RETAILING & HOSPITALITY

INTRODUCTION

Retailing is a major theme in the study area. While all areas have shopping centres, in most cases they serve mostly local needs. The study area, on the other hand, is notable for including within its boundaries a number of major centres that serve the metropolitan area (and wider) such as Chapel Street, Glenferrie Road, High Street and Chadstone and illustrate the changing modes of retailing over the past century.

As we shall see, the development of shopping centres throughout the study area strongly reflects the influence of different modes of transport beginning with railways, then tramways in the early twentieth century and, finally, the motor car in the post-war period. At a local level, many early shops were within walking distance of their customers or railway stations – this accounts for the small groups of corner shops scattered throughout residential areas, many now closed. The shopping centres also reflect the changing socio-economic circumstances of suburbs in terms of the mix and range of goods and services provided. The importance of local shopping centres to the area’s identity is also discussed.

The chapter concludes with a section on hospitality and entertainment, which illustrates how the hotels of the nineteenth century developed into the fine restaurants and nightclubs that the study area is known for, which attract people from all over Melbourne.

This chapter incorporates the following themes:

Australian Heritage Criteria (AHC)
Developing local, regional and national economies; Marketing and retailing.
HISTORY

7.1 Serving local communities

As the scattered communities developed throughout the study area, the first ‘shopping centres’ formed along the main roads (often at a crossroad), or near a hotel or key public buildings, and were usually within walking distance of customers. In the 1850s, for example, a number of shops, hotels and small business were clustered around the corner of Punt and Toorak roads – butcher, bakers, and a hay and corn store – serving the everyday needs of local residents. Shopkeepers lived above the shop, or simply set up shop in the front room of their house. In the smaller back streets, corner shops served the local neighbourhood. Malone notes a few of these shops in Fawkner, Argo, Davis and Phoenix streets, South Yarra (Malone, 1998:10, 11, 38).

Malvern’s first shopping centre was the small group of shops around Skinner’s village and the Malvern Hill Hotel at the Glenferrie and Malvern roads intersection (Bower, 1995). At the southern end of Glenferrie Road, the Gardiner Hotel and a few stores on the corner of Dandenong Road served the passing trade on the Gippsland stock route and the few local farmhouses in the 1850s. In 1860 Robert Alway opened a general store, known as ‘Wattle Store’, on the south-west corner of Wattletree and Glenferrie roads. The store was later carried on by Robert’s nephew, Adolphus Francis Alway. Real estate agent A.F. Alway (and Son) was established in Glenferrie Road in 1881, and later moved to Station Street. It was one of Malvern’s longest running businesses, remaining in the Alway family for 99 years (Malvern Archives).

The coming of the railways led to groups of shops developing around railway stations. At Hawksburn, shops extended along Malvern and Williams roads from the Bush Inn, which was established on the corner by c.1860. After the Oakleigh railway cut through Hawksburn in 1879, a small group of shops was built next to the station there. They included a butcher, dairy, grocer, greengrocer and lolly shop. Local landlord, and estate agent, E. Naylor also had his office and residence there (Malone, 2002:44, 2000:41; Wilde, 1993:135). These shops can still be seen with their iron verandahs, although their use has changed with changing shopping practices. Similar small groups of shops, and sometimes hotels, were also established around other railway stations.

As the electric tram network was developed throughout the study area, new shopping centres sprang up along the new routes. As we shall see, High Street and Glenferrie Road developed into major centres, but a number of small centres also developed, particularly at or near the terminus of routes such as in Waverley Road, Malvern East, and at the intersection of Wattletree and Burke roads, Malvern East.
7.2 Creating specialised shopping centres

