Discover South Melbourne

A walk around South Melbourne and Albert Park is an historical delight. Grand terraces, formal gardens, back lanes and hidden secrets all make for a walker's paradise. What's more there are plenty of places to grab a drink or a snack, as well as seats for the weary, and if it all gets too much there are trams to take you home. This walk provides just a taste of some of the highlights of the area. If you have the time have a wander down some of the back streets and laneways; they are full of hidden treasures and surprises. This area is well served

by public transport; the routes are marked on the map. You may also want to take a look at the two stations, South Melbourne and Albert Park, which now service the No 96 light rail. Albert Park Station was completed in 1880 and was originally known as "The Butts", because soldiers of the Royal Victoria Volunteer Artillery used it to get to the shooting range down by the sea, which was also the site of a major gun emplacement protecting Melbourne from invasion by sea. From South Melbourne railway footbridge you can clearly see the Dorcas Street bluestone bridge, which was built in 1857.

About the trail

Trail Length 3.5km

The walk is about 3.5km long and the terrain is flat. It should take about one hour to complete but it is worth giving yourself extra time to explore or to stop for a coffee or snack.

Public transport

The walk starts and finishes near public transport. Trams 112 and 96 will take you into the City or to St Kilda. Tram 1 will take you to the City or to the Beach.

For further information about public transport please call Metlink ph: 131 638.

Refreshments

There are plenty of cafes and bars to choose from along the route, on Clarendon Street, Coventry Street and in Albert Park. Refreshments are also available at the South Melbourne Market during open hours. The market is open Wednesdays 8am-4pm, Fridays 8am-6pm and on Saturdays and Sundays 8am-4pm.

Toilets

Public toilets are available in St Vincent Gardens, the South Melbourne Town Hall (during business hours) and the South Melbourne Market during open hours.

More information

Sustainable transport

The City of Port Phillip's Sustainable transport Unit aims to encourage residents and visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport wherever possible. This trail is part of a series of guided walks and self guided trails that help residents and visitors to discover Port Phillip by foot. It is one of the initiatives of the City of Port Phillip's Walk Plan 2005 - 2010 that aims to increase walking through improved facilities and programs to reacquaint people with their feet. For more information call ASSIST on (03) 9209 6777 or visit www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/walking.html

Streets For Living
walking + cycling + public transport

Local history

This walk provides just a taste of the local history of this area. If you would like to know more there are books available at the Emerald Hill Library. There are also local history displays at the South Melbourne Town Hall that can be viewed during business hours.

For more information call ASSIST on (03) 9209 6777 or visit the local history page on the website at www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/local_history_library.html

Getting physical

Greater physical activity results in better health and wellbeing. Keeping active can be as simple as walking a bit more than we already do each day.

CITY OF PORT PHILLIP

South Melbourne

Historic Precincts tour

This trail leads you on a short walk to explore some of the iconic places around South Melbourne and Albert Park
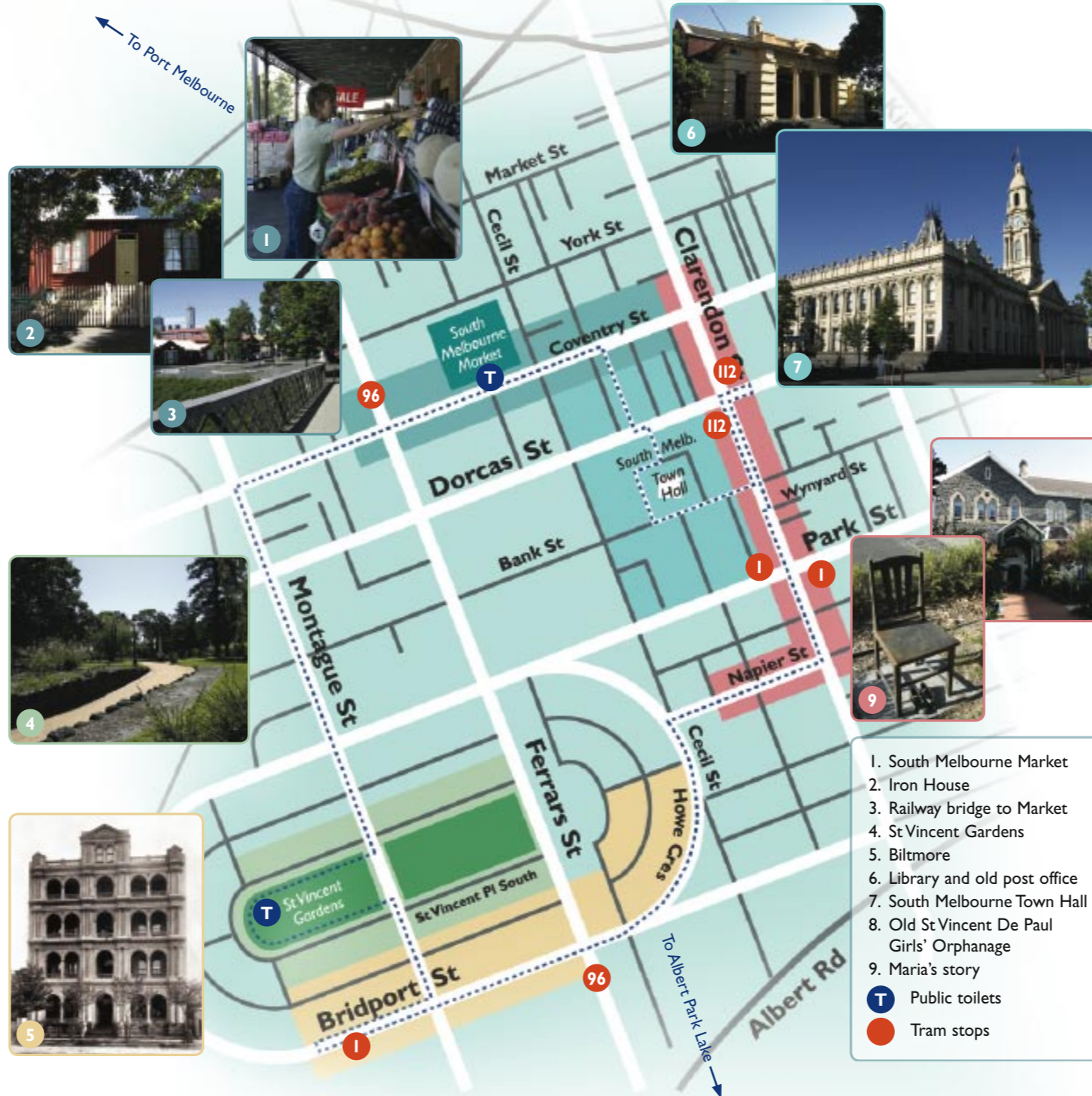
The historic precincts

