



historical
walking
tours

CITY OF SYDNEY 
city of villages

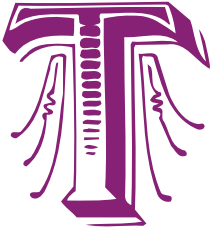
COMMUNITY SYDNEY'S DIVERSE PEOPLE

Historical Walking Tour



Front Cover Image:
Chinese New Year celebrations, 2011
(Photograph: City of Sydney Events)

DIVERSE



This walk will take you from Sydney Town Hall, south into what was once the industrial backyard of Sydney.



PLEASE ALLOW
1-2 HOURS FOR THIS TOUR.

Start at
Sydney Town Hall (1)
and nearby St Andrews
Cathedral (2).

**Sydney's
history
is all around us.**

Our walking tours will lead you
on a journey of discovery from
early Aboriginal life through to
contemporary Sydney.

Clóir Mose

Clóir Moore MP
Lord Mayor of Sydney

Its first buildings were factories, workshops and housing for some of the city's poorest citizens. Later it became a warehousing and market precinct.

Today it contains Sydney's Spanish Quarter, its Chinatown, and what is arguably the most significant 20th century Aboriginal site in the City. What the area lacks in grand buildings, it makes up for in its colourful social history of Sydney's ethnically diverse population.

Sydney's Haymarket area, c1920s
(Photograph: City of Sydney Archives)





KEY LEGEND

-  Train
-  Light Rail
-  Monorail

Central



 Central Station

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01 SYDNEY TOWN HALL

Sydney Town Hall is the seat of local government of the City of Sydney. This building was built in stages between 1869 and 1889 on the site of what was known as the Old Burial Ground. Between 1792 and when it closed in 1820, about 2,000 people were buried here. Many of the graves were shallow and people used to complain about the stench. According to the official notice, the Burial Ground was closed because it was offensive to the inhabitants. Before the Town Hall was built, the bodies were supposedly exhumed, but even today whenever there is digging in the area a stray skeleton is likely to turn up.

The Town Hall's high Victorian architectural style and decorative excesses earned it the nickname "The Wedding Cake Building". In the 1960s some people even thought it should be pulled down. Today, the Town Hall steps are a favourite Sydney meeting place.



Sydney Town Hall, 1930s
(Photograph: City of Sydney Archives)



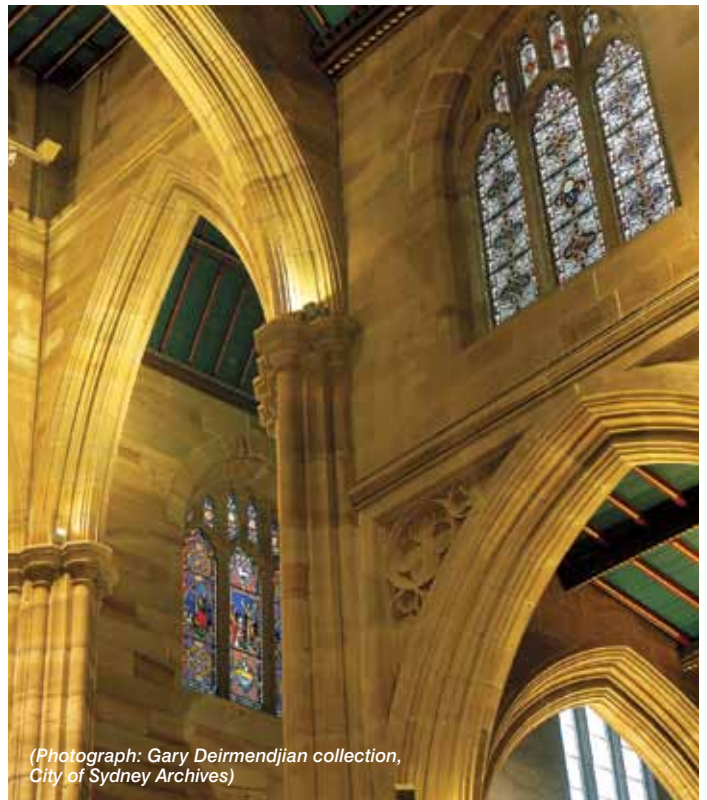
Cleaning the Sydney Town Hall clock, 1937
(Photograph: City of Sydney Archives)

02 ST ANDREWS CATHEDRAL

Designed by Edmund Blacket, Sydney's Anglican Cathedral is a fine pocket handkerchief-sized version of older European examples. Notice that the building stands with its back to the street with its main door and dominant spires fronting onto Sydney Square. There was supposed to be a street here too but by the time this building was finished in the 1860s it had disappeared. Plans for a Cathedral and a grand square in this spot went back to the early years of the 19th century, but at that time this was too far from the centre of town to take seriously. With the old disused burial ground to its north, and brickfields and markets nearby, it was an isolated place until the second half of the 19th century.