Toorak Village

Toorak Village took shape where part of Balbirnie’s estate was subdivided into small allotments between Bruce Street and Toorak Road, then known as Gardiners Creek Road. This was an ideal spot for a shopping centre, as the road had been made to Toorak House, a little further on, when it became the residence of the Governor of Victoria in 1854. Notley’s Hotel opened in the same year and shops soon clustered around it. By 1858 the shopping strip included a post office agency, blacksmith, carpenter, coach builder, dairy, grocer and draper. As Toorak’s local shopping centre, it had a village atmosphere, and in the 1930s there was an attempt to contrive the English village look with Tudor style facades. By the 1940s the Village had developed a special character, with a number of cafes, and specialty shops or ‘boutiques’ – sweet shops, dressmakers, milliners, florists – run by individual owners seeking to cater for the particular tastes of their wealthy customers. One famous boutique was ‘Magg’, an exclusive dress shop opened in 1949 by Zara Holt and Betty Grounds. The proprietors’ husbands were a prominent politician and architect, respectively (Malone, 2002:13–17; Langmore, 1992:207).

High Street Armadale

At Armadale the shops that clustered along High Street and around the station had a similar village feel to that of Toorak Village, with shopkeepers and customers sharing a sense of community. The Armadale Arcade, built in 1893, had a row of shops with offices above, leading to the station. Nearby, the site of Munro and Baillieu’s former real estate office was redeveloped as a picture theatre, which operated from World War I until the introduction of the ‘talkies’ in the late 1920s (Malone, 2005:24–29). The shopping centre served the local community until the 1950s, although there were a few special shops that attracted customers from further afield. Win Years remembered High Street in the 1930s:

When I was growing up, High Street – which was the nearest big shopping centre to us – was full of shops, for people who wanted to go and do their daily shopping for their fruit, their vegetables, their groceries … There were four grocers, there were about four butchers, there was the Boomerang Cake Shop, which was known far and wide for their cakes. There was Curtin’s – delicatessen, I think you’d call them that. They had a big crest over the door to say they looked after the Governor. Now people would come for miles for different shops like that in that area. There was even, I remember, a Chinese laundry, … That was before the war. …. But it has changed – look at High Street now … very up-market shopping (recorded interview 5 July 2000, Mecwa).
The Armadale shopping centre, like many other small local centres, suffered decline from the 1950s as shopping patterns changed, but later re-invented itself as a specialised antique shopping and tourist centre. The first of many antique shops began appearing around 1940, and the old picture theatre became Sotheby’s auction room for antiques and art in 1989 (Malone, 2005:6–8, 26–29). High Street now has many antique stores and markets, plus a range of galleries, old and rare book specialists and restorers and wedding boutiques.

**Prahran Market**

It seems that dissatisfaction with the Melbourne market among both producers and consumers led to the suggestion that markets for the sale of fresh produce be established in the suburbs. It was argued that growers from the market gardens and orchards to the east of Melbourne would have less distance to cart their produce, thereby bringing cheaper and fresher products for the customer. Prahran Council purchased a site in Greville Street in 1864, but hesitated to develop the site. The Prahran Market eventually commenced in 1868 and was a success. By 1881 the market had outgrown its site. For the next ten years it operated from an area north of Commercial Road, close to the present market site. A new market was built in Commercial Road and opened in 1891. The market attracted shoppers from neighbouring suburbs and other parts of the metropolis, and by the 1920s extensions were necessary. Following a fire in 1950 the market was rebuilt, and it was modernised and redeveloped in 1981. The market gained an early reputation for good produce and remained popular over many generations as produce, stall holders and shoppers reflected the waves of immigrants after World War II. It worked in conjunction with Chapel Street in establishing Prahran as one of Melbourne’s leading shopping suburbs (Cooper, 1924:230–33, 253–57; Wilde, 1993:137–40).
7.3 Creating Melbourne’s leading shopping centres

This section explores the development of three of the major centres within the study area: Chapel Street, Glenferrie Road and Chadstone Shopping Centre. As noted in the introduction, these centres illustrate the growth of the study area over more than a century, and the influence of various modes of transport.

As we shall see, the decision to locate the municipal buildings of Prahran and Malvern on Chapel Street and Glenferrie Road assisted in their early development. The opening of railways was a boost to early development, but it was the coming of the tramways along the length of each street that enabled the growth that really cemented their reputation among the leading shopping centres in Melbourne.

