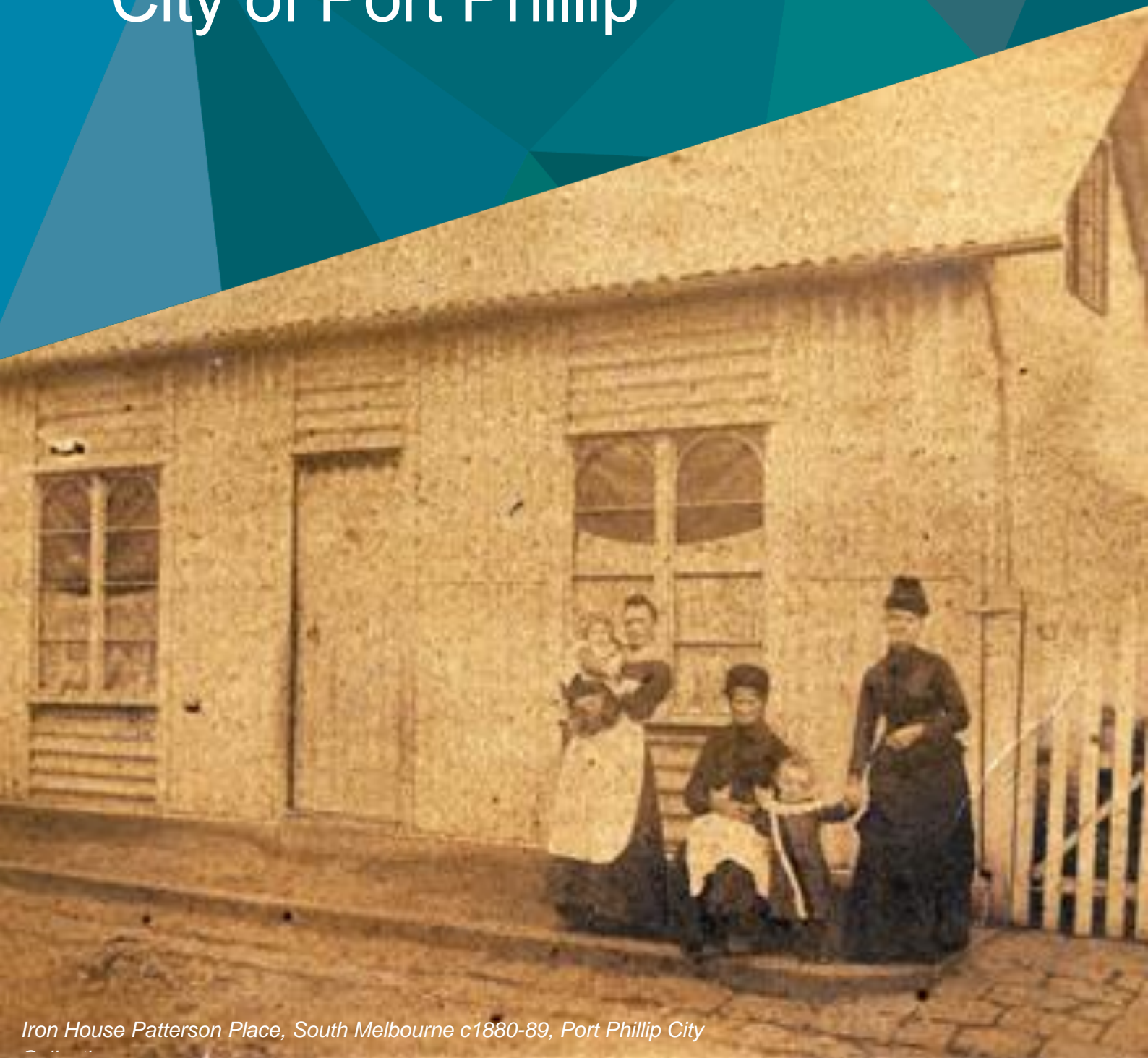




# How to Research Your House in the City of Port Phillip



*Iron House Patterson Place, South Melbourne c1880-89, Port Phillip City*

## Identify what you most want to know

- When was the house built and by whom?
- Who lived at the property and at what time?
- Maps and photographs
- How far back do you want to go? We have the most substantial records from approximately the 1850s-1960s

## Things to keep in mind

City of Port Phillip is an amalgamation of three former municipalities; City of South Melbourne, City of Port Melbourne and City of St. Kilda.