St Andrews Cathedral, c1901
(Photograph: City of Sydney Archives)



(Photograph: Gary Deirmendjian collection,
City of Sydney Archives)



Walk down George Street, cross Bathurst Street, pass the cinemas and turn right into **Albion Place** (03).

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03 ALBION PLACE

Sydney's streets were not the result of a planner's scheme, but developed through custom and chance. Laneways such as this one were once common all over the city. The southern side of this lane is a reminder of an older warehousing period.



Turn left into Kent Street. Here there are several good examples of turn of the century warehouses in characteristic red brick, with sandstone trim. If you look up Kent Street to the right you will notice a freestanding Georgian house, **The Judge's House** (04) at 531 Kent Street.

04 THE JUDGE'S HOUSE

Built in 1827, this is a rare surviving free standing house in the city. It was built for Judge Dowling who was the NSW Chief Justice from 1828 to 1830, but for almost a century it served a very different purpose as the City Night Refuge and Soup Kitchen, a charitable organisation for the area's poor.



Walk down Kent Street, turn right into Liverpool Street, and head for Sussex Street. This area is known as the Spanish Quarter. There has been a Spanish presence in this area from the last decades of the 19th century. Just before you reach Sussex Street, take the little dog-legged **Douglass Lane** (05).

05 DOUGLASS LANE

This is another remnant laneway of this old industrial area of town. Imagine coaxing your horse and cart up the incline of the cobbled section. This will get you to Sussex Street and the beginning of Chinatown.



Corner of Sussex Street and Douglass Lane, c1909
(Photograph: City of Sydney Archives)



Turn left into Sussex Street, then right into Goulburn Street and head for the **Trades Hall building** (6) on the corner.

06 TRADES HALL

Trades Hall was designed by John Smedley and began construction in 1888. This building was the headquarters and meeting place for the trade unions for many years. Some of its interiors still retain early 20th century signs and the building houses a large collection of trade union banners used in May Day and Labor Day street marches. Step inside and imagine the raised voices singing *The Internationale*.

07

Opposite the Trades Hall are the ceremonial gates that will take you into Dixon Street Mall, the heart of Sydney's Chinatown. Or you can turn right and head down to a peaceful retreat in the **Chinese Gardens in Darling Harbour** (07). In 1988, Australia's non-Aboriginal settlement was 200 years old. These gardens were a bicentennial gift to the young City of Sydney from the ancient city of Canton (Guangzhou) in southern China, the region where most of Sydney's early Chinese came from.

Continue along **Dixon Street** (08) to the end. Many of the Chinese firms here are new, but some, like the War Hing at No. 49 date back many decades. At Nos. 52–54 the August Moon Restaurant may look new, but there has been a Chinese restaurant on this site for over half a century.



SYDNEY'S CHINATOWN

There has been a Chinese presence in Sydney for almost 200 years. Many of the early Chinese Sydneysiders were market gardeners and traders, so wherever the markets were, so were the Chinese. Between 1909 and 1915 the City Council built a new market complex at the head of Darling Harbour. Chinese traders and importers rented market space and stores from the Council. Shops and restaurants followed, especially in Dixon Street which became the focus of Chinatown. Rooms above these shops sometimes became home for the Chinese traders and for retired gardeners who were unable to return home. The precinct became run down by the mid 20th century; the numbers of Chinese dwindled and the markets moved out of the city. Chinatown was refurbished in the 1980s. With increasing numbers of Chinese in the city once again, it has become a very popular tourist precinct as well as a meeting place for Sydney's Chinese community.