Almost a century after these two centres were first established a new form of shopping centre was to rise in the east at Chadstone, which was perhaps the most potent expression of the pre-eminence of the motor car in the post-war period.

A ‘Shopper’s Paradise’ – Chapel Street

Commercial Road was originally earmarked as Prahran’s main shopping and commercial strip, and a number of businesses were located there in the 1850s. However a few factors undermined the original intention suggested by the name of that road. In 1856 both the Court House and the Mechanics’ Institute were built in Chapel Street, the former on the corner of Greville Street and the latter a little to the north. The Mechanics’ Institute was the venue for early meetings of the Prahran Council (Cooper, 1924:110–12, 156), as well as other community meetings. Two hotels built in the 1850s – the Royal George, on the opposite corner of Greville Street to the Court House, and the Prahran, on the south-west corner of Commercial Road – also brought people to this part of Chapel Street. In 1860 this was the vicinity selected as the site for the new Town Hall, which opened in 1861, completing the public precinct for the small Prahran community (Malone, 1983:53, see map of Central Prahran 1860–1865; Malone, 1999:4–7). The construction of the bridge across the Yarra River at the northern end of Chapel Street in 1857 diverted traffic from Commercial Road. The arrival of the railway and opening of the Prahran Railway Station in 1860 finally sealed the fortunes of the central part of Chapel Street, and also led to the development of a subsidiary centre along Greville Street leading to the station.

Soon the stretch of Chapel Street between Commercial Road and High Street, on both sides, was full of shops of all kinds, supplying the everyday needs of local residents. Early shops were small, mostly single-storey buildings, with living quarters for the shopkeepers and their families behind. Later shops were larger and had a second storey for the family residence (Malone, 1983:17).

The 1880s boom brought further growth, and larger and more impressive shops were built. The establishment of branches of several large banks in the strip confirmed Chapel Street’s supremacy as a retail and commercial centre (Allom Lovell, 2000:45). Although the trains were already bringing shoppers from further afield, it was the arrival of the cable trams in 1888, bringing people right through the shopping area, which really set the seal on Chapel Street as one of Melbourne’s major shopping centres, which was epitomised by grand retail buildings such as the Prahran Arcade (282–284 Chapel Street). The arcade was erected in 1888–89 and comprised a complex including a hotel, restaurant and café, Turkish baths, and 29 shops.
The depression of the 1890s slowed trade and halted development, but the new century saw the establishment of several department stores and a new spate of shop building on a grand scale. One of the first big emporiums was, appropriately enough, the ‘Big Store’, which supplied just about everything for the home and opened in 1902. However, most of the grand commercial buildings in Chapel Street, including the large emporiums, were constructed in a five-year period from 1910 including the Osment Buildings (1910–11), Holt’s Building (1912), Love and Lewis (1913), while Conway’s and The Colosseum were both constructed in 1914.

Perhaps the most impressive of the new department stores was that of Charles Moore, who took over the drapery business of Jacob Read in 1903. Read had established a successful men’s clothing firm in the 1870s which had become one of Chapel Street’s largest businesses, lending its name to ‘Read’s Corner’. Moore specialised in ladies fashions, some of which were made in the shop’s workroom. Moore retained the old name but expanded the business and rebuilt the shop into a much larger emporium in 1915 (although it was never fully completed along the Chapel Street frontage) (Malone, 1983:21–22; Alom Lovell, 2000:6–12). The large domed building at the intersection of Commercial Road, now known as ‘Pran Central’, is still a major landmark and icon of the study area.

Chapel Street also had number of furniture stores, the best known being the Maple’s Store at the corner of High Street (Malone, 1983:23–28). The variety and choice of shops was an important part of Chapel Street’s appeal to shoppers, who could buy everything in one trip, including fruit and vegetables at the market near the corner of Commercial Road. Chapel Street’s heyday was in the 1920s, when it reigned supreme among Melbourne’s shopping centres. According to Cooper, writing in 1923:

*Chapel Street has often been described by the wholesale merchants, the princes of Flinders-lane, as the best shopping centre in the whole of Australia* (Cooper, 1924:49).

