

### Avoca, Murphy and Caroline Streets Area

This area comprises some of the most architecturally and historically, important houses in Prahran. Richmond House (56 Avoca Street), 64 Avoca Street, Caroline House (75 Caroline Street), 76 Caroline Street and 83 Caroline Street all were built, or retain substantial sections from the 1850's or earlier. The area also contains many other early and late Victorian detached houses and terrace houses as well as significant Edwardian and inter-war buildings. These all provide the dominant character and significance to this important area, despite the unfortunate incurring of more modern developments.

### Toorak Road Area

(Also part of Precinct 2)

By 1865 the South Yarra area was well developed and a gazetteer described the place as a 'pretty suburban village containing a few residences, and railway station, situated on the road two miles south-east from Melbourne ... the neighbourhood around the station is extensive and is the residence of numerous wealthy merchants and others whose business lies in Melbourne'. However, in contrast to the larger and more affluent developments to the north of Toorak Road, those to the south were much smaller and subdivisions much meaner. Coburg Place (now Myrtle Street) was typical of these smaller subdivisions. Ten identical small cottages were built and these are clearly shown on Kearney's map of 1855. Today, however, none survive and Myrtle Street remains as a lane with Powell Street being the principal frontage of the allotments. In the 1870s and 80s commercial premises boomed along Toorak Road and many flamboyant facades were erected for shops at this period. Part of the present South Yarra railway station was erected by 1874 (now the premises of a dry cleaning service) and this was later extensively renovated in 1915-16.

When the South Yarra to Oakleigh section of the main Gippsland Line was constructed in 1879 it joined the single track Brighton line at South Yarra. Because both lines were set in deep cuttings a potentially dangerous junction was created and this was not alleviated until some years later when the embankment of the cutting was lowered to provide a clearer vision for locomotive drivers.

Nearby, Her Majesty's Hotel was also extensively renovated. This occurred in 1889 and a year later Public Works Department architect A.J. MacDonald designed the South Yarra Post Office and this was erected during 1892-93. This unique building is one of a rare group of buildings which reflect the influence of the American romanesque style and the innovative design ranks it as one of the most important public buildings in Victoria. Apart from the Post Office and the flamboyant facade of the shops of the land boom, this period also saw the erection of many residences and Lee Terrace in Avoca Street typifying the architectural style of the land boom period.

The Toorak Road area is important for its groups of intact commercial buildings which form intact streetscapes along several stretches of the road. Although much of the other commercial development is not so intact, its scale and form (especially towards Punt Road) make a uniform low-scale shopping centre with no intrusive high-rise developments. The area is also enhanced by a number of individual buildings of significance especially the former South Yarra Post Office, Lee Terrace (6-18 Avoca Street) and the early residences nearby in Caroline Street and Avoca Street.

#### **Toorak Road Chapel Street Area**

(Also Precincts 2 and 6)

This area had strong links with the first settlers settlements in Prahran. Charles Forrest who bought allotment 6 on the north-west corner of Chapel Street and Toorak Road at the first land sale in 1840 erected his Waterloo Cottages in 1841. This was the first house to be built after the Crown Land sales in Prahran and in August 1842 he had started another house Hermitage Cottage on the site now occupied by the Capitol Bakery Building (The Fun Factory).

#### **PRAHRAN CHARACTER AREAS**

These encompass the Darling Street, Murphy Street and sections of Avoca and Caroline and Punt Road which have retained a mixture of modern flats interspersed with earlier significant buildings, mostly original developments on this subdivision.

The substantial early and late Victorian buildings are both single and double storeyed; some inter-war housing also contributes to the character of this area. The area is also of historic interest as being the first area of Prahran where houses were built and subdivision took place.

The walk up flat developments have made substantial in-roads on this character but the identity of the area is still largely derived from the earlier buildings, predominantly 1-2 storey Victorian villas.