08

DIXON STREET

Just as you pass the ceremonial gates on Dixon Street, look up to the left. The painted sign on this old building announces the Jong Wah (Chinese Republic) Association and the Dong Guan Goon Yee Tong. This old clan association was actively involved in the welfare of Chinese who came to try their luck on the goldfields in the 19th century. It has been meeting in this building since 1917.

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i HAYMARKET

This precinct has been known as Haymarket since the 1830s. At that time it was on the outskirts of town and was used as a cattle and hay market. In the 1860s fruit and vegetable markets were built here and the area became a locale for market people. Market gardeners, including many Chinese, would bring their produce to market and stay overnight in the nearby boarding houses. Shops and cookhouses followed, with Paddy's Market and several theatres providing added colour to the area. For Sydney's lower classes, Saturday night at the Haymarket was the place to be.



*Paddy's Fruit and Vegetable Markets, c1950
(City of Sydney Archives)*

09 Head past the **Paddy's Markets (09)** down Thomas Street then right into Ultimo Road to the corner of Quay Street and take a look at the **Sydney Market's Bell Tower (10)**. Opposite the markets is **Aaron's Hotel (11)**.



*Market tower on the corner of Quay and Hay Streets, 1920
(City of Sydney Archives)*

10 THE SYDNEY MARKETS' BELL TOWER

The foundation stone is dated 1910. Most of the building has been demolished, but the tower was conserved in 1985 when new university buildings were constructed on the site. On one of the old cart openings on Quay Street you can still see the painted name of A Yee, a firm of produce agents.

11 AARON'S HOTEL

This building at 37 Ultimo Road is one of the most intact of the old market buildings. Also known as the Wing On Building, it was leased to this large Chinese firm for many years. The Wing On Company began in Sydney in 1897, importing nuts, tea, rice, fireworks and ginger. Eventually this business became a major retailer back in China and Hong Kong.

Retrace your steps along Ultimo Road until you reach Thomas Street. Look up to the right along Ultimo Road and notice the inscription "KMT 1921" (12) on the pediment of the building at No. 75-77.

12 THE KUOMINTANG (KMT)

This was the political organisation that ousted the Chinese Emperors and introduced the first taste of democracy to China in the early 20th century. This building was the headquarters for the party in Australia and the Pacific.

When you reach George Street cross over it and walk north towards Hay Street.

13 HAY STREET CHAMBERS

The little sandstone building on the corner of Hay and George Streets was built in 1875 as a bank. During its life the ground floor has played many roles, including a café, a shoe store, and a cake shop. In 1990 the City of Sydney restored the building and in 1992 it opened as the Haymarket Branch of the City's Library. It offers newspapers and books in Chinese, Indonesian, Korean, Thai and Vietnamese languages.

Walk down Hay Street past some of the city's most charming little businesses (14) and (15).

14 CYRIL'S FINE FOODS

Cyril's is one of the oldest delicatessens in Sydney. It was started by Czechoslovakian immigrant Cyril Vincenc in 1956 and he can still be seen working in the shop today more than half a century later.



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15 SITE OF THE ROMA CAFÉ

When Italian coffee makers opened a cafe called The Roma in the 1960s the quality of Sydney's coffee went up a notch and this cafe very quickly became a place to be seen. The Roma closed its doors in 2005.



Walk through the covered plaza on the northern side of Hay Street into Campbell Street. Here you will find more interesting Chinese shops and on your right is the **Capitol Theatre** (16).

16 CAPITOL THEATRE

This building was designed by George McRae and completed in 1893 as a fruit and vegetable market. It was located next door to older markets that had been on the site since the 1860s. Originally a single storey building, the Belmore Markets was rebuilt with an extra floor in the early 20th century, and used as a circus venue, a cinema and a theatre. If you look up you will see that the terracotta pediment is decorated with fruits and, surprisingly, choko vines. The humble choko has all but disappeared from our vegetable menu.

By the 1980s, the building had become very run down. It was restored by Ipoh Garden for the City Council in the early 1990s. The exuberant 1920s interior, imported from the United States, is intended to evoke a romantic courtyard with a ceiling lit to imitate a star studded night sky.



