



Heritage Walk

500m walk

30 mins

Map nos. 1 – 10

## A. WINDSOR HERITAGE WALK

*Thompson Square Precinct*

***\*This walk includes many privately-owned buildings which are not open or inspection and may only be viewed from the public street.***

We suggest you start exploring at Thompson Square. Featuring many fine examples of nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings, the square was named by Governor Lachlan Macquarie in honour of his friend Andrew Thompson, and was originally the centre of the village known as Green Hills, proclaimed the town of Windsor by Macquarie in 1810.

### 1. THOMPSON SQUARE

Andrew Thompson, after whom this square is named, was a man of many talents. Described as a brewer, convict, emancipist, ferry owner, landowner, magistrate, police officer, salt manufacturer, shipbuilder, sealer, shipowner, tannery owner and wheat farmer, he also ate at the Governor's table. He died a hero at the age of 37, having rescued a number of people during one of the Hawkesbury's many floods.

The square itself is something to be proud of, being the only intact Georgian square in the country, dating back to 1795, when Windsor (then known as Green Hills) was essential to the survival of the infant colony based in Sydney, which depended on the farms of the Hawkesbury and the river to carry their produce (this was when there was very little by way of road transport). The collection of colonial buildings around the square has remained largely unchanged since being built between 1815 and 1880.

At the top of the square is the Pioneer Families Bicentennial Memorial featuring an anchor, symbolizing the importance of the river in the history of the town, and indeed, the nation, and a plaque recording the names of many of the early families.

## 2. WINDSOR BRIDGE

Before the bridge, the river here was crossed by ferry, and it was not until 1864 that the local member for Hawkesbury, the Hon. William Walker, put the idea of a bridge to the NSW parliament (1864 was when the railway line was extended from Blacktown to Richmond.)

The opening in 1874 was a grand affair, including a procession through the town and a bullock roast in Thompson Square (bring back the bullock roast!). The level of bridge was a matter of regular debate and, following repeated flooding, was raised by 2.5 metres in 1897.



Windsor Bridge over the Hawkesbury River 1879, State Library of NSW

## 3. THE DOCTORS' HOUSE

From 1858 to 1992 this house was occupied by a series of doctors, hence its nickname. The most famous of them was Thomas Fiaschi of Tizzana near Ebenezer (then, and now, a winery of distinction). The last was Walter James Skinner (better known as Bill). The fanlights above the entrance doors, the columns to each side, the sandstone flagged verandah and the delicate iron railings give the building a distinguished air. At the height of the 1867 flood the water lapped the balcony on the first floor, providing the occupants with great views of the river threatening to devour them.



Detail of Thompson Square Windsor 1879 with Doctors' House far right, State Library of NSW

## 4. HOWE HOUSE *(Part of the Hawkesbury Regional Museum)*

John Howe arrived as a free settler aboard Coromandel in 1802, and became hugely successful in early Windsor, picking up many of Andrew Thompson's business interests and public duties (including Chief Constable and Coroner) on Thompson's demise. He also engaged in a number of civil projects of his own, such as the enlargement of the wharf at Windsor, and is credited with leading several expeditions which resulted in opening up the Hunter region.

From 1962 to 2000 the building housed a museum, run by the Hawkesbury Historical Society, and it is now part of the award-winning Hawkesbury Regional Museum, which fronts Baker Street. It has been reinterpreted according to many uses over time, including an inn and newspaper office, and is well worth a visit (free entry). Open for inspection on weekends and on weekdays by appointment.

## 5. MACQUARIE ARMS HOTEL

This two storey brick Georgian building with cellar and attic rooms was built in 1815 by emancipated convict Richard Fitzgerald and is the oldest hotel building in Australia (though it has not had a continuous licence, which is why it is constantly having to defend its title). It was occupied by garrison soldiers during the 1830s, later used as a private home, and was well known as the Royal Hotel from 1872 until 1900.

Although there have been extensive additions, much of the original cedar interior woodwork is still intact, including the elegant staircases and colonial fanlights. A plaque on the wall facing the square shows the height of The Great Flood of 1867, when the river reached 19.3 metres.



Royal Hotel, George Street, Windsor,  
Hawkesbury Library Service (HLS)

## 6. AC STEARN BUILDING

This once-elaborate shop and residence was built in 1907 by Alf Stearn, who sold a wide variety of merchandise including cigarette and pipe tobacco, jewellery, including rings and watches, fireworks and musical instruments. It features a double storey cast iron verandah and decorative parapet with lion motif. The verandah was removed during the 1950s but has been reinstated.



