

WALKS IN MIDDLE PARK: 2

CHURCHES

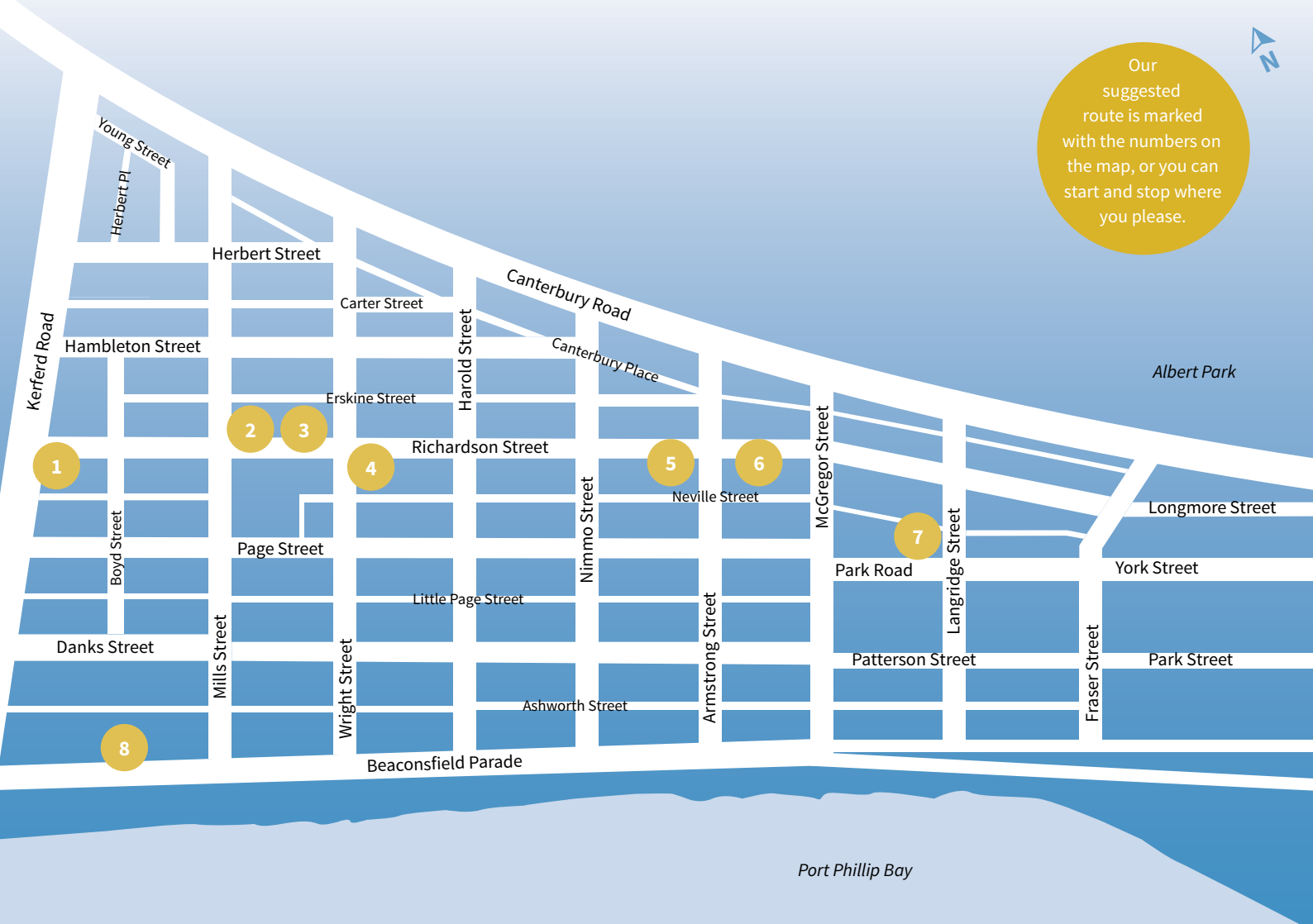
PAST AND PRESENT



Middle Park History Group

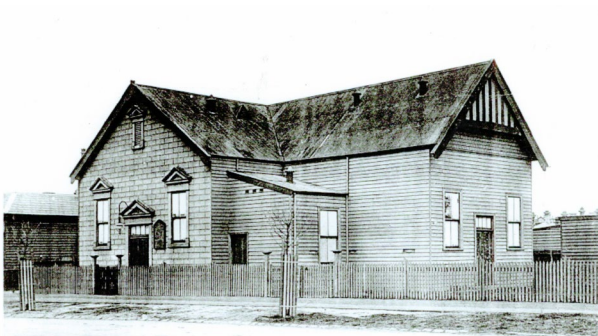


Our suggested route is marked with the numbers on the map, or you can start and stop where you please.



