

Walks in Port Phillip

AROUND ELWOOD VILLAGE



A guide around Elwood's village and waterways
MEYER EIDELSON

← St Kilda Beach

MAP NOT TO SCALE

TRAIL KEY

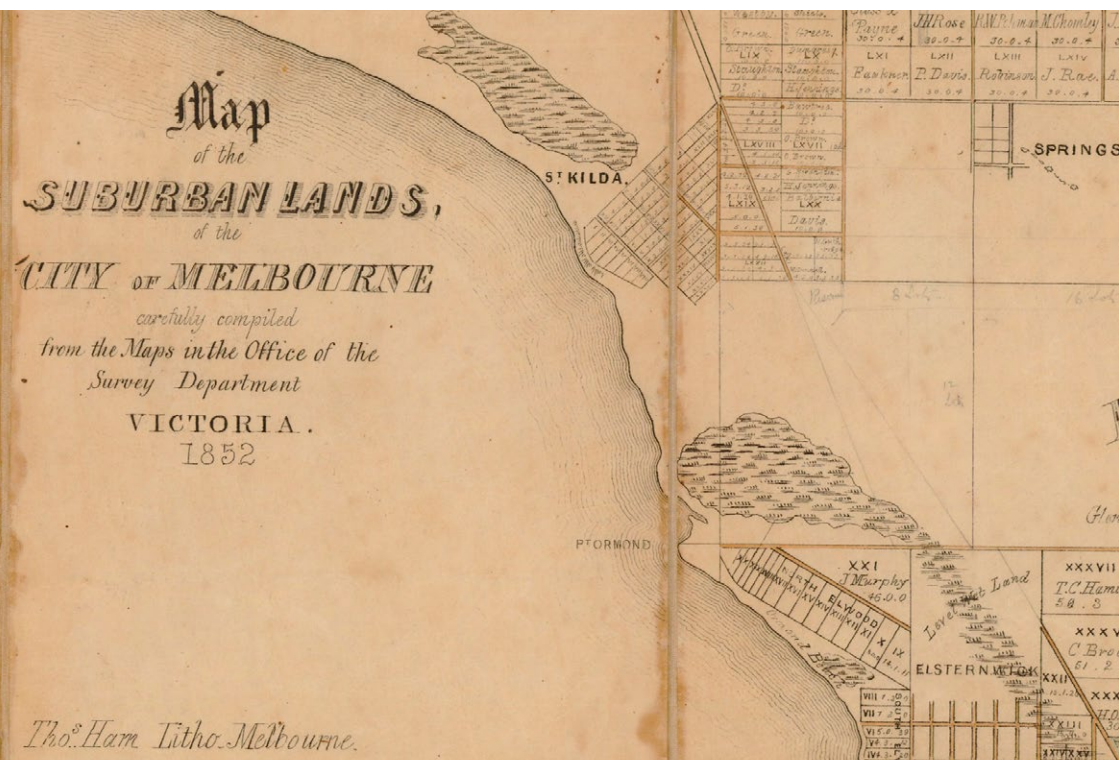
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|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. ST KILDA STREET BRIDGE | 12. LORNE AND OMEO VILLAS | 23. SUNDIAL |
| 2. PAIR OF CONCRETE SHOPS | 13. TIUNA, 8 TIUNA GVE | 24. ELWOOD CANAL |
| 3. BROADWAY THEATRE | 14. THALASSA, 17 BYRNE AVE | 25. MORAN RESERVE |
| 4. SHOP AND DWELLING | 15. ST BEDE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND HALL | 26. JOHN CRIBBES FOOTBRIDGE |
| 5. 90 ORMOND ROAD | 16. ORMOND MANSIONS | 27. POINT ORMOND HILL |
| 6. HORRY PEACOCK LANE | 17. ALDERLEY BUILDING | 28. ELWOOD BEACH KIOSK |
| 7. FORMER VAUTIER HOUSE | 18. STATE SAVING BANK | 29. TEA TREE RESERVE |
| 8. DOCKER HOUSE | 19. ST COLUMBA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL | 30. ELWOOD SAILING CLUB |
| 9. 31 VAUTIER STREET | 20. ELWOOD POST OFFICE | 31. FORMER ELWOOD BOWLING CLUB |
| 10. 93 ORMOND ROAD | 21. WINDERMERE | 32. ELWOOD LIFE SAVING CLUB |
| 11. WAVE STREET FORD | 22. SHELLEY STREET | 33. HEAD STREET OUTFALL PLATFORM |

This trail celebrates the vibrant Elwood Village and its surrounding landscapes of canal, lake, park and seashore.

