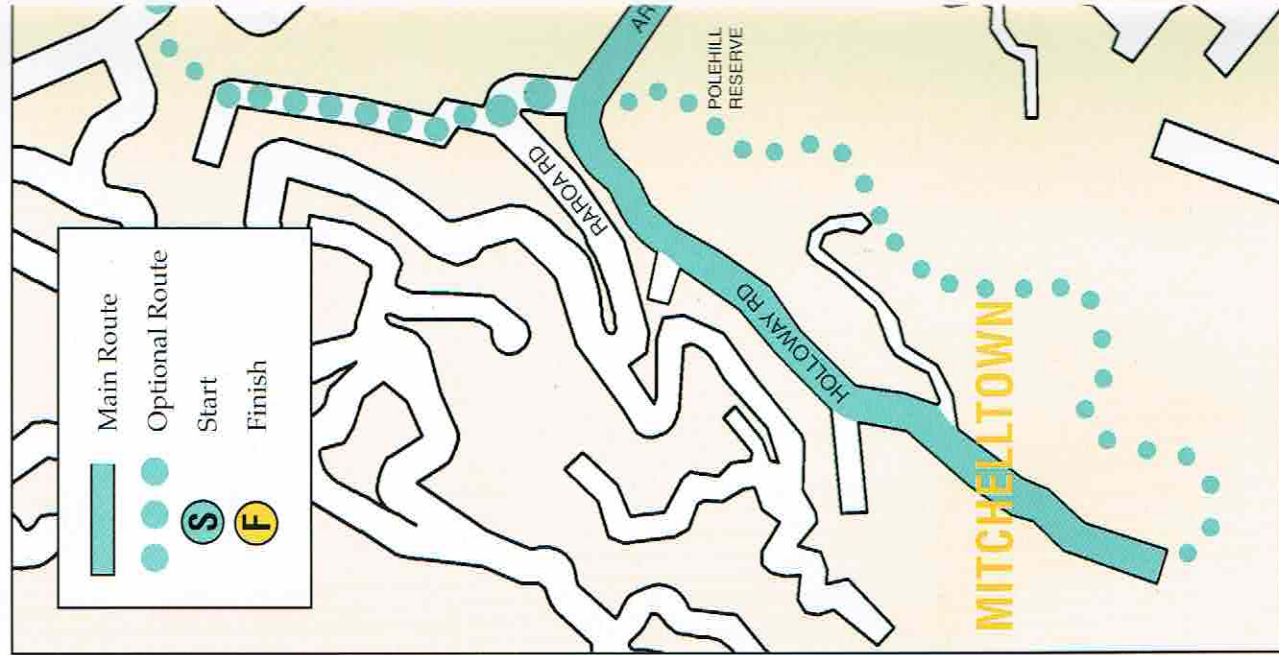


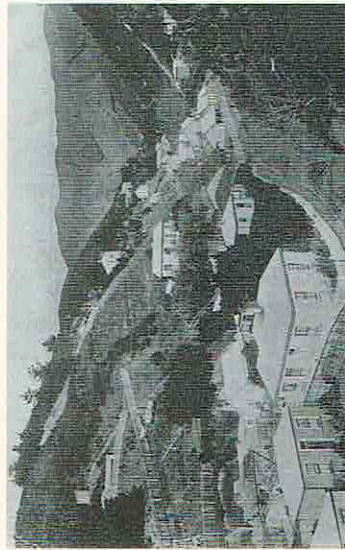
ARO VALLEY Heritage Trail



1 Haines Terrace [H2], the first notable building, can be reached via a long path from the Holloway Road entrance. This two-storey villa with its three-sided balustraded verandah, is a local landmark. It was built late last century for William Foster, former Town Clerk of Melrose Borough and headmaster of Mitchelltown School. Peter Fraser, Labour Prime Minister from 1940-49, lodged at 13 Holloway Road when he moved to Wellington in the mid-1910s.

17 [H2] is one of several single-storey houses later converted to shops (in this case a grocery store) with first-floor living space. Around the 1920s, casement windows replaced the original double-hung windows and timber shingles replaced the original rusticated weatherboards. In the 1950s and 60s the shop was known as the Holloway Cash Store.

21 [H2] another early workers' cottage dating from the 1880s. It was enlarged around 1910 to take in more tenants. Adornment is simple and typical of similar houses designed to the width of one room in Aro and Epuni Streets.



