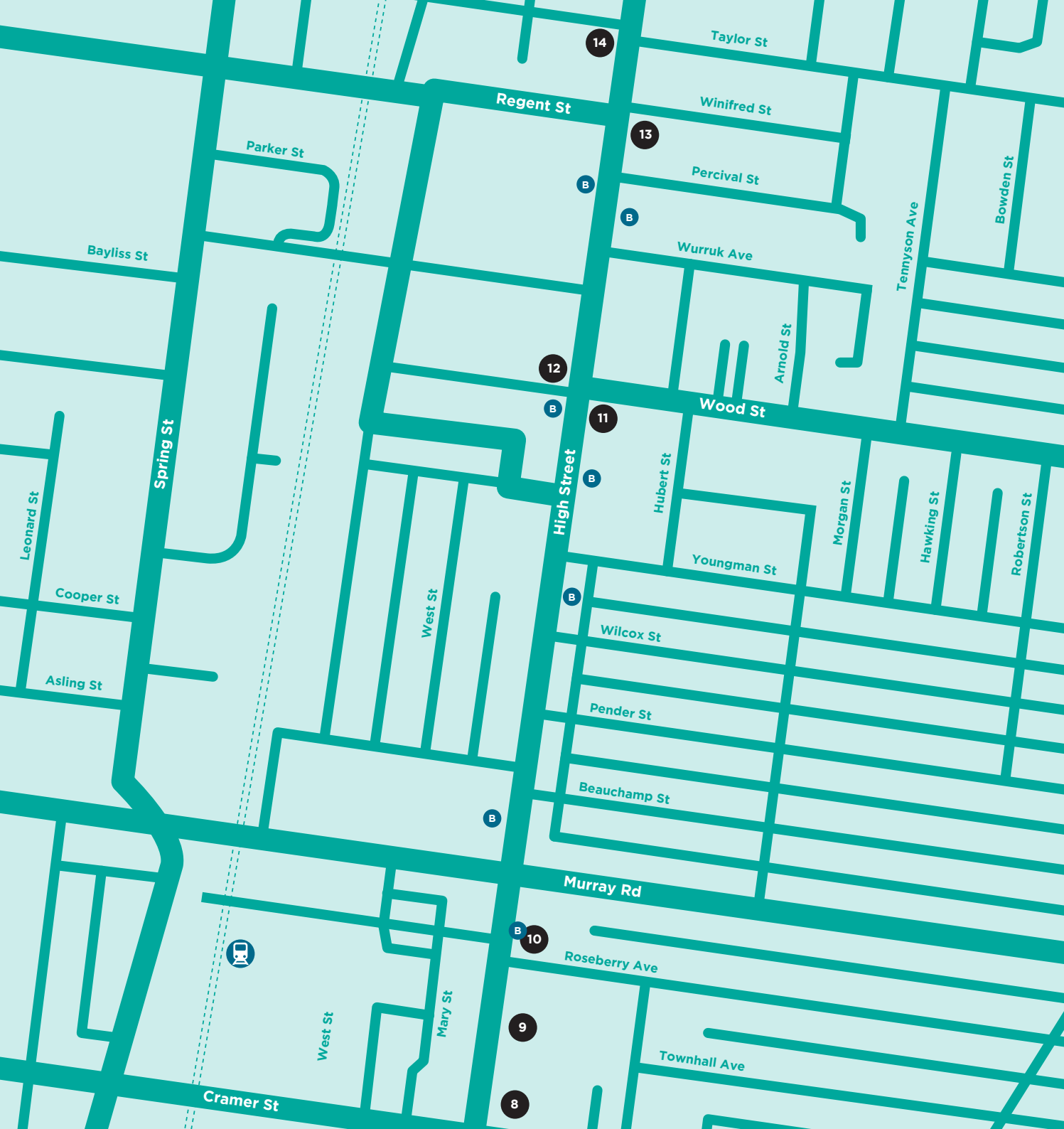
Council Club Hotel

393-397 High Street, Preston

Built in 1888 the Council Club Hotel was one of the most substantial buildings in what was still a largely rural Preston. It offered the most luxurious accommodation in the whole district.

A few small timber shops were scattered between Cramer Street and Murray Road.

In 1961 a bowling alley was built in Cramer Street opposite the Preston Market. It was not a success and the decision was made to demolish the Council Club Hotel and relocate to the now empty bowling alley. The hotel was renamed Cramer's.



14

Taylor St

Regent St

Winifred St

Parker St

13

Percival St

B

B

Wurruk Ave

Tennyson Ave

Bowden St

Bayliss St

12

B

Wood St

Arnold St

11

B

Hubert St

Morgan St

Hawking St

Robertson St

Youngman St

Spring St

Leonard St

Cooper St

Asling St

West St

Wilcox St

Pender St

Beauchamp St

B

Murray Rd

B

10

Roseberry Ave

9

Townhall Ave

8



West St

Mary St

Cramer St



8

Preston Town Hall

350 High Street, Preston

In 1885, Preston split from the Jika-Jika Shire to form the Preston Shire Council. The Council offices were located at the Junction Hotel until 1895, when the Preston Town Hall was built on the corner of High and Gower Streets.