Once abundant in wildlife and wetlands, with a rocky headland that provided outstanding views over Nerm, or Hobson's Bay, the area now known as Elwood was a rich source of food and a place for cultural gatherings for the Yalukut Weelam clan of the Boon Wurrung.

Elwood was surveyed by Robert Hoddle in 1850 but it was the early waterways that shaped the suburb's settlement and public spaces. The huge Elwood wetland was the major impediment to colonial development. Its draining from 1889 onwards initiated a residential boom. The Elwood canal remains as a unique seam of open space through the traditional country of the Boon Wurrung people.

Superintendent Charles La Trobe named the suburb for the rebel Quaker poet Thomas Ellwood, thus inspiring the poetic theme for almost 30 streets. The shops established in Ormond Road as early as World War One are today the heart of an expanding and cosmopolitan seaside community. The popular beach and bushland foreshore attracts local residents, sporting clubs and visitors from across wider Melbourne.



Map of the suburban lands of the City of Melbourne, 1852 [detail].
Courtesy State Library of Victoria
Elwood Village and wetlands lower right.

The St Kilda Street bridge (1) is a rare girder bridge designed by engineer John Monash in 1905 using pioneering technology. Monash rose to command the Australian Corps in World War One. From the bridge, a walking trail follows the Elwood canal to the foreshore.

A pair of rare and early concrete shops (2) at 157-159 Ormond Road date from 1919.

The movies came to Elwood in 1919 when the **Broadway Theatre (3)** opened at 145-149 Ormond Road. Cinema owners have included Westgarth Theatre (1927), Consolidated Theatres (1933) and La Scala (1958). From 1961 it continued as Elwood Reception Rooms, night club, cabaret and youth disco. After 76 years of entertainment, it was sold for development in 1996.

The shop and dwelling (4) built in 1915 at 121 Ormond Road is an early and rare heritage building. Its first occupant was grocer Richard Gilbert. Costumier (dressmaker) Eliza May Muir occupied it from 1927 until at least World War Two.

The beautiful Edwardian shop-front built in 1913 at **90 Ormond Road (5)** was used by chemists John and Alice Barker. Alice was one of Victoria's earliest female chemists. The first floor and rear residence were added in 1917 using Waurin Ponds and Stawell stone.

At the rear of 90 Ormond Road, **Horry Peacock Lane (6)** celebrates champion cyclist Horry Peacock. For decades, he assembled and sold his own brand of bicycles from the Monarch Cycles and Sports Store at 82 Ormond Road with his ever-present Irish Setter dogs by his side.



Ormond Road, Elwood, Victoria. The Rose Series P.3405. Courtesy State Library of Victoria H32492/4710. Corner of Vautier Street.

16-18 Vautier Street (7) is the site of the former Vautier House, home to Elwood's first European settlers John and Mary Broadbent who arrived in March 1854. Their portable wooden house arrived by ship and was assembled to house the first of six children at Elwood Hill on land purchased from speculator Joseph Vautier. For the next half century, the Broadbents advocated unceasingly for improvements to Elwood.

On this small rise of 'Elwood Hill', development began with the first land sale on 18 September 1851. In 1855 Reverend Joseph Docker built **Docker House (8)**, now two combined houses, at 30/30a Vautier Street. It remains Elwood's oldest house. Docker was a pioneer developer of Elwood, Richmond and Clifton Hill. **31 Vautier Street (9)** is the former 1880s manse with ballroom of merchant William Higginbotham.

