

Historic Milltown Walking Tour



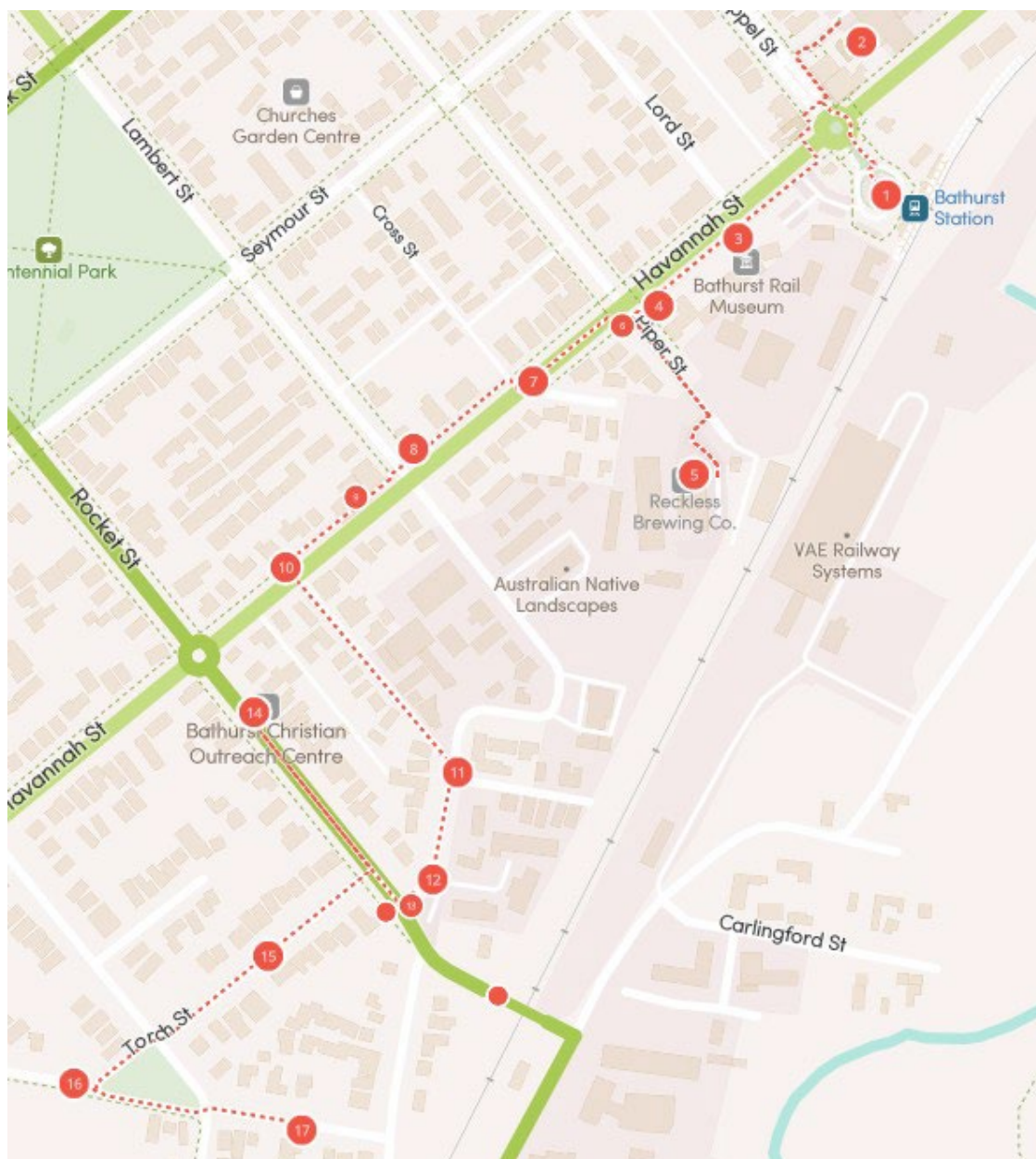
By the middle of the 19th century Bathurst had experienced considerable expansion and growth. The building of The Great Western Railway Line and later the establishment of railway workshops in the town provided jobs for over a thousand men.

As the railway expanded, agricultural country was opened and the west became a large wheat-growing area leading to a demand for land, both commercial and residential, close to the rail and flour mills. By the late 1800s, the Milltown community had sprung up with its own pubs, stores, police station, schools, cemetery and churches. The area had its own identity, and its character was formed by the mill and railway workers and their families. The working-class atmosphere of that time has disappeared, but reminders of the Milltown community and its former residents can still be glimpsed today.

1. Start at the Bathurst Railway Station - cnr Keppel and Havannah Sts.	The Great Western Railway was opened as far as Bathurst on 4 April 1876 by NSW Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson. Tenders for the station buildings were called in 1875, but the architect is unknown. Gas lighting was connected to the Station Master's residence (c1880) in 1882. The Chifley Engine was re-installed on this site on 21 May 2011 after extensive restoration work. The engine was driven by former Prime Minister Ben Chifley when he worked on the railways and serves as a tribute to him and to the railway industry in the Bathurst region.
2. Look across Havannah St to the right.	Tremain's Flour Mill stands to the right of the Victoria Bathurst on Havannah Street. Originally operated by the Smith brothers as the Victoria Mill, it was bought by William Tremain in 1874. Tremain's was the home of Invincible Flour.
3. Turn left, cross Keppel St, continue straight.	During the 1880s, the Railway Commission established workshops on ground adjoining the station. The Railway Institute (126 Havannah Street) became a focal gathering point for the growing railway workers' community. In the early 1900s, Ben Chifley attended night school and extension classes here. The refurbished site is now the Bathurst Rail Museum.
4. Continue to the intersection of Piper and Havannah Sts.	Now the Mitchell Conservatorium of Music (130 Havannah Street), the original use of this group of buildings is unclear, but they were offices and accommodation for the resident engineer as late as 1948. The sundial in the forecourt commemorates the service given to the railway by engineer R H Fry.
5. Turn left into Piper St to the end of the street.	This site was one of several flour mills operating in Milltown by the mid-1880s. The red brick building beside the railway line (now Reckless Brewing) was part of the premises of F Crago & Sons, first established in Lambert Street and later re-located to the bottom of Piper Street. When the new mill was opened in 1906, it was managed by Harry Crago, and the miller was T Littlewood.
6. Return to the cnr of Piper and Havannah Sts.	Between 1875 and 1890, complaints about the activities of 'larrikins' in the area were frequent. In 1876 it was announced in the press that "A Police station is to be erected at Milltown, near the goods shed, and put under the charge of a married police officer." The building (c. 1884) currently operates as The Old Milltown Police Station B & B (8 Piper Street).

