

# NORTHCOTE POINT WALK

North Shore City heritage trails





*Picnic at 'City of Cork', North of Northcote Point, pre 1900. Northcote library collection.*

Today, Northcote Point enjoys the advantages of a small backwater close to the city. With its many old villas and other historic features, a beautiful coastline and spectacular views, it is one of the Shore's most interesting heritage areas.

**Terrain:** Over level and some hilly ground.

**Duration:** The walk is in three sections (1-20 [approx. 1 hour], 21-27 [approx. 30 mins.] and 28-35 [approx. 40 mins])

**Parking:** Available along Queen Street or by Fishermans Wharf.

**Privacy:** The walk is along public roads and contains historical facts about the buildings and the area. Most of the sites on the walk are private property and many are used as private residences. Please respect the environment and the privacy of local residents, and do not trespass on private property.

*Start at the Bridgeway Theatre.  
All walks begin and end at the Bridgeway.*

## NORTHCOTE POINT HERITAGE WALK

During his lifetime, accountant and historian George Graham (1874-1952) recorded much of the Maori history of Auckland. Graham lived near the southern end of Northcote Point in the early 1900s.

Onewa Pa on the Point, as Graham described it, was in early times a fortified village, pallisaded and entrenched. Maori fished in the bays and gathered berries and roots from nearby forests.

The oldest known inhabitants of the district were Ngati Tai, who in ancient times suffered severely from raids of Ngati Whatua and, in about 1650, of Ngati Paoa. Ngati Whatua then conquered the whole of the Auckland isthmus. Onewa was attacked again and again and in about 1740, the remnants of the Ngati Tai tribe were driven out. Ngati Paoa took over Onewa's Ngati Tai villages, but were driven back by Ngati Whatua. Gradually, the remnants of Ngati Tai returned in the early 19th century to their old villages at Onewa.

After the musket wars of the 1820s and early 1830s, peace returned to the Auckland area. A few Ngati Tai, with their last chieftain Heteraka Takapuna, continued to live at Onewa for some years.



In 1841, the North Shore was included in the vast Mahurangi block, sold by Maori to the Crown, and Onewa Pa passed from Maori ownership.

Following the founding of Auckland in 1840, what is now Northcote Point was named Rough Point after Captain David Rough, Auckland's first harbour-master and superintendent of works. In 1848, the name was changed to Stokes Point by Captain J.L. Stokes of H.M. survey ship Acheron, during a survey of the Waitemata Harbour.

In the 1840s, the land on Stokes Point was subdivided into eight large lots and sold in the early 1850s to Phillip Callan, brickmaker, John McGeachie, farmer, Major Isaac Rhodes Cooper and Colonel Robert Wynyard. In 1867, the end of the Point was subdivided by the Crown and became the Town of Woodside.

Callan had a brickworks at the southern end of Sulphur Beach, possibly from the early 1840s on the basis of an agreement with Maori. Another early colonial industry on Stokes Point was R. Clark's soap and candle works, present in 1848, reputedly near Sulphur Beach.

In 1854, James Reed was given a licence to run the Stokes Point Ferry and in 1859, Callan built his North Auckland Hotel on the Point to take advantage of the ferry service and the main route north.

Sulphur works were built by James Tunny and James Pond next to Sulphur Beach in 1878, but did not last long. From the 1870s, Northcote was



*Sulphur Works c.1884  
Northcote library collection.*

well-known for strawberry gardens in the Belle Vue Ave area.

By 1880, most of the Point had been subdivided and many of the old villas surviving today date from the 1880-1910 period.

From 1848, Stokes Point was administered as part of the Hundred of Pupuke, covering all of the North Shore. The hundreds were dissolved in 1856 and until 1866, the Auckland Provincial Council administered the roads. The North Shore Highway District, which included Stokes Point, was established in 1866 and became the North Shore Riding of Waitemata County in 1876. The Stokes Point district was renamed Northcote by Major Benton in the early 1880s, it is thought after the British aristocrat Sir Stafford Northcote. Northcote attained borough status in 1908, but became part of the newly created North Shore City in 1989.

The late 1920s saw significant growth in Northcote, with the cinema, bus barns and the concrete road being built in 1927, and the post office in 1929.

The construction of the Auckland Harbour Bridge and motorway in the late 1950s drastically changed the Northcote Point environment. The eastern coastline was obliterated, the ferries ceased, shops closed, and the Point became something of a backwater. Rapid northward development took place and the Northcote Shopping Centre opened in December 1958.