93 Ormond Road (10) was the hideout for Pentridge escapees Ronald Ryan and Peter Walker in December 1965. From here the fugitives robbed the Ormond Bank and evaded a massive search effort before fleeing to Sydney.

The bluestone Wave Street ford (11) on Elster Creek channel is an Elwood icon often submerged during heavy rain, as is the Pine Avenue ford located upstream.

Lorne and Omeo villas (12) at 54 and 56 Spray Street are the only survivors of a row of eleven villas built in the new Seaside Estate of Elsternwick (Elwood) in the 1880s. Omeo Villa was the home of James Stirling, Government Geologist. His daughter Amie recalled in her memoirs that most of the family next door in Lorne Villa died from disease following floods in 1888.

Elwood's oldest buildings are mainly grand seaside mansions created in the land boom of the 1880s that followed the gold rush. **Tiuna (13)**, dated 1884, is at 8 Tiuna Grove. **Thalassa (14)**, built in 1889, can be found at 17 Byrne Avenue.

The former **St Bede's Church of England hall (15)**, corner Ormond Road and Byrne Avenue is Elwood's oldest church site (1916). A schoolroom was added to the rear (1918) with a vicarage at 2 Tiuna Grove.

Ormond Mansions (16) at 15-21 Ormond Road is a rare combination of three early shops and rear flats at 40-42 Glenhuntly Road dated from 1920.

The landmark 1920 building **Alderley (17)** dominates Elwood Junction. It houses seven shops on Glen Huntly and Ormond Roads. The famous architect Nahum Barnet designed this innovative mixed-use development in an Arts and Crafts style.

The elegant **State Saving Bank (18)** built in 1922 in banded Classicism style, is at 6 Ormond Road in what was the heart of the new suburb, Elwood Junction, opposite the former tram intersection and post office.

The foundation stone for **St Columba's Primary School (19)** was laid by Archbishop James Duhig on 1 October 1916 and was initially run by the Good Samaritan Sisters of the Catholic Church.

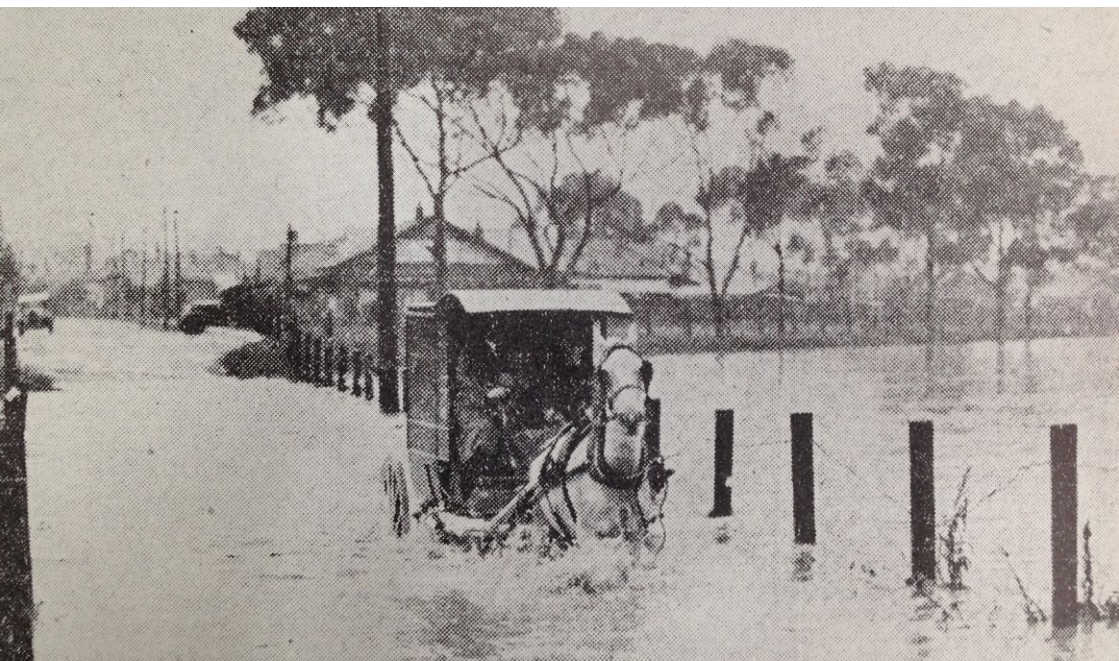
The construction of **Elwood Post Office (20)** in 1925, like the nearby State Bank, was an important milestone in the aspirations of the growing village around Elwood Junction.