Holloway Road in the late 1890's
(Alexander Turnbull Library)

On the right (the even-numbered addresses begin here) is **32a** [H2]. The dwelling is a distinctive wedge, built as it is on the acute corner of Old Bullock and Holloway Roads. Until recently it housed a succession of general stores while, in early years, it housed the street's sole public telephone and postbox.

41 [H2] is another store with upstairs lodging added. Until the mid-1910s it was run as a butcher's shop by the Haines family - as the vents above the awning indicate - then by a Mr Berry as a greengrocer's. It was then taken over by Gully identity 'Pop' Will Swensson. He died in 1993, aged 108. In his latter years he was visited, variously, by Prime Ministers Nash, Holyoake and Lange on his birthday. A 1993 TV programme, The Gullyites, focused on him and his family.

61 [H2], originally a farmworker's cottage (c.1880s), was built for Henry Mitchell in simplified Italianate style, now with various additions including a gabled facade and bay window. The wooden quoins on the front facade give the house a formality unusual in Holloway Road.

At the end of the road is Waimapihi Park, a former rubbish dump which a previous resident converted into a delightful park with the help of government-subsidised labour from 1980 to 1989.

> *Take the time to enjoy the park and, if you wish, take one of the tracks cut through the regenerating bush back to the bottom of Holloway Road. Otherwise head back down the road to Aro Street. Our last place of interest is right at the city end of Aro Street.*

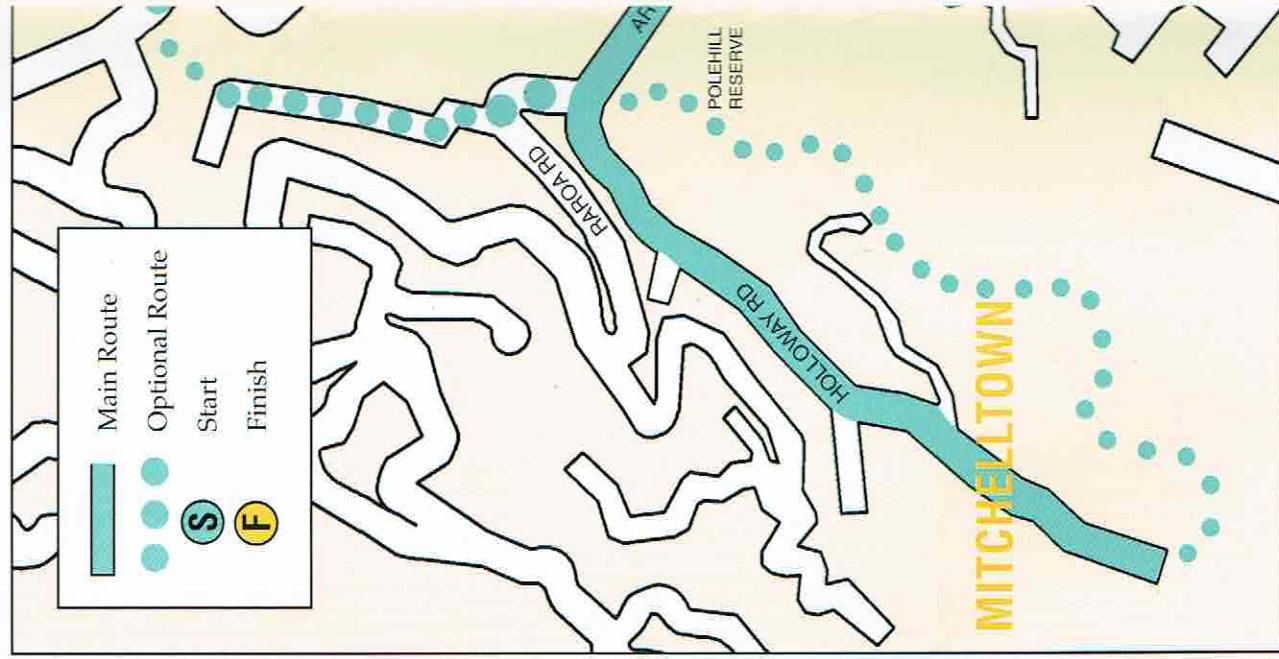
> *If you want to continue on to Kelburn, and the cable car terminus, viewing platform, shops and Victoria University, you can get there via Norway Street, Plunket Street and Upland Road.*

(14) Dransfield House 335 Willis Street

Built in 1875, this Italianate two-storeyed timber house was the home of Joseph Dransfield (1827-1906), a Yorkshire-born coal merchant and auctioneer who was Wellington's first elected Mayor from 1870-74 then again in 1878.

