

# Naremburn

NEIGHBOURHOOD WALK

The walk will take approximately  
TWO HOURS to complete.

**Naremburn** is one of the smallest of the Willoughby City suburbs and comprises the area bounded by the original line of Flat Rock Creek (now an enclosed drain) on the north, the railway line on the west, Chandos Street on the south and an irregular line from there to the west side of the Cammeray (Suspension) Bridge. This walk takes in only a portion of that area and has been designed to illustrate the late nineteenth, and early twentieth century cottages that give Naremburn its distinctive and cohesive character.

**Background** The suburb name dates from the 1800s, although its origin cannot be verified. It has been popularly known as Central Township, Dog Town, Pension Town and The Township. Early industries comprised timber getting, quarrying and market gardening. The earliest land grants in the Naremburn area were granted to Humphrey Evans and Peter Dargan in 1794. The area that comprised Central Township, bounded by Central, Market, Adolphus and Slade Streets, was granted to Dugald MacPherson in 1853 and 1854. The residential area was divided in the later years of the nineteenth century and the first few years of the twentieth century into small allotments. On these were constructed very small Federation-style detached cottages (now quite rare), some in timber but most in brick. In the 1880s Market Street was the commercial centre of Naremburn with shops and a market site, while the civic core formed between Merrenburn Avenue, Willoughby Road and Donnelly Road. Unfortunately the tiny suburb has been physically divided by the construction of the Gore Hill Freeway which opened in 1992, and the Warringah Expressway which also resulted in the demolition of many shops and houses.

#### How to get there

The 273 or 257 bus from Chatswood can be taken to the stop in Naremburn near Garland Road just past Bicentennial Reserve. If coming by car, you can park in Garland Road. St Leonards Railway station is a ten to fifteen minute walk away.

**The Walk starts at Flat Rock Bridge**, which crosses Willoughby Road. This was the main road through Naremburn to the Wilson's point ferry terminal. The original bridge was built in 1868 but was demolished in one of the regular flash floods.

This bridge – constructed in 1886 and designed by J.S. Wigram – still bears the inscription “erected 1886, H. Fleming, Mayor”. The bridge has been rebuttressed (1890) and strengthened (1896) to support a tramline which ran to the corner of Peshurst Street and Willoughby Road. In 1960 it lost the two sandstone pillars at each end, and today is one of Sydney's few remaining sandstone arch bridges. Proceed to the corner of Garland and Willoughby Road you can look along what is now Bicentennial Reserve. The area closest to Willoughby Road is Hallstrom Park. In 1946 Sir Edward Hallstrom contributed £3000 to convert the tip side of the nearby incinerator into playing fields for the employees at his refrigerator factory which was then situated on the other side of Willoughby Road where Castle Vale units now stand.

Bicentennial Reserve also contains the Willoughby Incinerator and the Willoughby Leisure Centre built in 1990, and gives access to Flat Rock Gully. Henry Lawson is reputed to have sought solace in the natural beauty of the bush of Flat Rock Creek when he lived briefly in Naremburn. Wilksch Walk, recently created by Willoughby Council, passes by what is now called “Lawson's Cave”.

The Willoughby Incinerator was designed, in partnership with Eric Nicholls, by Walter Burley Griffin, the American architect who came to Australia after winning the competition to design Canberra. It was built in 1934 and closed as an incinerator in 1965. It is now used as offices. The Bicentennial Reserve was once a natural gully and has since been filled in with garbage and burnt fill from the incinerator.

Walk up **Garland Road** stopping at the intersection of Giza Road for a good view of the Willoughby Incinerator. Garland Road was named after W. A. Garland who owned land in the street in 1883. No's 50, 46 and 44 are examples of early housing in this street.

Turn right into **Central Street**, which first appeared in official records about 1892.

- No 41 built 1895, is a simple turn of the century workingmans weatherboard cottage.
- No 33 built 1915, “Sebastopol” is a beautifully detailed Federation villa.
- No 31 has had a variety of uses. It began as a Temperance Hall and was later known as Central Hall and used for functions and meetings. Between 1903 and 1907 it was occupied by the Congregational Church but eventually reverted back to a hall. In 1925 it was acquired for the Naremburn Church of Christ, however by October 1985, dwindling membership saw the church sold and it is now used as a studio.