*Opening of Northcote Post Office,  
Queen St, 1929.  
Northcote library collection.*



## BRIDGEWAY THEATRE

122 Queen St

The Onewa Picture Drome (now the Bridgeway) and the Waitemata Bus & Transport Company Ltd bus barn, offices and several shops were built in 1927 by E. and J. Fraser, engineers. By 1929, the theatre's name had changed to the Palais because of the free dances, parties and fancy dress occasions that were held after the pictures, with the theatre seats pushed back to the walls. It was renamed King's Theatre during the 1930s and The Bridgeway after the Harbour Bridge was built. The cinema underwent major refurbishment in 2000, and the old bus barn became a second cinema. When the Waitemata Bus Co. was first established after the World War I, the distinctive red buses were housed in the old wooden barn behind the cinema in Clarence Rd.

1

*Across the road on the corner of Bartley St is...*

## FORMER POST OFFICE

115 Queen St

2

Northcote Point has had a post office since 1874 (see 5 and 7). This new post office was opened in 1929. Prime Minister Sir Joseph Ward congratulated Northcote Borough on its progress and promised to "facilitate the citizens' request about a bridge". The post office closed down in 1988 and the building is now a restaurant and architects' office.

*Next to the Bridgeway on the southern side is...*

## HALL'S BEACH

3

Hall's Beach was named after Peter Hall, of Winks and Hall, well-known Auckland cabinet-makers, who bought several acres next to the beach in 1870. The property was bought in about 1900 by the Fraser family who later built the Bridgeway. From about 1911 until the 1960s, boat builders such as Ernest Bailey built many boats, including launches and mullet boats, immediately to the south of Hall's Beach.

*Continue south along Queen St. 97, 'Korangi', 96, 'Featherstone', and 94, 'Garfield', were built by George Carter in the early 20th century. There were once many shops along Queen St. Also, Tarry's Hall, built in the 1870s, once stood at 75. Dances, gatherings, Northcote's first movies and early borough council meetings were held there.*

Waitemata Bus & Transport Company  
Northcote library collection.



Bridgeway Theatre and shops  
Northcote library collection.



Hall's Beach, Price Collection,  
Alexander Turnbull Library.



*Continue along to...*

## OLD BUTCHER'S SHOP

64 Queen St

4

The butcher's shop, now a residence and the Old Butcher Shop Art Studio, was built just after 1900 by R & W Hellaby who, from 1873, built butchers' shops all over Auckland.



*A little further along is...*

## LEPPER'S FORMER SHOP AND POST OFFICE

60 Queen St

5

In 1893, Henry Lepper, a tinsmith, became Northcote's postmaster. After his death in 1906, his wife Edith filled the position until 1929, as well as raising their eight children and providing many services to the community. After their first house near the wharf burned down in 1902, this became their new home, post and telephone office, as well as a lending library, stationers and haberdashery.

The Leppers were the NZ Herald's main agents on the Shore. The eldest son, George, used to row across the harbour early in the morning to get the newspapers for delivery unless it was too rough.



*Cross over the road. Opposite is...*

## HOUSE

59 Queen St

6

This architecturally innovative house, home to the design firm CREATIONZ, was designed by the well-known Auckland architect Peter Middleton and built in 1963.



*Price Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library*

*A little further along there was once an ambulance shelter, where the dead were taken on litters during the great influenza epidemic of 1918. On the northern corner of Duke St is...*

## FORMER BAKERY

55 Queen St

7

Northcote's first postmaster, John Grout Denby, ran a shop and post office here until 1893, as well as strawberry gardens in the Belle Vue Ave area. The Clow family bought the property in the 1890s and established a bakery and tearooms there. The bakery was run by the Gunman family in the 1950s.

*On the corner opposite there were once stables and a blacksmiths, and later Andrew Miller's horse-bus company.*

*Just past where Andrew Miller's was there is...*

## FORMER BILLIARD SALOON AND RSA CLUBROOMS

47-49 Queen St

Originally owned by John Broady, storekeeper. In 1912 it became a billiard saloon and in 1946, the Returned Services Association clubrooms.



*Laying concrete road, Queen St late 1920s. Northcote library collection.*

*Next door are...*

## FORMER SHOPS

43-45 Queen St

Built as two shops in the early 1920s, by grocer Thomas Heaton. In later years the shops were combined as Hall's grocery, before being converted to residences in the 1970s.