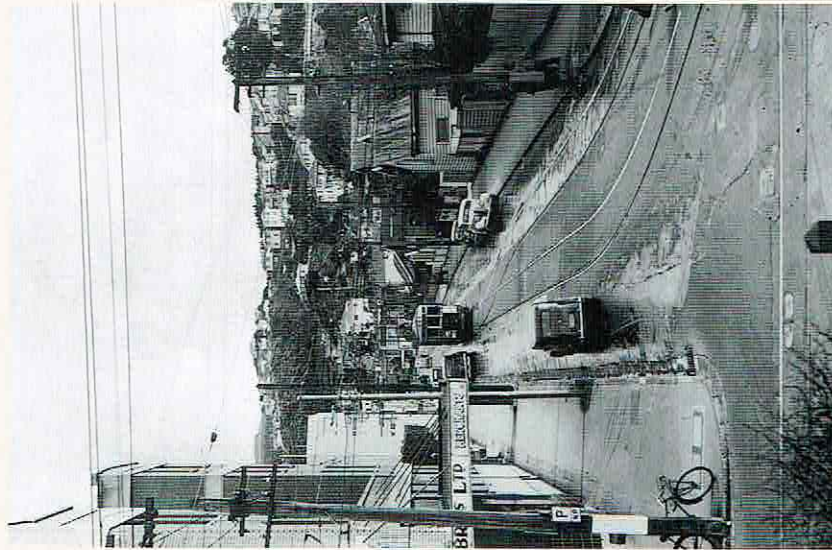


ARO VALLEY HERITAGE TRAIL



Bought by the Wellington City Council in 1938, the house was used as an arts centre for most of the 1980s. Renovation and restoration of the house began after it was damaged by fire in 1995.

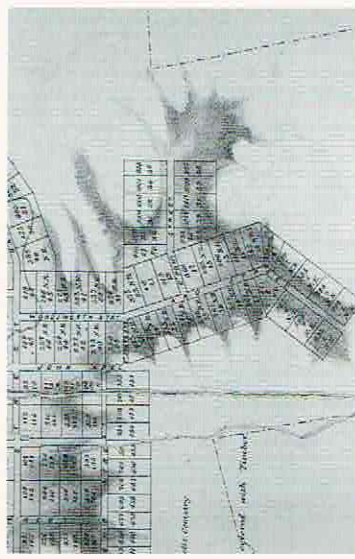
Upper Willis Street was once an affluent area, though only a few of the many former homes of merchants and doctors survive.



The view back up Aro Street from just south of Dransfield House, in 1949. (Alexander Turnbull Library)

Background Information

Aro Valley is the major valley inland from the flat expanse of Te Aro. The land was part of the New Zealand Company purchase in 1839. It is so named because the stream flowing through it then passed across Te Aro flat before entering the harbour near what is now the junction of Taranaki and Manners streets.