Even Cooper thought this may have been an exaggeration, but the statement does indicate the importance of Chapel Street to the clothing and fashion industry, then controlled from Flinders Lane, Melbourne.

After the Depression of the 1930s, Chapel Street had stronger competition from city shops, especially the large department stores such as Myer and Buckley and Nunn. Nevertheless, Chapel Street’s popularity among suburban shoppers continued until the 1950s, when the car began to replace trams and trains as transport for shopping trips. Parking was difficult in and around Chapel Street, although the council did try to provide parking space. As discussed later in this section, the opening of a new concept in shopping at Chadstone in 1960 further changed people’s ways of shopping.

In the late twentieth century various attempts to revitalise Chapel Street included the conversion of Read’s into Pran Central, and the former IXL Jam Factory into a shopping arcade. Central Chapel Street became a trendy centre of fashion and entertainment for the new population of professionals who now reside in Prahran and other inner suburbs.

The Windsor Quarter at the southern end of Chapel Street has in recent years developed a strong focus on art, music and alternative lifestyles brought about by a strong student presence.
Glenferrie Road

The shopping precinct in Glenferrie Road, extending from High Street to Dandenong Road, developed later than the Chapel Street shopping centre, and although some of the first shops were established as early as the 1850s it is very much a product of the 1880s land boom. As we have seen, the opening of the railway line from South Yarra to Oakleigh in 1879 brought the beginnings of suburban development and during the economic and land boom of the 1880s many acres of market gardens were subdivided into housing estates. Residential settlement in turn stimulated commercial development, which began around the railway stations.

Glenferrie Road had its beginnings in the small shopping strip that developed beside Malvern Station along Station Street between the south end of Glenferrie Road and Claremont Avenue. Meanwhile, as we have seen, a similar centre was formed in High Street around Armadale Station (Raworth and Foster 1997).
As at Prahran, it was the establishment of the civic complex – the Shire Hall, with the Court House and Public Library – that eventually determined the size and boundaries of Malvern’s main commercial centre. The impressive civic centre on the corner of High Street and Glenferrie Road was opened in 1886, forming one point of a triangle with the other two points at Armadale and Malvern stations. The new Town Hall Estate, diagonally opposite, was sold in 1888 and included commercial sites along High Street. The E S and A Bank was built on the south-east corner. A large number of storekeepers and tradespeople established businesses along Glenferrie Road before the economic crash of the 1890s temporarily halted development.

Commercial growth re-commenced in the new century. The next boost came with the development of the tram network of the Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust from 1910, which ensured the continued growth of the shopping centre. The development of the centre followed the tram route along Glenferrie Road from Dandenong Road to the High Street intersection, thence along High Street where it met the group of shops around Armadale Station. At its peak the centre included seven banks and several theatres (Raworth and Foster, 1997). Over the years Glenferrie Road and High Street shopping centre has rivalled Chapel Street, and in the 1920s attracted crowds of Friday night shoppers nearly as large as those in Chapel Street (Malone, 2005:25).

Chadstone

In 1960 a ‘new era in suburban shopping’ was introduced with the opening of Melbourne’s first regional shopping centre. It was built on thirty acres of the former farm of the Convent of the Good Shepherd at Chadstone. The shopping centre was developed by Myer, with the first suburban Myer department store as its centrepiece, plus 72 shops, a supermarket, child minding facilities and other conveniences, all under one roof. Shoppers need not depend on trams or trains, because twenty of the thirty acres was given over to car parking. It is interesting that in 1960 it was assumed that the average woman was not a driver. The Malvern Advertiser suggested that housewives may like to take their driving lessons while travelling to or from the new shopping centre. Following its purchase by the Gandel Group in 1983, the Chadstone Shopping Centre was enlarged by twenty-six percent, and further extensions have subsequently been made, increasing the number of shops to around 400 and adding an entertainment precinct. The present, much larger, centre bears little resemblance to the original centre as it opened in 1960 (A Place in History, p.69; Strahan, 1989:241–42 and 270–71).
7.4 Providing hospitality and entertainment

7.4.1 Early hotels

Early inns or hotels were established along the main tracks and at crossroads to provide accommodation and refreshments for travellers, and were usually the first commercial buildings in a settlement. As communities grew, hotels became meeting places and centres of social life. Prahran had over twenty hotels in the 1850s and this number had more than doubled to 50 in 1888. Many would have been small local pubs, where brickmakers or other local workers sought refreshment after the day’s work. Malone mentions the ‘sing-song’ evenings at hotels such as the Prince Albert in Chapel Street, Windsor. Many were situated in the small back streets off the main roads (Malone, 1983:53, 1988:10).