8

*A few doors along is...*

## NORTHCOTE TAVERN

37 Queen St

10

Northcote's first hotel was built by Philip Callan in 1859 and is thought to have been constructed of bricks from Callan's Sulphur Beach brickworks. It was located on the other side of King St from the present building and was originally called the North Auckland Hotel. Later it was known as the Ferry Hotel. In 1882, it was announced that the hotel was to be pulled down and replaced by a 'handsome family hotel' of 'the Italian order of architecture', with about 20 rooms and a spacious 'clubroom', commanding extensive sea views. Local architects, Hammond and Sons designed the new building. By the end of the 1890s, the name had again changed to the Northcote Hotel. The northern wing of the hotel was added a few years after 1900.

*Opposite the hotel there is a public walkway to the foreshore.*

*Price Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.*

9





*Continue along Queen St into what was once the Town of Woodside.*

## FORMER SHOPS

26 Queen St

Built by Fred Souster, architect, around 1910 for his daughter-in-law, Rachel Souster. The shop on the northern side was a grocery and general store, and the other a dairy. They were converted into a residence in the 1970s, but the distinctive Meadowgold ice cream sign on the side window remains.

*The photographer William Archer Price, some of whose photos illustrate this brochure, lived nearby in the early 1900s. No. 20, built in 1901, was St Hilda's Retreat, the home of Canon Davies, in the 1970s-80s. The last house on the right, known as 'Peterhouse', was built for sea captain, Matthew Slattery and his family around 1885. Walk down to the wharf. The adjacent reserve housed air raid tunnels during World War II.*



11

## FISHERMAN'S WHARF

12

Fisherman's Wharf, reputedly Auckland's first marine restaurant, was built in 1970-1 by restaurateur Bob Sell. For the opening night on September 7, 1971, Sell invited 'all the people who never go out anywhere', and 150 senior citizens, the oldest of them aged 104, sat down for a swanky meal. The NZ Herald wrote the next day, 'and in the background, the waters of the Auckland harbour, lit by the brilliant lights from the bridge above, glistened like the eyes of all the old people'. Since 1973, the restaurant, now closed, has had a variety of owners.



## NORTHCOTE WHARF

13

In 1856, the Crown formed Queen St and built a wharf at the southern end. Horse-buses serviced the ferries. The old wharf was pulled down in the 1960s, and the present much smaller one built.



Norfolk library collection.

*Walk up the steps opposite Fisherman's Wharf and along the coastal path to the tip of Stokes Point for spectacular views of the Waitemata Harbour.*

## STOKES POINT AND ONEWA PA

14

In pre-European times, Stokes Point was the site of the Onewa Pa, a stronghold of great strategic importance. Onewa means 'divided earth'. It refers to the trench fortification running across the headland.

In 1908, a scout den was built on the reserve for the Northcote scout patrol, reputedly New Zealand's first. In that year, a 22-metre high flagstaff was erected on Stokes Point to celebrate Northcote becoming a borough and the visit of the American fleet. At the ceremony, the New Zealand flag was presented by local Maori, who also planted a totara, named 'Tainui', since destroyed by bad weather.



*Local Maori residents present NZ Ensign to Mayor Alex Bruce, 1908. Price Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.*

*On Stokes Point you can see the complex substructure of the Auckland Harbour Bridge.*

## AUCKLAND HARBOUR BRIDGE

15

Opened on May 30, 1959, the bridge was designed by Freeman Fox and Partners and built by the Cleveland Bridge and Dorman Long partnership. It is over a kilometre long. The four-lane bridge greatly accelerated the development of the North Shore and quickly became inadequate. Two more lanes were added on each side in 1970 by Ishikawajima-Harima Heavy Industries Co. Ltd, using giant floating cranes to lift the box girder sections into place. Beneath the bridge is a memorial to three workers killed during construction.

Northcote library collection.



Northcote library collection.



*Facing Stokes Point reserve on the western side of the bridge is...*

## QUINTON VILLA

1 Queen St

16

James Trounson built Quinton Villa in 1901 in the ornate Edwardian style. The villa was built from one huge kauri, chosen by Trounson and brought by scow to the Point from land he owned north of Dargaville. Trounson gifted some of this land, which was covered with magnificent kauri forest, to the people of New Zealand in 1921.