The Council ran a competition to design the new building, and a plan for an eclectic blend of the Queen Anne and French Second Empire styles by the architects Birtwhistle and Scanlon was chosen. This design is significant because most Town Halls in Melbourne were built in the Classical Revival style.

The 1880s were a time of great prosperity in Melbourne and the grandiose new Town Hall stood as a symbol of Preston Shire Council's civic aspirations.



The Preston Cenotaph was constructed in 1923 in memory of the Preston residents who served in the First World War. A second memorial site inside commemorates those that served in the Second World War and Korea.

Take the opportunity to read the inscriptions on the Cenotaph that stands outside the Preston Town Hall. The Cenotaph was built to commemorate deceased servicemen and women and was constructed in 1923. This photograph was taken in 1930.

The wrought iron fence that previously surrounded the Town Hall was dismantled and repatriated as part of the War effort in World War 2.

The first library in the City of Preston was on the ground floor of the Preston Town Hall, along with the Returned and Services League (RSL).

An interesting side note is that during the Second World War the Town Hall was taken over by the RAAF for use as the Air Defence Headquarters. From this site the RAAF planned to maintain the air defence of Melbourne from Japanese bombing raids.



9

Preston Bowling Club

360 High Street, Preston

The Preston Bowling Club was located next door to the Post Office. You can see the old post office on the left of the photo (where the modern post office now stands.) The Club was on the current site of Lucchini's, which is a well-known café and patisserie.





10

Preston Fire Station

378 High Street, Preston

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade station at Preston was designed by Cedric Ballantyne and constructed by 1912. The total cost of the building is estimated at £2475. The station comprised two, two-storey brick buildings and is significant as it demonstrates the way of life, accommodation and methods of work at fire stations in the early twentieth century. It is also significant as one of a number of community buildings erected in the area, as Preston progressed toward becoming a city. No longer a working fire station it now operates as a café.





11

Woods General Store

530 High Street, Preston

(Corner of High and Wood Streets)

The Wood Family was one of Preston's pioneer families, arriving in the district in 1850 as part of a large group travelling from England. They came prepared to establish themselves as small businessmen, and brought enough goods to open a General Store. The store sold the usual range of products, including feed for stock, chaff and grain, eggs, cheese, clothing, assorted tools and confectionery. The store quickly became a community focal point and gained a useful advantage over competing stores by becoming Preston's first Post Office.

As Postmaster and operator of the General Store, Edward Wood had some power and influence within the early Preston community. The fledging community had been unofficially named 'Irish Town' by another local pioneer, Samuel Jeffrey, and his fellow Irish countrymen but Wood and his followers decided it should be named 'Preston' after a place in the UK. This was much to the dismay of Jeffrey, who had championed the cause of 'Irish Town'.

See the commemorative brass plaque embedded in the footpath outside this location, which is now a bustling Medical Centre.



12

Preston Arms Hotel

635 High Street, Preston

The first reference to the Preston Arms Hotel was in September 1855, when Edward Sheldrake Plummer's application for a hotel licence failed due to his non-attendance at the hearing. In December of that year, Plummer appeared at the Bourke Licensing Session and was granted a licence for the hotel.

During the 1850s, the Preston Arms Hotel frequently appeared in the papers due to a wide range of activities. Catherine Mulqueeny was the publican during this time, who was previously the publican of the Prince Alfred Hotel up the road. Note the Mulqueeny signage on the building.

The Hotel was part of a small but successful community, which included Woods General Store and the Preston Uniting Church.





13

Harvey's Grocery Store

626 High Street, Preston

The first mention of a shop on this site was in 1894 when James Holmes ran his business from there. In 1904 Joseph Harvey took over the site, relocating from his previous shop just a bit further north on the west side near Station Street.

Harvey was to run his store right up until the end of the Second World War.

Even after he left, the store continued as a grocers, before becoming a TAB and then finally a real estate agency.





14

Irish Town

*Cnr. High and Tyler Streets,
North Preston*

Samuel Jeffrey refused to acknowledge that his community had been renamed Preston, (see Stop 11) and insisted on leaving 'S. Jeffrey, Irish Town' on the side of his drays and giving Irish Town as his postal address.

Coming into faith in his late twenties, Jeffrey was instrumental to the building of a small Methodist Church on his land at the corner of High and Tyler Streets. The Preston Methodist Church is now known as the Preston Uniting Church.

In the early 1870s, Jeffrey offered three-quarters of a hectare of land in Tyler Street to the Victorian Education Department at the time. The Department built Preston Primary School on the land and it opened in January 1875. Jeffrey Street, which runs to the west of the school, is an ongoing reminder of the Jeffrey family's position as early pioneers.

To find out more about Preston's Irish connection, go to heritage.darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au/article/888

Irish Town Monument: See the commemorative marker outside the church.

Information has been sourced from Darebin Heritage, visit Darebin Libraries for an extensive range of heritage articles. Telephone: **1300 655 355**

heritage.darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au

If you come across any broken, raised or damaged footpaths, please contact Darebin Customer Service on 8470 8888 or use **www.snapsendsolve.com** to report.

More information

Public Transport: Route 86 Tram runs High Street to Plenty Road. www.ptv.vic.gov.au

Public Toilets: www.toiletmap.gov.au

You may also be interested in other Walking discoveries in your neighbourhood



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