Malvern’s first hotel, the Malvern Hill, was built on the corner of Glenferrie and Malvern roads in 1853 to encourage settlement in Skinner’s estate. The original timber building was replaced by the present two-storey brick building in 1861. Another early hotel in Malvern was the Wattle Tree, where early meetings of the Gardiner Road Board were held. This hotel closed in 1866, but the building remains at 196 Wattletree Road (A Place in History, p.58).
The *Racecourse Hotel* was built in 1858 by Rody Heffernan, on the corner of Scotchman’s Creek (Waverley) Road and the Main Dandenong Road. Heffernan owned substantial landholdings in the district, and had run several hotels in Melbourne, including the Horse and Jockey. He had an interest in horse racing, and it is believed that the clearing of land for a racecourse at Caulfield in 1857 encouraged Heffernan to purchase the prominent site opposite. A blacksmith’s forge was established next to the hotel for the benefit of stockmen and travellers on the Main Dandenong Road. By 1866 the hotel had been enlarged to 12 rooms and John Graham was the ‘beerhouse keeper’. After John died his widow, Margaret, ran the hotel until 1911. The original building has had a number of alterations and extensions, including the addition of a second storey and Spanish Mission style façade in 1926 (Malvern Archives).

The *Racecourse Hotel* was one of two hotels that were associated with the nearby Caulfield Racecourse. The other was the *Turf Club Hotel*, which was established in 1871 on a site on the north side of Dandenong Road directly opposite the entrance to the course (though the direct connection was lost somewhat when the railway went through in 1879). The original single-storey building was replaced by a two-storey brick hotel in 1923. In 2005, it was occupied by a Dan Murphy liquor store (Malvern Archives).

The pub was an important part of working-class social life, particularly for men. Malone mentions Roderick Marshall, an engine driver living in Armadale in the 1920s, who had:

… a few beers and a Saturday afternoon flutter with the S.P. bookie who worked from the hotel next door (2005:5).

The S.P. (starting price) bookie was a bookmaker who took bets from people who couldn’t attend the racecourse. It was an illegal form of gambling, but was popular among working-class people until the middle of the twentieth century, when the TAB was set up. The action was centred on pubs and back lanes in Melbourne’s inner suburbs, including Prahran (Wilde, 1993:127–28). The present author can remember seeing the S.P. bookies and their customers huddling in the back lanes of Prahran in the 1950s.

Malone (1988) traces the changing role of hotels, from providers of accommodation for travellers, meeting places for local organisations and entertainment venues for the community, through the era of the ‘six o’clock swill’ that accompanied six o’clock closing from 1916 to 1966, reducing the activities of many hotels to the bar trade.
7.4.2 Developing a modern hospitality industry

The gradual relaxation of Victoria’s restrictive liquor laws from the late 1960s revived the hospitality industry, and brought new opportunities for entertainment in the study area, particularly in Prahran and South Yarra. Malone has noted the sprinkling of cafes, tea rooms and restaurants in Chapel Street before World War II (1984:26–27). In the 1950s a few European chefs developed fine dining in restaurants such as Maxim’s at a time when licensed restaurants were rare in suburban Melbourne. Maxim’s was opened in the former Duke of Edinburgh Hotel in South Yarra in 1957, becoming a leading restaurant for Melbourne ‘society’, before moving to The Como Hotel in 1989 (Will, 2000).