Outside the post office is the former tram stop with a pole that until recently had the words 'cars stop here' painted on it. Two tram lines once converged on this corner but were removed in the 1950s. One tram ran from Elsternwick station to the beach along Glen Huntly Road. The other travelled from St Kilda Railway station along Broadway and Ormond Road.

The 1930s saw a dramatic increase in the number of flats in Elwood for Melburnians seeking a lifestyle by the sea. **Windermere (21)**, at 49 Broadway, is a rare block of flats in the Art Deco 'streamlined moderne' style designed by famous local architect, James Esmond Dorney, in 1936. His masterful Elwood buildings include Surrey Court at 71 Ormond Rd, Chénier at 8 Glen Huntly Rd, St Kiernans at 51 Ormond Esplanade, Garden Court at 73 Marine Parade and Antigone at 34 Docker St, where Germaine Greer was born.

Shelley Street (22) highlights how the planting of trees has dramatically transformed swamp and sand landscapes into green corridors. At the east end of Shelley Street, Elwood College (1957) and Elwood Primary School (1917) cluster around School Park.

Located along the canal, just north of the schools, is a **sundial (23)**, a gift to the people of Elwood in 2017 from Celeste Walters, children's book author and local resident.



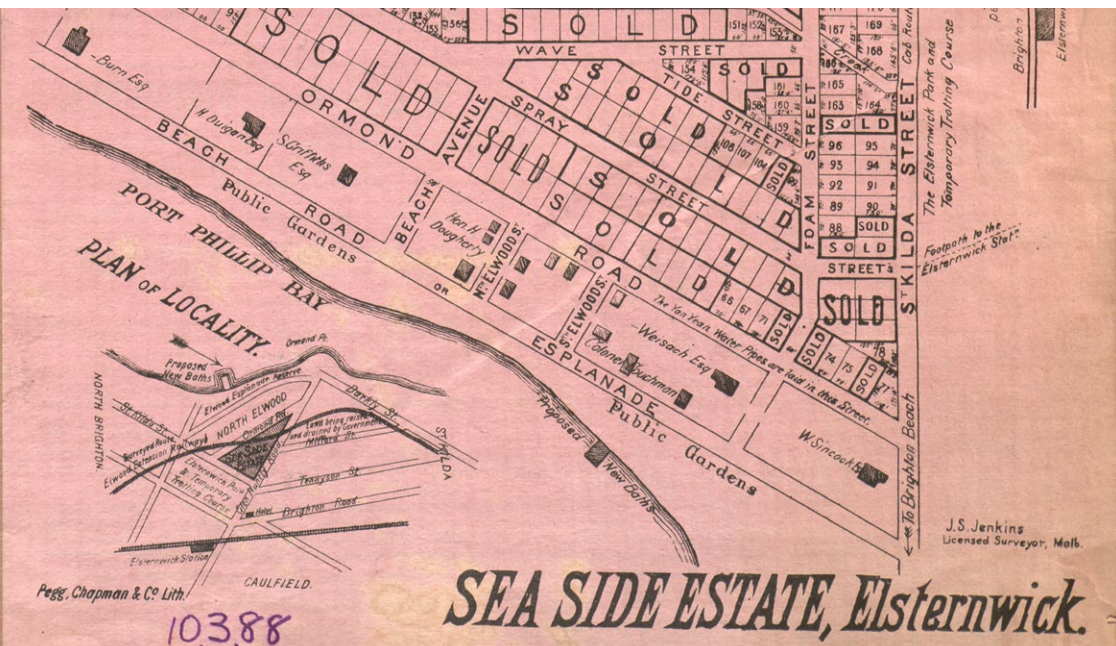
Ford at Wave Street, 8 December 1930, from The Development of the Elster Creek Drainage System, Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works.

