

# Heritage Walks of Devonport

## Cheltenham – Fort Takapuna

Walk approximately 1 hour, excluding optional loops

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### Explore North Shore

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### Don't miss these three additional walks which explore other areas of Devonport's development

#### Victoria Road – Town Centre

The walk along Victoria Road features many late Victorian and Edwardian commercial buildings at the heart of the town centre, as well as Windsor Reserve. Mount Victoria is an optional loop.

#### Devonport Waterfront

King Edward Parade to Torpedo Bay highlights some of Devonport's late Victorian and Edwardian homes, as well as early commercial buildings, memorials and sites of important events. An optional walk up North Head can be included.

#### Our Neighbourhood

This wander through established residential streets highlights homes of early Devonport residents, as well as the first power station, the Mount Victoria cemetery and some of Devonport's early churches. The Devonport Museum and Mount Victoria are optional loops.

## Fact or Fiction?

Local Folklore & Fanciful Anecdotes

- When Waitemata Golf Club was formed on 21 August 1905, the joining fee was one guinea with an entrance fee of £1 per round of play. It is the second oldest golf club in Auckland. At the inaugural meeting it was agreed that caddies would be paid sixpence for an afternoon, and one penny for every ball found.
- In 1897, a resident of Narrow Neck, Ernest Hope Peel (grandson of Sir Robert Peel, British Prime Minister and namesake of the British Bobbies), made headlines when he took the law into his own hands, after objection letters were ignored. Angry and tired of being woken by the early morning practices at a target range established by the local Rifle Association, he marched his wife and six daughters down to Narrow Neck Beach one morning, to stand in the firing line, so the rifle club would put an end to this annoying practice.
- Pat Sheehan, Mayor of Devonport from 1973 – 1980, resided at 20 Cheltenham Road. He actively endorsed the Devonport Borough Council to begin New Zealand's first municipal recycling scheme in 1976. Pat's brother, Terry Sheehan, proclaimed himself to be King of Devonport, and was a well-known local prankster, partially responsible for placing a bronze plaque on the waterfront that declares: On This Site In 1897 Nothing Happened.
- Considered part of the Borough of Devonport, Rangitoto Island was administered by the Council from 1898 – 1967 when control passed to the Hauraki Maritime Park Board. From 1920 until 1937 a community of 140 private baches was developed on leased land on the Rangitoto foreshore. The baches caused much debate over the years, and in 1967 the Minister of Lands ordered their gradual removal, to be implemented over a 20-year period. Bach leasers and preservation groups objected; 34 baches still remain, as irreplaceable artefacts of architectural and social history.
- In 1878, a free library was formed in Devonport (the first in the Auckland Provincial District).
- In September 1881 the council passed a law prohibiting the keeping of pigs.





**M**ilitary lookouts were established on North Head and Fort Takapuna because of the extensive views of the harbour. With volcanic soil for farming, plus attractive beaches, it became an enviable retreat. Vauxhall Gardens were created in the 1860s, and swamp west of Wairoa Road drained to create a racecourse (now a golf course). Devonport's residential development increased because of fine beaches, proximity to its own commercial centre and ferry transport to the city. Watch the *History of Devonport* video, atop North Head.

## Cheltenham — Fort Takapuna



*From Torpedo Bay, walk north along Cheltenham Road towards the beach*



### 1 4 Cheltenham Road

Charles C Dacre, a well-known businessman and local politician, lived here. He was a founding member of the Takapuna Jockey Club and North Shore Rugby Club. He also served as a member of the Devonport Highway Board and the Auckland Harbour Board.

### 2 Optional loop

*North Head Maungauika (via Takuranga Road)*

North Head played an important role in the defence of the Auckland Harbour from the 1880s when it was fortified as part of the harbour defence system established in response to fears of a Russian attack. Between 1888 and 1914 prisoners were incarcerated at North Head

where they were put to work digging a network of tunnels that link the defence facilities.



There has been much speculation that historic aircraft were hidden inside sealed tunnels. In spite of extensive exploration they have never been discovered.

*After exploring North Head, walk back to Cheltenham Road and turn right*



### 3 26 Cheltenham Road

Built in 1906 for Albert and Adelia Goldwater. Albert was a founding member of both local and national swimming organizations.

registered with Heritage New Zealand



### 4 25 Cheltenham Road

Hugh H Brown lived here in the 1890s and was the first keeper of Bean Rock Lighthouse, that began operating in 1871 and today survives as the oldest timber lighthouse in New Zealand.



### 5 33 Cheltenham Road left-hand side on beach

This was originally a timber villa built for the Ewington family, and after the death of this couple, additions were made in Spanish Mission style.



### 6 46 Cheltenham Road right-hand side on beach

Originally the Cheltenham Tea Kiosk, opened in 1913. It provided changing rooms and a large tea room for beachgoers. Now a popular reception lounge.



*Turn left and walk northward along Cheltenham Beach*





**7** 14 Oxford Terrace (beside Balmain Reserve)

This was the childhood home of writer Inez Peacocke who was born in Devonport in 1881. In 1906 she became the first teacher at the new Dilworth Ulster Institute (later known as Dilworth School) where she gained attention for her skills as a storyteller. She published her first novel for children *My Friend Phil* in 1915 and went on to write for both children and adults under her maiden name Peacocke and her married name Cluett. Her books were set in Auckland and three of them, including the autobiographical *When I Was Seven*, were set at Cheltenham Beach.



