Shellharbour Village Heritage Trail

Harbour

Little Park

1

Wollongong St — Wollongong St

2
3
4
5

Wentworth St — Wentworth St — Wentworth

6

7

8

9

10

Mary St — Mary St

11

12

13

Sophia St — Sophia S

Towns St

Wilson St

Addison St

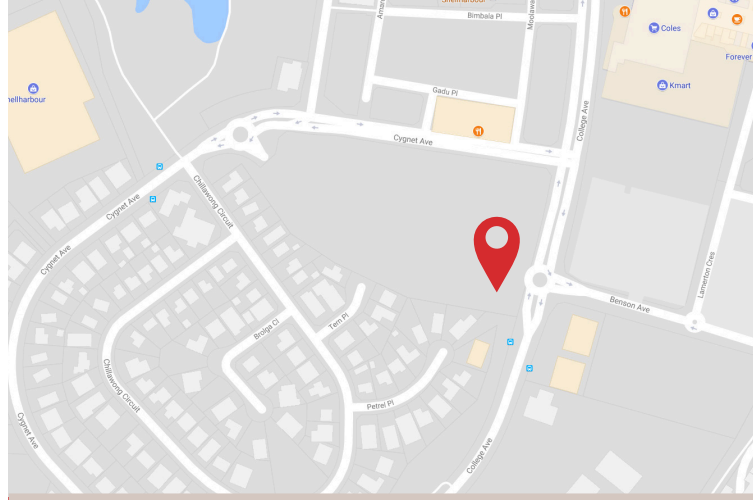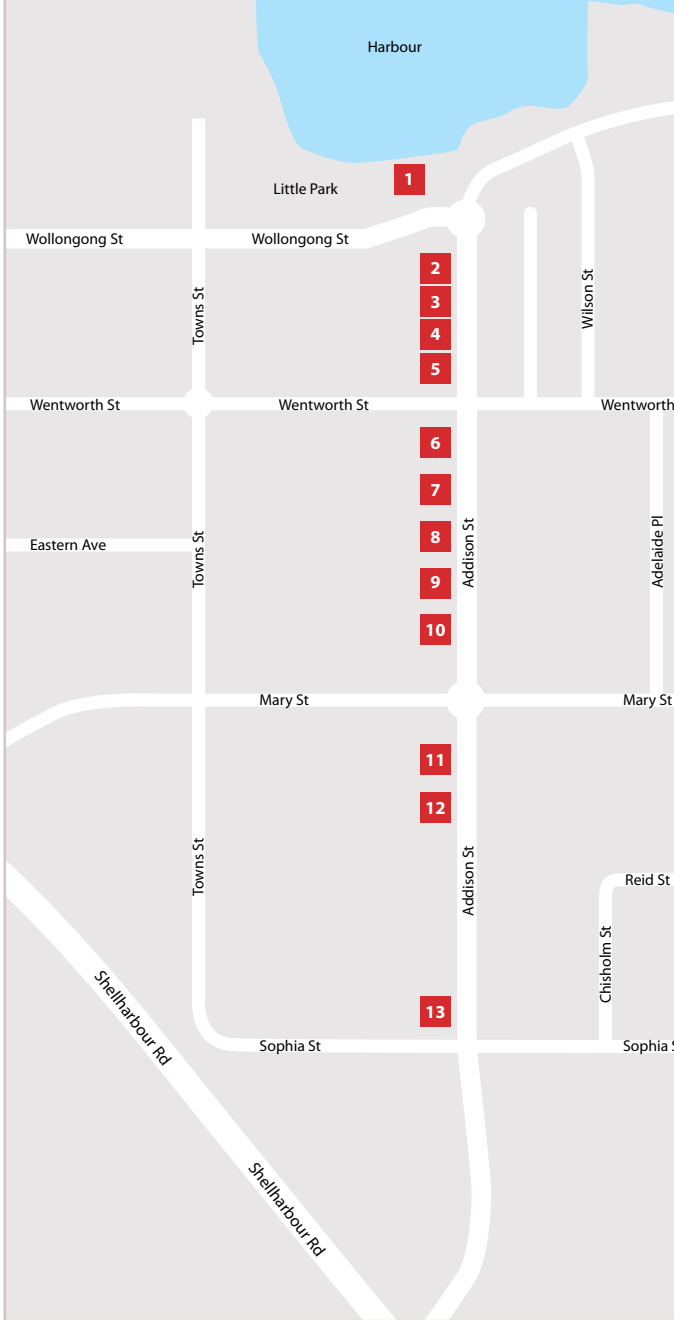Adelaide Pl

