

HERITAGE



TRACING THE HISTORY OF YOUR HOUSE IN HOBSONS BAY

Design and construction

- The style of a building can give clues about the time the building was constructed. In Victoria, the main periods of house building were 1887-1890, 1920-30 and 1950 onwards.
- You can learn to identify houses from Early Victorian to Modern styles with the *What house is that?* booklet available on the [Heritage Council of Victoria website](#).
- Other published resources you can borrow from Hobsons Bay Libraries include:

Australian house styles by Maisy and Ian Stapleton (2003)

Australian houses of the twenties and thirties by Peter Cuffley (2007)

Australian houses of the forties and fifties by Peter Cuffley (2007)

State Library Victoria also has a [significant collection of resources on architecture](#).

Trove

- Enter in your address in Trove. Results will vary from news to notices, advertisements to lost and found. If there is any information, it gives you an interesting insight the history of your house. If there isn't any information on your exact address, try to open up your search terms (i.e. '200 Millers Road, Altona North' to '200 Millers, Altona North'). <http://trove.nla.gov.au/>

Maps

- MMBW (Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works) maps are also an excellent resource - these maps show the original division of land, streetscapes and environmental features. If you can't find your house, these maps may give you information on what it may have originally been numbered or its street name, etc. These maps are available on both Trove and SLV. Use keywords 'MMBW and perhaps street name'. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/search/category/images?keyword=mmbw&l-geocoverage=Australia%2FVictoria&l-artType=Maps>



Image: <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/133672>



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[View and print online maps](#) from Victorian Department of Land. You can zoom to an individual property or see a street or area. The map can show you: boundary lines between properties, aerial photography, zones for land use, overlays, for example heritage overlay and floodway overlay, and bodies of water.

Photos

The State Library of Victoria holds almost 3000 aerial photographs from 1949 to 1964 by Charles Pratt viewed [on-line](#). In the SLV catalogue enter "airsy" the name of his photography business and the name of the suburb in the search box.

Hobsons Bay Libraries has a small collection of street photography search our catalogue for [Streets and Properties of Hobsons Bay](#).

Auction plans, subdivisions and estate history

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, real estate companies produced many thousands of posters featuring maps of the lots available at upcoming auctions. Some of these posters have been scanned and made available online, but you may have to visit the institution in person to view other items in their collections.

Post Office Directories (Sands and McDougall)

Sands and McDougall is another step. They were the Melway of their day. They provided directories as well as maps. Hardcopies are available in Williamstown Library but most, if not all, have been digitised and are available online either on Trove or SLV. These will only give you the householder (ratepayer), and not the whole family. For example Mr. John Smith would be entered but not his wife and children at that address.

State Library Victoria

https://find.slv.vic.gov.au/discovery/collectionDiscoveryvid=61SLV_INST:SLV&collectionId=81213035910007636

Victorian Rates Notices

Rates notices can also provide information to your house's history such as who lived there. This resource is available through Ancestry (accessible only within the library).

<https://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/Libraries/Services/Heritage-and-Research-Assistance/Research-Assistance>

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1. Hobsons Bay Libraries website above
2. Click on Ancestry, enter your library card details
3. Click the Begin searching button
4. Choose Australia and NZ
5. Click on Victoria
6. Go to Victoria Wills, Probates, Land, Tax & Criminal
7. Click on Victoria, Australia, Rate Books, 1855-1963. City of Williamstown rate books are available from 1858-1902.
8. Enter details of person and click on search.

- Williamstown Library Heritage Room also have on Microfiche Williamstown Rates Records from 1858 to 1937. You will need to book into either Heritage Room Computer to use the Microfiche.
- City of Williamstown Register of Rateable Properties 1959-1981 VPRS 8677 was recently digitised and available on the [Public Record Office Victoria](#). The **Register of Rateable Properties** identifies the properties and persons rated. Rate records to be created according to the year in which the rate was levied and then by the ward. The arrangement of the streets is arranged according to an established route taken by the assessor. Be sure to find the index of the order of streets.

Hobsons Bay Council – Planning & Building

- The council's website has links to Building Services, Town Planning Services, Heritage, Planning Applications, Strategic Planning Services and Environmental Sustainable Design.
<http://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/Planning-Building>
- Go to the Heritage Page for links to Guideline, Architectural Styles, Conservation Management, Heritage streets & laneways, Restoration of Heritage Place, Heritage Studies and State listed Heritage Buildings.
http://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/Planning_Building/Heritage
- **The latest Heritage study is from 2017 and is available online**
- Search the Online Planning Register for all current and complete planning permit applications in Greenlight from 1999 [Application Register \(greenlightopm.com\)](#)
- Owners can submit a General Enquiry via Greenlight for pre-2000 however plans. However, there would be a charge for written advice/documentation which is \$250.00, with no guarantee we have anything.
[General Enquiry](#)
- The Public Record Office Victoria has a guide on how to research their [Public Buildings Plans and Files](#).
- You can find plans for some public buildings at State Library Victoria in their [Architectural Drawings Collection](#).

Heritage studies are available to borrow from the library: including 1985 Western Region Heritage Study. [Search our catalogue here.](#)



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Title search, land and property search and certificates

Order these for a fee online at the:

- [Department of Sustainability and Environment](#)
- [ANSTAT Property Information](#) or
- [LANDATA](#)

Public Records Office of Victoria

- The Public Records Office of Victoria holds records about individual blocks of land and their ownership over time, these date back to the arrival of European settlers. There are some things you can view online, but mostly you will need to order the items and view it at the Public Records Office in North Melbourne. <https://www.prov.vic.gov.au/explore-collection/explore-topic/researching-land-and-property>

Australian Architectural Index

- An online resource by Miles Lewis that allows people to search by area, building type or architect's name. <http://mileslewis.net/australian-architectural/index.html>

Victorian Heritage Database

- The Database is home to the Victorian Heritage Register. The site is searchable. You could try your street, suburb or house name. <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/>
- You can find out whether a property is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register, the Victorian Heritage Inventory or is affected by a Heritage Overlay in a local planning scheme by using Heritage Victoria's 'Is my place heritage listed' search tool [on the Department of Transport and Planning website](#).

Wills and probate

Owners of properties will specify in their Will who the property is to pass to upon their death. Probate documents may include important details such as property description, location, valuation, contents and reference numbers.

[The Public Record Office Victoria website](#) has more information on the wills and probate records they hold, as well as tools to search for specific items online and some digitised documents.



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Books

- If your house is located in Williamstown, you can check Williamstown Conservation guide. If there is any heritage significance, your house should be listed in there. Details will vary. Search for City of Williamstown conservation study, 1993 prepared by Kinhill Stearn in association with Graeme Butler, Marilyn McBriar; edited by David Hackworth (F 720.288099 STE)
- Ada Ackerly's Tracing the history of your house in Williamstown: practical guide is also a good start. Tracing the history of your house in Williamstown : practical guide / by Ada Ackerly (728.099451 ACK).

General overviews

For general overviews and introductions to researching the history of buildings and houses, try one of the following resources.

- The State Library Victoria's Researching buildings and Houses research guide.
- The Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) has several useful resources. The Historic Homes research guide is a good overview of the subject, and they also have guides on Researching your house and Researching land and property.
- Don't forget about a valuable primary resource – your neighbours! Have a chat with them. You'll never know what they may know especially if they've been in the area for a long time.