Stearn's General Store Windsor, HLS

## 7. FORMER HAWKESBURY MOTOR GARAGE

From 1923 to 1974, this is where you'd come to buy your Buick, Chevrolet, Vauxhall or Bedford - and to have it serviced and repaired. Since then, the premises have been occupied by a variety of commercial tenants.

Hawkesbury Motor Garage established in 1923 by  
L Morley, HLS



## 8. FORMER MOSES BAKERY AND HAWKESBURY STORES

Four generations of the Moses family baked bread in Windsor between 1821 and 1971. They must have been good at it, because business prospered, with bread being delivered to surrounding areas by horse and cart and along the river by boat. In the early 1880s, William Moses built the two-storey Hawkesbury Stores building next door. It traded groceries, crockery, homewares and hardware, and boasted plate glass display windows lit at night by gas. In 1886 the business had expanded to include a saw mill, chaff-cutting and corn-cracking operations. In later years the Hawkesbury Stores building was separated into the series of single shops that can be seen today.



Remains of Hawkesbury Stores, George Street, Thompson Square 1960, Bowd Collection, HLS

*A good look at nos. 9. and 10. can be had from the corner of George and Bridge Streets, which is also the starting point of the Peninsula Precinct Walk (Map B).*

## 9. SCHOOL OF ARTS

This is the site of the old Government Store, from which the Battle of Vinegar Hill rebel, Philip Cunningham, was notoriously hung. The current Italianate-style School of Arts building replaced it in 1861, providing library facilities and a venue for lectures and meetings. (Out of these humble voluntary operations developed the local public library, the modern community or neighbourhood centre, and formal systems of adult and technical education.) Continuing to function as a community centre until 1947, the building was converted into a factory for the boot manufacturer Enoch Taylor, and is still known by many locals as 'the boot factory', though it has been many things since.



School of Arts, Bridge Street, Windsor, HLS

## 10. HOUSE 10 BRIDGE STREET

This substantial residence was built in the Colonial Regency style for Dr Joshua Dowe, surgeon at the Hawkesbury Benevolent Society Hospital in Macquarie Street, Windsor between 1856 and 1860. The building has served a variety of purposes including St Katherine's Girls' School, Windsor Grammar School, home of local MP Brinsley Hall, and Craginsh Maternity Hospital (1922-1934). Interesting features include the scrolled parapet, delicate wrought iron balustrades, open work columns and French doors opening on to the top floor verandah



Lilburndale, Bridge Street, Windsor, HLS

## OTHER WINDSOR HERITAGE WALKS

### B. THE PENINSULA PRECINCT

This walk starts at Thompson Square and explores what is known as 'The Peninsula', site of early land grants and many significant public buildings of the Colonial era. Today The Peninsula is a popular residential area, boasting a variety of housing styles, all contributing to the character of the streetscape. Within this precinct John Tebbutt also built several observatories from which he made important astronomical discoveries.

2km walk  
1 hour

### C. WINDSOR MALL PRECINCT

Starting at the waterwheel near Baker Street, this walk explores the commercial heart of Windsor, returning to Thompson Square via The Terrace. A variety of architectural styles may be observed along the way, as well as several churches and the Windsor Reservoir, an item of industrial heritage significance

2 km walk  
1 hour

### D. McQUADE PARK PRECINCT

Continuing along George Street from New Street to the Windsor Railway Station and back along The Terrace, discover the residential areas of Windsor as they have developed around McQuade Park. The park was planned by Governor Macquarie when the town was laid out in 1810. Of special interest is Francis Greenway's iconic St Matthews Anglican Church and its burial ground and rectory.

3.5 km walk  
2 hours



For further information call the  
Hawkesbury Visitor Information Centre  
(02) 4560 4620  
[www.discoverthehawkesbury.com.au](http://www.discoverthehawkesbury.com.au)

The Centre is at Ham Common  
(opposite Richmond RAAF Base)  
328 Hawkesbury Valley Way  
RICHMOND NSW 2753

Open 7 days. Managed by Hawkesbury City Council.

## A. WINDSOR HERITAGE WALK - Thompson Square precinct

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|-------------------------|--|
| 1. Thompson Square      | 7. Former Hawkesbury Motor Garage  |
| 2. Windsor Bridge       | 8. Former Moses Bakery and<br>Hawkesbury Stores  |
| 3. The Doctors House    | 9. School of Arts  |
| 4. Howes House          | 10. Number 10 Bridge Street  |
| 5. Macquarie Arms Hotel |  Hawkesbury Regional Museum |
| 6. A C Stearn Building  |  |