Capitol Theatre in the 1930s
(Photograph: City of Sydney Archives)



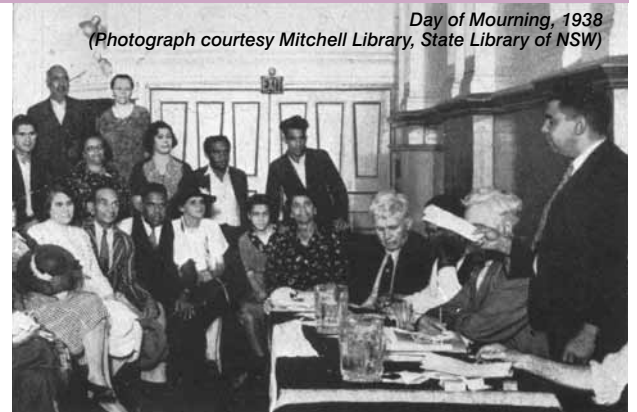
Capitol Theatre interior after refurbishment
(Photograph: City of Sydney)



Head down past the theatre to the end of Campbell Street, go under the railway overpass and turn left into Elizabeth Street. From here it is a short walk to Hyde Park. On the way you pass the **Australian Hall** (17) at No. 150 and the **Mark Foys Emporium** (18).

17 AUSTRALIAN HALL

This little sandstone building, built in 1912–13, has been home to diverse organisations. It has housed a German Social Club, a Roman Catholic lay organisation, a couple of theatres and the Cyprus Hellene Club. But its greatest importance is to Sydney's Aboriginal people. Here on 26 January 1938, during official celebrations of 150 years of European settlement, Aboriginal leaders called for a Day of Mourning and drew up a list of political demands for full citizenship. It is widely recognised as the first Aboriginal civil rights movement. The building is listed on state and national heritage registers because of its high cultural and social significance.



Day of Mourning, 1938
(Photograph courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW)

18 FORMER MARK FOYS EMPORIUM

This was one of the largest and grandest department stores in the city. The original 1909 three storey building designed by McCredie and Anderson grew to six stories over the years. Notice the distinctive white glazed bricks and deep yellow terracotta trim announcing *Hosiery, Shoes, Corsets* and other items for sale.

When trains were the most popular method of going to town, the store thrived because of its proximity to the underground railway station. However, the extension of the trains further north left Mark Foys down the unfashionable end of town and the store was closed in 1983. It now houses legal courts and is officially called the Downing Centre.



Mark Foys advertisement
(Image: City of Sydney Archives)



Cross over into Hyde Park to end this tour. At this southern end of the park is the **ANZAC War Memorial** (19).

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19 THE ANZAC WAR MEMORIAL

This is one of Sydney's most interesting Art Deco buildings. Designed by Bruce Dellit, it was opened in 1934. It contains sculptures by an English-born migrant, Raynor Hoff. His beautiful interior statue called *Sacrifice* depicts a group of three women supporting a dead soldier.

They represent the givers of life, weighed down by death. This piece is often interpreted as a powerful peace symbol, and at the time of construction, this memorial generated a lot of debate. The memorial contains no names, but 120,000 stars in the ceiling dome represent those from NSW who served.



Medals of war service
(Photograph: City of Sydney Archives)



ANZAC Memorial, c1950s
(Photograph: City of Sydney Archives)



At the other end of Hyde Park is the **Archibald Fountain** (20).

20 ARCHIBALD FOUNTAIN

This flamboyant fountain depicts a bronze Apollo and other mythological characters. If your eyes are good you might be able to read an explanation of the allegorical figures at the base of the north-east corner of the statue. But while its inspiration might be ancient Greece, it was bequeathed to the people of Sydney by J F Archibald to commemorate the association of Australia and France during World War I, and was designed by French sculptor Francois Sicard.

Archibald was the editor of *The Bulletin*, a paper that encouraged writers to write about Australia, but he himself was a confessed Francophile. He sported a neat French-styled beard and changed his given names from John Feltham to Jules Francois. Most Sydneysiders would have no idea who Archibald was, but everyone loves his fountain.



Children at the Archibald Fountain
(Photograph: City of Sydney Archives)



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STOP!

ON THE FOOTPATH

LOOK!

RIGHT, LEFT AND RIGHT AGAIN

LISTEN!

FOR ANY OTHER TRAFFIC
INCLUDING PUSH BIKES

THINK!

IS IT SAFE FOR ME TO CROSS?

CROSS!

WITH CARE AND KEEP ON
LOOKING FOR OTHER VEHICLES

This brochure was prepared by the
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