Since the 1960s many new restaurants, bars, taverns and nightclubs have opened in South Yarra and Prahran, some providing live entertainment such as jazz or rock bands. Many of them occupied early hotels, which changed their name, image and style of service, often more than once, to appeal to new generations of residents and visitors from other parts of Melbourne. In 1988, 27 of the municipality of Prahran’s 50 nineteenth-century hotels were still in existence, some rebuilt, many renamed and all modernised. The original South Yarra Inn, opened in 1853, has been through a number of guises – South Yarra Club Hotel, Hatter’s Castle, Trakkers Inn – surviving a century and a half of changing community needs and tastes on its prominent site at the corner of Punt and Toorak roads (Malone, 1988). The former Duke of York Hotel in High Street became Edward’s Tavern, the Morning Star in Chapel Street became Frost Bite (Malone, 2001:7, 2000:60).

Changes to liquor laws also led to the development of nightclubs, some of which are in former hotels. This is discussed in the historic context of ballrooms and dance halls in Chapter 9.
These images show the development of the South Yarra Club Hotel from the 1860s (top right), South Yarra Club Hotel (below) (date unknown) to the present day (bottom right).

[SLHC Reg. No. 12305 and 7430] [Context 2005]
The theme of Retailing and Hospitality is illustrated by a variety of places that have important heritage values. These values are sometimes expressed in tangible ways, such as by surviving fabric (such as buildings, structures, trees and landscapes), but are also apparent in the associations and meanings embodied by the place for different communities. This chapter provides a summary of values associated with these places and provides a representative list. For further examples, reference should be made to the heritage studies and reports listed in the bibliography.

Retailing was, and is, of major significance to the study area and to Melbourne as a whole. The study area’s retail development is linked directly to the evolution of different modes of transport beginning with railways, then tramways and, finally, motor cars. The ability to chart the changing face of retailing from the late nineteenth century to the present day within the study area is unique in Melbourne.

The shopping centres within the study area contain some of the finest examples of nineteenth- and twentieth-century retail architecture in Melbourne, which reflects the development and prosperity of the centres over many years.

Examples of heritage places associated with the theme of Retailing include:

- **Serving local communities**
  - Shops at 338–360 Punt Road, South Yarra – a small Victorian era centre
  - Hawksburn Station shops, Oban Street – a small centre associated with a railway station
  - Central Park shopping centre and Waverley Road, Malvern East, are examples of inter-war centres around a tram terminus.

- **Creating specialised shopping centres**
  - Toorak Village
  - High Street, Armadale
  - Prahran Market.
Creating Melbourne’s leading shopping centres

» Chapel Street between Dandenong Road and Toorak Road. The centre includes early one and two-storey shops south of High Street, the ‘emporium’ district between High Street and Commercial Road, and the Victorian and Edwardian specialty shops between Commercial and Toorak roads

» Glenferrie Road (between High Street and Dandenong Road), which is a very intact Victorian and Edwardian shopping centre

» Chadstone Shopping Centre.
Providing hospitality and entertainment

The places associated with the hospitality and entertainment industry provide evidence of how people in the study area and Melbourne generally have wined, dined and socialised over many years. Hotels have always been important meeting places and centres of social life and the study area is no exception. What is of particular interest in the study area is how the places associated with the hospitality industry were adapted and developed to serve the changing needs of specific groups such as the wealthy residents, migrants and, more recently, the gay and lesbian community. Toorak and South Yarra became notable centres of Melbourne’s nightlife in the post-war period and many of Melbourne’s earliest fine restaurants and nightclubs were within the study area.

Examples of heritage places associated with the theme of Providing Hospitality and Entertainment include:

- Racecourse Hotel, cnr. Waverley Road and Dandenong Road, Malvern East
- Former South Yarra Club Hotel, cnr. Toorak Road and Punt Road, South Yarra
- Former Wattle Tree Hotel, 196 Wattletree Road, Malvern
- Malvern Hill Hotel, cnr. Malvern Road and Glenferrie Road, Toorak
- Former Duke of Edinburgh Hotel (later Maxim’s Restaurant), Toorak Road, South Yarra
- Exchange Hotel, Commercial Road, South Yarra.

U1 Update 1 Additional words inserted