

Monuments & sites

A self-guided walking tour



Parramatta Park contains over 100 fascinating sites relating to Aboriginal and colonial heritage, including natural areas, places of archaeological interest, buildings and monuments.

The natural landscape shows how the traditional owners – the Burramatta clan of the Darug people – practised land management techniques.

The earliest successful colonial farming practices and the beginnings of the cattle industry were also instigated in what is now Parramatta Park. Town planning took place for the first time on a grand scale in Parramatta too.

The cultural landscape of the Park is reflected in its monuments and heritage buildings, especially in the 'Government Domain', which was where Lachlan Macquarie built a vast estate.

This self-guided walking tour takes in some of the significant features of the site's evolution from farming settlement to 'People's Park'.

BEGIN YOUR TOUR AT THE GEORGE ST GATEHOUSE.



- Toilet
- Accessible toilet
- Gatehouse
- Cafe/restaurant
- Playground
- Picnic shelter
- BBQ
- Pedestrian entry
- Vehicle entry
- Paved path
- Unpaved path
- Track
- Cycleway
- Cycle route
- Loop road
- Carpark
- Train line
- Bus stop
- Train station

10 LITTLE COOGEE

Finish your walk at "Little Coogee", a popular swimming spot in the 20th century.



Parramatta Park is open to vehicles every day from 6am to 6pm (8pm during daylight saving). Pedestrian access is possible at any time.

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PARRAMATTA PARK

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George Street Gatehouse
(the Tudor Gatehouse)



1 PARK GATEHOUSES

There are six gatehouses at the Park entrances on George Street, Ross Street, Park Road, Macquarie Street, Great Western Highway at Mays Hill and Queens Road. These gatehouses date from as far back as the 1870s and are intact today.

The Tudor-style George Street Gatehouse (1a) and the Gothic-style Macquarie Street Gatehouse (1b) are the grand entrances to the Park.

The George Street Gatehouse was built on the site of Governor Macquarie's small stone lodge in 1885 and is now a local landmark. Commissioned by the Parramatta Park Trust, its architect was Scottish-born Gordon McKinnon and the builders (Hart and Lavors) and blacksmiths (T Forsyth) were from Parramatta.

The gatehouses reference British culture and are examples of the enhancement and utility of nineteenth century design.

2 LADY FITZROY MEMORIAL

This memorial and a commemorative oak tree mark the site where Lady Mary FitzRoy and Lieutenant Charles Masters, the Governor's Aide, were killed in 1847. The carriage they were travelling in, recklessly driven by Governor FitzRoy, overturned and hit a tree.

Lady FitzRoy's death was considered "an irreparable misfortune to the colony". It signalled a period of decline for the Domain, as Governor FitzRoy stopped visiting the site where the accident happened and Government House fell into disrepair.

The monument and other sites helped historians piece together the significant events which affected Parramatta and the colony.

3 THE BATH HOUSE

The Bath House was completed in 1823 for Governor Brisbane. Two important colonial architects, Francis Greenway and Standish Harris, are associated with the design.

It contains the archaeological remains of a pumping system which was developed to bring water to the building and heat the water as well. This convict-built heating and pumping system made the Bath House very significant in heritage terms.

In 1886 the Trustees converted the Bath House to a pavilion, which survives today.



The Bath House

4 THE OBSERVATORY TRANSIT STONES

Governor Brisbane built an observatory in the Park in 1822, in keeping with the spirit of discovery of the time. It was the third observatory built in Australia and astronomers Charles Rumker and James Dunlop used it to complete the first systematic cataloguing of the southern skies.

Accurate star positions for navigation and surveying were invaluable to the colony. The observatory's transit stones – which originally supported a transit telescope – were used as the meridian mark for explorer Thomas Mitchell's first trigonometric survey of Australia in 1828.

The observatory building fell into ruin and was demolished in 1848. Only the transit stones were left standing. The stones are associated with the earliest astronomical observations ever undertaken in the Southern Hemisphere in the European scientific tradition.

Instruments from the observatory are now in the collection of the Powerhouse Museum.



Boer War Memorial and Cannon

5 BOER WAR MEMORIAL AND CANNON

The Boer War Memorial was erected in 1904. It's one of comparatively few such memorials and is particularly important because the first Australian troops to arrive in Africa in 1899 came from the Lancer Barracks in Parramatta.

The 100 lancers from the nearby districts who took part in the Boer War were representing Australia, as distinct to Britain, in what was the nation's first overseas military engagement.

The memorial incorporates four Doric columns and entablature (the architrave, frieze, and cornice) blocks recycled from the Parramatta Courthouse built in 1837. The gun placed on top was purchased by New South Wales in 1856 as part of the defence of Port Jackson.

Located in a prominent position on the ridgeline, the memorial serves as a landmark when viewed from outside the Park boundaries.

6 THE CRESCENT

The Crescent is a natural amphitheater formed by a small billabong on the bank of the Parramatta River. Favoured by the Burrumatta clan of the Darug people before colonisation, it was earmarked for agricultural purposes by Governor Phillip in early 1788.

Visitors can see important buildings and landmarks from The Crescent's vantage point, including Parramatta River, the Old Kings School, Brislington House and the spires of St Patrick's and St John's Cathedrals.

7 GOVERNMENT HOUSE PARRAMATTA

Governor Phillip had a small timber cottage built in 1790. Nine years later Governor Hunter replaced it with a two storey Georgian-style house of plastered brick. This was enlarged to its present form in 1815 by Governor Macquarie, who added the wings, colonnades and portico.

Its use by the early governors and its standing as a focal point for colonial society make Government House significant. It is also an example of the work of important early colonial architects, and a direct translation of the English built form to an Australian landscape.

The building was restored by the Government Architect in 1908. It has been managed by the National Trust (Australia) since 1967.

8 THE DAIRY COTTAGE AND SUNKEN MILK ROOM

The two-roomed Dairy Cottage was constructed between 1796 and 1805 by ex-convict George Salter. It is one of the oldest surviving, intact cottages in Australia.

Governor Macquarie purchased Salter's land sometime between 1811 and 1815 and converted the cottage to a dairy, adding a pavilion on either side. One pavilion, a sunken milk room that was adjacent to the dairy, is still housing a cellar beneath the Rangers Cottage (built around 1870).

Known as the Dairy Precinct, the Dairy Cottage and the Rangers Cottage form part of Parramatta Park's UNESCO World Heritage listed area. It is rare to find such an intact building as the Dairy Cottage, which has remained substantially unchanged since 1820, and serves to demonstrate the techniques and materials used by early European settlers.

9 MEMORIAL TO WILLIAM (BILLY) E. HART

This memorial commemorates a pioneering cross-country flight, the first in Australia, which took place on 4 November 1911. Racing from Penrith to Parramatta Park, William Hart won in 23 minutes against Wizard Stone of America. Stone lost his way and landed at Lakemba.

Hart was the first Australian to fly a plane and the nation's first qualified pilot. The memorial celebrates this important and enterprising aviator.