Turn left into **Market Street**, which was so named in 1882 because it contained the original shops and market of the

Naremburn area. It contains a number of fine houses including:

- No 62 built 1888, a weatherboard cottage.
- No 60 & 60a. Once called “Barbistone”, these semi detached houses were built in the Arts & Craft style popular throughout the Federation period.
- No 58 is said to have been occupied for a short time around 1907, by the balladist and short story writer Henry Lawson.
- No 56 built about 1893, originally called “Wallabadah”.
- No 54, a weatherboard cottage, called “St Albans” built 1885.
- No's 46-48 built 1884. No 46 was originally called “Pearspoint” then “Cengola”.
- No 42 built 1882 by Herbert Carden, originally called “Waratah” and later “Leura”.
- No's 38 & 40 built 1882 by Bartholomew Wear. In the 1920s No 38 was named “Westcoe”; & No 40, “Dungog” which later became “Tanja”.

#### Across the road

- No 37 & 35 built 1928-29 in the Tudor Revival style.
- No 33 a two storey Victorian house called “Romatrappa” built 1882.
- No 31 & 29 large late Victorian semi-detached houses with rendered walls and timber verandah detailing.

Turn right up **Adolphus Street**, but don't enter the “no through road” extension. Named after the developer Frederick Alfred Adolphus Wilson in 1882 when he developed the area, Adolphus Street forms part of the northern boundary of the Peter Dargan grant of 1974. Facing each other across the road are:

- No 12-14, a pair of semis c.1930 with interesting detailing on the windows.
- No 11 built 1883 is a typical modest timber Victorian workers cottage, originally called “Belfast” and then “Waitara”.
- No 10 built 1905, a timber federation cottage called “Kamilaroi”.
- No 7 a timber cottage built 1911, originally called “Doreen” and later “Wallson”.
- No's 6 & 6a built 1938, semi-detached cottages.
- No 5 built 1911, a timber Edwardian workers cottage called “Caipen” and later “Eastbourne”.
- No 3 built 1904 a timber cottage sympathetically extended.

Turn left into **Slade Street** named after Sydney solicitor George Penkivil Slade in 1889. This street has a combination of well preserved houses of which the following are of particular interest:

- No's 21 & 21a on the corner of Adolphus Street.

- No's 13 & 11;
- No's 7 & 9; &
- No 5 built 1884, a timber house with iron roof.

#### Now cross Slade Street and go back towards the Expressway

- No 8 built 1904, a timber cottage called “The Camp” until 1920, then “Marbella”.
- No 12 is a large turn of the century timber cottage situated on a large block, while next door is the Central District Ambulance station.

Continue down Slade Street. Most of the houses between Adolphus Street and the end of Slade Street are of interest. On the southern side for example are:

- No 22 built 1903, a brick cottage called “Himalaya”.
- No 24 built 1924, a pointed weatherboard
- No 28 built 1911, originally “Grantham” & later named “Kilburn”

Cross the road to view No 27 built 1900, a brick cottage originally called “Rondella,” then “Walton Villa”, & later “Devon”.

- No 25 built 1882, a timber house called “Norco”.
- No 33-35 built 1913. No 33 originally called “Belana”, later “Anzac”, and then the “Haven”. No 35 originally called “Trebora”, now “Abella”.

On the other side of the street, No's. 40 to 48 were all built around 1901. Note also:

- No 42 originally called “Aristo” later, “Kyneton”.
- No 44 originally called “Burndale” later “Carlyle”.
- No 46 “Dellastrada”.

Now cross to the northern side where at No. 43 you can see a town house development designed to blend in with the surrounding architecture.

- No 47 a late nineteenth century building.
- No 51 built c1905, called “The Three Lamps”. Named after the three lamps that were on the verandah of the house prior to electrification.

#### Now cross the pedestrian bridge

(opposite No 51), which spans the **Gore Hill Freeway** to the small shopping centre on the other side. This is an ideal place to stop for refreshment.

When the tram service was introduced along Willoughby Road the shopping area moved here from the original Market Street

site. The first store was here in 1904, and at its peak Willoughby Road had grocery chains such as Moran & Catos and Goodlands, as well as butchers, bakers and bootmakers etc. In 1978 the expressway cut through the area greatly reducing the shops.

