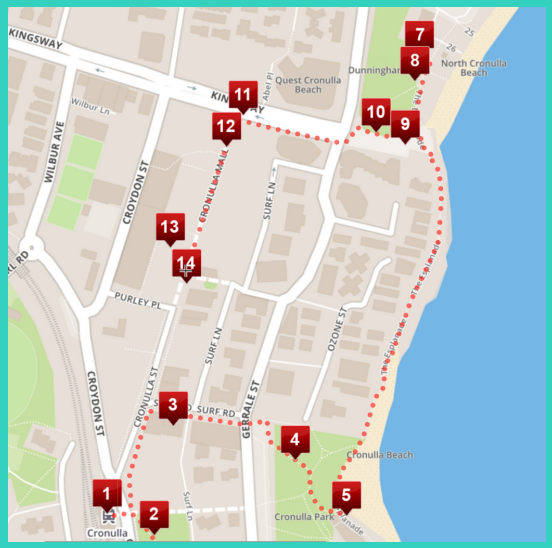
MAP



DIRECTIONS

1. Begin the tour at the Cronulla train station
2. Cross over at the traffic lights and enter Monro Park to the right
3. Retrace your steps to the start of the park and continue down Cronulla mall. Turn right onto Surf Road and stop at the Cronulla School of Arts
4. Continue along Surf Road, cross at the traffic lights and enter Cronulla Park
5. Cross through the park to Cronulla Surf Club
6. Walk north along the esplandae and keep an eye out for the north Cronulla sea wall that dominates the landscape
7. Continue North to the North Cronulla Surf Club
8. Cross into Dunningham Park
9. Perymans place is the open paved area to the south of the park, a plaque is located on the northern wall.
10. Further up is the Bali Bombings memorial
11. Walk West up the Kingsway to Cronulla Theatre, located on the corner of Cronulla mall
12. Walk to the southern side of the clock tower to view its face
13. Continue through the mall until reaching the post office on the right.
14. Move further down the mall to the Banc building.

CRONULLA WALKING TOUR

88 Venetia Street
Sylvania 2224

shirehistory@gmail.com
https://www.shirehistory.org/our-museum.html

SUTHERLAND SHIRE Historical Society

CRONULLA

WALKING TOUR

PRESENTED BY SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Approx. 45 minutes

THE STOPS

1. Cronulla Train Station

Cronulla Train Station opened 16 December 1939. The station is unique because both platform 1 and 2 are arranged end to end, making it the second longest rail platform in New South Wales. The train station is now heritage listed. Several art deco features are evident in the station building.

2. Monro Park

Monro Park was named to honour real estate agent C.O. J. (Joe) Monro. The park was originally the old Cronulla school site and now contains a war memorial to commemorate the servicemen and women who served in all wars and conflicts. The memorial was originally situated on the Kingsway and then moved to Monro Park in 1940. In 2015 a series of plaques were added to the memorial as part of the ANZAC Centenary celebration. This was an initiative of the Cronulla Rotary Club and the Cronulla RSL SubBranch.

3. Cronulla School of Arts/ Theatre

Cronulla School of Arts opened in 1912, replacing a weatherboard building in Cronulla Street, constructed five years earlier. One of the few such organisations still operating independently in NSW, the School of Arts hosts a number of local groups including – since 1963 – the Cronulla Arts Theatre. The School of Arts Dramatic Society was formed 17 years previously and had been performing plays in various halls around the Shire. In 1958 a stage was built in the School of Arts auditorium and the group changed its name to the School of Arts Theatre Group.

4. Site of the Hotel Cecil (Located adjacent to Cronulla Park)

With the opening of the tram line in 1911 tourism to Cronulla began to grow. By 1921 Cronulla had an estimated population of 1700 which grew to 3700 over the summer. In 1927 the Hotel Cecil, situated at the top of Cronulla Park, was established when its owner Joe Monro extended and altered Monro Flats. The Cecil Ballroom and Cafe, located closer to the waters edge at the northern end of the beach, had been built the previous year. During the summer, dances were held in the ballroom every Saturday night. The facade at the rear of Cecil Apartments is all that remains of the hotel.