Eastern Ave

Reid St

Chisholm St

Shellharbour Rd

SHELLHARBOUR CITYMUSEUM

Visit us in person

Shellharbour Civic Centre
76 Cygnet Avenue
(Corner Cygnet and College Avenue)
Shellharbour City Centre, NSW, 2529

FREE ENTRY - OPEN 7 DAYS

Contact us

Ph: 4221 6100

Visit us online

www.museum.shellharbour.nsw.gov.au

TREAD SHELLHARBOUR

Download the
Tread Shellharbour app
from the app store and take
the virtual tour

Shellharbour Village Heritage Trail

Shellharbour Village is home
to some of the city's oldest
remaining buildings. This trail
covers the history of
the village and its people.

We hope you enjoy it.

ABORIGINAL HISTORY

Dharawal was the name given to the Aboriginal people who called the Illawarra their home for thousands of years before European settlers came to the area. The 'Wodi Wodi' tribe lived in the southern areas of the Dharawal including Shellharbour. Archaeological evidence discovered at Bass Point proves Aboriginal people have lived in the area for at least 17,000 years. Many of the names of local towns are derived from the Dharawal language.

EUROPEAN HISTORY

Shellharbour was so named because of the vast quantities of shells found at the foreshore; the remains of Aboriginal middens which once scattered the coast. Shellharbour Village was originally called Peterborough and was one of the earliest land grants by Governor Macquarie, to D' Arey Wentworth in 1821. After Wentworth's death in 1827, the estate was divided between five of his children - Robert, Martha (Reddall), Sophia (Towns), Mary Ann (Addison) and Catherine (Darley). The town of Peterborough was officially laid out on 22 September 1851.

1 HARBOUR AND STEAM FLOUR MILL
HARBOUR AND FORESHORE - PLAQUE 2

A jetty and a boat store was built at Shellharbour in 1859 to assist with the loading of cargo and storage of goods bound for the Sydney markets. The Dunster family of Dunster's Hill, Croom, would signal to outlying farms that ships had arrived in the harbour, by means of a large wicker ball that was hoisted high in one of the large fig trees on the property. Robert Wilson's Steam Flour Mill was opened on the foreshore in 1857 and powered by a 10 horse-power steam engine. The Mill stood on rising ground south of the boat store and at the foot of Wilson Street and was used for divine services prior to the building of churches in the village.

2 'SEASIDE' AND THE OCEAN BEACH HOTEL
CNR ADDISON AND WOLLONGONG ST - PLAQUE 3

On this site, once stood 'Seaside', the beautiful white two-storey home of the Bursill family. Charles Bursill was the first and last Harbour Master at Shellharbour. 'Seaside' was demolished and replaced by the Ocean Beach Hotel; built for Mrs. Henrietta Bush in 1929. The Ocean Beach Hotel could accommodate sixty guests and was built to cater to the tourist trade. The rooms were described as both artistic and modern, while the tiled and marble bathrooms had hot and cold reticulated water with the latest in showers and fittings. The stained glass windows of the dining room opened to a tiled verandah complete with afternoon tea tables decorated in gold and black.

3 STEAM PACKET HOTEL
11 ADDISON STREET - PLAQUE 4

Campbell Mercer built this hotel in 1855. He leased the building to David Moon who obtained a Publicans License and opened the Steam Packet Hotel in April 1856. The hotel became known locally as Cosgrove's Inn when Thomas Cosgrove purchased it in 1861. The hotel was a centre for social life and public meetings, as well as a base for travellers. The Condon family owned the hotel from 1868 until the 1880s, after which it continued under a succession of licensees until the early 1900s when it became Beazley's General Store, followed by the Gethings Store. The building was demolished in the late 1970s.

4 OLD CORNER STORE
ADDISON & WENTWORTH ST - NO PLAQUE

This building is one of the oldest timber buildings remaining in Shellharbour. Robert Wilson, a storekeeper and Alderman on the first Shellharbour Municipal Council, purchased this site from TA Reddall in 1875. Shellharbour City Council restored the building with the financial assistance of the NSW Government.

5 SETTLERS ARMS AND NEW ROYAL HOTEL
CNR ADDISON & WENTWORTH ST - PLAQUE 5

Robert Martin built the Settlers Arms in 1856. The hotel became a meeting place during the early years of the village. Some 200 persons signed the petition for the formation of Shellharbour as a Municipality at this site, in 1858. Misfortune was to strike the Martin family when the hotel and residence of Robert Martin were destroyed by fire on 8 April 1872. In 1891 on the same site, Henry Mood, builder, former coachbuilder and Alderman of Municipality of Shellharbour, built the New Royal Hotel which became a popular spot for tourists and locals. The hotel was also destroyed by fire in 1931.