**Walk south past the shops** – note the corner store, now a coffee shop with “1907” on its facade and turn right into **Rafiah Street** named after Joseph Rohan, foundation secretary of the Naremburn Progress Association 1901. The street has well maintained similar federation period homes on either side. Most of the houses in the street were built around 1910 – 11, and form part of the Dargan's Grant estate.

- No 6 is a typical example. It was a rental property built in 1911, along with four other houses by Frank De Baskerville Carden, a builder who owned all of that side of the street. It was bought in 1920 by the War Service Homes Commission. Rented to Ernest Cooper, a tram guard the house was eventually bought by him and remained in his family until at least 1960.

Turn left into **Glenmore Street** named after Glenmore Road, Paddington where Thomas Broughton of Broughton Estate of which this area is a part – lived for 53 years. Note especially –

- No 10 “Fifeshire”, No 12 “Seyah” & No 14 “Beulah” all built c.1912.

Turn right into **Bongalong Street** named by the Thomas Broughton Estate developers, possibly after an associate's station property.

Apart from No 16 “Innesvale” a weatherboard house built in 1907, and No 18 c.1924, most of the houses were built between 1911 and 1918. On the north side are No 1 “Warrego”, No 3 “Nestor”, No 7 “Kircaldy”, No 9 “Rocklily”, and No 11 “Arcot”, and on the south side No 8 “Rosebank” & No 12 “Peronne”, formerly known as “Oatley”. At the end of Bongalong Street take care turning left into busy **Northcote Street**, which first appeared in 1904 and was possibly named after Henry Stafford Northcote, Governor-General from 1904 – 1908. On the skyline to your far right you will see the Channel 2 TV Tower, to the left, the towering home unit block in Herbert Street near St Leonards station, and further to the left, the Forum building overlooking St Leonards station. At this point it is possible to take a detour which will add about 20 minutes to the walk. It will take you down some charming streets of “workmen's cottages” and back to this point. If not taking the detour proceed up Dalleys Rd.

## Detour

**Continue down Northcote Street, Turn left into Mitchell Street, left into Ross Street & right up Darvall Street. At Henry Lane turn left and left again in to Oxley Street. Walking along Oxley Street, note No 20, built in 1907 – 1908, it was originally named “Foster” before being called “Mayfield”, and was once owned by the War Services Home Commission. Oxley Street will take you back to Lawson Lane, which after turning left will take you to Ross Street. Turn right down Ross Lane, which is halfway down Ross Street, this will take you back to Dalleys Road. This detour will take you through an interesting and varied collection of early twentieth century small housing styles.**

**Note that the home unit complex that has been built on the old Naremburn School site backs onto the lane that runs from Bongalong Street to Willoughby Road.**

Turn right into **Dalleys Road**, possibly named after William Bede Dalley NSW Attorney General from 1875 – 77. No's 17, 13, 11, 5 and 1 are examples of early Federation housing. Interestingly, No 13 called “Tchelely” has been brick-faced. It would seem to have been named by the second owner, a Mrs. A Lloyd, in 1913 after “Tchelely Station” near Hay, NSW. No's 8 – 2 on the other side of the road, are examples, somewhat altered, of 1910 – 20 housing styles

- No 2, built 1913, called “Arden”
- No 4, built 1918, called “Berwen”
- No 6, built 1921, called “Woodford”
- No 8, built 1923, was originally called “Columba” but later became “Sterling”.

What is of particular interest in this street is the construction of different styles of medium density housing erected in the former Naremburn school grounds on both sides of Dalleys Road. The “Meridian” on the north, and the “Schoolhouse” on the south, and the successful adaptation of No 10 of the 1923 building of the Girls' Department into the complex.

#### Former Naremburn Public School

On the corner of Willoughby Road and Dalleys Road, other original school buildings still exist and are being used at the moment by the North Harbour Conduct Disorder Unit. Applications for a public school in Naremburn began in 1882, and the original building was opened in 1887. A new infants' section was opened in 1912 and a two-storey brick section in 1927. By this time the school catered for both Primary and Secondary pupils and a Junior Technical Department was



established for boys and a Domestic Science Department for girls. During the 1930s these sections were transferred from Naremburn and formed the basis for North Sydney Junior High School and Willoughby Girls High. The last of the Secondary section was moved from the school in 1974 and it reverted to Naremburn Public School until its closure due to dwindling numbers in December 1990. Now cross Willoughby Road and turn left.