Emerald Hill

This area was once used as a corroboree ground by the Boonerwrung people. After European settlement the area was named Emerald Hill because it stood out as a green hill amongst the surrounding swamps. Emerald Hill changed its name to South Melbourne in 1883. In 1856 the Melbourne Protestant Orphan Asylum was built on this site. The South Melbourne Town Hall (opened 1880) was once home to the police station, post office, library, and the fire station as well as council offices. Across the street the Emerald Hill Library, which was formerly the post office (1912), and the police station (1928) were built when the council needed more space.

Clarendon St reet

Take a short detour from Clarendon Street down Dorcas Street and you will see St Luke's Church, built in 1857. It was one of the first buildings in South Melbourne and its elevation shows how much the level of Clarendon Street was lowered in the 1860s. Before 1880 the building on the corner of Wynyard Street was the post and telegraph office. You will need to walk down Wynyard Street to the back of the building to see the original bluestone. Walk along Clarendon Street and turn into Napier Street past the old St Vincent De Paul Girls' Orphanage, which was built between 1863 and 1867. The Sisters of Mercy vacated the site in 1965. In 1993 it was converted into a hostel for the aged. On the corner of Church Street is a small chair and a set of shoes; with Maria's story inscribed by the chair. These are part of a project telling the stories of people in Port Phillip.

Albert Park

A short walk from South Melbourne is Albert Park. As you walk through here you will pass Howe Crescent, completed in about 1868. Dominating the Albert Park precinct is the imposing Biltmore building, which was built in 1887 and extended in 1889 and 1920. Originally the Albert Park Coffee Palace, it later became a private hotel. During World War II it was used to billet American army officers, after which staff from the Royal Melbourne Hospital lived here. It is now subdivided into private apartments.

St Vincent Place and Gardens

The distinctive oval street pattern is based on the London square model, which is rare in Australia. It was laid out in 1857 and contains a number of grand buildings. The gardens were initially developed between 1868 and 1871, although major redevelopment was carried out between 1904 and 1912. These gardens provide a wonderful place to stop and rest; there are drinking fountains and toilets here.

South Melbourne Market

On your way to South Melbourne Market you will pass the Iron House at 399 Coventry Street (1853/1854). It was one of seven portable kit houses in Coventry Street. They were manufactured in Manchester and shipped out in kit form to ease the housing shortage during the gold rush.

Follow along Coventry Street across Ferrars Street and over the railway bridge to South Melbourne Market. The market was established in 1867 on a Crown grant of land to the former City of South Melbourne. Today 140 businesses operate from the market.

Map labels:

To Port Melbourne

Market St · York St · Cecil St · Clarendon St · Coventry St · Dorcas St · Bank St · Montague St · Ferrars St · Howe Cres · St Vincent Pl South · Bridport St · Cecil St · Napier St · Wynyard St · Park St · Albert Rd

South Melbourne Market · South Melb. Town Hall · St Vincent Gardens

To Albert Park Lake

Legend:

1. South Melbourne Market
2. Iron House
3. Railway bridge to Market
4. St Vincent Gardens
5. Biltmore
6. Library and old post office
7. South Melbourne Town Hall
8. Old St Vincent De Paul Girls' Orphanage
9. Maria's story

T Public toilets

● Tram stops