There are many buildings in Middle Park that once were churches. Now only two churches remain that still hold services for their congregations: the Albert Park Baptist Church and Our Lady of Mt Carmel. Most of the churches were built between 1891 and 1928 when Middle Park itself was being established. They were places of worship as well as meeting places for vibrant communities of various religions. Social changes in the community brought diminishing attendance at church and some are now converted into dwellings.

1 Albert Park Baptist Church



Albert Park Baptist Church 1890-1909



Albert Park Baptist Church 1935

The Albert Park Baptist Church is on the corner of Kerferd Road and Richardson Street. The first church, a timber building, was built in 1891. Burnt down by vandals in

1909, it was replaced in 1911 by a brick structure facing Kerferd Road, and remains one of only two active churches in Middle Park. This red brick building has five bays with Gothic-style leadlight windows seen from Richardson Street. The façade has cream-coloured double doors with a leadlight window on either side and three more windows above the entrance lobby, topped by a slate roof.

2 Church of Christ



(SLV, c1970s)

This building, planned to seat 150 people, was erected in 1909, designed by W. Meekison, the first Pastor. A simple design of red brick containing three bays, later increased to five, each with a Gothic-style window, gave entry from Richardson Street. The Marseilles-style tiles of the roof give a black and red effect. Following declining membership a Greek language school was set up in 1976, initiated by the church and a member of the Greek community. After the sale of the building in 1977 it became a photographic studio. During the 1990s it was converted into three apartments, and dormer windows were introduced into the roof, cleverly designed to maximise the interior height.

3 Presbyterian Church



(CoPP Local History Collection, n.d.)

This elegant church, unfortunately now gone, at 245-251 Richardson Street, was designed by J.H. Stainsbury, architect, and opened in 1912. Built of red brick in the baroque style it displayed elaborate moulded-cement fenestration of its leadlight windows. The arched

entrance in Richardson Street was centred between triple windows with additional windows above, between two pillars. The Interior consisted of a nave and two aisles, the nave being flanked on each side by an arcade of five Gothic arches supported on four light Gothic columns.



(CoPP Local History Collection, n.d.)

A church hall was constructed next door. Church services ceased following consolidation with the Congregational and Methodist Churches. Purchased by the Victorian Education Department in 1976, the building was to be used as an additional resource centre associated with Middle Park Primary School, but was burnt down in 1981 by vandals. Four two-storey townhouses and a children's playground now occupy the site.

4 Our Lady of Mount Carmel



(CoPP c1900s, sm0312)

The first Catholic church on the corner of Richardson Street and Wright Street was built in 1890, enlarged in 1912, then replaced by a Romanesque-style building in 1927 (pictured on the cover of this brochure). It was designed by architect A.A. Fritsch in red and buff brick with stained-glass windows by the German Studio Zettler. The Carmelite Priory, in red brick, stands behind in Wright Street. An Indigenous garden, on the Wright Street side, is planted with shrubs and grasses known to the local Yalukit-Willam clan of the Boon Wurrung people. On the south-eastern side stands the Carmelite Hall which now houses the Carmelite Library, a unique theological library of Spirituality and Mysticism. Note also the sculpture in the Memorial Garden, between the church and the hall, of the virgin and child by Robert Prenzel. This once stood on the top of the church cupola, but after being struck by lightning in 1989, it was replaced by a bronze replica.

5 Methodist Church 1



(SLV, c1970s)

This building was constructed in 1891, and was then known as the Wesleyan Chapel, but by 1902 had become the Methodist Church. It is now barely recognisable as a sacred site. Romanesque in style, with polychrome brickwork, the façade contains three arches, one central with a smaller one on either side, better viewed from the opposite side of Richardson Street. Note the interior consisting of a cove ceiling, lined with tongue and groove stained pine wood, all occupied currently by a health and wellness group. A Sunday School operated behind the church in a separate building. A growing congregation necessitated a larger meeting place which was erected at number 288 Richardson Street. The first building was then converted into a kindergarten.