5. Cronulla Surf Club

Cronulla Surf Club was one of the first clubs established in Australia in 1908. Initially housed in an old tram carriage, the club grew as Cronulla did and now has over one thousand members. In 1909 a new clubhouse was built and the first surf carnival hosted at Cronulla was on Easter Monday of that year. In late December 1913 Cronulla was the scene of one of the worst multiple drownings in NSW. The Louden family lost three of its youngest members who were swimming at Blackwoods, a beach further south of Cronulla. Members of the surf club attempted to help but were too late. In the 1930s surf carnivals became more popular and large crowds attended the proceedings. The art deco style building that still stands today was built in 1940. From here the Australian lifesaver became a unique symbol of Australian culture and a way of life for those living near the coast.

6. North Cronulla Sea Wall

Cronulla and North Cronulla Beaches have been severely eroded over the last century. The natural processes of depletion and sand deposition were disrupted when native vegetation was cleared and frontal dunes flattened. Construction of hard surfaces in the form of rock pools, seawalls and concrete aprons has exacerbated the problem. Built in 1921, the first North Cronulla seawall was destroyed by storms in the 1940s. A later replacement seawall again collapsed in 1974. The present 'Seabee' armoured seawall was constructed at North Cronulla in 1985 with a honeycomb structure stretching the length of the beach.

7.North Cronulla Surf Club

As the beaches became more popular in the 1920s there was growing concern for the safety of swimmers who frequented North Cronulla Beach. On 19 December 1925 the first surf patrol watched over the beach and on 6 October 1926 the clubhouse was officially opened. Although the club struggled during the depression era it survived and was renovated in 1932, and again in 1937. However, in 1946 the storm that damaged the seawall also caused cracks in the clubhouse walls and eventually this building was demolished. It was another four years before the current clubhouse was built.

8. Dunningham Park

Dunningham park was named and dedicated in 1939 to honour the Minister for Labour and Industry, John Dunningham, who had died the year prior. The stone gateposts and the Norfolk Pines and Canary Island Palms were installed when the park was open.

9. Peryman Square

This area is named after Jim Peryman who lost his life whilst attempting a surf rescue at North Cronulla in1950. He was trying to save a 16-year-old girl when his rescue line became weighed down with seaweed pulling him under the surface of the water. The young woman was saved by another club member but Peryman could not be revived on the beach. Jim was awarded a silver medal and certificate of merit by the Royal Shipwreck Relief and Humane society

10. Bali Bombings Memorial

The Bali bombings occurred on the 12th October 2002, killing 200 people, 88 of whom were Australians. Seven of these victims were from the Sutherland Shire. The memorial was built by the Sutherland Shire Council and was unveiled just before the first anniversary of the bombings.

11. Cronulla Cinema

Cronulla Cinema was opened on 5 October 1928. It was built to be an improvement on the old theatre located in Gerrale Street. It boasted having refreshment buffets both up and downstairs, a spacious vestibule, lounge and roof garden.

12. Clock Tower

The tower was erected in 1989 as part of the official opening of the Bicentennial Plaza. Originally built in England in 1770, the Caltex Oil company purchased the clock as a bicentennial gift to the Shire council.

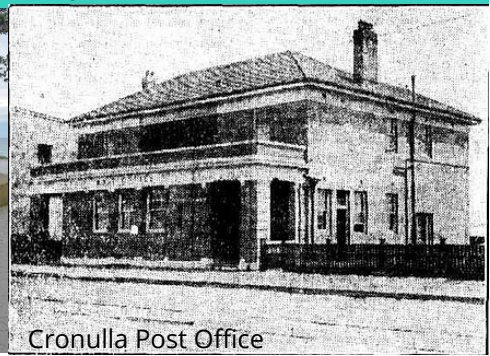
13. Cronulla Post Office

Built in 1924 this building is heritage listed. A purpose built post office was erected in 1900 which was replaced by the current building. Initially the building consisted of a post office, residence and telephone exchange.

14. Commonwealth Bank

The Commonwealth Bank was constructed in 1938. The site previously held a butchers shop. In 1956 a clock with a calendar was installed above the entrance but was then removed in renovations during 1967. In 2013 the bank vacated the building and moved further down the street.

Cronulla School of Arts Opening

The Cecil Hotel, Ballroom and Cafe mid 1940s

Cronulla Surf Club 1940s