6 CAROLINE CHISHOLM PARK
ADDISON STREET - PLAQUE 1

In 1843 Caroline Chisholm, the 'Emigrants' Friend' settled some 23 families in Shellharbour. By 1857 many of these immigrants had secured or were leasing homes and properties. These settlers turned mainly to dairy farming. Many of these pioneers were signatories to a petition dated 14 January 1859, to form the Municipality of Shellharbour. The Shellharbour Rolls of Honour and Memorials to the Great War 1914-1918 and World War II 1939-1945 were originally erected in Little Park, Shellharbour. They were later relocated to Caroline Chisholm Park in Addison Street and incorporated with the Samuel Atchison Boer War Memorial and the Cities Service Boston Memorial.

7 THOMAS STORE
25 ADDISON STREET - PLAQUE 6

In 1855, John Thomas purchased this site and by 1857 had established a store and residence. John Thomas was a prominent member of the town. His son, also John, later established a bakery at the rear of the property. The building and bakery was demolished in November 2000. The bakery ovens were restored by the Tongarra Heritage Society, and are retained on the original site (now Addison's Seafood Grill and Bar) located in the rear foyer of the restaurant.

8 WINDRADENE
NO PLAQUE

Windradene was built on part of Walter Allen's estate c 1871. Allen was an important pioneer of the area, running a store and establishing a post office. Windradene was reputedly built as a holiday house, and leased out to visitors in the area. The Norfolk Pine at the rear of Windradene dates to Arbor Day, 1895, when pioneers planted pines along the harbour foreshore in celebration.

9 ALLEN BROS. POST OFFICE AND GENERAL STORE
35 ADDISON STREET - PLAQUE 7

At this site in 1868, Walter Allen established a general store and residence. Allen also operated a post office adjacent to the store until his death in 1876, when the business was taken over by his wife and members of the family. Goods were often ordered by catalogue through the Post Office, arriving by ship, train or mail. Allen's Bros Post Office and General Store building remains today, although extensive alterations have been made over the years.

10 PETERBOROUGH STORE
CNR ADDISON AND MARY STREET PLAQUE 11

John Graham purchased this site and opened the Peterborough Store in 1857. John leased the store to his brother Edward Graham in 1858, who continued the business and operated a Post Office on the premises. Edward provided a room for Council meetings prior to the building of the Council Chambers in 1865. In 1872, the Peterborough Store became Thomas Coughrane's Royal Hotel. The Hotel traded until 1890, and by 1891 had reverted to a residence. The building was demolished c.1956 to make way for the first Shellharbour Worker's Club.

11 WOODBINE, FORMER COURT HOUSE
20 MARY STREET - PLAQUE 8

In 1859, due to the need for police presence in the village, approval was given to erect a temporary watch house. The timber watch house was built in 1861. In 1877, this new basalt courthouse and lock up was built to replace the watch house. In 1908 the court was moved to Albion Park and in 1938 this building was converted into a private residence. It was later named 'Woodbine' by the Miller family, who named it after their Croom farm.

12 FORMER COUNCIL CHAMBERS
32 ADDISON STREET - PLAQUE 9

On 4 June 1859, Shellharbour was declared a Municipality. William Wilson, Andrew McGill, Patrick Collins, Robert Wilson, Ebenezer Russell, Robert Martin, William James, William Moles and Joseph Dunster were elected as Alderman. Prior to the building of the Council Chambers, meetings were conducted in a room rented from storekeeper, Edward Graham. Stonemason, Matthew Dinning, constructed the Council Chambers building in 1865 of basalt rubble, and the first Council meeting was held in 1866. The Chamber served until the late 1890's when Council sold the building and moved to a new site in Albion Park.

13 TEMPERANCE HALL
CNR ADDISON STREET AND SOPHIA ST - PLAQUE 10

Hicks Bros, bacon curers of Shell harbour, donated this land for a hall to the Alowrie Divison Order of Sons and Daughters of Temperance. James Cawdell, Grand Worthy Patriarch, laid the foundation stone in September 1882. The stone contained a sealed bottle, a time capsule, together with a copy of the constitution, newspapers, and coins of the era. Cawdell officially opened the hall 26 March 1883. The Temperance Hall became the Pictorium, screening silent moving pictures in the 1920's. It was later called the Empire Theatre and ran talking movies until 1960. The hall was demolished for housing in 1969.

You have now reached the end of the trail. We hope you've enjoyed it. If you have any questions about the history of Shellharbour City please ask our Museum staff and volunteers.