*Walk northwards along Princes St. To the right is a steep access road to the Gold Hole, a boat haul-out area so named because of yellow sulphur from the Sulphur Beach works that washed up on the beach. Continue along Princes St. All Black Kel Tremain grew up at 44 and...*

*Boy Scout Arbor day below Quinton House, 1908. Northcote library collection.*



*...further along, Kiwi Rugby League star Jason Lowrie grew up at 84.*

## HOUSE

61 Princes St

17

This house, the largest on the Point, was built in about 1906 by Percy William Bolland, tailor. He sold the house in 1911 to Daniel Dickenson Metge, headmaster of Newton East Primary School. Now a private residence and a commercial base for Compass Dolphin Ltd Architecture and Interiors.



*Price Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library*

*A short way along is...*

## PRINCESS PARK ESTATE

67 Princes St

18

The town planner F.W.O. Jones' vision for Northcote Point in the 1950s involved demolishing old houses along the spine of the Point and building intensive housing and high-rise apartments. The only part of this scheme built was a three-storey block of units intended to link 12-storey and 14-storey twin towers which for timing and funding reasons did not proceed. Objections from the community put an end to further high-rise redevelopment.

*Continue to the end of Princes St.*



Price Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.

*Turn right into Beach Rd leading down to Sulphur Beach, or left to return to the Bridgeway.*

## SULPHUR BEACH

19

This once popular beach, named by Maori Oneoneroa, meaning 'long sand beach', was reclaimed for the motorway in the 1950s. The area got its name from the sulphur works opened there in 1878 by James Tunny and James Pond, who brought crude sulphur from White Island. Unfortunately, the foundation for the works gave way and the project was abandoned within a few years. Boat builders Bailey and Lowe also operated from the southern end of this beach.

*Turn left and walk along Sulphur Beach Rd beside early cottages, beach houses and the huge bank of land reclaimed for the motorway, until you come to Tennyson St and....*

## FORMER HARBOUR BRIDGE TOLL PLAZA BUILDING

20

This late 1950s building, considered to be a fine example of its era, was designed by Llew Piper and Associates. It has expensive bronze windows to counteract the salty conditions.

*The nearby tunnel goes under the motorway to the extensive Shoal Bay intertidal area. Turn left into Tennyson St, right into Alfred St, along to Nelson St and through the public walkway into Stafford Rd. Opposite is...*

## STAFFORD PARK

21

This park, like Stafford Rd, was named after Sir Edward Stafford, who at 37 years was New Zealand's youngest ever Prime Minister, first elected in 1856. Stafford's second wife was Mary Bartley, daughter of Thomas Bartley who bought his estate beside Sulphur Beach in 1853. Bartley often rowed home across the harbour to Stokes Point after Provincial Council meetings.

*Walk up Stafford Rd...*



*...turn left into Richmond Ave, past 21 where the Bartley's 1850s house once stood. Walk along to...*

## HOUSE

33 Richmond Ave

22

This Victorian villa was the scene of a murder in 1930. Arthur Thomas Munn poisoned his second wife Lillie, shortly after she made a will leaving him everything, including the house. He had struck up a relationship with another woman. Lillie Munn's death aroused the suspicions of the young Dr Dudding, who later became a medical legend in the district, leading to Munn's arrest and execution several months later.

*Two houses along on the corner is...*

## HOUSE

8 Richmond Ave

23

This 1940s English cottage-style house was designed by M.K. Draffin, who also designed the Auckland War Memorial Museum. Recent additions to the northern end complement the original design.



*Tree planting in Richmond Ave, late 1940s.  
Northcote library collection.*

*Turn right into Bartley St and walk up to the corner. On the right is...*

## BALMORAL HOUSE, SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE

119 Queen St

24

Once named Balmoral House and built for Roseina Hand in about 1900. In the late 1920s, it became the home and surgery of Dr Reginald Dudding, whose practice stretched from Northcote to Kaukapakapa. Sometimes working 18 hours a day, he was greatly respected for his humanity, dedication and generous attitude to needy patients. Dr Dudding later moved to the large house on the corner of Queen St and Faulkner Rd.

*On the corner directly opposite is...*

## ANTIQUE SHOP

130 Queen St

25

Originally the premises of cabinet-maker and undertaker, Albert Hurley. The Hurley family bought the property in 1908 and sold it in 1945. From 1950 to the 1970s, it was occupied by Alfred Yates, greengrocer.





*Return to the Bridgeway, or continue northwards.  
On the western side of the street is...*

## HOUSE

138 Queen St

26

Built in about 1915 by the Giles family, who hosted many musical evenings in the large music room running along the southern side of the house. In 1937, it was purchased for the Returned Soldiers' Association's clubrooms. In 1946, it again became a private residence.