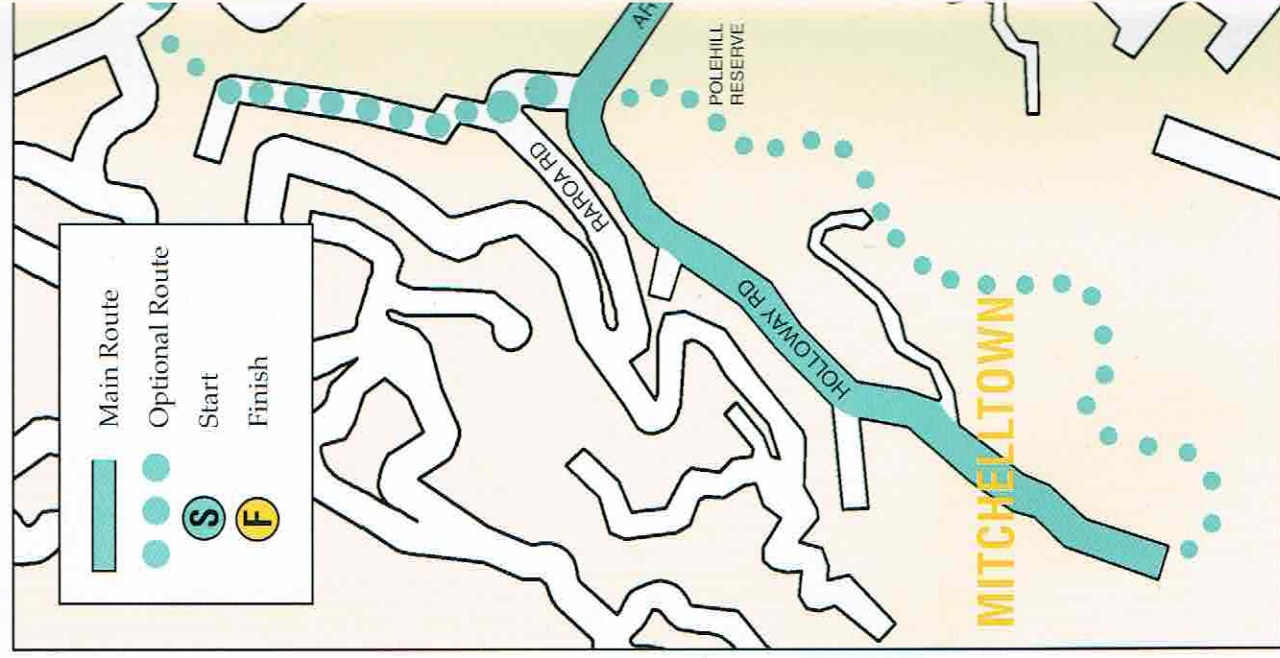


The Aro Valley section of the New Zealand Company plan of Wellington, 1840, by Captain William Mein Smith. (Alexander Turnbull Library)

In the 1840 Plan of Wellington, the Aro Valley consisted of Wordsworth, Aro and Epuni Streets, as well as St John Street, which connected Aro Street and what became known as The Terrace. Of the 13 freehold acres available for European settlers, nine were in Epuni Street. European settlement grew as Maori left the area, including Te Atiawa who returned to Taranaki in the 1850s/60s. Also, in 1855, the opening of the Old Bullock Track meant the valley became an access route for Karori settlers. The only other route to Karori followed what is now Glenmore Street from Thorndon.

European settlement (for example, in Boston Terrace and former McKinley/Fitchett Streets off Nairn Street) stepped up in the 1870s as a result of the Vogel immigration schemes, but stagnated during the 1880s depression. It expanded greatly (mainly working-class people) between 1890 and 1910 under the Liberal government of 1891-1912.

ARO VALLEY HERITAGE TRAIL



Thomas Ward's 1891 survey showed that of the first 36 Town Acres here, only five sections had more than one house on them. By way of contrast, nearby Mitchelltown had 50 houses in 1891. Development was assisted by the extension of the electric tram to Brooklyn in 1906, with a single track up Aro Valley. The service ceased in 1957.

The area's heritage value derives from the fact it contains the largest collection of unaltered working-class homes in Wellington, some built by local tradesmen for employees, many put up by professional builders and developers as speculative investments.

Among early local builders and developers was William Adams (1846-1930), after whom Adams Terrace is named. He also built extensively in nearby Devon, Landcross, Durham, and Essex streets, names he bestowed for their associations with his English upbringing. His wife Lavinia was a substantial developer in her own right.

Other notable developers and landowners in the valley were John Martin (1822-1892), John Fitchett (1817?-1875) and Robert Tait (1834?-1920) - more on the last two below. The former gave his name to Martinborough.

Today, house sizes and street width in the valley remain virtually unchanged. Many visitors will find the small scale and intimacy of the area appealing - along with the pleasing contrast between the densely built lower half of the Valley and the more open and rural Mitchelltown.

Maori Settlement

Early tribal occupants of the Aro Valley included Ngati Mutunga, Ngati Ruanui, Ngai Tara and Ngati Mamoe. In the 1830s the Taranaki Atiawa settled at its western end. The stream itself was an important food source for Maori. It was called Waimapihi - in Maori, "the stream or bathing place" of Mapihi, a local chieftainess of Ngai Tara and Ngati Mamoe descent.

Before 1844 Te Aro Maori cultivated some 700 acres of land on the hills behind their settlement. In early 1844 Te Aro chiefs finally signed a deed that brought Te Aro into the NZ Company purchase of 1839. In the Aro Valley some 35 of the original 48 Town Acres under the New Zealand Company Plan of Settlement for Wellington (1841) were designated Native Reserves. In 1847 and 1874, however, the Maori presence reduced as they shifted to areas such as Johnsonville, Vogelstown and Ohiro Valley, on to land awarded in compensation for that taken for European settlement.

Geology and physical characteristics

Much of Wellington consists of the remnants of an old peneplain, a flat expanse that rose from the sea about 20 million years ago. This land was heavily dissected by watercourses from that time and today the tops of the hills around Wellington indicate the general height of that eroded peneplain. During this time massive faults appeared that are still active today. To the immediate west of Aro Valley is the Wellington Fault running north-east along the foot of the Tinakori Hills and beyond.