On the corner of Donnelly Road and Willoughby Road is *St Leonards Catholic Church*. The central section of the church is capable of seating 600, and was designed by J.T. McCarthy and completed in 1913. Plans for the complete structure included twin towers and a spire. The towers were never built but a single spire of galvanised-steel framework was assembled on site and lifted into position on top of the brick tower. Copper cladding was then attached to the spire, which was completed in 1955. Today the spire can be seen from most parts of the suburb. Next to the Church is the former *St Leonard's School*. The first Catholic school in Naremburn was opened in Market Street in 1894 by the Sisters of St Joseph. It also served as a church. A new school/church was built on the same site in 1904 but eventually a separate church - St Leonards, was built in 1913. Later, the present school was built adjacent to the new church and occupied from 1932. Most of the materials were recycled from the Market Street building, including 39,000 bricks. The school closed in 1996.

On the corner of Merrenburn Avenue and Willoughby Road is *St Cuthberts Anglican Church*. It was designed by B. J. Waterhouse and erected during the First World War. Opened in 1916 it replaced a timber church in Market Street that had opened in 1883.

Turn right into *Merrenburn Avenue*.

On your right is an attractive Convent belonging to the Sisters of St Joseph. The foundation stone was laid in 1935. The convent also housed school boarders for a number of years.

On the left, is No 35 built in 1913 and from 1920, the home of William (Billy) Jack. Billy Jack was an Alderman of Willoughby Council from 1939, Mayor 1948-50 and Federal Member for North Sydney 1949-66. It is currently the "White Rabbit Child Care Centre".

Just opposite at No. 30 is a pleasant house called "Allawah" which was built in 1913. The road now turns into a bridge spanning the Warringah Expressway, opened in 1978.

Most of the houses from here to Brook Street were built around 1911-1914, although some have been substantially altered.

- No 8 built 1917, called "Greylands".
- No 6 built 1915, called "Verona".

- No 4 built 1922, called "Aruna Glug".

Turn left into *Brook Street*, named after the brook that used to cross it near Donnelly Road. Bypassing Dodds Street, turn left into *Rhodes Avenue*, commemorating Cecil Rhodes, Prime Minister of Cape Colony, later South Africa. The street first appeared in the Rate Books in 1899 and has an attractive collection of houses. Most were built between 1900 and 1910 and many are worth a closer look, including;

- No 1 "Narene" on the right hand corner was built in 1902.
- No 16 a weatherboard house on the left-hand side was also built in 1902. Cross the street to see No 19-21, semis built in 1912.
- No's 27-29 semis built in 1908

On the left is No 28 formerly St Cuthbert's Rectory. This Federation style single-storey house (1904), now with an attic, was acquired by St Cuthbert's parish before the opening of the present church in Willoughby Road in 1916. It features a complex roof of Marseilles type tiles, topped with finials and onion-shaped chimney tops. There are also bay windows, leadlight, tapered timber verandah columns and a tiled verandah.

- No 30 built 1905.
- No 31 built 1908, was called until the 1970s, "Camden" and is now known as "Ryan's Cottage" – presumably after Thomas Ryan, from whose grant the street and most of the surrounding area was subdivided
- No 32 built 1906.
- No 35-37 are brick semis, built in 1912. No 35 was originally called "Beltana" and then "Trebora". No 37 was once called "Lynville" amongst many other names. At the end of Rhodes Avenue there is a pathway that runs past a small park which overlooks the Expressway and leads back to the junction with Slade Street, and thence along the Expressway out to Central Street.

*Central Street* No 5-7 Naremburn Neighbourhood Centre Library 1958, Baby Health Centre 1961 (designer Mr Roche Willoughby Council's Chief Health and Building Inspector), redeveloped 1987. The first stage of the Neighbourhood Centre was opened in 1958 as the NADA (Naremburn Amenities Development Association) Children's Library, built with funds provided by Council and NADA. The Library is open Monday and Thursday 2.30-5.00pm and Saturday 9.30-12noon. Other activities at the Centre include a Pre-School, Playgroup, After School Care, and an Over-Fifties Group. The Centre is also used by the Naremburn Progress Association and there is a room for hire. From here you can walk back up Central Street to Garland Road and to your starting point.