**8** Balmain Reserve

This land was owned by the Balmain family and acquired for a park by the Devonport Borough Council in the mid-1930s. Soon afterwards, depression relief workers set to work forming and improving the reserve. With beautiful views to Rangitoto, it is popular with beach-goers for picnics and sports gatherings.



*Continue walking to the northern end of the beach, to the children's playground.*

**9** Plaques – Cheltenham Beach Caretakers

Public concern over the depletion of shellfish beds on Cheltenham Beach came to a head in the early 1990s. Sampling of shellfish numbers was undertaken by concerned locals, aided by the Royal Forest and Bird Society. Initial results were alarming and led to the formation of Cheltenham Beach Caretakers who pushed for a ban on shellfish harvesting. With the support of local Maori, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and other local groups, the ban was put in place in 1993 and shellfish samples continued to be collected to track progress.



*At the end of Cheltenham Beach, turn left by the playground, through Bath Street, and turn right into Vauxhall Road.*



**10** 108 Vauxhall Road

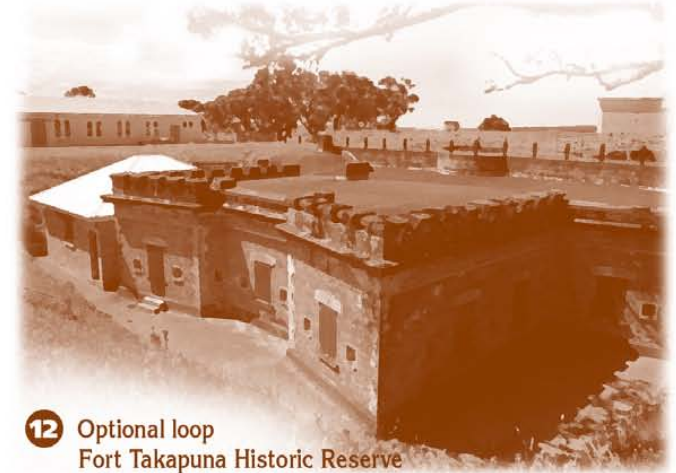
Once the home of Mr J C Macky, Mayor of Devonport from 1896 – 1901, who was drowned when the *Lusitania* was torpedoed in the Atlantic in 1915. He resided in this house for a number of years.

**11** The Rotary Walkway (beside 126 Vauxhall Road)

*This is an alternative route into the Fort Takapuna optional loop*

There is no formal track through the Fort Takapuna Historic Reserve, but Devonport Rotary has funded a walkway beside the old Navy barracks to take you into the former defence area (the main entrance to the reserve is at 128 Vauxhall Road).

The Fort was equipped with two six-inch guns and living accommodation for the gunners stationed there. After the First World War the fort was abandoned.



**12** Optional loop  
Fort Takapuna Historic Reserve  
128 Vauxhall Road

This reserve encompasses one of a number of forts overlooking New Zealand's major harbour built as a result of the Russian threat in the 1880s. The New Zealand Army had a military hospital on this land in the 1930s, which later became a maternity facility. The site was converted to a naval accommodation precinct, before the houses were removed in the 1990s and a reserve created. The Officers' Mess, scene of many formal naval functions, has recently been restored. The nearby barracks are also being restored.



*Head towards Narrow Neck Beach, then cross the road into Wairoa Road*



**13** Waitemata Golf Course

Built on a former swamp it was reclaimed in the 1870s and the Takapuna Racecourse was established on the site, which it shared with the Waitemata Golf Club (where the golf course had been in the centre of the race track). The shape of the racecourse can still be seen in the layout of the current golf course, and the Jockeys' Changing Rooms are now the Devonport Croquet Club premises.



Turn left into Grove Road



**14** 8 Grove Road

This large residence was built in the early twentieth century for John A Artha and his family. One of the sons, John P Artha, was an amateur astronomer and a founding committee member of the Auckland Astronomical Society. He gave talks on astronomy and wrote articles on the subject for local newspapers from the 1910s. In the early 1920s substantial additions were made including the tower on the western side of the house, designed to house Artha's telescope. The dwelling remained in the Artha family until the late 1940s. It is currently a rest home.

Turn right into Vauxhall Road



**15** Vauxhall Road Shops

In the 1920s a small set of shops arose at the intersection of Vauxhall Road and Tainui Road to serve the growing Cheltenham Beach community. By 1930 locals had the choice of two grocers along with a butcher and fruiterer. In 1963 a branch post office was opened in an existing shop building on the northern side of Grahame Street. Now it's a busy hub of eateries, and interesting shops.

Turn left into Tainui Road



**16** 37 Tainui Road

This residence was built around 1910 for Ernest Little, a produce merchant originally from Christchurch. Little was heavily involved in local affairs, serving as Devonport Borough Councillor for eighteen years and deputy mayor for six. He was also chairman of the Devonport Public Library Committee, Devonport Welfare Committee and the Cheltenham Ladies College Board. Ernest's wife Philippa was involved in the Devonport Plunket Committee and the North Shore Swimming Club. The house was 'modernised' in 1967, but renovated back to villa style in 2007. The large liriodendron tree in the front garden is a protected tree.



**17** 7 Tainui Road

This property was one of the earliest 'corner dairy' shops in the area and remained so until the 1980s when it became a private residence.

Turn right into Cheltenham Road and end this walk at Torpedo Bay (if you wish, you can pick up the Neighbourhood Walk from this point).