South Melbourne was originally called Emerald Hill until 1883, Port Melbourne was originally Sandridge until 1884.

House number changes. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, many homes in South Melbourne had their numbers changed. We have a physical copy of the South Melbourne Number Changes book in the Heritage Centre, and a digital on our website <https://library.portphillip.vic.gov.au/our-collections/local-history-collection/south-melbourne-number-changes-book>

New n <sup>o</sup>	Old n <sup>o</sup>	Street	Occupier
		Albert R <sup>d</sup>	
1	1	South side	Kerr Chas. M.
3	2	"	Farrow. H. C.
5	3	"	Sligh. H. N.
7	4	"	Kelly. M <sup>r</sup> L.
9	5	"	Burns M <sup>r</sup> A.
11	6	"	Pearce. G. B.
13	7	"	Hurry. Col. J. L.
15	8	"	O'Halloran. M.
17	9	"	Deant.
19	10	"	Williams M <sup>r</sup> L.
21	11	"	Davis M <sup>r</sup> S. J.
23	12	Arnall & Jackson, PRINTERS	Bar. M <sup>r</sup> A.
25	13	Manufacturing & Stationers, 478 COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE.	Darlot. Hy. A.
27	14		Hosking M <sup>r</sup> C.
29	15		Honours. A.
31	320		Shad. Tho.
33	318		Cockbill. J.
35	house		Morrison. M <sup>r</sup> G.
37	house		Kerr. H.
39	house		Smith. G.

South Melbourne number change book c1900, Port Phillip Heritage Centre

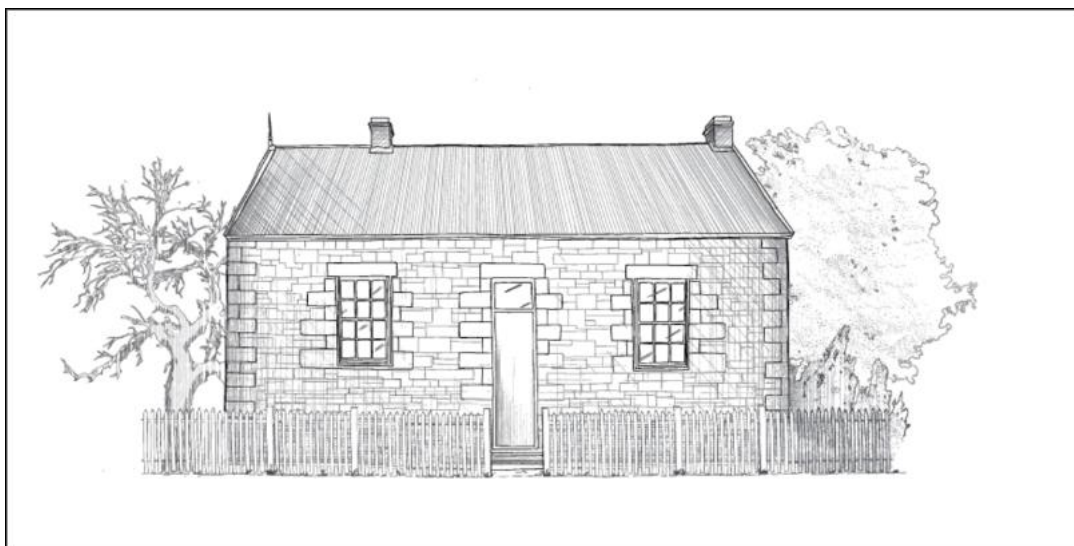
Building permits, planning permits, initial drawings and other information pertaining to the construction of the property can be found by asking council to perform a property file search at the St. Kilda Town Hall or online. This will incur a fee: <https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/planning-and-building>.

Email [filesearch@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:filesearch@portphillip.vic.gov.au) to check if there are files first.

## Getting started

Identifying the architectural style of your house! See the guide below to determine what era your house may be from.

<https://victoriancollections.net.au/stories/what-house-is-that>



*Tribal Media Makers (illustrator), 'Early Victorian House', c.1840-1860, Heritage Victoria Created by Heritage Victoria for the 'What house is that?' Interactive*

If it seems like a 19<sup>th</sup> century build, the property may be on a Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) map from the late 1890s. These maps were created to plan a new sewerage system in Melbourne from the 1890s to the 1950s. Digitised maps are available through the State Library collection: <https://guides.slv.vic.gov.au/victorianbuildings/maps>.