*Walk along to the corner of Stafford Rd.*

## METHODIST CHURCH

corner of Queen St and Stafford Rd

27

Built in 1901 by George Carter at a cost of 205 pounds. The Sunday School hall in Stafford Rd was built in 1922. The church, hall and the two old villas next to the church are now owned by the Tongan Methodist Church. On Sundays, the church rings with the sound of the Tongan church choir.



*Price Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.*

*On the corner straight across Stafford Rd are...*

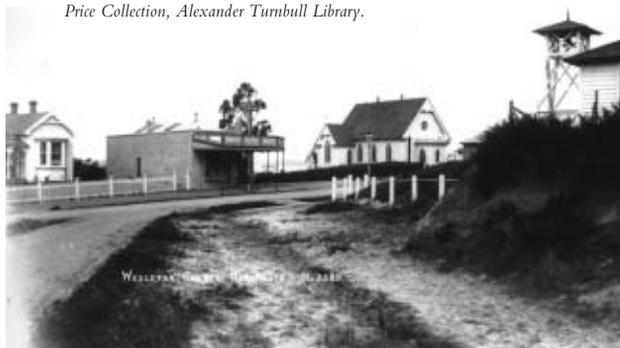
## SHOPS

corner of Queen St and Stafford Rd

28

In 1911, William Henry Ormrod built a house and a grocery shop, now a wine shop, on the corner. The historic octagonal phone box originally stood on the corner of Onewa and Gladstone Rds.

*Price Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.*



*Cross the road into Rodney Rd. On the corner is...*

## **FORMER COUNCIL CHAMBERS,** corner of Queen St and Rodney Rd

29

The Borough of Northcote was formed in 1908. The first council meeting was held in these new chambers on March 12, 1912. Informal council meetings - known as 'the Funnel Committee' - were often held around the funnel on the ferry, as only one councillor did not catch the 8.30am ferry to the city. The chambers moved to the Northcote shopping centre in 1959 and the old chambers became a branch library and then a crèche.



*Northcote Fire Brigade,  
Northcote library collection.*

*Behind the former council chambers is...*

## **WAR MEMORIAL HALL**

30

This hall, designed by Thorpe, Cutter, Pickmere and Douglas, was opened in 1956. The government matched 5,000 pounds raised by the borough through community events for building the hall. The roll of honour inside records the names of Northcote men killed in the two world wars. The previous building on the site was a fire station, well-known for its Model T Ford fire engine, which often had difficulty getting up the hills and had to be pushed on more than one occasion.



*Continue along until you come to...*

## **MASONIC LODGE**

14 Rodney Rd

31

Lodge Onewa was set up in 1911 and these headquarters were built in 1912. Lodge North Harbour now meets in the refectory and the hall, once the venue for dances and community meetings (anything from Sunday school or the croquet club to political meetings), and the building is available for public hire.

*Price Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.*

*Walk down Council Tce into Little Shoal Bay.*

## LITTLE SHOAL BAY

32

In pre-colonial times, there were waahi tapu (sacred sites), kaianga (villages), canoe landing sites and gardens associated with the historic settlement of Awataha. Maori used the tidal area to fish and gather shellfish. Maori Track runs from the top of Council Tce to the scout den. From 1902 until the 1950s, the land was occupied by the Birkenhead and Northcote Gas Company gasworks. A wharf, its wall still there today, was built to enable barges to bring in the coal. The manager lived in the last house on the right in Council Tce and residents could pay their bills at the office at the top of the road. The site became a public reserve in the late 1990s.



*Northcote Tennis Club opening in Shoal Bay, 1925. Northcote library collection.*

*Walk up the walkway by the Scout den and turn right along Clarence Rd. About halfway along is...*

## FORMER POLICE STATION

33

11 Clarence Rd

The first Northcote policeman was stationed near the hotel. In 1913, the Crown built the Clarence Rd police station, with a paddock for the constable's horse. Legend has it that when Samuel Flavell, constable-in-charge, needed his garden dug, he would pick up a couple of drunks, and that one Sunday when the hotel was raided, he was one of the ones caught. The previous policeman was Denny Rowles, known for his many quaint sayings and old lemon squeezer felt hat. The old police station is now a private residence, and has acquired a turret. The room on the right was the police cell.

*You may now return to the Bridgeway.  
We hope you've enjoyed this heritage walk.*

*Acknowledgements  
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