The **Elwood Canal precinct (24)** is a popular walking and cycling reserve from St Kilda Street to the Elwood foreshore. The canal was designed by engineer William Thwaites in 1889 on the alignment of Elster Creek to drain the Elwood wetlands. Its completion in 1907 sparked a housing boom despite continuing floods. Spanned by twelve bridges and two bluestone fords, the canal is the only one of its kind in metropolitan Melbourne.

Reclaimed from the sea c1970, **Moran Reserve (25)** is a popular recreation area for parachutes to land, skating and kite flying. **John Cribbes Footbridge (26)** was named after the late St Kilda Councillor, a founder of the sister city relationship of the City of Port Phillip with Obu, Japan.

Point Ormond Hill (27) is the remnant of a huge sandstone bluff which was a former campsite, lookout, ochre and shellfish harvesting site for the Boon Wurrung people. Stone and bone tools have been recovered in the area. Aboriginal people have an oral tradition that includes accurate accounts of the flooding of Hobsons Bay or Nerm thousands of years ago. In 1840 the Boon Wurrung were displaced when the bluff became a quarantine station and burial ground for plague victims from the Glen Huntley immigrant ship. The navigational marker on the top of the hill, restored in 2015, was used as a beacon to guide ships through the Bay.

The **octagonal Elwood Beach Kiosk (28)** opposite Normandy Road was built in 1915 and is the oldest structure on Elwood Beach, providing refreshments for bathers for more than a century.



Sea Side Estate, Elsternwick. Courtesy State Library of Victoria 10381/129911. Elsternwick was proposed as an early name for Elwood by resident and developer Charles Ebdon.

The Tea Tree Reserve (29) has provided shelter for many generations. Its shady pathways and nooks have been revitalised by extensive plantings by local residents and council since the 1990s and feature rare remnant flora and bird life representing the coastal dune scrub and grassy woodland plains from the sandbelt of south-eastern Melbourne.

In 1924 the clubhouse of the first Sea Canoe Club in Australia was erected and became the **Elwood Sailing Club (30)** in 1939. The Elwood Angling Club (1939) and Sea Scout hall (1958) are adjacent.

The Elwood Bowling Club (31) was established in 1925 on the foreshore opposite Beach Ave and was converted to a community centre and café with a playground in the 1990s.

The first life saving club in Victoria was established in Elwood in 1911. The current **Elwood Life Saving Club (32)** building was designed by architect Don Fulton and built in 1971. The tennis courts, soccer and croquet club in nearby Elwood Park were formerly a bullock paddock and rifle range.

At the end of Head Street is the **outfall platform (33)** which sits above a huge diversion drain running from New Street. Constructed in the 1950s to mitigate flooding in response to a petition of more than 3,000 signatures to State Parliament, the drain channels stormwater away from Elwood and out to sea.



Broadway, Elwood. The Rose Series P.3406. Courtesy State Library of Victoria H32492/4711.

Intersection of Broadway, Ormond and Glen Huntly Roads.

START	St Kilda Street bridge
FINISH	Head Street outfall platform
LENGTH	4 kilometres (approx.)
TIME	70 – 90 minutes
REFRESHMENTS	There are numerous cafés along the route

Visit heritage.portphillip.vic.gov.au for more information about cultural heritage programs and activities in the City of Port Phillip.

You can also contact us by phone via our ASSIST centre on **03 9209 6777**.

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Council respectfully acknowledges the Yalukut Weelam clan of the Boon Wurrung. We pay our respects to their Elders, both past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

Cover: Thomas Clark, *Red Bluff (Elwood before levelling)*, c1860. Oil on canvas. Port Phillip City Collection pp1996.18.245. Today Port Ormond Hill.