This is also helpful to see if the house number is different, or if the street name has changed.





*Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works detail plan. no. 531, 532 & 530, South Melbourne, 1895*

## Rates Records

These can be found on microfilm at our Heritage Centre and are available to search by appointment. We have rates records on film for South Melbourne (formerly known as Emerald Hill), Port Melbourne (formerly known as Sandridge) and St. Kilda. Elwood, Balaclava and East St. Kilda properties are to be found under St. Kilda. Albert Park and Middle Park are under South Melbourne, and Garden City is under Port Melbourne.

We have the following years:

- Emerald Hill rate books from 1855 to 1883
- South Melbourne rate books from 1883 to 1938
- St. Kilda rate books from 1857 to 1961
- Sandridge rate books from 1860 to 1884
- Port Melbourne rate books from 1884 to 1965

The rate book for each year records the properties by:

- Name of tenant
- Occupation of tenant
- Name of owner
- Address of property
- Number of rooms
- Fabric of dwelling: brick, wood, iron
- Occasionally numbers of people residing in dwelling
- Net annual value of property

Ancestry.com Library Edition is available for free at the Port Phillip Heritage Centre and every library branch, it has digitised versions for these years, and are only searchable by name of resident, not address:

City of Port Melbourne: 1860-1901  
City of South Melbourne: 1855-1900  
City of St. Kilda: 1859-1900

<https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/>

Public Record Office Victoria also has some digitised years available:

City of Port Melbourne: 1863-1900  
City of South Melbourne: 1855-1931  
City of St. Kilda: 1857 - 1900

<https://prov.vic.gov.au/>

## Other Avenues

Search for the property address in the Port Phillip Heritage Review. Each entry usually has extensive citations, can be helpful for both old and new historically significant properties.

<https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/about-the-council/strategies-policies-and-plans/port-phillip-heritage-review>

For photographs, search the address on the Port Phillip City Collection:

<https://copp.melbourne.axiell.com/imu/>

The state library also has a great collection of photos of South Melbourne from the Urban Action Committee c.1970s: <https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/get-involved/cua-streetscapes>

Trove (Archive for the National Library of Australia) has an excellent collection of digitized Australian newspapers and magazines, including local publications, starting from way back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Searching for an address can retrieve family notices from the occupants, advertisements if the building or occupants ran a business, real estate notices, and more.  
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/>

The Sands and & McDougall Melbourne Directories. These are historic street directories for residential properties and businesses in Melbourne. At the Heritage Centre we have the complete collection from 1857-1974 on microfiche. The State Library has an incomplete digitised collection for every 5 years.  
[https://find.slv.vic.gov.au/discovery/collectionDiscovery?vid=61SLV\\_INST:SLV&collectionId=81213035910007636](https://find.slv.vic.gov.au/discovery/collectionDiscovery?vid=61SLV_INST:SLV&collectionId=81213035910007636)

Our Ephemera files are located at the Heritage Centre. There is a filing cabinet for the three former municipalities. Certain buildings have a file. Ask Heritage Centre staff for access to the files.

## Local History Collection

These books and other titles in our collection can be useful in researching buildings or building styles:

South Melbourne: A History, Susan Priestley, 1995

A History of Port Melbourne, Nancy U'ren & Noel Turnbull, 1983

The History of St. Kilda, Volume One, 1840 to 1930, John Butler Cooper, 1931

The History of St. Kilda, Volume Two, 1840 to 1930, John Butler Cooper, 1931

The Show Goes on: The History of St. Kilda, Volume Three, 1930 to 1983, Anne Longmire, 1989

St. Kilda 1841-1900: Movers, Shakers and Monkey Makers, Carmel McKenzie, 2023

House Names of South Melbourne, Talbot Hill, 1988

Australian Houses of the 20s and 30s, Peter Cuffley, 198

A Place of Sensuous Resort: Buildings of St. Kilda and Their People, Richard Peterson, 2004

Middle Park: From Swamp to Suburb, The Middle Park History Group, Series 2, 2014

Demolished Buildings Port Melbourne Photographs 1981-1991, City of Port Melbourne Building Department