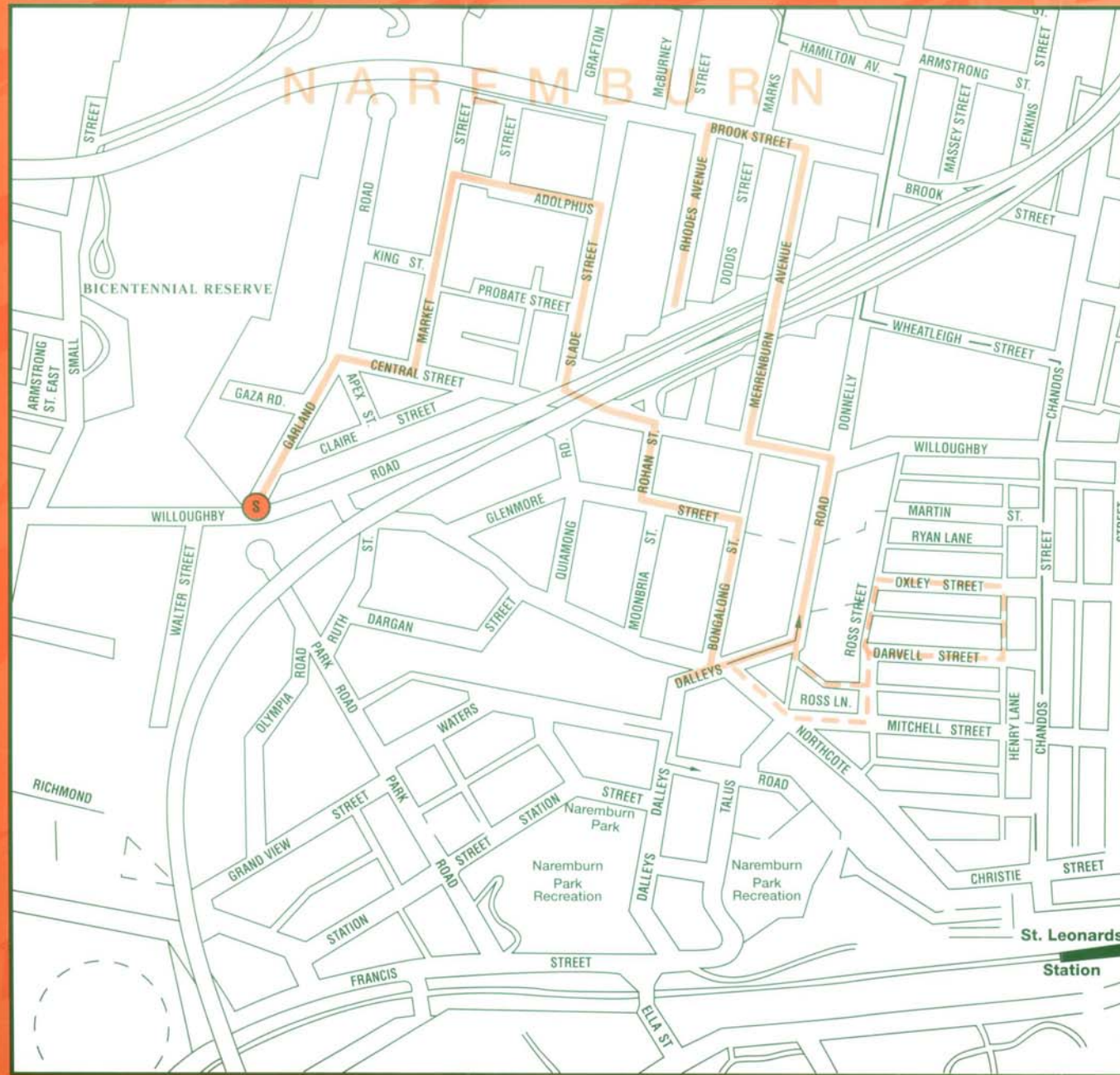
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WILLOUGHBY  
CITY COUNCIL





UBD map specially prepared for Willoughby Municipal Council by UBD  
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INDICATES STARTING POINT

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MAIN ROUTE


DETOUR

*Further Reading:*

**"The Naremburn Story"**  
*by Eric Wilkesb*

- available to borrow at Willoughby Library.

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