7. Turn left onto Havannah St to Cole St.	Cole Street borders what was the Old Cemetery Ground at Milltown, established in 1839 and in use from 1840. The original acre was divided into two sections: Wesleyan and Roman Catholic. It was closed about 1870. Its declining condition provoked outrage and the existing dedication of the land for burial grounds was revoked in 1901.
8. Cross to the opposite side of Havannah St.	D J Healey and Sons General Store occupies the corner of Havannah and Lambert Streets. Listed among the Bathurst Business and Commerce representatives in 1909, the proprietor claimed to have the largest general store in the Milltown area.
9. Continue along Havannah St.	The third Railway Hotel on the present site (157 Havannah Street) was built in 1926-7. From 1861, it traded on the corner of Lambert and Havannah Streets and at times was called The Milltown Inn and The Milltown Hotel. The first licensed premises on the original site was called The Wheatsheaf, dating from 1859.
10. Continue along Havannah St.	169 Havannah Street was built for Francis Crago, former mayor and mill owner, in 1883. The grand residence, surrounded by extensive grounds, originally had tennis courts and a caretaker's cottage.
11. Cross Havannah st into Oakes St (one way street).	At the bottom of Oakes Street stands 26 Bant Street (once called Bent Street), erected about 1885. The two-storey shop and residence were built on land bought by storekeeper William and Elizabeth Mousdale. The business became known as The Milltown Stores.
12. Turn right onto Bant St.	Milltown Public School (28-34 Bant Street) was erected in 1879. In 1908, its name was changed to South Bathurst Public School. Elizabeth McKenzie (future wife to Prime Minister Ben Chifley) was a pupil here.
13. Continue along Bant St to Rocket St.	The Anglican Church of St Barnabas (36A Bant Street) was erected in 1881 to replace an earlier weatherboard building dating from 1875. The chancel was added in 1895 and the spire in 1901. The church was consecrated in October 1896. A feature of the church was a stained-glass window, dedicated to WWII POWs, padres and nurses. Two rectors of St Barnabas were held prisoner by the Japanese during WWII. The church was destroyed by fire in 2014, but the window survived and is displayed on the Bathurst RSL Club walkway on Rankin Street.
14. Look to the left at the intersection of Bant and Rocket St.	The railway over-bridge was constructed by the railway in 1888 and crosses over the rail yard and workshops. It was an important thoroughfare over the new railway line towards the Lachlan and Goulburn areas.
15. Look across Rocket St to the Torch St intersection.	Currently the site of Metro Petroleum Bathurst, the corner of Bant and Rocket Streets was once the location of The Jolly Hurlers Inn , opened by Robert Dunsmore in 1860. It traded into the 1870s when the new owner's application for a licence was refused. William Field established a bakery and store on the site c1895. It was known as the Railway Bakery when V J O'Farrell was the proprietor in 1924.
16. Turn right and continue along Rocket St.	The former Thompson Memorial School Church (35A Rocket Street) opened for worship in 1880 in memory of William Thompson, first Superintendent of the Methodist Sunday School in Milltown. It was built for use as a Sunday school as well as for worship. The church choir was formed by Mr J Gordon in 1892 and the school hall added in 1929. Now private property (Bathurst Academy of Dance).
17. Cross Rocket St into Torch Street.	The naming of Torch Street , like Havannah Street, is thought to have been inspired by the visits to Australian marine waters in the 1840s and 1850s of Royal Navy ships HMS Torch and Havannah.

18. Continue to the intersection of Torch and Busby Sts.	At the end of Torch Street is Logan Brae (34 Busby Street), as it was originally named. Commissioned by John Busby in 1876 and designed by architect Edward Gell, it was later purchased from the Busby family by Hon J Meagher, who presented the entire 25 acres to The Sisters of Mercy. It was renamed St. Joseph's Mount and was a novitiate for novices of the order of Mercy. Directly behind, at the foot of Spencer Street, the spires of St Stanislaus' College can be seen. The school, also designed by Edward Gell, was opened in September 1873. Logan Brae is now privately owned.
19. Turn left down Busby St to Chifley Home (left hand side.	Chifley Home at 10 Busby Street was the home of former Australian Prime Minister 1945-1949, J B Chifley (Ben) and his wife Elizabeth. The house was opened to the public as a national memorial by Prime Minister E G Whitlam in 1973 and is kept as it was when Ben and Elizabeth lived there. Although Ben Chifley's early experience on the railways led him into politics, he always maintained his allegiance to the Milltown/Bathurst community. This modest cottage remains as a tribute to the humble beginnings of Bathurst's favourite son.



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