A series of splinter faults branch off from the Wellington Fault. Activity along these faults over millions of years caused tilting of the land to create valleys, including Aro Valley, south-east of the main fault. Aro Valley, and its tributary valleys, are well sheltered from the wind and have soil enriched by past alluvial deposits. The valley walls are steep in places and house sites are correspondingly uneven, in typical Wellington fashion.

Flora and fauna

In contrast with other flatlands around Wellington in 1839–40 with their flax, toitoi and other cover, the upper parts of Willis Street and Polhill Gully had extensive forest cover of rimu and other native conifers, though some of the lower ridges had been cleared for Maori cultivation. Pictures from the late 1870s photos show no surviving forest behind the Terrace or around Aro Street or in the south west section of the Town Belt. From the 1880s exotic trees were planted while gorse and broom took hold because early grazing leases did not (yet) stipulate their removal as weeds.

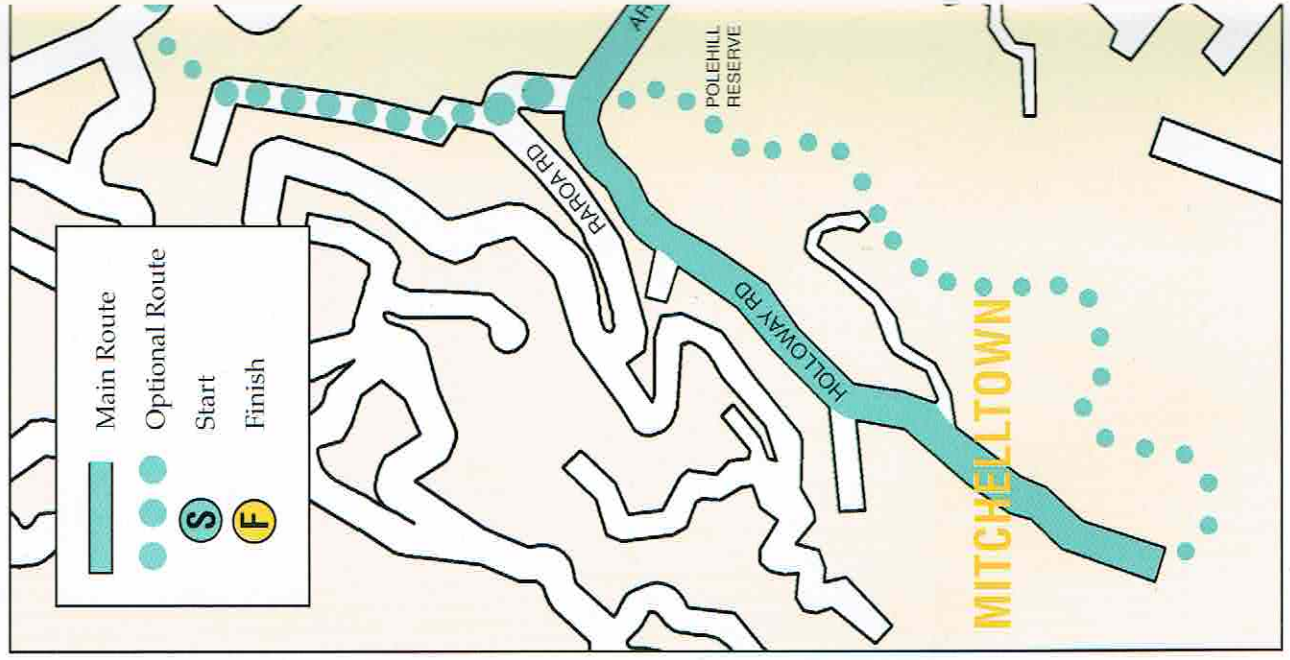


Aro Valley from its upper reaches, c.1870. Vegetation is already sparse, although housing development has a long way to go to fill the valley. (Alexander Turnbull Library)

The Town Belt, the city's margin of recreational green land established by the New Zealand Company in 1840, reaches into the valleys. Macrocarpa and other conifers are on the slopes above Holloway Road at the head of the valley. Mown grassland or mahoe/ conifer woodland provide pockets of green in lower Holloway Road and in the Norway Street gully.

Exotic fauna like possums, rats and cats and the few remaining native birds, mainly tui, can be found in this area. The Town Belt's fragmented nature in this area is due to the redesignation of sections over the years as Maori reserve land or for use by institutions like Victoria University.