6 Methodist Church 2



(SLV, c1970s)

Alec S. Eggleston, well-known church architect, designed this building at 288 Richardson Street with seating for 300 and furniture of Tasmanian oak. Opened in 1923, it is of late Edwardian design with a slate roof, an octagonal tower and a gothic-style main window, which contains a leadlight cartouche showing a bible and flowers. The octagonal tower topped with a castellated parapet is beside a loggia entrance which has two side bays. Following the inauguration of the Uniting Church, attendances gradually decreased, resulting in closure. In 1992 the building was sold and by 1994 had been converted into three apartments with an impressive glass door across the entrance. The building is now known as The Abbey.

7 St. Anselm's Anglican Church



(St Silas church archives, n.d.)



(Interior of St Anselm's, NLA, c1950s)

In 1890 the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne purchased a double block on the corner of Langridge Street and Neville Street. A weatherboard church was built facing Langridge Street, designed to cater for 600 people, opening in 1891. The dedication ceremony was conducted by Rt.

Rev. Field Flowers Goe, Bishop of Melbourne. In 1922 a second church was opened on the north-west corner of Langridge Street and Park Road; the earlier building became a kindergarten and hall. The new building was created in red brick, with a roof of terracotta shingles and finial topped by a Celtic cross above the entrance in Langridge Street. The hall was replaced in 1969 by a brick structure, named the Emmeline Murton Hall, on the corner of Langridge and Neville Streets, designed by Blyth and Josephine Johnson, architects. The Church was closed in 2000, the parish being amalgamated with that of St. Silas in Albert Park. The Vicarage in Park Road was erected in 1911, a two-storey brick building with a side entrance and balustrades on the verandah and balcony. This is now a family home. The brick church and hall have been converted into units. A plaque on the wall in Park Road celebrates 100 years of worship.

8 The Good Shepherd Convent Chapel, Beaconsfield Parade



From about 1895 to 1974 this large site was occupied by a complex consisting of a convent, a girls' hostel and a commercial laundry administered by the Good Shepherd Sisters, as well as a Catholic primary school. As part of the convent complex there was a large chapel, its semi-circular apse end facing Beaconsfield Parade. The complex closed in the early 1970s and in 1976 the Housing Commission bought the parcel of land from Mills Street to half way down the complex. The former convent, laundry and chapel were demolished with only the external wall remaining. By the end of the decade half the convent complex had been developed as the Shoreline public housing and the other half as medium-rise, up-market private units. The primary school on the site continued for some years until it, too, was sold and the school building was developed as a large private house, with several modern townhouses on the adjoining land.

Publications such as this walking tour are produced by the Middle Park History Group, dedicated to helping residents and others appreciate the history of Middle Park.

Your membership supports this very important work and offers opportunities to actively explore our rich heritage. Annual membership is \$15.00.

For details, visit middleparkhistory.org

BOOKS BY MIDDLE PARK HISTORY GROUP

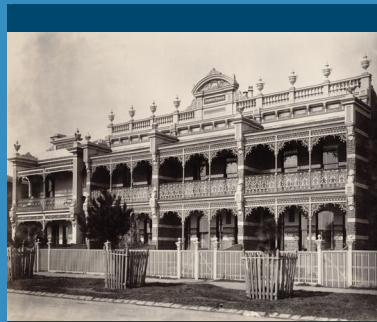


THE HEART OF MIDDLE PARK

STORIES FROM A SUBURB BY THE SEA

The Middle Park History Group

Middle Park Historical Series Number One



MIDDLE PARK

FROM SWAMP

TO SUBURB

The Middle Park History Group
Middle Park Historical Series Number Two



MIDDLE PARK THE WAY WE WERE

The Middle Park History Group
Middle Park Historical Series Number Three

Available for purchase from the Middle Park History Group and other retail outlets – see middleparkhistory.org for details.

Published by Middle Park History Group Inc. © 2018
PO Box 5276 Middle Park VIC 3206
middleparkhistorygroup@gmail.com
middleparkhistory.org

Research: Diana Phoenix
Editorial: Sonya Cameron and Jackie Tidey
Design: Vanessa Battersby



The Middle Park History Group
is supported by the
City of Port Phillip.