ARO VALLEY Heritage Trail



Maori glossary

Pa a stockade or fortified place.
Pakeha a person of predominantly European origin.

Architectural glossary

balustrade a series of short posts (balusters) supporting a rail.
bargeboard a board fixed on the end of a gable or the edge of a lean-to roof, covering the ends of horizontal roof members and sometimes decorated.
bungalow a single-storey house, derived from Indian word for light, verandah dwellings; popular from 1900 to 1940, with the largest influence coming from California.

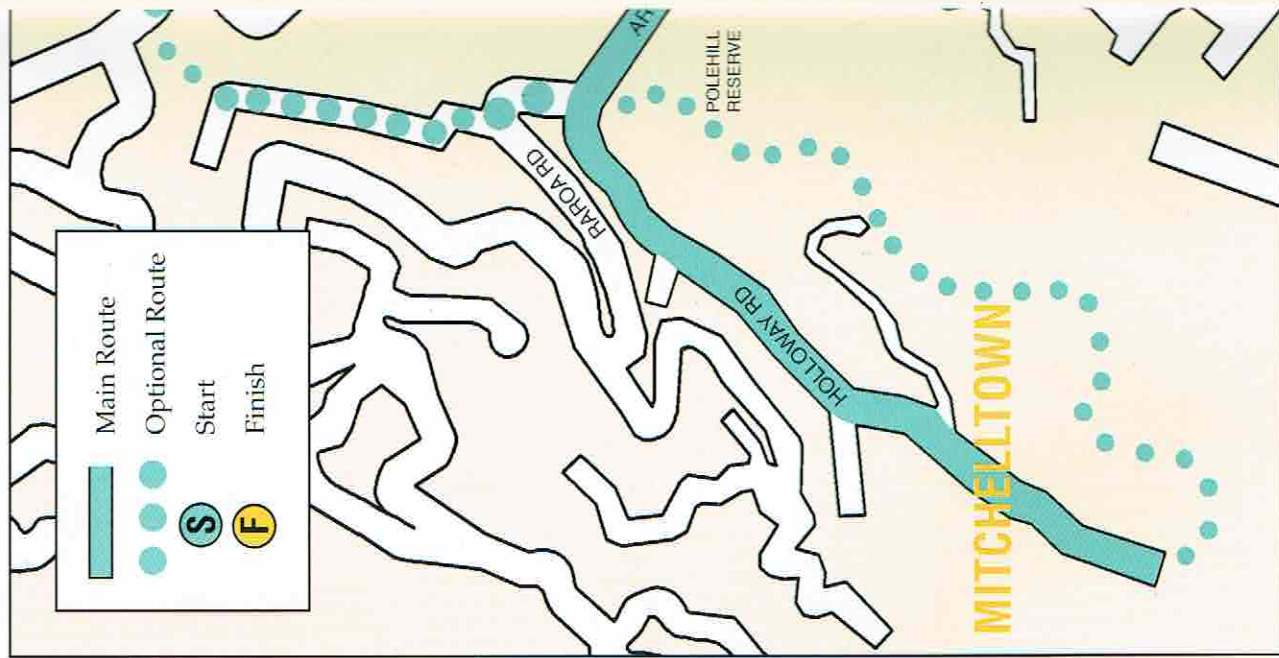
casement window a window hung on its side and opening outwards or inwards.
Classicism a revival of or a return to the principles of Greek or (more often) Roman architecture.

double hung windows sash windows sliding up and down in front of the other and held in place by cords with counter-balancing weights inside the jambs.

Gothic a style of architecture that flourished in Europe from the latter part of the 12th century until the 16th, and revived in the 19th century; characterised by pointed arches, rib vaults and flying buttresses

Italianate the style characterised by stilted arches to the windows and doorways of what otherwise would be called a formal Italian villa

ARO VALLEY Heritage Trail



mortice

and tenon a joint formed by a projecting piece (tenon) fitting into a socket (mortice).

quoins

the dressed stones at the corners of buildings, usually laid so that their faces are alternately large and small; often imitated in this country with blocks of timber.

Roman

Classical architecture characterised by much use of rounded forms (arch, vault, dome).

villa

Traditionally a villa is a country residence for relaxation but in the last 100 years the term has been applied more to any detached residence in town or country; in New Zealand villas are usually regarded as more formal in layout.

weatherboards

overlapping horizontal boards covering a timber framed wall.